

NOVEMBER 2, 1978

60c

the contemporary  
music magazine

# downbeat®

**FANIA  
ALL-STARS**  
Salsa '78  
--Crossover Or Die



## MAX ROACH

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## JACK DeJOHNETTE


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## the first chorus

BY CHARLES SUBER

It has been a while since our last quiz. So lest you develop lazy reading habits, here are some easy to hard questions chosen from this issue. The answers are at the bottom of this column. Score as follows: ten or more correct is a Leader Reader; six to eight correct is a First Chair Reader; three to five correct is a Substitute Reader; less than three correct and you call yourself a musician?

1. What are the last names and instruments of these bop pioneers: (a) Diz; (b) Max; (c) Bud; (d) Charlie; (e) Oscar?

2. In which Harlem jam club did both Max Roach and Jack DeJohnette sit in: (a) Savoy; (b) Cotton Club; (c) Birdland; (d) Mintons; (e) Bop City?

3. How did Jack DeJohnette "learn the changes": (a) buy a fake book; (b) on the job; (c) playing the piano; (d) singing?

4. What advice does Max Roach *not* offer young drummers: (a) develop humility; (b) study keyboard harmony; (c) discriminate among styles; (d) seek yourself; (e) make mistakes?

5. Which of the following drum tips does Louie Bellson *not* recommend: (a) light wood sticks for cymbals; (b) muffle bass drum; (c) tighten snare batter head for flexibility; (d) change heads frequently?

6. Which of these instruments does Jack DeJohnette *not* play: (a) bass; (b) drums; (c) piano; (d) melodica; (e) recorder?

7. Whom does Max Roach believe is mistaken to change styles: (a) George Benson; (b) Stanley Turrentine; (c) Freddie Hubbard; (d) Charles Mingus; (e) Sonny Rollins?

8. According to Ravi Shankar, Indian music and jazz have what in common: (a) discipline; (b) meter; (c) improvisation; (d) harmony; (e) tuning?

9. According to Joe Farrell, who is the only bassist with guts enough to adapt a Bird tune for electric bass: (a) Cecil McBee; (b) Charlie Haden; (c) Jaco Pastorius; (d) George Mraz?

10. What instrument does each of the following salsa stars play: (a) Nickey Marrero; (b) Louis Kahn; (c) Willie Colon; (d) Pupi Legretta; (e) Johnny Pacheco?

11. Which is the correct clavé rhythm: (a) five beat, accent 2 or 3; (b) four beat, accent 1 & 3; (c) three beat, accent 3; (d) five beat, accent 1, 3 & 5; (e) four beat, accent 2 & 4?

12. Who among the following are Polish jazz musicians and what do they play: (a) Zbigniew Brzezinski; (b) Zbigniew Namyslovski; (c) Michal Urbaniak; (d) Attila Zoller; (e) Josef Zawinul?

13. According to Max Roach, Thelonious Monk's advice to loosen up is to: (a) make a mistake; (b) listen to Oscar Peterson; (c) wear another hat; (d) get to the gig on time.

Next issue features, among others, the Milestone Jazzstars, plus John Klemmer, Sam Rivers, and Leroy Jenkins.

Answers: 1, Gillespie-trumpet, Roach-drums, Powell-piano, Parker-alto, Pettiford-bass; 2-d; 3-a; 4-c; 5-a; 6-c; 7-d; 8-a; 9-c; 10, a-trumpets, b-trumpet, c-bass trumpet, d-violin, e-flute; 11-a; 12-b, alto and c, violin; 13-a.

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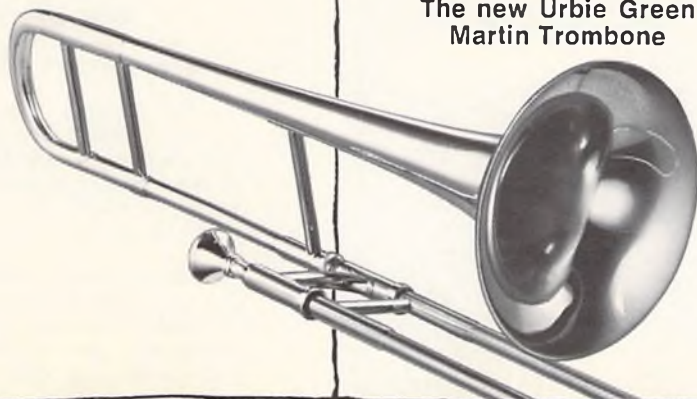
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# CHORDS AND DISCORDS

## Metheny v. Fusion

I'm not too eager to hear Pat Metheny's new "powerhouse" group after reading his remarks in the 7/13/78 *down beat*. His comments, particularly about Jan Hammer and Return To Forever, clearly show where his head is at. To call Return To Forever "unmusical" is totally absurd, especially from someone who is concerned with letting people know that he is capable of playing fast. Return To Forever did much more than just play "arrangements"—which is why their music appealed to so many people. If Metheny has as much musicianship as Return To Forever, maybe he wouldn't be playing in clubs that are ¾ empty.

His statement that he doesn't want to see musical technology's possibilities defined by Jeff Beck or Jan Hammer was a remark made

out of blatant stupidity. First, Hammer is not concerned with defining the possibilities of electronic music, but rather with using electronic developments to fit his personal, unique style. Regardless of his musical setting, Hammer creates original, imaginative ideas through his soloing. He is one of a rare breed in that he has developed a style that is truly his own by interspersing linear melodies with unusual rhythmic concepts. Until Metheny develops a concept as unique as Hammer's, I suggest he keep his mouth closed.

Brian Eggleston Rochester, N.Y.

## A Woman's Touch

I was pleased to find an article on Carla Bley (*db*, 6/1/78) between the supportive covers of modern music's most communicative magazine. It is genuinely refreshing to hear music that is entertaining, alive, positive and "perky" in this age of technical wizardry and religious mania. Bley's music reaches beyond the personal idiosyncracies of those who play it and truly communicates, without the need to assert dogmatic proofs or to bring the listening world to the musician's level of romantic

dissociation.

We all need Carla Bley's music.  
Gerard Jonline Isla Vista, Cal.

## Kritikizing

Re: "43rd Annual Critics Poll" (*db* 8/10/78). It's ridiculous. How can these critics overlook the guitar talents of Al DiMeola? Joe Farrell, a tremendous talent in the reeds, was also wronged. He is probably the best soprano sax (not to mention tenor man) around. He wasn't even on the list, never mind winning.

Return To Forever wasn't on the list for best combo, which is another case of moronic ignorance on the part of those kritikis.

C. A. Rosenberg Warwick, R.I.

*No unit called Return to Forever released an album or performed publicly during the period covered by the Critics Poll. As to the other matters, we offer no apology. Ed.*

## Albin's Affront

Why do I get the impression that Scott Albin's review of the Newport Festival Carnegie Hall Concert featuring McCoy Tyner with chorus and orchestra was written by a military adversary? Arsenals and squadrons are terms far removed from jazz.

It was Mr. Albin's review, not the music, which lacked depth. Mr. Albin's resistant observations convey a fragmented concern with details, and he was very serious about those details. But he was presented with a greater issue—*Art*—about which one must be far more serious.

Religion is the most fertile source of inspiration for artists of Mr. Tyner's caliber. Did the critic see or hear or feel the full implication of what he was dealing with? It is not possible to have clarity if, in a review, details are not factual and respect is not present. One cannot have total perception without sharpness, seriousness and most important, attention.

Eric Gravatt's drumming would certainly have elevated Mr. Tyner's offerings, had Gravatt been playing. However, since Wilby Fletcher was the drummer on this occasion, I must question Mr. Albin's attention, accuracy and antagonistic evaluation.

If, in fact, Mr. Albin was present at this concert, he might have noticed the profound enthusiasm that percussionsit Guilherme Franco evoked from the entire audience with his masterful additions of colors, textures and frequently ethereal rhythms.

Mr. Albin, I suggest that you sit on your pen and open your mind.

S. Mathison New York City

*Mr. Albin replies:*

*I went to the concert to hear some music. Apparently Mr./Ms. Mathison feels the concert was more in the nature of a religious event. What I found ponderous, Mathison apparently found inspirational.*

*I am no adversary of Mr. Tyner and the other musicians. The "military" terms describe a massive quantity, and are no reflection on the quality of the brass, reeds or vocalists. These terms only indicate the magnitude of Mr. Franco's achievements in so often overshadowing the others.*

*I did indicate some bright moments in the concert, but it seems that Mathison expected that Mr. Tyner could do no wrong, and Mathison's own preconceptions were fulfilled. Is it possible—just possible—that there could be any flaws in Mr. Tyner's work?*

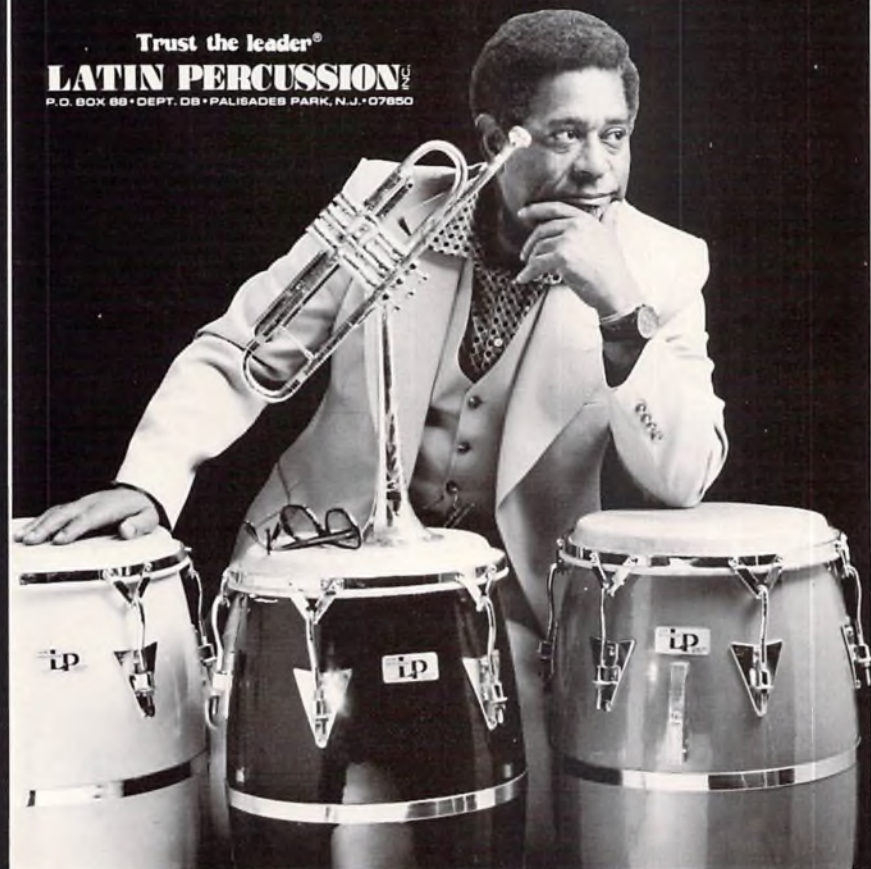
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*—Max Roach*



# NEWS

## Jazz, Rock, Art Meet Arcology



Arcosanti view from the air; notice the apse

CORDES JUNCTION, ARIZONA—Arcosanti is destined to house thousands in a unique experimental city atop a desert mesa in unpopulated northern Arizona, and is more than just another trendy try at some communal Utopia. Based on the arcology (architecture and ecology) theories of Paolo Soleri, the self-contained, environmentally conscious community will avoid urban sprawl by growing vertically, reduce pollution by eliminating the need for automobiles, and conserve resources by using sun and wind for power. It's a viable, working alternative to urban entrapments, and an inspiration to all who come in contact with it—which perhaps explains why Arcosanti's fourth annual festival of the arts attracted major jazz and rock stars at benefit wages.

Held from October 5 through 8, the festival featured Anthony Braxton playing one of his amazing solo concerts, Sam Rivers unleashing his heady quartet, Ralph Towner leading Oregon through its eclectic paces, and performances by Dave Liebman, the Gary Burton Quartet with Bob Moses, Bernard Purdie (serving as "house drummer"), David Friesen with guitarist John Stowell, and Richie Beirach. Drummer Freddie Waits collaborated in an improvisation with the Bill Evans Dance company (no relation to the jazz pianist), and worked with critic Dan Morgen-

stern on a lecture called "The Evolution Of Multiple Percussion Instruments In Jazz." Braxton, Beirach and others held workshops, and an all-star jazz jam broke loose.

Young crowds turned out to hear rockers Steve Stills, Todd Rundgren and Utopia, Richie Havens, Shawn Phillips, Kenny Rankin with Roy McCurdy on drums and Tom Rush, among others. The main stage was situated in a deep ravine below the city's main apse (vaultlike arch), with room for thousands across a natural rock amphitheatre. Colorful balloons, concession tents offering ethnic foods, and smaller stages busy with dance, drama and art filled the scene.

Almost as impressive as the music were "Art In The Environment" works by three leading international artists. Washington, D.C.'s Rockne Krebs used lasers to create a multi-media light show; Otto Piene inflated translucent, floating sculptures similar to his Munich Olympics Rainbow, and Tal Streeter struggled in the canyon winds with the world's largest kite—actually several hundred kites latticed together.

Central to everything was Arcosanti's contagious spirit of cooperation and celebration. This was an event where artist and spectator alike could feel the positive vibes and communicate with intimacy.

## POTPOURRI

Charles Mingus and Joni Mitchell have collaborated on an album (for Elektra/Asylum), with Ms. Mitchell writing lyrics to accompany Mingus music, and players from the jazz side, including Wayne Shorter, Gerry Mulligan, Don Alias, Jaco Pastorius, and Stanley Clarke. New words to "Goodbye Pork Pie Hat" were unveiled when Joni joined Herbie Hancock (on acoustic piano) in duets at a benefit in Berkeley, for which they'd rehearsed a full week.

Pianist Jaki Byard broke Keystone Korner's attendance records during a five day stint back in August—the first time the Boston based bandleader had worked the West Coast since playing with Charles Mingus in the early '60s.

Ray Charles has taped a one-hour special for *Billboard's* new airline programming show, which begins its in-flight run in December. The tape covers Ray's long music career via interview material and recorded music, much of which is drawn from his upcoming Atlantic disc, *Love And Peace*.

Tony Williams has been preparing his next Columbia record, set for early '79 release, with several different bands: a quartet consisting of George Benson, Jan Hammer, Paul Jackson, and Williams; another quartet with Herbie Hancock, Stanley Clarke, and Tom Scott; a series of duets with Cecil Taylor, and (probably to be included) live cuts recorded in

Japan with Brian Auger, Ronnie Montrose and Billy Cobham.

In the works at Gene Norman's GNP/Crescendo Records is the first album by Dave Pell's Prez Conference group which, as Supersax did with Charlie Parker, takes its impetus from the recorded legacy of tenor saxophonist Lester Young. His solos have been transcribed and expanded by arranger Bill Holman for the group, comprised of Harry Edison, trumpet; Bob Cooper, Gordon Brisker and Pell, tenor saxes; Bill Hood, baritone sax; Arnold Ross, piano, Al Hendrickson, guitar, Frank DeLaRosa, bass, and Will Bradley, drums.

Barry Harris' recent Cami Hall appearance featured the bebop pianist in concert with horns, strings, and voices. Among the soloists were Slide Hampton, Harold Vick, Tommy Turrentine, and Lonnie Hillyer.

Trumpeter Greg Bobulinski has been awarded a National Endowment For The Arts grant in Composition to complete "an original work based on influences of Spanish folk melodies and jazz harmonies." Brooklyn born Bobulinski, who has worked in the Clark Terry Big Band and with Red Garland, hopes to record the finished opus next year.

Jazz critic Bob Blumenthal, formerly of the Boston *Phoenix* and read now in *Rolling Stone*, with wife Denise named their bouncing . . . er, bopping, baby boy Charlie Parker Blumenthal.

## First Atlanta Jazz Fest A Powerhouse Affair

ATLANTA—September was "Jazz Month" and the First Atlanta Free Jazz Festival, made possible by the city, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Georgia Council for the Arts, several record companies, radio stations, individual musicians and businesses, ran from Thursday, Sept. 21 through Sunday, Sept. 24.

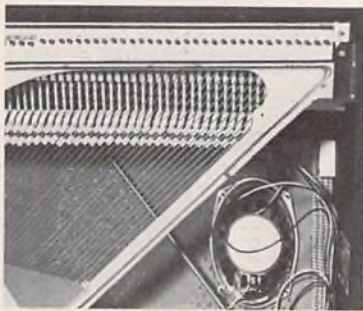
A "Powerhouse Jazz Concert" with Gary Bartz, Raul de Souza, Bobby Lyle and Caldera (all part of Capitol Records' Modern Music of the Americas promotional tour) was "sold out" in advance, although all tickets to the Atlanta Civic Center were free, distributed on a first come-first serve basis, and general admission. Afternoon concerts and workshops around the city at various

sites, several outdoors, involved local musicians like saxist Sil Austin and Ruby Red's trad band, while tenorist Paul Jeffrey taught jazz ensemble techniques and Barry Harris conducted a bebop clinic with bassist Larry Ridley. Sun Ra and his Arkestra performed an evening concert; there were blues and dixieland sets, besides performances by Byard Lancaster, Ms. Jean Carn, and Arthur Blythe.

At a Saturday "Jam and Rap" session instrumentalists and enthusiasts shared ideas on how to attract more music to Atlanta. There was no report on the meeting by presstime, but from the plans for the First Atlanta Free Jazz Festival, the locals seemed to be moving in the right direction.

# This 88 moves!

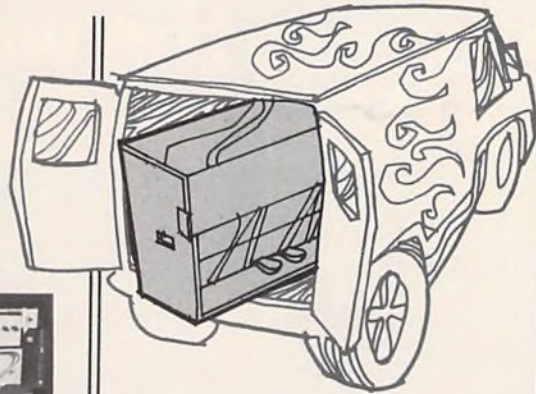
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## Robin Returns From Africa

NEW YORK—Saxman Robin Kenyatta has returned from a State Department sponsored tour of Africa. Kenyatta's quartet, which included Michel Heron on piano, Feud Deround on bass and Oliver Johnson on drums, played 2500 to 5000 seat stadiums to packed houses in Mali, Tunisia, Syria, Morocco, Liberia and Kinshasa. For several concerts the group was joined by African percussionists. Kenyatta told **db**, "It was fabulous."

Kenyatta reports jazz interest high in Africa. Randy Weston and Memphis Slim are regular visitors to the continent. Kenyatta spent his spare time sightseeing

and checking out African music, especially the highlife style.

Shortly after his return to New York, Kenyatta went into the studio and recorded a commercial single, "The Sheik of Araby," to be released on his own label, Jazzdance Records (P.O. Box 5118, FDR Station, New York City 10022). When asked why he formed his own label, Kenyatta commented, "It's time musicians have more to say about what they put out."

And he had no qualms about his role as entrepreneur. "I can handle it. It's something to deal with, part of being in the business."

## ART PEPPER HOT AGAIN

LOS ANGELES—Art Pepper's long career in jazz has been marked by more than its share of misfortune, not the least of which has been the alto saxophonist's much publicized narcotics problems which resulted in almost a decade's incarceration in three separate terms of imprisonment from the early 1950s to the middle '60s. However, this problem a number of years behind him (**db**, June 5, 1975), Pepper lately has been troubled by recurring health problems that, following a hugely successful Japanese tour in the spring of this year, have prevented his performing in his hometown of Los Angeles. A recent month's hospitalization has cured him of what was diagnosed as a form of anemia, and a regimen of diet and medication has returned the altoist to health. Things are once again beginning to look up for Pepper.

Recently he completed a recording for Interplay Records, made under the supervision of the label's owner-producer Toshiya Taenaka, with pianist Milcho Leviev, best known for his work with Don Ellis, among those on board. Following this, the altoist signed a long-term contract with Galaxy Records, one of the labels of the Berkeley-based Fantasy Records complex. Currently in release is a valuable set of reissues, alternate and unissued recordings from the early 1950s, *Art Pepper Plays Shorty Rogers and Others*, on the recently reactivated Pacific Jazz label (PJAL-896H). Fans of the altoist can also look forward to more of his recordings from Contemporary Records, the Los Angeles jazz independent for which he has recorded over the last two decades.



Altoist Art Pepper

Contemporary's John Koenig, son of the label's founder and moving force, the late Lester Koenig, reports that he has been working through the large number of performances—24 reels of tape, in fact—recorded during Pepper's critically acclaimed stand at New York's Village Vanguard in early fall 1977. Koenig stated that he plans to release several albums—"at least three, and possibly more"—from this group of location recordings.

Topping things off, Pepper's long-awaited biography, written in collaboration with his wife, journalist Laurie Miller, currently is in the hands of an editor at Macmillan & Co. The book will include a comprehensive discography of Pepper's recordings compiled by longtime friend and Pepperphile Todd Selbert, as well as extensive interviews conducted by Ms. Miller with a number of the saxophonist's musical associates over the years, including multi-instrumentalist-leader-arranger Benny Carter, of whose wartime band the teenaged Pepper was a member; pianist Russ Freeman; tenor saxophonist Bob Cooper; vocalist June Christy and other members of the Stan Kenton Orchestra of the late '40s and early '50s in which Pepper was first brought to national prominence.

## NEW RELEASES

Out again—or still—on **Arista/Freedom** is **Ornette Coleman's Great London Concert** with a string section, recorded in the early '60s; also on the label is pianist **Hampton Hawes' A Little Copenhagen Night Music**. On the **Novus** line is **Larry Coryell with Stan Getz, European Impressions, Ran Blake's Rapport; Muhai Richard Abrams' Spiral, Air's Montreux Suisse Air, Mike Manieri's and Warren Bernhardt's Free Smiles**.

**India Navigation's** new releases include **Chico Freeman's Kings Of Mali**, with **Don Moye, Cecil McBee, Anthony Davis, and Jay Hoggarth**, and **Rendezvous With Now** by **Munoz, Pharoah Sanders' former guitarist**.

**Ray Brown's** trio, with **Cedar Walton** on piano and **Elvin Jones** on drums, is preparing a disc for **Contemporary Records**.

**Inner City's** latest release has guitarist **John Scofield Live**, **Lew Tabackin** on flute and tenor displaying his **Dual Nature**, **Marvin Hannibal Peterson In Antibes** with saxman **George Adams**, and the debut of violinist **David Rose, Distance Between Dreams**.

Georgia-based **Progressive Records** checks in with the **Lee Konitz Quintet, Figure And Spirit**;

**Hank Jones Trio, Arigato**; guitarist **Chuck Wayne's** trio and quartet, **Traveling**, and **Buddy De Franco's** quintet with **Tal Farlow, Like Someone In Love**.

**Anthony Ortega's Rain Dance**, **Charles Owens' The Two Quartets**, and guitarist **Tommy Tedesco's When Do We Start** are available from **Trend-Discovery Records**.

**Count Basie and Milt Jackson, Big Band Vols. I and II** are now out on **Pablo**, along with **Jamento**, by the **Monty Alexander 7, Lady Time** by **Ella Fitzgerald and Tudu Bem!** by **Joe Pass and Paulinho Da Costa**.

**Keith Jarrett's** 10 ten record boxed set is all the talk at **ECM** (via **Warner Bros.**)

Five two-disc **Blue Note** packages from **United Artists** feature previously unissued material by **Jackie McLean, Lee Morgan, Stanley Turrentine, Chick Corea, and Art Blakey's** early '50s **Jazz Messengers**, with **Clifford Brown and Lou Donaldson** on some tracks.

**Dobre Records' fast growing catalogue** boasts sets by pianists **Roger Kellaway and Milcho Leviev**, guitarists **Laurindo Almeida and Mundell Lowe**, and drummer **John Tirrabasso**.

## Playboys Jam Jazz At Five

LOS ANGELES—The Playboy Club in Century City launched in September a series of jam sessions from 5-7 p.m. on the first and third Tuesdays of each month. Called "Jazz At Five," the series is intended to be "an exciting after-work diversion for business people and any and all non-professional musicians," said Steve Goodman, Sr., producer of the series, vice president of a Century City advertising agency, and a trumpet player himself.

"Sponsored by the Century City Chamber of Commerce and The Century City Cultural Commission, 'Jazz At Five' is strictly a fun event," said Goodman, "conducted in a relaxed and supportive way. We invite anyone who can play a musical instrument, regardless of their level of competence, to sit in. Each set will be anchored by one professional.

"We put the groups together (4-6 people at a time), provide drums, a piano, and plenty of en-



Happy hour rhythm section

couragement. Maracas, claves, and tambourines will be provided for those in the audience who wish to play along. Playboy Bunnies will join the jamming.

"A modest donation will be charged at the door, and all drinks will be at regular Happy Hour prices."

## Fats' Fun Pure Broadway

NEW YORK—*Ain't Misbehavin'* is a jazzy Broadway musical show that runs on pure fun. Five hard lovin', singin' and dancin' Harlem folks consort to report on the work and world of Thomas "Fats" Waller.

Fats was a composer, singer and virtuoso musician. At sixteen he met his mentor, the legendary James P. Johnson, in whose tradition he followed. Waller took the art of stride piano to it's highest level. His humor was his trademark. Fats was a great comedian. His comedy, musicianship and personal pizzazz made him one of America's first black stars.

Now, thirty five years after his death, Broadway pays tribute. More than thirty tunes written by Waller (there are a handful that he didn't write, but did make popular) are trotted out belly to butt. *Ain't Misbehavin's* company of five high energy young performers—Nell Carter, Andre De Shields, Armelia McQueen, Ken Page and Charlaire Woodard—each in turn entertain up a storm.

Hank Jones appears as the pianist onstage. Although he's not supposed to be Fats he said "... the Fats Waller thing is implied. I try to play in the idiom. The piano role is mostly comping in this show." Jones also told db,



Fats Waller

he believes "the show is very well thought out. A lot of people are under the impression that it's a history of Fats. It's not. It's a song and dance revue with a lot of energy from a beautiful and highly talented cast. They're all great hits and a good song will always be a good song. I'm thrilled to be on stage in something worthwhile."

Arvell Shaw, the great bassist who for many years was a stalwart of Louis Armstrong's All Stars, is in the band that also appears on stage, along with Sheldon Powell on saxophone, Joe Marshall on drums, Alex Foster on clarinet, Virgil Jones on trumpet and Eddie Bert on trombone. Shaw said, "*Ain't Misbehavin'* shows you what kind of man Fats was; it tries to tell the truth about him by not overblowing it. We just play his music."

## JazzTheatre Workshop Forges Forward

NEW YORK—At the Little Theatre in Harlem's YMCA, JazzTheatre Workshop is forging the connection between the improvised arts of jazz and theatre.

The workshop, founded by Richard Dubin, a New York based actor/director, and **down beat** East Coast Editor Bret Primack, counts among it's members trumpeter Dizzy Reece, trombonist Steve Turre, saxmen Sal Nistico and Charlie Rouse, pianist Art Resnick, bassists Bob Cunningham and Victor Sproles, percussionists Michael Carvin, Myra Casales, Jimmy Wormworth and Charlie Persip, vocalists Andy Bey, Carmen Lundy, Diane Snow, Roberta Baum, Marion Cowings, Beryl Tittle and Janet Lawson. Clark Terry's the musical director.

Dubin, a former trumpeter, explained his idea thusly: "Musicians stories have never been told honestly, in plays or films. How could they? Kirk Douglas (not to single him out) can't play the trumpet! But what if musicians could act? What if they could not only act, but improvise

scenes and music spontaneously? That's what we're striving for in JazzTheatre."

Just after this year's Newport Festival, Dubin and Primack began recruiting musicians and looking for rehearsal space. "Finding the right people wasn't easy," Dubin said. "But it was worth all the trials and tribulations. We have fantastic musicians who are deeply committed to this project."

The Harlem "Y" seemed a natural for space. Dubin spoke with Livingston Francis, executive director, and Pat Dempsey, program director and "... in half an hour we'd agreed. Not only did JazzTheatre Workshop have a place to rehearse, it had a home and two ardent supporters."

JazzTheatre Workshop will create a first performance piece by late winter. "We know it's going to take time and lots of help to realize the fullest potential of this project," said Dubin. "In six months, we'll have a show. A successful show could catalyze the actualization of JazzTheatre's fullest promise."

## FINAL BAR

Vocalist Irene Kral died in mid August after a long bout with cancer. She was 46 years old.

Ms. Kral worked as a big band singer, beginning at age 16 with Jay Burkhardt in her native Chicago. Later she toured with a group called the Tattle Tales, singing lead, all solos, playing drums, and travelling through Canada, Bermuda, and Puerto Rico as well as coast-to-coast.

After joining Maynard Ferguson's band, Ms. Kral enjoyed good reviews for appearances at Birdland and other East Coast venues. She recorded four tracks with Ferguson on an Emarcy album entitled *Boy With Lots Of Brass*, but the first recording she fronted was called *The Band And I* with Herb Pomeroy's group; she also recorded a collection of Steve Allen tunes, *StereoIrene*.

After the birth of a daughter, Jodi, Ms. Kral settled in Los Angeles, became Shelly Manne's featured vocalist and appeared regularly on the Steve Allen television show. A Capitol recording of *My Fair Lady* caught her with Manne's combo and Jack Sheldon singing and acting; also to her credit is the now deleted collection on Ava, *Better Than Anything*, with Junior Mance's trio. Most recently she had recorded two albums with keyboard player Alan Broadbent, *Where Is Love* (nominated for a 1977 Grammy) and *Gentle Rain* for Choice Records, besides *Kral Space* for Catalyst. A third Broadbent/Kral effort is due soon.

Ms. Kral had a second daughter, Melissa, with her former husband Joe Burnett, a trumpeter. She was the sister of pianist-singer-composer-arranger Roy Kral (who works with wife Jackie Cain). Roy told db Irene worked up until three weeks of her passing.

"She managed to express her pleasure at finally being acknowledged when she said to me, 'It looks like we've finally made it,'" Roy said.



VERYL OAKLAND

Irene Kral

Louis Prima

Louis Prima, singer, showman, song writer and trumpet player, died in New Orleans August 24 at the age of 66. He had been in a coma for three years after brain surgery.

Prima began in music by studying violin, but switched to trumpet and secured his first job in a New Orleans theater in 1929. His credentials as a jazz player were earned in the middle '30s on New York's 52nd Street. He followed Wingy Manone into the Famous Door at a time when The Street was changing over from a row of defunct speakeasies to Swing Alley. He led a band that included at various times Claude Thornhill, George Brunis, Eddie Miller and Pee Wee Russell, in a dixieland format that allowed Prima's penchant for clowning and singing full range. By the '40s he had been almost totally absorbed into pop music, although the 53 sides he made for Brunswick and Vocalion between 1934 and 1936 are still good fun very much influenced by Louis Armstrong.

Prima was occasionally seen in a jazz context over the years, notably at the second Esquire All-American Jazz Concert in 1945. But he became more famous as the leader of a dance band.

When the big band era folded Prima drifted. Then in the middle 1950s he experienced an extraordinary comeback when he teamed with his wife Keeley Smith and an r&b band led by Sam Butera called The Witnesses. Prima and Smith broke records at night clubs such as the Copacabana (New York), the Chez Paree (Chicago) and the leading clubs in Las Vegas. The couple were divorced in the 1960s, and both continued to work successfully apart.

Prima remarried and teamed with his new wife, Gia Miaone, who survives him. He had two children by Miss Smith and three by Miss Miaone.

At the time of his death his most famous number, *Sing Sing Sing*, was in the midst of a stunning revival as the centerpiece of the Broadway show *Dancin'*. The score included the famous Jimmy Munday arrangement played by the original Benny Goodman band, loaned to the production company by Goodman himself. But Prima was sadly not able to savour this final glory, due to his comatose state.



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# Fania ALL-STARS

## SALSA '78 - CROSSOVER OR DIE

*Fania All Stars*

by HOWARD MANDEL



left to right: Adalberto Santiago, Johnny Pacheco, Pete "El Conde" Rodriguez, Cheo Feliciano, Ishmael Miranda, Santos Colon, Ruben Blades.

CAROL FRIEDMAN

The Fania All-Stars, salsa's most ambitious orchestra, celebrated their 10th anniversary in July of 1978 traditionally—by selling out Madison Square Garden and playing their contemporary big band Latin music, flavored by improvisation and age-old rhythms, without a trace of fusion.

"The whole world is going salsa!" exulted emcee Izzy Sanabria, publisher of *Latin New York* magazine and unabashed promoter of Latino soul music. "Cuba, Puerto Rico, jibaro Spain, Mexico! Las Estrellas de Fania!"

Striding into the spotlight to the roar of the well-primed crowd were the instrumentalists, all band leaders or favorite sidemen, who season the hot dance music that was thought to be breaking big in the '70s—bigger than the boogaloo in the '60s, bigger than the mambo in the '50s. Waiting in the wings were the smoothest, most passionate New York singers who vocalize in Spanish, including Pete "El Conde" Rodriguez, Adalberto Santiago, Santos Colon, Ishmael Miranda, Cheo Feliciano, Hector Lavoe, Ruben Blades, and the Queen of Salsa, Celia Cruz.

"Now the man who keeps them all jumping—" Sanabria cried, "the big gun of Fania Records—Johnny Pacheco!!" Out sprinted an angular figure in a form-fitting powder blue suit with white piping and fringe, waving to his audience then counting off a clavé, the

typical five beat folkloric rhythm accented on the second or third stroke which underlies all Latin American music.

Young Papo Lucca's piano picked up the pattern over timbalist Nicky Marrero, congaist Johnny Rodriguez, and bongoist Roberto Roena. Sal Queras was there on standup electric bass. The trombones of Louis Kahn and Reinaldo Jorge harmonized with the three trumpets led by Louis "Perico" Ortiz—bass trumpet soloist Willie Colon awaited his special introduction. Multi-talented Pupi Legretta playing violin, sturdy tres player Yomo Toro, and vibist-arranger Louis Ramirez added to the texture. Schedules of their own working bands disrupted, the headliners who wax for Fania Records again collaborated to form a powerhouse band, putting on a fabulous show. Pacheco, the Santo Domingan-born composer, conductor, flutist, and vice president of Fania, America's most active salsa label, stoked the band as though shoveling coals into a furnace—and in a moment no one listening was able to sit still.

Though caught between rows of folding chairs and theater seats, an audience composed of all ages and all races was trying to dance. If the Fania All-Stars' goal was only to stimulate movement, they succeeded long ago, because the polyrhythms and overlapping melodic themes of their Latin American, Afro-Cuban music demand the adjective "infectious."

But Johnny Pacheco, his partner in Fania Jerry Masucci, the rest of the All-Stars and a widespread family of friends and business relations have had grander hopes for this aggregation. The band performs only a few times a year in already assured markets, and records at most twice every 12 months, so members can front their own creative projects. Yet the idea behind the All-Stars is that they sell the entire label, all the bands, singers, and salsa music, itself.

So Pacheco and Masucci aspire to a boundary-breaking crossover hit in the pop, r&b, or disco vein which will, they posit, lead to acceptance of Latin-rooted Spanish language music in the mainstream music market.

"You get a top ten album in the pop market and I guess that's what everyone is talking about, that's where it's all supposed to lead," says Masucci, who handles the business aspects of Fania Records while Pacheco oversees artistic considerations. In pursuit of that elusive breakthrough, Fania Records and the ever-changing band bearing its name signed a three year agreement with Columbia Records to co-produce an album a year, starting in 1976.

That year the Fania All-Stars made two albums, *Delicate And Jumpy* for Columbia with production help from Gene Page, and *A Tribute To Tito Rodriguez* for Fania, an in-house labor of love involving Masucci, Pacheco, Ramirez, and pianist-composer-arranger-



left to right: Johnny Pacheco, Louis "Perico" Ortiz, Adalberto Santiago.

CAROL FRIEDMAN

bandleader Larry Harlow.

"People were disappointed when we did the first Columbia record," Pacheco remembers. "Because there was no Latin music involved. So the Latin crowd got disappointed. That's why we started doing one side completely Latin, the other side the Columbia stuff. On the Latin radio programs we hear the Latin tunes played; on the American stations, the American stuff, although now they are starting to play the tune I wrote [for the All-Stars' latest, *Spanish Fever*], *Coro Miyare*. I heard it on 'BLS, here in New York. They play that because a lot of blacks listen to that station, and they go crazy for the music.

"I think mostly the same people buy Fania and Columbia albums, but we try to make the material different on each album. We have to give them a little mixture, because we want to get to the middle of the market. Maybe we can do a little crossover with a tune from *Spanish Fever*.

"If that goes big, maybe the people who buy it will listen to the second side, the Latin music. If they like *that*, maybe they'll go out and buy the other stuff, our own thing. On Fania records, there is crossover material for the American market, but from the Columbia records we expect more. I think you just have to give both kinds of music. *Spanish Fever* is selling more than the last one [*Rhythm Machine*] so I guess people are getting more into it. We try to make the Columbia records more American than the Fania records."

*Live At The Red Garter*, the first Fania recording of the All-Stars (issued in 1972), had crossover offerings: a duet version in English of Marvin Gaye's ballad *If This World Was Mine*, and a Memphis Horns-inspired *Strut*. But most of *Red Garter* (there are two volumes), which features, besides Pacheco, 18 □ down beat

Colon and Harlow, the popular leaders Ray Barretto, Joe Bataan, Tito Puente and Eddie Palmieri, is a rough Latin jazz jam, with piercing trumpet breaks, several percussion solos, cliché-crushing pianistics, and discursive, improvised vocalizing over a simple phrase repeated by an impromptu chorus. There is the marvelous, funky feeling of music created in the heat of life.

By comparison, *Spanish Fever* opens with the title track: an "Ole" and some standard flamenco guitar licks by guest soloist Jay Berliner, a disco beat, guest Maynard Ferguson's trumpet break ending predictably on a squeezed high note, and a femme chorus mixed out front repeating the two key words of the title. All the potential of the recording studio supplants any spontaneity—and where are the Fania All-Stars?

Continuing through the disc: *Que Pasa?* uses Latin percussion, timbales and scraper, a couple characteristic measures by guest alto saxist David Sanborn, then the tune's title to frame guest Eric Gale's guitar solo. "Wha' happen-ing?" sings the male chorus in bad dialect. *Space Machine (Ride, Ride, Ride)* makes the All-Stars indistinguishable from any other disco corporation but for Nicky Marrero's rolling sticks perking the beat. On *Your Serenity* ringer Hubert Laws blows a flawless (but not Latin) line, Sanborn gets another passage, and strings well into a fade-out.

Flip it over to hear some salsa: Pacheco's *Coro Miyare* opens with a pagan chant over an Afro-Cuban conga beat. Papo Lucca maintains perfect counterpoint syncopation with the chorus: an interesting trumpet line is developed by the section over a complex, clean and fast rhythm; a whistle intrudes irregularly, an amazing ascending orchestral motif turns the tune around, and there's a cutting, uncred-

ited trumpet solo, probably by "Perico" Ortiz.

*Donde* is a bi-lingual pop arrangement with more Latin ingredients than anything on the A side. Ishmael Miranda's feature *Te Pareces A Juda* (You're Like Judas) is a progressive Latin band piece, and *Sin Tu Carino* (Without Your Love) is a romantic lyric sung persuasively in Spanish by heartthrob Ruben Blades. Side two could appear on an entirely different album than side one, and perhaps some day it will. At Madison Square Garden the All-Stars performed all of side two except *Donde*, and nothing from side one at all.

The All-Stars' previous Columbia release, *Rhythm Machine*, is not so strictly segregated. The opening track, *Ella Fue (She Was The One)* is a fusion attempt similar to *Donde*, with guest guitarist Gale soloing, but *En Orbita* sounds like the All-Stars, and bassist Bobby Valentín displays his remarkable chops over uncluttered percussion (the more amazing as Mongo Santamaria on congas joins Marrero and fast fingered Roena on this album). Executive producer Bob James takes a keyboard solo on *Awake*, and producer-arranger-conductor Jay Chattaway penned the samba *Jubileo*. But these are interspersed among *Peanuts*, a novelty arrangement reminiscent melodically of Santamaria's '60s Latin jazz, two more fusion cuts and the authentic Latin sound of *Juan Pachanga*, sung by Blades.

Chattaway, a youngish staff producer at Columbia, had worked on Maynard Ferguson's *Conquistador* and arranged Gato Barbieri's *Caliente* before assignment to the Fania project.

"At an a&r meeting in California, someone noticed that *Caliente* was a Latin pick of the week in *Billboard*," Chattaway explains from his current office at Tappan Zee Records, which he heads with Bob James. "And May-

nard's album had been a commercial success. So I was set up with Latin guys. I loved to listen to it but I didn't realize what I didn't know. Pacheco taught me most of the stuff—he's really a genius and has become a close friend.

"I wrote an original samba-type song for the second album, and *Rhythm Machine* did well—retained a Latin sense, also got some pretty good reviews, and opened a few jazz ears to Latin jazz. The album was well recorded; for the first time you could hear bongos go wild. Columbia decided to go for another one, get into the r&b market and, even more, the established Latin market. Their aim was to get all star jazz talent, and all star Latin talent, to become a leader in the salsa market with the Fania All-Stars, and not to make it less Latin, necessarily.

"It's not the large conglomerate delving into this music. At Columbia we believe in diversifying, and are into the Latin thing as well." Chattaway was part of the Columbia tour of Cuba in May, 1978, which resulted in signing Irakere, the first Cuban jazz band to record in the U.S. since the Cuban Revolution.

Chattaway recently produced Mongo Santamaria. "I'm becoming the ethnic producer," Chattaway chuckles. "They think I can do this." But he has worked to learn the styles, listening to a collection of old Cuban records, RCA reissues, charanga (flute and violin) bands, studying Johnny Richards' *Cuban Fire Suite* written for Stan Kenton's orchestra, and finally confronting the idiosyncracies of his colleagues.

"We never quite get rehearsals," Chattaway says of the All-Stars recording dates, "and the albums are enormously expensive by some standards. There is a lot of playing to get the groove, to work out the arrangements—they do rhythm charts, but it would be impossible to notate some of the things they play. Then, sometimes, the melodies are the last things to be composed.

"Sometimes they come in with a hot *montuno* type riff. Like *Coro Miyare*; we did the rhythm track before anyone had any idea what the melody might be. Pacheco came in with an African type coro that became the melody; we recorded the coro itself, alone, then decided to put African percussion on top of it. I wrote strings and horns on top of that, and it turned into a tribal thing, and a favorite commercially.

"Among the All-Stars, everybody contributes. They're into co-writing; songs are composed by committee, like one person would write the vocal part, Louie Ramirez would write a horn part and I would expand on it, make it a bit more contemporary. Ramirez is a pretty good player but a really good writer."

Chattaway denies the Columbia-Fania venture is disco-aimed. While perceiving that "most of the Latins are dance fans, not jazz fans," he's nonetheless cautious about going after the disco market, afraid the music will "lose something."

"But you can't write all your heavy stuff, either, or you'll scare everyone away," he worries. "It's a problem because radio is really the only way to make a record successful. You must choose the path of least resistance to get on the radio, then go for a crossover. Salsa songs are usually story oriented—but in case there's a turnoff with the Spanish language, we've had a tendency to have shorter catch phrases, and bi-lingual songs.

"So far the All-Stars on Columbia are better

sellers than their albums on Fania, but Columbia has a strong marketing arm. If Fania had Columbia's machinery, I'm sure they would do better. For the All-Stars, Columbia's first step in marketing is heavy into radio ads on Latin stations."

Chattaway has learned from the All-Stars, too.

"The rhythmic concept—I probably wouldn't want to write a samba if I hadn't heard the All-Stars. All their songs have a built-in clavé metronome, like a samba in a box, and that's why we called the one album *Rhythm Machine*.

"Every jazz artist tries to incorporate some Latin aspects in their music. I'm planning on eventually having Latin elements on my solo album for Tappan Zee. In the meantime, to hear an authentic Latin group play Latin music composed by an Anglo is a real treat. When you do funk music everything is straight up and down. Latin rhythms cover a much broader spectrum," Chattaway asserts.

Pacheco is aware that his music is filtering down through other musicians, and becoming influential. "I was very thrilled," he says ingenuously. "There were a lot of studio guys, American musicians, who told me they went to see us at the Garden because they dug the music. To see that kind of thing happening!

"There are lots of [non-Latin] guys who come to see the band just to watch. Then you see them when we get off the bandstand, they get on the conga and imitate what they've seen. There are some good guys around—who have all the records, and they try to learn Latin percussion by playing along with the records. Some of these guys who can play are working with Latin bands. And there are a lot of horn players now, who aren't Latin, playing with Latin bands."

Pacheco and most of the other Fania musicians learned their music directly from their predecessors.

"I started playing when I came to the States; I was 11," Pacheco relates. "I picked up the music from records and from musicians around me, especially in my family. My father was a musician, a wind man, he played alto sax and woodwinds, and my uncle was a trumpet player, who started one of the first bands in Santo Domingo, called Santa Cecilia. My flute playing comes from my father.

"I have a black ebony flute, a five key flute which is very antique and was made only in France, though I think in Germany they play it, too. It's played with the Meyer fingering system.

"A lot of our music is traditional. When we get the rhythm thing together, the only thing we put down is the rhythmic base, then we let the rhythm players do their own thing. Of course, there's a new generation of arrangers coming up, guys who have grown up listening to jazz, to rock, and the change is incredible. So far, it's better—they write 9th chords, and use different licks, and sometimes we blend in island things, like the *meringe* from Santo Domingo, the *bomba* from Puerto Rico; we might even add Mexican licks. So we have changed the sound, and that's why everybody digs it—because they can identify with some part of it."

The upcoming arrangers include Ramirez, a lead trumpet player named Enrico Frise, pianist Lucca, bassist Valentin, and Sonny Bravo, pianist of Tipica '73. Fania also keeps up with the rising young players; Masucci regards bassist Sal Queras, newly added to the All-Stars, highly.

Masucci doubts deep roots are essential in the makeup of budding All-Stars.

"Sometimes they're not even known, you know," he admits. "They come up with the right kind of sound and we have the experience and producers to work with them. And sometimes they're playing out there, and are well known on the dance circuit but without a record. Then we try to sign them. There's no set formula, and you never know; you just have to use your taste and hope you're right."

Nor is age a factor. Nicky Marrero is only 27, but has been on the salsa scene for 12 years.

"My uncle had a band, my brother plays guitar and bass a little, and I started playing professionally when I was 15," Marrero says. "I learned percussion on my own. I got a set of timbales, practiced with tapes and records, and got into the congas, bongos, and traps afterwards." He's reinvesting his learning by teaching, along with Sonny Bravo, "Latin rhythm, theory, the whole works" at the East Harlem Free School Of Music, a program administered by Latin musician Johnny Colon.

"I've worked with every one of the All-Stars in the recording studio and on club dates. We in the All-Stars have good communication; everybody works together, nobody gets in anyone's way. As for Tipica '73, I've been with them three years. We met in New York. I had been working with so many different bands, and was looking for a good position. The whole band is cooperative, the charts are out of sight, and being a member of it is the best thing that's happened to me so far."

Marrero has contributed his own ideas to salsa percussion.

"The standard setup in orchestras is rhythm bell, cha cha bell, cymbal and timbales," he notes. "What I and others have done is add a bass drum, snare, tom, and maybe a hi hat."

Nicky plays standing up and he's a performer to watch. At the Garden he dressed in red boxing colors, with "Champ" stitched across the back of his dressing gown and gloves hanging from his waist. The climax of the show was the "surprise" appearance of Tito Puente, long regarded as Latin jazz's top timbales player—Tito and Marrero engaged in a furious timbales duel, and ended in a draw.

"Wearing colors was friendly agitation, like in a cock fight," Marrero laughs. "We weren't fighting it out; on the contrary, there's a lot of love between us." Love perhaps borne of respect for a tradition, as Marrero avows, "We play folkloric rhythms; I've learned them by talking to the veterans to get the correct way of doing things. I get around, and personality-wise, I get along with all of them."

The sound of a music rooted in a folk culture generally evolves slowly, through the culture's absorption of individual variations, like Marrero's expanded timbales kit. Musicians such as Pacheco, a synthesizer with roots deep in tradition but an ear for the future, may be catalysts of development. But the pressure of the marketplace is speeding change at Fania.

"The music has become much hipper," claims Masucci, who shares a composer credit on *Juan Pachanga* from the *Rhythm Machine* album. "More musical, more intricate, heavier arrangements. New experiments, you know? Actually, that's what the All-Stars albums on Columbia have been; on each album we try to experiment with mixing different sounds and we also keep a few tunes with our basic roots. Everything is about trying to keep roots and branch out at the same time. And every album we've put out on Columbia has doubled sales

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# MAX ROACH

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## *There's No Stoppin' The Professor From Boppin'*

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By BRET PRIMACK

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“I remember when I was 15 or 16, I used to work Coney Island sideshows. I worked a place called Darktown Follies and we would literally play 18 shows a day. Can you imagine that? And I loved it! I had all that energy. We'd be on stage half an hour and off half an hour. On the weekends, at Coney Island, we'd start at ten o'clock in the morning and we'd go 'til four or five o'clock the next morning. Then you'd get off and look for someplace to jam. When I got out of high school, before I went to Manhattan, I started getting a little reputation. The war was on so guys like the Shadow Wilsons and the Jo Joneses, they were in the Army. I could read music because I worked hard at it. And so I had a lot of gigs. . . .

“Cecil Payne and I grew up together. I was at a place playing one night, I must have been 16 or 17 and he came running in the club, taking out his horn. He said, 'Man, I knew that was you playing on the drums when I heard you down the street. I could hear it from the corner.' That's when I realized I was doing something that was unique to me. . . . Dizzy heard it because when he was with Cab and I'd go to Minton's, I put my mother's eyebrow pencil above my lip so I could get in and jam. I was really underage. Dizzy heard me there and he said, 'When I get my own band, I'm going to use you.' Dizzy knew that Bird and Bud and Oscar and them were doing something like he was doing which was a departure from what Roy and Junior Raglin and Benny Carter and Teddy Wilson and them were doing at that time. Dizzy was more or less the catalyst for that period. And then of course there was Monk; around at that particular time, he was going away from Teddy Wilson 'cause Teddy and Tatum were dominant forces. And Roy Eldridge and Henry Red Allen and these folks. Drummers were like Big Sid and that crowd. Chick Webb.

“We just wanted to be ourselves musically. I can't remember having any static from anyone. I worked with Louis Jordan, with Duke Ellington, and I worked with Coleman Hawkins and Charles Shavers, everybody. Lester. You know musicianship is trying to deal with the situation at hand. And Dizzy's group was particularly rewarding with Bird and all of us in it, because now we had a chance to express what we felt. Dizzy gave everybody that kind of freedom. It wasn't locked in like okay, you

20 □ down beat



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play this arrangement and this arrangement to the letter. Just play. It had a lot to do with the times. An amazing amount of instrumental virtuosity came out of that period."

And Brooklyn-born Maxwell Roach has been influencing drummers all over the planet, ever since.

He remembers recording with Bird: "He'd write one part, the trumpet part, with these funny rhythms and unusual ways of doing things. That was his mark. He really wrote different kinds of melodies. His whole thing was like that. So he wrote the trumpet part and he'd transpose his part from the trumpet part and he'd tell the changes to the pianist and the bassist. He'd look over at me and I'd say, 'Well, what am I supposed to do?' He'd say, 'Oh, you know what to do.' He never really told me anything. I guess he wanted me to think for myself."

Since the '50s, Roach has led his own groups and a list of his sidemen reads like a *Who's Who*: Clifford Brown, Sonny Rollins, Booker Little, Freddie Hubbard, Stanley Turrentine, Clifford Jordan and on up to his current quartet, which features trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater, tenor man Billy Harper and either Calvin Hill or Reggie Workman on bass.

Since '71, Professor Max Roach has been teaching at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where he was instrumental in establishing a jazz major in the music department.

Before leaving on a four-month tour that would take him to Japan, Europe and all across this country, Roach consented to an interview.

**Primack:** Max, please tell us why we haven't seen a new release from you in sometime.

**Roach:** You know, a funny thing happened. During '71, we were coming out of the '60s with all that turmoil. I was involved in it, from an abstract point of view, as much as you can become involved with an art form like music. You title your tunes and hope the music will reflect the feeling. Anyway, they kind of included me in that whole movement. I was caught up in it, and my fever for it was just as enthusiastic about everything as everybody else's was. But during the early '70s, I was called into Atlantic and it was suggested to me that I do some material that was familiar to the world, for sales.

It was suggested in such a subtle way. Nesuhi Ertegun said, "Max, we've been knowing each other for years and you should really be rich." He's already rich, of course, which is great 'cause he worked for it. I remember those guys hauling records up and down five flights of stairs years ago, during the '40s. So I said, "Yeah, I couldn't agree more, but how do I go about it, Nesuhi?" And he proceeds to tell me that you piggyback, coattail on different songs, basically you do familiar material. So I went home and called him and said, "Well, I'll do Negro spirituals, which is familiar material." Of course, I missed the boat. That was the last record I did for them.

During that time was the beginning of fusion and crossover, the styles that prevail today. When I read Clive Davis' book, Miles was asked to do the same thing. At that same time, Nixon was in office. And at the same time, we started getting films like *Jaws*. It was almost like a diversionary tactic to change the thought systems. And it worked! Everybody began to dance, everybody began to fantasize. They left reality totally. But you know, you become paranoid when you're just an ordinary citizen after a while. You wonder if it's in your

interest that rock people have overpriced themselves. You wonder if it's in the interest of record companies to look for other sources because we buy what they tell us to buy. We consume. We're conditioned, I mean well-conditioned consumers. That's how I happened to go to see *Jaws*. I saw all this fantastic publicity until I just went to see it. I was sold and went in and stayed 15 minutes and then I had to leave. I couldn't believe it, that I had gotten duped like that. For me personally, there was nothing I could take home, use in my everyday life. It was totally escape. What do I want to escape for? I love this life!

At the same time, I got several calls about teaching. That's when black students were demanding that universities hire black faculty. So I got in on that wave and took a job at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. And at the same time, everybody was asked to cross over. It's amazing how this thing affected younger people. To me it was like a conspiracy. I don't know how, but everybody went towards that. What was frightening about it was that all you could hear was in this one dimension, totally. Then the disco thing came in, and that's where we are today. You know, it may be easing up a bit.

But I did not record up until two years ago. I had been going on tours to Europe, because work was very scarce in that period for guys, so-called straightahead musicians, purists, whatever that means. But the European public still had a taste for it. So during my summer breaks and winter breaks and sometimes even during the semester, I'd go to Europe. And in '76, I was in Europe during the fall when Mao died. Archie Shepp's group was there, Mingus was there, and I was there with my group, with Cecil and Billy and Reggie. After the tour was over, the young Italian Communist Party asked us if we would do something. While we were negotiating that, Mao died. Mingus backed out because he had just signed a heavy contract with Atlantic, so he said he couldn't do it. But the young Italian Communist Party asked would we do something.

So I wrote a suite, two in fact, just for duet, for Shepp and myself. We did it at a concert in Rome, which was supposed to reflect what we felt about the death of Mao. As an extra piece, I did a South African thing, *South Africa '76*. Anyhow, the French Socialist Party was there, and they asked us to fly to Paris and record it in the next couple of days, which is what we did. It came out on a double album called *Force*.

So I started recording again, quite by accident. In 1977, the Cos Academy of Arts and Letters gave the album the Grand Prix International Du Disque. Now the way the Socialists did it was like this. They said all they wanted was for the music to make a statement for the party, that's Mittern's party. They wanted it for France and you can take the masters and do whatever you will. The Japanese immediately bought it.

Then I pulled out some of the older tapes I have, like the Clifford Brown, a tape of our last jam session in Chicago, and the Japanese took that. Then I'd been working with M'Boom Re. We went to Europe in '74 and did a festival. We took the radio tape from that with us, and I submitted that to Japan, and they took that. And so I've been recording, and the stuff has all been released. Actually, Japan has been the major market. From '76 until now, I've done about ten albums, but none of them are available in the states—with my quartet, with M'Boom Re, solo albums,

I've just done a thing with Dollar Brand, a duo album that was leased immediately to Japan. But I'm still waiting to find a distributor for the rest of the world, so to speak.

**Primack:** Have you negotiated with any American companies?

**Roach:** Only with Columbia. See, I own the *Freedom Now Suite* and when Columbia got a wind of the Clifford Brown tape, *Raw Genius*, out in Japan as a double album, they wanted that. They also wanted to re-release the *Freedom Now Suite* on their masters series and I have just consummated a deal for that on a lease arrangement. And that's the first thing I'll have out here since '71, since *Lift Every Voice* for Atlantic.

**Primack:** But have they expressed any interest in your quartet?

**Roach:** It's funny. No. The thing with Archie, no. The quartet? You see, Columbia is overloaded. Phonogram, they can't even hear that straightahead thing, so to speak. I haven't said anything to Atlantic. I'm optimistic, though. I have tapes of all my groups that are well done. Eight-track tapes, where I had Freddie Hubbard, Clifford Jordan, James Spaulding, Booker Little, all my groups. I have a stockroom of all that stuff.

I did play some of that stuff for Columbia. They have perhaps the largest roster of jazz musicians of any company in the world. They've got just about everybody. I don't get a negative thing from them. In fact, I'm not interested in signing with a company on those terms ever again, you know that perpetuity and all that stuff. I'd rather lease the material, produce it myself and lease it. When you do that, Columbia can be your distributor for a certain percentage of your sales and I think I can arrange a deal like that, which is what I'd rather do with a company that gives me an honest count and I just stand all the production costs, because that's what it's amounting to now.

So I guess some things will be coming out soon with Columbia. We talked about it and my relationship with them would be as producer/artist, not as a signed artist who is the owner of the material for perpetuity and all the other little things that guys do sign with companies for. I've just about had my fill of that.

**Primack:** What's your position at the University of Massachusetts?

**Roach:** A full professor. Many years ago, I had gone to Manhattan School of Music and gotten a B.A. in music but I never had to use it because I was making a living playing on 52nd Street and on up. My major was theory, not percussion. I sent myself to school by working on 52nd Street, playing drums, so I never had to utilize my degree. I got a little reputation in the jazz world for being a drummer, which I'm grateful for.

So I never had to go to teaching until '71, when things really got tight. In any case, it's all part of the conspiracy. You know, culture deals with thought systems and the way we think. Culture is the ultimate weapon. After you send in the Army, it's a lot less expensive to impose your way of thinking and then the people will govern themselves like you want them to. Culture is a device used for that. So when they turned the students and the people around, with the culture, with the media, with the music, everything, that's why I thought it was a conspiracy. But whether or not, I was happy to get up into the university. I went in there and because the university was looking for people, it meant that I could ask for what I

thought I should get, which was a full university professorship. So I didn't have to go through the regular channels, in a sense. There was a lot of resentment in the department because of that.

After I got involved, well it's like anything else, you really become involved with the students and the whole university and with the politics of the university. For example, we fought to have a jazz major in the music department. That struggled its way into the personnel committee itself, the whole department has to vote on something like that. It reminded me of black folks moving into a white neighborhood. You're ruining the neighborhood, you know! And it's American music. My defense for that was that they were unpatriotic. I said, "You know, it's damn unpatriotic for us as Americans not to deal with something that's home grown."

Our music reflects the democratic way more than anything else. You know, a guy introduces a thing, and we all get a chance to say something about it, get a chance to make something, and that's what democracy is all about. Our music is a reflection of that. Whereas the music they insisted on is imperialistic because there are only two people who govern it, the composer and the conductor and everybody else is like a serf or a peon. But anyway, we have a jazz major now! We won the fight with the help of a lot of people and some of these people lost their jobs, it was really kind of brutal. Having a jazz major there was worth the six years I spent at the university. Of course, now I'm on leave and teaching on a part time basis, one semester per year, and that's the spring semester. I do eight contacts during the spring semester. That's the arrangement we have. I do a lot of traveling. I get paid according to the hours I put in.

**Primack:** What courses did you teach?

**Roach:** I taught history, theory, composition, orchestra, conducting, small band, large band. I taught no percussion at all. They had a very fine percussion teacher there. I did go to Africa. I got a grant from the university and spent one summer in Africa for a course I proposed called History Of African Music And Musicians, and I did a lot of research over there. I brought back a lot of material and taught a course in that particular subject. The university bought some wonderful instruments for that course. We had an African drum choir, with the balafons and the whole thing. My ordinary schedule was so crowded I just couldn't continue the course. But it was an interesting thing. I had to teach the course out of the Black Studies Department. It was an extra thing for me because I was not in Black Studies, but they were interested in me going over there to prepare for the course. But it was too much. I was overloaded. I didn't have a minute to myself. It was like working eight days a week, 25 hours a day. So I had to get that up. But I got a lot of it personally.

Now I'm back out here because I'm basically a performer, that's what I've done all my life. We've been doing quite well. Since I left the university, which was the fall of '76 when I took my leave after we got the jazz major established, we've been going pretty good ever since. We've been to Japan, Europe any number of times, and now we've begun to work in the States. Prior to that, we were working mainly in Europe, every place but home. But we're beginning to work here now.

**Primack:** How have American audiences been responding?

**Roach:** It's good. If the Village Vanguard



**"Our music reflects the democratic way more than anything else. You know, a guy introduces a thing, and we all get a chance to say something about it, get a chance to make it something. And that's what democracy is all about."**

and Storyville are any indication, the Keystone Korner in San Francisco, the Showcase in Chicago, Sandy's in Boston and Blues Alley in Washington D.C., we're doing pretty good. The crowds have been there and the response has been just tremendous. It has a lot to do with the fact that they're exceptional players. Billy and Cecil and either Calvin or Reggie. So it's been good and I'm happy about that.

You're always happy that it's at home, 'cause traveling isn't easy. You're away from your family quite a bit and besides, going from place to place night after night, it's a grind. I don't know how these athletes do it, these basketball players. They've got to be iron men to play like that and go from city to city every night. It's just unbelievable. Other than that, everything seems to be looking pretty good. As soon as we can get an audience in the USA, we can feel at ease. So the quartet is doing nicely.

**Primack:** Have you been doing any work lately with M'Boom Re?

**Roach:** No, lately I've been dealing with the quartet primarily. But we're going to start rehearsing because we're producing another album in a studio setting. We did three festivals in Europe in '74, one in France, one in Belgium and one in Holland and we brought back masters to these performances and they were released in Japan.

**Primack:** How did M'Boom Re come about?

**Roach:** Well, I just had an idea for a percussion ensemble that was within the continuum that our music expresses in this country. It comes out of this kind of wellspring of ideas, swinging and meaningful, like Basie and Duke. Just a percussion ensemble that reflects what Bird and Trane, what we've all done. So the first thing was, I knew there were a lot of good players on the instruments but didn't know how many were good players on mallets. So that's when I narrowed it down and got the personnel. They had to be mallet players as well as arrangers and composers. That made it easy.

Then we made it into a cooperative, so I could keep the same personnel constantly,

year after year after year. We've been together since 1972, Warren Smith, Freddie Waits, Joe Chambers, Omar Clay, Roy Brooks and we use Ray Mantilla on congas. But we haven't done too much. Warren Smith teaches of course, he's involved in a lot of Broadway things. Most of the guys are real busy.

It wasn't a group that was formed so that we could make a living off of it. Everybody had to be able to support themselves outside of this group. This group was going to take its time and evolve as naturally as possible because we knew where we wanted to go with the group and the problems we were faced with, that it would take time, the fact that all the people were going here and there with other groups and their own groups. So we had to rehearse when everybody was in the same place at the same time, which wasn't that often. But the group developed nicely and it's continuing to develop nicely. What we're planning now is to go into a studio and record the group with as much separation as possible so you can hear all the subtle things we're using, all kinds of bells and all the other things. I'm very interested in developing the instrument itself, the jazz drum kit into the kind of instrument that has the same qualities as the solo guitar or solo piano. I believe the instrument is capable of doing that.

**Primack:** Any advice for young drummers trying to develop their own sound and approach?

**Roach:** The first thing I think they should do is not to think that they know everything. If they start out thinking that they know everything, they're going to lose. That's the first step—to develop the kind of humility that allows them to absorb. The second step is don't be discriminating at all. Play in any situation because what you're after is the sound of that instrument in your every fiber.

I played in marching bands when I grew up. Anything that wanted a drummer I would deal with. Rhythm and blues, Louis Jordan, anything that I could just touch the instrument and deal with it in any situation. I played shows for fire dancers, symphony orchestras, they had neighborhood symphony orchestras

# JACK DeJOHNETTE

## SOUTH SIDE TO WOODSTOCK

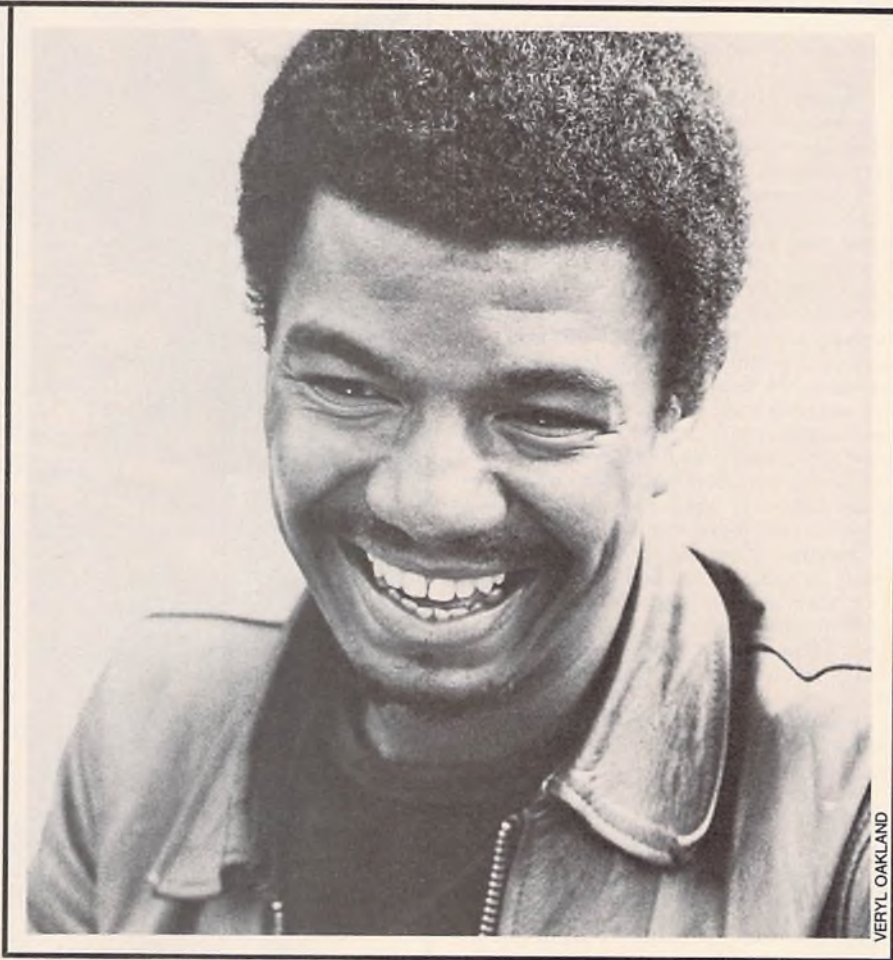
By CHIP STERN

Jack DeJohnette is possibly the most vital drummer in jazz today. Since arriving in Manhattan in 1966, DeJohnette has been in great demand for club work, concerts and recording sessions. He brings a keyboardist's sensitivity to the drums, making him an ideal accompanist, explosive yet restrained. As his many recordings demonstrate, DeJohnette has the ability to blend perfectly into any ensemble, yet still provide an aggressive, percussive spark that ignites soloists. "I play against people," DeJohnette says. "Not busy, just pushy and strong. I like to challenge players; play with them and against them. It depends on the particular piece. Sometimes if I feel a piece is too stiff I'll inject some fire into it so that it'll loosen up and the players will get the spirit."

The spirit that DeJohnette draws from encompasses a broad scope of musical idioms, and the entire spectrum of drum stylisms. In jazz there have been two schools of drumming in every era of the music. The Mr. Inside drummer tends to play right on top of the beat, pushing the music forward. The Mr. Outside drummer tends to lag behind the beat, letting the music achieve momentum, then plays catch-up with drum accents around the kit. "What Jack DeJohnette amounts to, as an individual, is a synthesizer of drumstyles," says Jack. "That's basically what I'm about. I mean, I just try and bridge that thing of the inside-outside concept."

The music of Jack DeJohnette's *Directions* is a sum total of all the different styles DeJohnette has played: free-form, bebop, standards, blues, classical and rock. To call his music fusion is to do it a disservice, because instead of uniting the duller forms of music in search of a trendy formula, *Directions* employs any and all forms in search of communal spontaneity. DeJohnette compositions like *Last Chance Stomp* and *New Rags* create a historical continuity between musical eras and forms—the only common denominator is the hipness of the music. DeJohnette's music reflects the tumult and frenzy of urban existence, but it also contains elements of sylvan tranquility—what is often referred to as the "ECM sound." How have two such divergent sensibilities managed to prosper side by side in one musician? Are these sensibilities, in fact, the opposites people believe them to be? In search of answers to these and other questions, I went to see Jack DeJohnette and his family at their home in Willow, N.Y., just outside of Woodstock.

When I arrived at DeJohnette's mountain-side home, he was eager for me to hear two unreleased ECM albums, his own *New Directions*, with Eddie Gomez, John Abercrombie and Lester Bowie, and *Nice Guys From Chicago*, by the Art Ensemble of Chicago. Both



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albums are exploratory, energetic and humorous, and "are going to put a stop to that talk about how ECM doesn't swing," DeJohnette said. The clarity and creative latitude on both albums were impressive, and I asked how Jack had become associated with ECM's principal, Manfred Eicher.

"I heard about Manfred through Keith Jarrett and a couple of other people who started working with him," he answered. "The word got around that there was this cat from Germany who was really into the music and the sound of the instruments; he'd come to a recording session and bring his own microphones. I met Manfred Eicher in 1972 when I was touring Europe with the CTI Festival.

"Manfred said he had been listening to the Charles Lloyd Quartet, and Miles' groups, and he expressed an interest in recording those musicians and doing some things that hadn't been done before. The first date I did for ECM was *Ruta And Dairy* which was produced by Keith and I, and Manfred. Then there was John Abercrombie's *Timeless*.

"Then I started to do a lot of sessions, and

each time we worked together the association got closer and closer. A situation developed of respect and understanding over the past five years. Our concepts are similar. He knows that I have a very broad perspective on music, so that I can be utilized in a variety of situations besides being the leader of a date. I really enjoy working with Manfred. The past year has been a particular pleasure for me, and things are looking very exciting for the company. As far as the music is concerned it's been a development. The main thing is to try and keep the music clear, even though it's complex.

"Manfred and I have what you could call a close relationship. We understand and respect each other. He was very supportive in getting this particular group of musicians together for the *New Directions* album, which means a lot to me, because this is the best band I've ever had. Anything I want to try, usually we can work something out; there are differences of opinion, but we can discuss them. We argue too; we have fights but that's part of a relationship. Most of the time from the arguments

the concepts come closer. We can better appreciate each other's needs, and what is required in a particular situation."

Manfred Eicher's records have such an identifiable sound that he has been open to a lot of criticism about his concept. Is Manfred aware of what people say about him?

"Manfred is very aware of the label that's been put to his label," DeJohnette explained. "He says 'So a lot of the music is pretty, and maybe some of it is the same. But I enjoyed the period of making that music. I'm not sorry I recorded any of those albums. If someone doesn't like the music they can do it their way on their labels. Instead of complaining, put forth your own alternatives as to what's happening.'

"Manfred works with musicians and personalities who can somehow jell with him and make a working situation. I consider myself very fortunate to be working on such a label and with some great musicians. Aspects of ECM are very positive in terms of the records being made available and sound quality. The records are very clear, maybe too clear for some people's ears, but at least if the music is there you hear it all. People were always complaining about not hearing the drums or not hearing the definition of the bass. Manfred has taken the trouble so that you can hear it all, and people should be appreciative in that sense whether they like the label or not. At least you can hear what the ideas and intentions really were. Some criticisms bring up my group as the only example of a funky group on the label, but I mean, that doesn't matter—it's all personal. What matters is how artists feel about their record, and how people who like such music are able to get to it. Manfred expects the criticism he gets, but he knows what he is doing, and his dedication to what he's doing isn't lessened by what people have to say."

How does Manfred compare as a businessman-impresario to other people DeJohnette has worked with?

"Manfred's different because he's not an American, first of all. He doesn't have an American concept of business. He has a European viewpoint integrated with the Afro-American concept of jazz, and the classical and avant garde concepts. Manfred was also a bass player with the Berlin Philharmonic. So you don't deal with a lot of high pressure bullshit like you get with American record companies. It's pressure, but it's relaxed and directed so you don't waste energy. Manfred deals with artists on a one to one basis. It would be nice if such a situation could happen here—a humanistic approach to business—but this country isn't run that way. Everything is monopolized here. That one to one thing with the artist is really nice, because you deal with one person for everything. It makes things very simple.

"Manfred is concerned with making records that the artist can be happy with, not whether or not it sells, although we are aware that the business is to sell records. But the music takes the highest priority, like Dave Holland's solo bass record [*Emerald Tears*] or my album *Pictures*—that was only my second album for ECM and he didn't have to let me do a duet."

On that album there was a beautifully recorded drum solo, *Pictures II*, in which the tom-toms seemed to shift from speaker to speaker. How had they gotten such a clear, open sound?

"It's just a matter of a cat's conception of

ears. It's not something that couldn't be done in another studio. Manfred does a lot of recording in a studio in Oslo, which has a particular room characteristic, and the engineer Jan Erik Kongshaug has incredible ears, but if other people took the time to get the sound right, they could get similar results. Another reason it sounded so good was the drums I use—Sonor.

"Sonor has made a lot of improvements in the construction of a drum. The wood shells are thicker, but more important than that is

again, but not real low. Just enough so that when you hit them you can get that guts feeling where they sound right through the floor. And I never muffle any of my drums. Of course that depends on what type of music you're playing, but if I'm doing a funk date I'll just use a studio set without the bottom heads, maybe taking a bit of the muffle off so that it will ring a little bit instead of being completely dead. But for my set-up I use Remo Ambassador heads, top and bottom, including my bass drum—there's no muffle on that either.



VERYL OAKLAND

the level of craftsmanship they put into the drums—they're beautiful. Sonors have their own distinctive, personal sound and I dig them. I used to use Gretsch, but they tend to be too boomy and ringy for me. Sonors are right in between—you can have them ringy or short. Sonors can be light and heavy at the same time, which corresponds to my particular touch because I can be very light or heavy depending on the situation.

"I used to have my drums tuned way up high; now I'm starting to tune them down

Leaving the bass drum open is nothing new; Roy Haynes has been doing it for years; Kenny Clarke too. That way the bass drum rings—it has some tone. A lot of people hear a bass drum ringing and they say they never knew a bass drum could sound like that—but that's the characteristic of the drum. And I just love that sound."

As a listener to any of DeJohnette's recordings will show, he is an aggressive, forward-rushing drummer. More than just an accompanist, he is an equal solo voice in the ensemble.



The most distinctive aspect of the Jack DeJohnette sound is his luminous use of cymbal color and tonality. Once in a *Village Voice* piece I observed that DeJohnette played the drum like a piano, the drums and cymbals being analogous to the left and right handed functions on the piano. Was that a far-fetched comparison?

"No. That's exactly the way I hear them. To me cymbals are the bridge to the drum set—they connect it up. Cymbals are like the thumb to the piano: the way you use the thumb when you're making an arpeggio run up the piano, that's the way I hear my cymbals in relation to the drum set. Cymbals sustain—they hold so you can do something else. *They are pedal tones*, and in the overtones of the cymbals are orchestra sounds, orchestra intervals. When I hear a cymbal I hear thousands of tones and microtones.

"About five years ago I switched to Paiste cymbals, which are the greatest cymbals going—they are the Rolls Royce of cymbals. Any sound I could conceive, they could achieve. Paiste cymbals have an amazingly pure tonality; you can really define a distinct pitch with them, not just clang-clang, crash-crash. When I started playing Paistes I began hearing pitches and overtones I'd never heard before in any cymbal.

"Robert Paiste is a European, so he's really into the *art* of his cymbals. Paiste is always changing and improving their stuff every year, and coming up with hip new sounds, like the new Dark Ride series which is an improvement on the original K. Zildjian sound. The

are thicker and more durable, and the cymbals are consistent too—they sound better with age, and they don't just go dead on you."

On his right DeJohnette starts with a 22" Formula 602 Dark Ride: a penetrating ping sound, full bell tone, deep undertones and a high, clear crash: next is a 20" Formula 602 Flat Ride: this cymbal has no bell, and as a result it has a dry, defined stick tone with a minimum of overtone buildup—it is a perfect trio cymbal, giving pinpoint ride definition without getting in the way of the other instruments; finally, on the right, there is a 20" Formula 2002 China Cymbal: a very funky crash with a hollow, gong-like character. In the middle DeJohnette uses a 16" Formula 2002 Medium: a bright penetrating crash with surprising ride definition. On his left is a 22" Dark Cymbal: a deep resonant crash with a hollow, a fast decay time and a burnished Oriental tone color. A pair of 14" Dark Sound Edge Hi-Hats completes the set-up. "These are the finest pair of hi hats I've ever used," said DeJohnette. "They're extra-heavy, but you have so much flexibility it's unbelievable; you get a real nice Jo Jones whoosh sound. And the bottom has the Paiste Sound Edge, which is a specially rippled cymbal that guarantees a nice bright chip sound whenever you bring the cymbals together with your foot pedal—Sound Edge's never choke." I noodled a bit with the hi hats and was struck by the diamond sharp clarity. Then DeJohnette took the sticks and his hands became a blur of controlled motion. Sounds I couldn't even imagine rushed forth from the hand-hammered

any categories for things."

When DeJohnette was four, his mother and grandmother decided it would be a good idea for him to start studying piano, so he began working on classical piano. His first teacher was Antoinette Rich, who at that time led an all-girl symphony orchestra in Chicago. "My next teacher was Viola Burns, who graduated from the American Conservatory. I stayed with her about ten years. I did Bach and the usual repertoire—Rachmaninoff, Chopin. It wasn't until I was older that I got into Ravel. I really liked Ravel." Ever the multi-instrumentalist, DeJohnette was also a proficient kazoo player. One time he put on a performance for Antoinette Rich, who noticed he had perfect pitch. When he was five he was on stage blowing hot kazoo with T-Bone Walker at the Persian, a jazz club in Chicago. "I used to listen to the records and copy the saxophone or trumpet solos on my kazoo, note for note. I was playing piano then too, but I never thought it would be my life. I had been playing for a while when I lost interest in music. I got interested in other things. I got interested in girls.

"It wasn't until I heard Fats Domino play *Blueberry Hill* that I got back into the piano again, by way of rock and roll. So I used to play all the '50s hits on the piano, because they were all simple chords with similar cadences. I was going to CVS High School, which was on the South Side, and I was in the high school band. The first year I played acoustic bass. I played left-handed without reversing the strings because it felt good that

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***"You're not thinking five stroke roll or whatever, you're going for the sound . . . It has to be like automatic pilot so that your technique and emotions come together in that one instant."***

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Darks are a combination of the dark and high pitched sound in one cymbal, which is a very difficult combination to get. I've gone to the factory and we've talked about the sound of cymbals.

"I keep working on things with Freddie Studer and Robert Paiste, because they work on feedback from musicians so that they can keep perfecting every aspect of all their lines of cymbals. Working with Robert Paiste is just like working with Manfred—it's a whole relationship. *It's built*, so it's not like here today, gone tomorrow. They both build upon a foundation of trust and commitment to total quality. In that way, when it hits, it's there—it stays at a level of quality, instead of going downhill."

DeJohnette took me down to his basement to illustrate some points about his favored cymbals. "Paiste has got three professional series of cymbals: the Formula 602, Formula 2002, and the new Dark series. There's been a progression of quality in each series so that the drummer has a choice of whatever sound he's hearing. What developed was that the jazz drummer wanted something a little bit darker and heavier, and the rock drummer wanted something a little higher and thinner; so you end up with cymbals that go in opposite directions or that share certain characteristics. Paiste's are very delicate cymbals if you want that sound: if you want to be brash, they've got that too. When Paiste first came out they had a problem with their cymbals cracking all the time, because to get the sound they wanted, they built them very thin—but they've overcome that problem now. All of the cymbals

brass . . . whooshes of air released from within . . . Jo Jones ting ting-a-ding . . . distant church bells . . . eerie confluences of overtones like Caribbean steel bands . . .

I was becoming lost in the infinite nuances of DeJohnette's art, a world-wide symphony of musical and cultural references from just one set of hi hats.

\* \* \* \* \*

For Jack DeJohnette, the musical journey began in Chicago, Illinois. Among his earliest recollections is the almost mystical attraction of music.

"I got into music by listening to these old jazz records that my uncle had. The old Okeh National Records: Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey; Duke Ellington; Billie Holiday. My uncle was into jazz and he had all of the old 78s. Roy Woods is his name, and he was a jazz DJ, every type of DJ, and now he's a vice president of the Black Network of Broadcasters. Through him, indirectly, I got involved in music. I used to be able to play these records on the old Victrola. I couldn't even read—I was about three or four at the time—but I could tell what record I wanted to hear by the label, and by the distance from the end of the record to the label. You know, when I listened to Louis Armstrong, Charlie Parker, Lester Young and Billie Holiday, I didn't know how important they were. I just loved music. At the same time I used to listen to classical music on the short wave radio—we had a radio that picked up Europe, and things like that. So I listened to country music, blues and jazz without any opinions about what the music was at that time. I just loved music, and I didn't have

way. After that I switched to concert drums. That was my first thing with the drums.

"Meanwhile, I was playing piano again and there was this cat named Red Smith, who played alto and he was really into Charlie Parker. And one day he said to me, 'Hey, man, ain't you heard Bird?' And I had, but that was when I was a kid, so I'd forgotten. So he took me over to his house, played me some Charlie Parker records, and that sort of helped me get back into jazz. Later we won a high school combo contest and went on TV. We played *September Song* and something by Bird.

"About that time I got into the drums very seriously. One day I heard Ahmad Jamal at the Persian, and I heard Vernell Fournier on drums. His brush work was so incredible—I mean just impeccable. If they reissue those sessions, you can hear that Ahmad's always been his own man—way ahead of his time in terms of using space and chord voicings, which is one of the reasons Miles liked him so much. Ahmad knew how to get the most out of his instrument, so that a piano trio sounded like a symphony orchestra. He's a great organizer, and his concept is so sophisticated and intelligent, yet so loose and funky. And that band at the Persian was one of his best groups. I was playing in a combo at that time with a cat named Johnny, who was into fixing souped-up cars. He had an old set of drums with sequins and things that he'd fixed up himself and left in my basement for a very long time. So I went out and bought a set of brushes after I heard Vernell Fournier, and I started to fool around with those drums.

"After I'd been playing drums for a while I

went all the way back and checked out the African aspect, and masters like Jo Jones, Sid Catlett, Cozy Cole, Ike Day, and Zutty Singleton. The next thing I heard after Fournier that really knocked me out was the Clifford Brown/Max Roach group, which for that time was a dynamite group—*still is*. I still listen to their records today: things like *Daahoud* and *Love Is A Many Splendored Thing*—they were really incredible compositions the way they were set up.

"And everything about Max. The way he comped; the way Max punctuated made things very clear. His use of bass drum: the concept of using the bass drum as another interval drum, instead of keeping loud, steady 4/4 time on it. The way he tuned his drums. The way he utilized the melody and changes in his solos—I mean you can sing his solos [DeJohnette does].

"Max's tempos were incredible too, and he was always so relaxed and set real good. The total music was always together. He picked good musicians, and was a hell of a composer—*still is*. Max composed suites that he performed with symphony orchestras. It's amazing, when you consider how much he's done, that he hasn't received more recognition. But thankfully he's back out playing again, and I think he's really happier now that he's not just teaching. Max Roach isn't just a drummer—he's a complete musician.

"All of the great drummers, like Philly Joe and Art Blakey, play piano; they have some knowledge about chords and composition. So now you have players like Billy Cobham, Alphonse Mouzon, and Tony Williams who have an understanding about how music is constructed. It doesn't necessarily make you a better musician or drummer, but sometimes it does.

"Some of the other drummers who had an effect on me at the beginning were Philly Joe Jones, Art Blakey, and Roy Haynes. I really got into Miles' music, and Philly Joe was making it happen. Philly was like the acrobatic dancer of the rudiments. He took rudiments and made 'em swing. On the *Cosmic Chicken* album, on *Last Chance Stomp*, there's a section where the music is progressing through the different eras. There's something in there when I change the recording sound to the modern era—the bop section—and the solo that I play is a dance that is a tribute to Philly.

"Art Blakey had that press roll down. Even today, a lot of younger drummers don't take me to the places where Art does. The way he set that band up, using shading and dynamics, and just swinging and driving that band. Art can hear a composition once and have it down. He once did it at one of my rehearsals. Right after he heard the tune he sat down and played it, and it sounded like he'd been playing it for years. So his ears are ridiculously acute. Just hear the composition once and boom. My ears have developed in that way too. I can read fairly well, but I really rely more on my ear and my heart.

"Roy Haynes is another main cat. Roy was someone I copied just in terms of touch and phrasing. Not licks, but feeling. And I didn't realize how much I'd learned from Jo Jones until the thing you played for me in [a forthcoming] *Blindfold Test*. What's interesting is Jo Jones was down to the Village Vanguard one night when I had Directions there. And Jo was funny, he said 'I'm not appearing tonight. I'm not working anymore. I make guest appearances. I know you—you're Jack DeJohn-

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ette by way of Chicago.' Jo was beautiful.

"So I was playing a solo where I was only using the snare drum—and I was sort of playing for Jo too. I don't know whether Jo dug what I was playing or not, but I had my eyes closed, and you know that big pillar by the bandstand? Well, I was really getting into it, when suddenly I open my eyes and Jo is standing right next to me, looking at me like he was interested in what I was playing. The last time I'd looked up he was standing at the bar, and he'd moved from the bar to the pillar to hear what it was all about. And he never said anything, but that blew me away that *maybe* what I was playing got him up out of his seat to come have a look.

"We are not aware of how many influences, consciously and unconsciously, are in us. Even if you never heard a guy, someone will say, 'You sound just like so and so.' Elvin sounds like the Ashanti drummers. You have ten or 12 drummers, each playing a different rhythm, and they'll come together and play a chorus, then go out again. Elvin plays a lot of things like that, but maybe it's not conscious. It just comes out of something inside you.

"Anyway, back to Chicago. I'd been playing in combos all over Chicago when Pat Patrick introduced me to my first jam session. Pat would come by my house and take me along to a place called the Archway, which used to have sessions on Thursday nights. Pat used to have a nickname for me. He'd say, 'Hey Baby Sweets, what's happening?' So one night I sat in and they were playing a Bb *I Got Rhythm*, and I didn't know the changes, and I got screamed at by E. Parker MacDougal. 'Hey man, don't you know the changes?' I was really embarrassed. So Pat came over to the piano and said, 'Okay, I'm going to come over to your house and teach you some changes.' Pat would show me rhythm changes and things, and was just a great help to me. I started to get my chops together, working on hand exercises, playing just everything I could. I got a fake book and learned all the standards so that I'd be well rounded. I even did a couple of gigs singing, doing doo-wop things. I still sing a little, but it's not my main interest as it is George Benson's.

"At that time you didn't have to come to New York City because there was so much music happening in Chicago. There used to be jams going all the time. Cats would play all night, then there would be a breakfast jam. You'd go home, catch a few hours of sleep, and things would start back up. There were so many great musicians in Chicago—the scene was really happening. There were people like Ira Sullivan, Johnny Griffin, Von Freeman, Gene Ammons, Jody Christian, Muhal Richard Abrams, Wilbur Campbell, James Willis, Scotty Holt, John Gilmore, Sun Ra, Eddie Harris, Charlie Clark, and on and on.

"Scotty Holt was my main man. He was one of the few people who knew me both as a pianist and a drummer. Scotty watched me develop, and inspired me to go to greater places with my creativity than I would have gone. Scotty could not touch his bass for a long time, and still come up with something with technique, fire, and imagination. He was one of the few people I knew who took the attitude that when you played a standard tune you should try and interpret what the song was trying to say spiritually. Like *Stranger In Paradise*—what is that tune saying? Scotty played recently with Woody Shaw on the West Coast, and he told me it almost made him pick up his

bass again and go on the road. I hope he does. He's a real spirit on the instrument—I'd love to play with him again.

"I got my first gig on drums with Eddie Harris. Now Eddie did a psychological trick on me at the time, which I didn't realize then. Eddie told me, 'You know Jack, you play good piano, but man, you're a natural drummer. You play the drums and you'll make a lot of money.' I said I wanted to play both, and he said, 'Okay, but you've got to focus on one.' I made some of his gigs as a piano player, and at the time Harold Jones was his drummer, and he was also teaching at the American Conservatory. He got tied up and couldn't make some gigs, so I rented a set of drums and we went to Philadelphia to play the Showboat—Eddie, Willie Pickens, Joe Diorio, and me. I played a couple of gigs with him, but Eddie wouldn't hire me full-time because I wouldn't play drums all the time.

"I was still making gigs on both instruments, playing with Lucky Carmichael, Paula Greer, and at piano bars on the North Side where you weren't allowed to fraternize with white people. At that point I was very fortunate to have the time to practice six to eight hours a day, regularly. I would get up in the morning and put in three hours or so on the piano, take a break, then put in another four hours on the drums—every day. I'd play with records, then play without: then go out and make as many gigs as I could; listening to guys; watching guys; asking guys questions. I'd practice rudiments on my thigh while watching TV.

"Sun Ra was a big influence in Chicago. Back then, around 1958, Sun Ra would be reading comic books and space magazines and everyone used to think that he was crazy. I used to think he was half and half. But there was something about him—he was honest—and when I had the time I'd always make his rehearsals. I was trying to develop myself as a drummer, and it was a great experience to play with him.

"I did a lot of avant garde gigs in Chicago. At the time I went to Wilson Junior College I met Roscoe Mitchell, and we started playing together. Scotty Holt was playing with Muhal before there even was an AACM. So we started playing, and we brought in Roscoe. Then I met Joseph Jarman, and more and more people began getting together. One time there was a whole AACM Big Band that I played in, and we used to rehearse at Lincoln Center on 39th St. on the South Side. That music was incredible, and the music was always clear.

"One thing about the avant garde in Chicago and the music in New York, was that the music in New York was tenser and more negative. Negative, I suppose, because at that time New York was a really heavy place to live, what with cabaret cards and all that stuff. In Chicago cats hung out with each other, and there was not so much animosity. Cats would get together and share ideas—there was just more of a family feeling around. When we played free music it wasn't just screaming and honking; there was always some kind of form to it. You never had to think about whether something was right or wrong because it always made sense."

Back in the 1960s there was a spirit afoot in America which resulted in much social turmoil, and a heightened humanistic-mystical aspiration began to surface. It was as if no one was satisfied with themselves or society—there was a sense of hope that change could be

# THE REAL TRUTH

## about price & quality.

“ Ironically, in this age of education and sophistication, I've found that many musicians and soundmen have no clear understanding of the various factors affecting the cost of products they buy and use everyday. Too often we try to relate price and quality on a direct or "you get what you pay for" basis without considering the processes involved or the way the manufacturer is structured who produced the product.

It is generally understood that the farmer who grows the wheat and grocer who sells the bread actually receive a small percentage of the total profit on that item. The real costs involve so-called "middlemen" or other production and corporate inefficiencies.

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# RECORD REVIEWS

\*\*\*\*\* EXCELLENT / \*\*\*\* VERY GOOD / \*\*\* GOOD / \*\* FAIR / \* POOR

## SCOTT HAMILTON

SCOTT HAMILTON 2—Concord Jazz CJ 61: *East Of The Sun; There's No Greater Love; Rough Riding; I Want To Be Happy; Everything Happens To Me; Love Me Or Leave Me; Blues For The Players; The Very Thought Of You; It Could Happen To You.*

Personnel: Hamilton, tenor sax; Cal Collins, guitar; Nat Pierce, piano; Monty Budwig, bass; Jake Hanna, drums.

\* \* \* \*

## WARREN VACHE

BLUES WALK—Dreamstreet DR 101: *Blues Walk; A Child Is Born; Squeeze Me; Sissiboo; Blue Bossa; I Remember Clifford; The Walker; I Got It Bad.*

Personnel: Vache, cornet; Scott Hamilton, tenor sax; Bucky Pizzarelli, guitar; John Bunch, piano; Michael Moore, bass; Butch Miles, drums.

\* \* \*

Perhaps the most curious thing about Scott Hamilton is the reaction he's stirred among us writers inclined to favor pre-Coltrane/Coleman jazz styles. From free jazz through rock and into the period of fusion and disco, we have clung stubbornly to the mainstream values of logical harmonics and disciplined linearity. We've insisted on the eternal validity of such masters as Lester Young, Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster, Bird and their direct descendants. And we've blamed the spotty state of contemporary jazz on the indifference of the young comers to the wisdom of our heroes.

Now along comes Scott, who is everything we could hope for in a young player, and we are all admittedly amazed that he was even aware of our heroes and that he should see fit to adopt them as his own. Amazed despite the fact that there are more authentic swing and bop records available to young players today than even during the music's heyday. Perhaps what amazes us most is that anyone would actually listen to us at all, much less a musician of Scott's caliber.

There is a certain luxury in being constantly and massively ignored, as all writers know. While we may become impatient with the way public taste lags behind our own, the last thing we want is for it to actually catch up. We take comfort in the fact that we will never be held accountable for the consequences of the advice we so generously offer to working musicians.

Hamilton is perhaps the most recorded musician in America right now. Quite an achievement after only one year in the studios. He has appeared on at least six LPs on Famous Door, two on Chiaroscuro, one on Dreamstreet and another half dozen or so on Concord, the label of his debut. In any case, now that we've all gotten over being amazed at this most prolific and consistent musician, perhaps we should get down to the real business, reviewing.

This is his second album for Concord as leader, and it's better than his first. Without  
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another horn to share space with, Hamilton is always on top of this one. Nat Pierce's piano is proper and discrete in accompaniment and abounds with Basieisms in solo. Hanna is graceful as he pirouettes about on his high hat.

Aside from Hamilton, the glory goes to Cal Collins here, a superb musician on both acoustic and electric guitar. Although he rarely takes more than a chorus at a time here, his relaxed momentum and contemporary phrasing make him the most interesting new guitarist to reach an LP this year.

This is a gentle album in which ballads and medium tempos dominate. What is lacking is more sheer action and drive. *I Want to Be Happy* smokes from start to finish, especially as Hamilton launches himself into the thick of things with a quote from Lester Young's *Every Tub*. The Basie feel stays, with Collins' excellent rhythm guitar and Pierce's solo which leads into the first of two tension tightening modulations. Hamilton can generate extraordinary power at these paces, but he chooses to stay in low gear most of this trip and just enjoy the pretty scenery. His best album is still ahead of him, which at 24 is a pleasant thought to consider. Hamilton is only the most prominent of the new coterie of young New York based musicians who have suddenly been turning up virtually everywhere on records. Most of them are in evidence on the Warren Vache album—Hamilton again, Mike Moore, John Bunch (who's not so young) and Butch Miles. All but Miles are featured regularly these days with the Benny Goodman Sextet. Goodman, in fact, was the discoverer of Hamilton, Vache, Moore and Cal Collins, not a bad track record in two or three years time.

All the things being said about Scott could also be said of Vache. He's a superb player who's refused to be cut off from the main line of jazz trumpet development. So why aren't they being said? Perhaps because the brass instruments were less affected by the free jazz movement of the '60s than the reeds. The spell of late Coltrane, Shepp, Ayler and others (not to mention electronic gadgetry) threw the saxophone into such a state of anarchy and tonal indecency that the pure tenor sound was virtually eclipsed from a generation of young players. No comparable upheavals occurred among brass players, however. So today Hamilton has the benefit of an extraordinary contrast working for him. Vache tends to blend into a logical continuity.

The only trouble with this otherwise fine album is that it too tends to blend into a steady parade of recent small group sessions, none of which stand out with any kind of assertive individuality. While one can't fault anything specifically here—certainly not Vache, who plays very well—there is never the impulse to stand up and cheer a sudden burst of inspiration or ensemble rapport. There are certainly

flashes the exceptional and sustained moods. Warren plays with a cocky strut on *Squeeze Me* and quick footed clarity on *Sissiboo*. It's a happy, relaxed, tasteful session, warmly lyrical on three ballads. But not a special session.

—mcdonough

## JOHN ABERCROMBIE

CHARACTERS—ECM 1-1117: *Parable; Memoir; Telegram; Backward Glance; Ghost Dance; Paramour; After Thoughts; Evensong.*

\* \* \* \* 1/2

On *Characters*, Abercrombie has created a multi-dimensional sense of atmosphere, a spectrum of guitar sound ranging from the ethereal to the basic. In each of the album's well-crafted cuts, the guitarist has achieved a tightrope balance of multi-tracked string voices that evokes a brooding, mysterious yet strangely uplifting mood.

A major part of Abercrombie's accomplishment here is his successful experimentation with electric guitar sound. His careful, tasteful use of Echoplex on the long opening cadenza of *Parable*, for example, charges the blues scale notes (even some rock and roll licks) with an eerie spatial complexity. The round electric tones on *Telegram* are unified, flowing images of strength. And *Evensong's* coupling of low, organ-like chords with distant, sobbing notes on top helps make it a rich listening experience.

The other side of the performance here is, of course, the acoustic playing, which enhances and interweaves with the electric lines while remaining distinct and balanced. *Backward Glance's* acoustic backdrop has a finger-picked, slightly Brazilian feel while *Memoir*, an all-acoustic piece, is in a dark, minor, folkish mood. *Paramour*, the album's most romantic cut, is an acoustic duet that matches a gentle strummed rhythm with a clear, lyrical lead line. Abercrombie's other resources of acoustic variety include rolling chord strums, lines played in staggered duet, and a judicious use of harmonics.

The compositions are uniformly interesting and evocative, if atmospherically similar. The aptly-named *Ghost Dance*, for one, is marked by a swirling, spectral juxtaposition of tonal colors, divided into sections by a menacing figure that recurs periodically throughout the tune.

Ultimately, *Characters* emerges as a record that is multi-layered as well as multi-tracked. There's a lot to hear—many voices, many shadings. With this album Abercrombie reveals himself as more than a hot picker. He's a shaper of sonic images of great power and beauty.

—schneekloth

## BORAH BERGMAN

BURSTS OF JOY—Chiaroscuro Records CR-158: *Bursts Of Joy Or Circles, Whirls And 8; Three For The Left Hand Alone (1. River Shadows, 2. Oranges, 3. Horizons).*

Personnel: Bergman, solo acoustic piano.

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Borah Bergman is to piano what Ornette Coleman or John Coltrane is to saxophone. Instead of trying to expand his instrument through electro-mechanical means, he has rethought the traditional pianistic approach where the right hand takes the melody and the left hand the chords.

In place of that basic method, Bergman has liberated each hand from its usual functions. Believing each hand to be equal, melodic and chordal materials are just as likely to appear in either treble or bass.

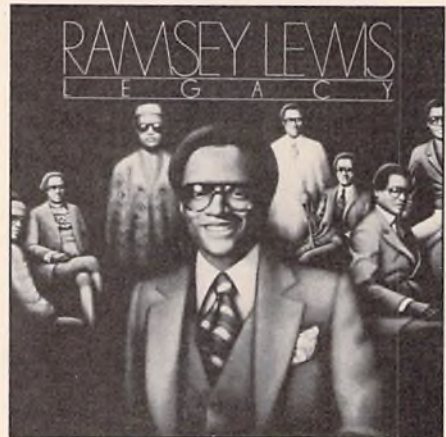
# The history of a people. The music of a man.



Ramsey Lewis draws deeply on his solid roots in jazz, rock, classical, and Latin music to emerge triumphant with an enduring musical milestone: his new album, "Legacy."

On one side Ramsey realizes his lifelong desire to play with a full symphony orchestra in "Legacy." It's a composition by James Mack which Ramsey premiered with the Kansas City Philharmonic in January, 1978. "Legacy," which utilizes a classical framework, leaves ample room for the patented Lewis piano to stretch out and search for new spaces while revisiting the best from the past.

And on the other side, Ramsey steams ahead with the kind of witty, sophisticated funk that's made him one of America's favorite piano-men.



## Ramsey Lewis shares his "Legacy." On Columbia Records and Tapes.

Other dimensions of his playing involve physical stamina and an extraordinary technique. Filtered through a sophisticated musical intelligence, these qualities yield a music of great energy and boldness.

Bergman's music is also rich in freely evolving extramusical associations. A sound painter with the dash and abstractness of Jackson Pollack, Bergman creates bright vigorous canvases of startling luminosity.

The first side is devoted to *Bursts Of Joy Or Circles, Whirls And 8*. Just as the title suggests, this 18 minute spontaneous composition is a veritable Fourth of July celebration in which effervescent geysers spew forth showers of multi-colored sparks. Throughout, the forward momentum never falters. Bergman's music is always of great urgency.

On the second side, Bergman essays *Three For The Left Hand Alone*. Again, the title tells all. An exceptional technical tour de force, the three-part exercise also demonstrates a more restrained intensity and greater sense of development than *Bursts*. —berg

## BILL BRUFORD

**FEELS GOOD TO ME**—Polydor PD-1-6149: *Beelzebub; Seems Like A Lifetime Ago (Part 1); Seems Like A Lifetime Ago (Part 2); Sample And Hold; Feels Good To Me; Either End Of August; If You Can't Stand The Heat . . . ; Springtime In Siberia; Adios A La Pasada (Goodbye To The Past)*.

Personnel: Bruford, tuned and untuned percussion, kit drums, tunes and final say; Dave Stewart, keyboards, reasonably advanced harmonic advice; Allan Holdsworth, guitar; Jeff Berlin, bass; Kenny Wheeler, fluegelhorn; Annette Peacock, vocals.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Drummer Bill Bruford is making a breakthrough in jazz-rock (or is that rock-jazz—it's all so confusing). *Feels Good To Me* organically fuses jazz's harmonic and melodic breadth with the rhythmic impetuosity and electric bite of rock. Bruford's concepts take a back seat to no one: not Weather Report, Gary Burton, Terje Rypdal or John McLaughlin. *Feels Good To Me* offers vital new directions for fusion, which has become overripe and bombastic of late. This is where fusion is going to have to go if it is to remain viable.

Bruford is a thinking man's rock drummer and an imaginative composer. He was a founding member of Yes, and later played with Robert Fripp in King Crimson. As a result his fusion is overlaid with the formal aspirations of the British school of rock—a kind of classical sense of structure, but not nearly as garish as most of the bands in that genre. Bruford's compositions contain a steady stream of rhythmic transitions, catchy melodic hooks, and variegated harmonic configurations. His steadily chipping hi-hats provide the rocking impetus for the music. Bruford orchestrates tension and release by manipulating rhythmic accents—there is a constant rising and falling of dynamic colorations from cymbals to drums (instead of an incessant bombardment of fills).

All of Bruford's fellow participants make brilliant contributions. Annette Peacock's tart suggestive voice has a very unsettling effect. On *Seems Like A Lifetime Ago (Part 1)* her voice has the cold menace of a synthesizer, and her lyrics evoke images of spiritual longing and frustration in a barren, Godless universe—the self-expression of souls who must create meaning through their own actions (“Whatever the TV said, forget it/Just try and think of a way to grow . . . No use making the same mistakes forever and ever on end/We're caught in a circle, and can't stop spinning/

30 □ down beat

Back to the beginning again.”). On (*Part 2*) Bruford shades her voice with a shimmering Paiste sizzle cymbal so that it seems to swell and expand into space. Keyboardist Dave Stewart (who shares credit with Bruford for the arrangements and orchestrations) provides a dense landscape of color and movement on every tune, and guitarist Allan Holdsworth's screaming linear leads have the sustained impact of an electric organ.

Every tune is full of surprises and delightful twists, but *Either End Of August* is this album's masterpiece. A swaying pastoral mood is announced by Stewart's synthesizer and piano, leading to a sensuous fluegelhorn soliloquy by Kenny Wheeler; the theme is then carried by Jeff Berlin's fretless electric bass—one of the most gorgeous sounds I've ever heard. Berlin is due for some serious recognition. He is among the finest electric bassists in existence; check out his work on the Gary Burtonish mallet excursion *If You Can't Stand The Heat* and the rock n' rollin' *Sample And Hold*.

This is one hell of an album; adventurous and illuminating in a way that Bruford and Holdsworth's more predictable sounding band U.K. has not yet approached. Hopefully Bruford will do a follow up to *Feels Good To Me* real soon. —stern

## PAUL BLEY

**AXIS/SOLO PIANO**—Improvising Artists IAI 37.38.53: *Axis; Porgy; Music Matador; El Cordobes—Please Don't Ever Leave Me*.

Personnel: Paul Bley, piano.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Paul Bley operates on multi-tracks of thought. Whereas many of today's entrants in the solo piano sweepstakes try to elicit the most effects possible from a single mood, Bley's musical personalities constantly overlap so that his improvisations are like a series of vignettes. What at first may seem like a lack of focus is really thoughtful eclecticism. Bley sees cross-cultural musical connections where most see only polarity. *Axis/Solo Piano* is a unique recital.

For insight into the method of his madness turn to the title cut, a dynamic exploration that takes up all of side one. It opens with popping tones from the inside of the piano and booming pedal tones before shifting to an uptown stride feeling; Bley returns to his initial sonic effects, using them as an interlude for a dark probing theme based on elements of Stravinsky's *Rite Of Spring*—a meeting of 20th century tonality and the blues. His development and variation is continuous, and it ends with a pulsing juxtaposition of a single staccato note and the inner strings. (Don Pullen is the only other pianist who can get as much out of the inside of the piano as Bley.)

Bley has a formidable technique, but he is just as concerned with the sonic possibilities of his instrument. He favors a ringing sound, and makes good use of overtones and silences. On Gershwin's *Porgy* he struts out a four-square pulse under the theme, segues into some rubato colorings, evokes a passionate blues, and finally fades into reflective musings. Prince Lasha's *Music Matador* combines Mexacalli tremolos, unusual harmonies, and a Southwestern barrelhouse ambience. Bley's *El Cordobes—Please Don't Ever Leave Me* begins with ominous Cecil Taylorish power but concludes with rhapsodic longing.

As you learn to free associate with Bley, *Axis* will draw you into some exotic worlds. The live recording is clear; so are Bley's ideas.

—stern

## FRANK LOWE

**DOCTOR TOO-MUCH**—Kharma PK 2: *Trombone; Crush; Parts; Doctor Too-Much; Structuralism; Broadway Rhumba; Future Memories*.

Personnel: Lowe, tenor sax; Olu Dara, Leo Smith, trumpets; Fred Williams, acoustic bass; Philip Wilson, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

*Doctor Too-Much* should help further the growing reputation of tenor saxophonist Frank Lowe. A descendant of the avant garde lineage of '50s and '60s players like Ornette Coleman and Archie Shepp, Lowe has combined that vocabulary of growls, harmonics and piercing wails with various mainstream traditions into a highly personal and impassioned approach.

*Trombone* is a four-and-a-half minute tenor solo dedicated to George Lewis and Joseph Bowie. Slap tonguing, sheets of sound and subsonic flurries are propelled forward with energy, wit and an undergirding sense of structure.

The other tenor solo is *Future Memories*, a warm juxtaposition of the old and new with episodes of breathy lushness in an almost Lester Young-mode.

The remaining tracks feature Lowe and the ensemble, trumpeters Olu Dara and Leo Smith, drummer Philip Wilson and bassist Fred Williams. It's a compatible group with a shared background and common approach.

*Crush* is an Ornette-like melody that finds the three horns surging and receding with rough-and-tumble abandon. *Parts* is a pointillistic soundscape with lots of space and evocative colors by Wilson and Lowe. *Doctor Too-Much* heals with rhythmic oscillations running from march to bossa nova. *Structuralism* sustains a mood of mysterioso through the collective interactions of the ensemble. *Broadway Samba* has Lowe alluding to Sonny Rollins, and another provocative timbral exploration by Wilson. —berg

## JAMES MOODY

**BEYOND THIS WORLD**—Vanguard VSD 79404: *Nairobi To Soulville; Love Was The Cause; The Television Song; Beyond This World; You Follow Me; Dis-Kom-Blu-Ba-Late Me Baby; Put Your Shoes On, Baby*.

Personnel: Moody, saxes, flute; Mark Grey, keyboards; Jimmy Johnson, percussion; Carl Lynch, Billy Butler, guitar; Herb Bushler, bass.

★ ★

James Moody has always been one of my favorite players. His work with Dizzy Gillespie and his own groups has often been brilliant. The same, unfortunately, cannot be said for *Beyond This World*.

The key to the problem is suggested by the lyrics of Moody's *The Television Song*. At one point, the reedman sings, “television is my only salvation.” In fact, the whole album sounds like it was put together by numbed TV addicts. It's dull, flat, washed out, monochromatic and one-dimensional.

A more specific problem involves Moody's vocals and songs. Moody, as much as he might like to be, is simply not a singer. His voice is weak, frequently out of tune and inexpressive. His songs suffer from trite lyrics and tedious melodic and harmonic structures.

In addition to Moody's role, some of the blame must be shared by producer/arranger Tom McIntosh and executive producer Ed Bland. For them to have stood by and allowed a bonafide talent like Moody to prostrate himself in front of such crass material was unconscionable. —berg

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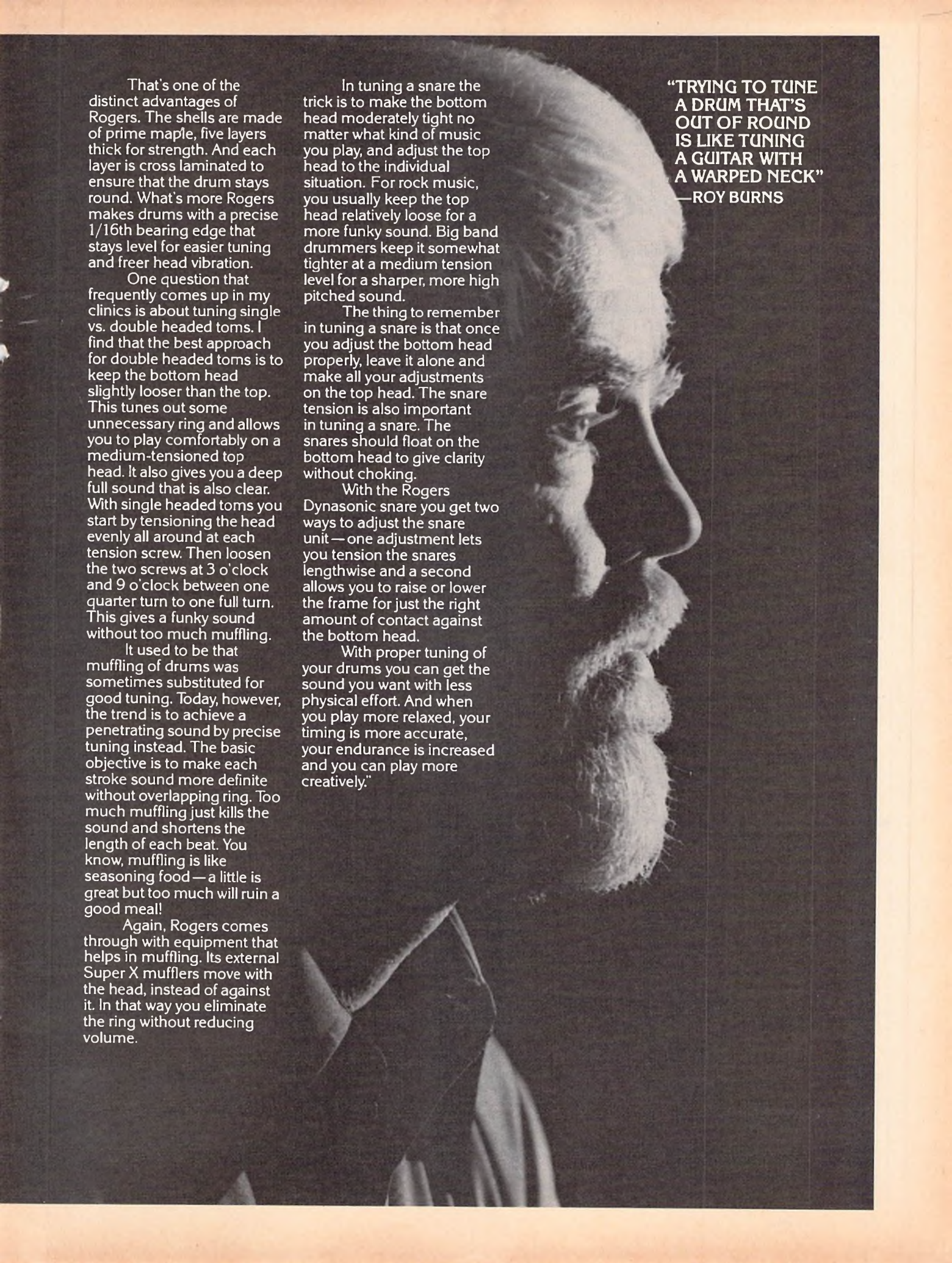
One fundamental thing to remember about tuning is the importance of drum construction. If it tends to go out of round, trying to tune it is like trying to tune a guitar with a warped neck. Also, more often than not, when it is out of round, the bearing edges won't be level. And unless the bearing edge is level, it's virtually impossible to accurately control the evenness of head tension.



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One question that frequently comes up in my clinics is about tuning single vs. double headed toms. I find that the best approach for double headed toms is to keep the bottom head slightly looser than the top. This tunes out some unnecessary ring and allows you to play comfortably on a medium-tensioned top head. It also gives you a deep full sound that is also clear. With single headed toms you start by tensioning the head evenly all around at each tension screw. Then loosen the two screws at 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock between one quarter turn to one full turn. This gives a funky sound without too much muffling.

It used to be that muffling of drums was sometimes substituted for good tuning. Today, however, the trend is to achieve a penetrating sound by precise tuning instead. The basic objective is to make each stroke sound more definite without overlapping ring. Too much muffling just kills the sound and shortens the length of each beat. You know, muffling is like seasoning food — a little is great but too much will ruin a good meal!

Again, Rogers comes through with equipment that helps in muffling. Its external Super X mufflers move with the head, instead of against it. In that way you eliminate the ring without reducing volume.

In tuning a snare the trick is to make the bottom head moderately tight no matter what kind of music you play, and adjust the top head to the individual situation. For rock music, you usually keep the top head relatively loose for a more funky sound. Big band drummers keep it somewhat tighter at a medium tension level for a sharper, more high pitched sound.

The thing to remember in tuning a snare is that once you adjust the bottom head properly, leave it alone and make all your adjustments on the top head. The snare tension is also important in tuning a snare. The snares should float on the bottom head to give clarity without choking.

With the Rogers Dynasonic snare you get two ways to adjust the snare unit — one adjustment lets you tension the snares lengthwise and a second allows you to raise or lower the frame for just the right amount of contact against the bottom head.

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A DRUM THAT'S  
OUT OF ROUND  
IS LIKE TUNING  
A GUITAR WITH  
A WARPED NECK"**

**—ROY BURNS**

## JOHNNY HODGES

AT THE SPORTPALAST, BERLIN—Pablo 2620 102: *Take The A Train; In The Kitchen; Mood Indigo; Solitude; Satin Doll; I Got It Bad; Rockin In Rhythm; Autumn Leaves; Stompy Jones; C-Jam Blues; Jeep Is Jumpin'; Good Queen Bess; Things Ain't What They Used to Be; I'll Get By; I Let A Song; Don't Get Around Much; Just Squeeze Me; Do Nothing Til You Hear From Me; Rose Of The Rio Grande; All Of Me; Sunny Side Of The Street; Blue Moon; Perdido.*

Personnel: Hodges, alto sax; Harry Carney, baritone sax; Lawrence Brown, trombone; Ray Nance, trumpet; Al Williams, piano; Aaron Bell, bass; Sam Woodyard, drums.

\*\*\* 1/2

If this 1961 concert is not among Hodges' greatest work, it is certainly among his most typical, characteristic and satisfying. A scan of the titles and cast tells the story—pure Ellington in miniature, albeit without Duke who was at work in Paris at the time on a film score.

If all hands seem to run for cover, it's certainly the cover they know best. The nice thing about these subcommittee-level meetings of the Duke's men was that they pushed a few key soloists into the spotlight who normally had to wait their turn in the full band concerts. It's particularly worthwhile here in the case of Harry Carney. The baritone sax basically divides into two categories in jazz—Carney and everyone else starting with Gerry Mulligan. It was his extraordinary tone, mainly, so massive and rich you could practically count the vibrations. For nearly 50 years the Ellington reed section shook with its power and authority. Here he is the reed section.

Tone was, in fact, the trademark of practically every classic Ellington soloist. Few did terribly interesting things with time. But all had sounds that were nobody else's. Hodges turned oozing phrases with broad dynamic range at ballad tempos, stretching notes and then bending them into long, smooth art deco shapes. At moderately swinging paces he bobs along on the beat, snaps a phrase abruptly one way or the other, and occasionally twirls about in a startling pirouette (*Perdido*). There is always style in his motion.

For Ellington buffs this is rewarding though standard fare. For the newcomer, it's an ideal two-LP display of some of the most enduring pre-bop sounds in jazz. —mcdonough

## ANDY SIMPKINS/ JOEY BARON/ DAVE MACKAY

HAPPYING—Studio 7 ST 7-403: *Sometime Ago; Happiness; Melissa; Younger Than Springtime; Being Green; Amanecer.*

Personnel: Simpkins, bass; Baron, percussion; Mackay, keyboards, vocals.

\*\*\*

As middle of the road piano trio albums go, this stands up well. While certainly not an original keyboard voice, Mackay gracefully spans the idioms of Powell to Evans, with occasional nods in the direction of Wynton Kelly and Pete Jolly. Simpkins, who put in a dozen years with Gene Harris' Three Sounds and half as many with George Shearing, is a seasoned, punchy bassist, straddling the line between Gomez and Brown, at times capturing the best of both worlds.

Most impressive is the group's sometimes high level of rapport. Combinations like these easily degenerate into a stock format: hot-shot pianist plus bass and drums to fill in the gaps. Not so here. The ambitious *Amanecer* opens with a fragile, upper register bass line, bell

tree tinkles and Debussy-esque keyboard runs—an effective collaborative effort. A segue into a fast samba section prompts a felt electric piano solo: ambiguous clusters, burning outside lines.

But all cuts aren't so happily inspired. Mackay also sings, with a touch of throaty Sinatra and a heavy doses of pseudo-hip Mark Murphyish mannerisms. His lyrics are, well, forgettable. *Happying*, for example, drones on about "facing truth in children's hearts," and "living life without hangups." West Coast cultism at its slickest. More fortuitous are the brief bass/scat vocal duets: stereophonic Slam Stewart.

In sum, a 50/50 album, the best half of which can stand on its own with no apologies. —balleras

## PETE AND SHEILA ESCOVEDO

HAPPY TOGETHER—Fantasy F-9545: *Ain't That The Truth; Harockumole; Bolinas; Bridges (Travessia); Burrito Bandito; Hello Like Before; Happy Together; Cueros.*

Personnel: Pete Escovedo, timbales, congas, vocals; Sheila Escovedo, congas, drums, vocals; Mark Soskin, keyboards; Ray Obiedo, guitar; Randy Jackson, bass; Billy Cobham, drums; Eddie Henderson, fluegelhorn; Mel Martin, woodwinds.

\*\*\*

There is currently a plethora of product on the market featuring a standard disco fuzak formula colored with varying marginal effects depending on the artist's geographical location, ethnic background, and musical history, not to mention his choice of gurus. This is yet another such offering—disco con congas with a light pop touch and a Latin-rock flavor. Pete and Sheila Escovedo exude a balmy west-coast essence on this sometimes laid-back, sometimes energetic outing with production and percussion assistance from Billy Cobham. With Cobham and the California couple all featured on drums the session is permeated with a strong percussive feeling that carries the momentum for want of any other impetus. Weak material would seem to be the main drawback here, that and a general lack of imagination. With melodic hooks as insipid as these the only out would be a strong flair for embellishment, but endless repetition and aimless modal noodling is all that this crew seems up to.

*Ain't That The Truth* is standard disco fare with stiff plodding drums, a heavy Tramps-like bass line, and a tepid flute lead ala the Salsoul Orchestra. *Harockumole* in like fashion recycles a flimsy little riff for a melodic line, but reflects a more fuzoid approach with soaring synthesizer lines over a Latin-rock beat. Pete and Sheila vocalize in unison on *Bolinas*, a Brazilian pop-styled number reminiscent of Sergio Mendes or Santana's latest, and Pete sings the lead on *Bridges*, one of Milton Nascimento's weaker compositions, given a straight-up nightclub treatment here.

*Burrito Bandito* is another exercise in fuzi-disco, with some blatantly exploitative quotations from Coltrane on soprano and a timbales solo that won't keep Tito Puente up nights. Pete takes another vocal turn on *Hello Like Before* in a standard Vegas treatment worthy of Steve Lawrence before joining Sheila again for another breezy pop duet, *Happy Together*, enlivened by Eddie Henderson's tasty work on fluegelhorn. *Cueros* is a salsa styled percussion workout that substitutes energy for technique and which seems to have been dubbed over a tape of

crowd noises for added excitement.

The Escovedos have taken a lightweight approach combining elements of pop, rock and MOR, apparently in quest of mass appeal. With some catchier tunes and a little radio airplay they might be hitsville bound, but this pablum just won't fill the bill. It may serve for agreeably inoffensive background music, but it certainly cannot sustain much in the way of serious listening. —birnbaum

## STONE ALLIANCE

CON AMIGOS—P.M. Records PMR-015: *I'll Tell You Tomorrow; Mujeres Sud Americanas; Miss T.; Graciela; Amigos; Taking A Good Long Look.*

Personnel: Steve Grossman, tenor sax; Gene Perla, bass, keyboards, guitars; Don Alias, drums, percussion; Santiago Giacobbe, piano; Daniel Binelli, bandoneon; Jose Maria Loriente, Roberto Valencia, percussion.

\*\*\*

Stone Alliance, the trio of tenor saxophonist Steve Grossman, bassist/keyboardist Gene Perla and percussionist Don Alias, has always showed promise. With *Con Amigos*, that potential is closer to realization.

A large part of the inspiration for this particular project was a trip to South America and a close collaboration with four outstanding Argentine musicians, pianist Santiago Giacobbe, percussionists Jose Maria Loriente and Roberto Valencia, and Daniel Binelli who plays the bandoneon, an Argentine type of accordian with buttons on each side which produce single tones.

*I'll Tell You Tomorrow* opens with a charming bandoneon solo that gives way to a singing bass vamp and sizzling cymbals. With the brisk 4/4 established, energetic solos by Grossman on tenor and Giacobbe on electric piano follow. *Graciela* combines layers of percussion for a bubbling cauldron over which Grossman's swirling Tranish tenor dances. *Amigos* is a three-part testimony to the high spirits of internationalism. *Taking A Good Long Look* is a reflective meditation with romantic South American breezes blowing through.

There are also two tracks by the trio itself. *Mujeres Sud Americanas (The Women Of South America)* is an exotically scented memoir of shared warmth and passions. It is also a fine studio effort with synthesizers and overdubbing tastefully executed. The other trio cut is *Miss T.*, a charming and gracefully flowing waltz. For this, Grossman's tenor emerges more out of the Rollins' than Coltrane tradition in what is one of the saxophonist's finest recorded efforts to date. —berg

## FINN SAVERY

DUALISM—EMI 6C 063-39169: *Dualism; Mountain Air; From "Seven Motives To Play"; Section I And II; Three Sections For Piano.*

Personnel: Savery, piano, vibraphone; Toke Lund Christiansen, flute; Jesper Thilo, clarinet; Preben Gamov, horn; Palle Mikkelsen, trumpet; Vincent Nilsson, trombone; Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen, bass; Bjarne Rostvold, drums; Bjarne Boie Rasmussen, viola; Ingolf Olsen, guitar; Ole Pedersen, marimba.

\*\*\* 1/2

Savery is a Danish pianist and composer whose style is deeply grounded in the classics. The combination of classical and jazz elements in his work suggest the term "third-stream," although that once heralded "wave of the future" has long since passed into virtual oblivion. Perhaps that is why this album has an air of anachronism about it, a latter day survivor of a school that never really took root. During the past 20 years or so jazzmen

# "The Leblanc has a fat sound."



Leblanc Duet No. 4, featuring Pete Fountain

It's prior to show time at Pete Fountain's new bistro in The Hilton on the River in New Orleans. We're relaxing at a table near the stage, and Pete's describing what he enjoys doing when he's not here.

**Fountain:** I love to fish. I have a small fishing boat, and go out on it a lot. Around home, my hobby is just tinkering with my cars. I have twelve antique cars, including a '36 four-door convertible like Roosevelt's. Could be his, because it has an oversize trunk, maybe for the wheelchair. I enjoy my Rolls, too. My Rolls and my Mercedes. Those two cars I run a lot. And I started collecting trucks. Have a half dozen of 'em. I'm really interested in old planes, too. The biplanes. And I love race cars. Got into motorcycles for awhile, too, and still have my Harley 1200cc. Big Harley. I kick it, and it kicks me back. It's tough.

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time somebody plays his clarinet."

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have absorbed elements of classical composition without having been absorbed in turn; the ongoing collaboration prophesied in the 1950s has been obviated. Jazz players no longer look to the classical world for respectability—indeed the shoe is often on the other foot as classicists turn toward jazz for new sources of inspiration. Compared to the work of an Ornette Coleman or Anthony Braxton, Savery's work is dated and somewhat clumsy in its attempts to meld the two idioms.

Savery excels in the orchestration of clean, beautifully balanced sonorities, building expansive open-ended chord matrices out of shifting, deliberately paced arpeggios. His somber, introspective musings are voiced with impeccable instrumental shadings and intoned with symphonic purity, without the timbral colorations and heavy vibrato associated with jazz performance. Similarly his metric sense is structured with the measured precision of the conservatory, and his use of dynamics is muted and rather invariable. In an eclectic fashion he leavens the severity of such classical mentors as Schoenberg, Stravinsky and Varese with touches of progressive swing and cool jazz and a taste of romantic impressionism. Throughout there is a feeling of sobriety, almost of stodginess, that bespeaks the preponderant influence of classicism and a reserved Danish melancholy that holds even the jazzier pieces in check.

*Dualism* and *Section I And II* reveal a debt to Varese as the instruments of the ensemble alternate to color the shifting tableaux of dissonant chords with precise and formal articulation. In *Dualism* the classical motif is abruptly transfigured into a Kentonesque swing chorus as Niels Pedersen leads the band with an up-tempo walking bass line. The effect is rather jarring as one genre is superimposed wholesale upon the other without a genuine fusion of elements.

Savery is at his lightest on the three solo pieces *From "Seven Motives To Play,"* displaying a Bill Evans-like romanticism without Evans' technique or depth. His mastery of the jazz idiom is incomplete and he seems more at home on *Section I And II*, also for solo piano, sketching atonal figures with a sure sense of structure and symmetry.

Savery's rhythmic inflexibility and emotional restraint tend to give his music a dry, monochromatic cast, notwithstanding his gift for cool, formal tone colorations and architectonic balance. His performance is a tasteful one, but in the end his classical rigor overshadows his pretensions to bridge the gap between disciplines. —*birnbaum*

## TEDDY PENDERGRASS

LIFE IS A SONG WORTH SINGING—Philadelphia International JZ 35095: *Life Is A Song Worth Singing*; *Only You*; *Cold, Cold World*; *Get Funky*; *Get Loose*; *Close The Door*; *It Don't Hurt Now*; *When Somebody Loves You Back*.

Personnel: Pendergrass, vocals; musicians not listed.

\*\*\*\*\*

Teddy Pendergrass is not a sophisticated soul artist, but Gamble and Huff, his two main producers, are, and that is why this second album by the former lead singer of Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes is such a satisfying venture, drawing on both the sheer emotional power that Pendergrass has come to be known for and the lush arrangements and urbane songs that Gamble and Huff with their staff of in-house writers and producers have been turning out for the past ten years.

The inspiring balance between singer and producers is best evidenced on *Close The Door*, which has been a huge hit for Teddy Pendergrass this summer. He delivers the mid-tempo song in a straightforward but nevertheless dramatic and involved way wrapped up in the inimitable saturated sound of Philadelphia. Instead of letting Pendergrass indulge in the gospel mannerisms that always seem to lurk in his vocal style Gamble and Huff have chosen wisely to allow the instrumentation to handle the embellishments. Strings weave in and out, a flute motif crops up here, a guitar figure shimmers there, all in such perfect rapport with the singer that it sounds improvised and thus adds extra conviction to his performance of the "risque" song.

Excepting the embarrassing disco stomper *Get Funky, Get Loose* which brings out the gospel animal in the vocalist the album is characterized by an even, albeit short, collection of slow to midtempo tuneful material that keeps Pendergrass on a steady course, and the record is a solid if somewhat old-fashioned effort. But then Teddy Pendergrass is an old-fashioned soul singer. —*gabel*

## RICK WAKEMAN

CRIMINAL RECORD—A&M SP 4660: *Statue Of Justice*; *Crime Of Passion*; *Chamber Of Horrors*; *Birdman Of Alcatraz*; *The Breathalyzer*; *Judias Iscariot*.

Personnel: Wakeman, acoustic piano, mini-Moog, polyMoog, Hammond B 3 Organ, Birotron, Mander Pipe Organ, RMI Computer Keyboard, Harpsichord, Fender Rhodes, Clavinet, electric harpsichord; Frank Ricotti, percussion; Alan White, drums; Chris Squire, bass; Sylviane Savez, Christine Riesen, Claudine Mange, Francoise Cardinaux, Eliane Henchoz, Claudine Corbaz, Claire-Lisa Valet, Ann Catherine Noinat, Daniele Meystre, Annette Fonjallaz, Lise Dutray, Marlyse Paschoud, Francoise Cottet, soprano voices; Janine Isaaq, Elizabeth Pahud, Nicole Meraus, Mary Lise Perey, Josianne Henn, Janine Pradervand, Marlyse Berney, Francoise Wannaz, Christiane Durel, Anne Claude, Pierre Humbert, Christine Frehholz, Liliane De Berville, alto voices; Claude Alain Von Buren, Andre Borboen, Charles Moinat, Rene Monachon, Jean Maurice Juvet, Francoise Emery, Raphael Bugnon; Bernard Dutray, Daniel Borgeaud, tenor voices; Peirre Tharin, Yves Lambercy, Jean Michel Favez, Samuel Chetrit, Claude Alain Morasini, Roland Demiville, George Caille, Pierre Alain Favez, bass voices. All voices are on track six only.

\*\*\*

There are two good things about the music of Rick Wakeman. First, left alone on acoustic piano, he can come up with some mildly melodic, rather pleasant, cocktailish Baroque vamps. *Birdman Of Alcatraz*, with upper register keyboard multi-tracking presumably essayed to picture the fascination with birds that the subject (an Alcatraz convict) had, is real cute.

Shrewd sense of harmonic counterpoint is thus the second virtue. Yet in light of the guy's pomposity, his mechanically adept musical skills are unfortunately overwhelmed by the pathetic scope of a musician obsessed with telling some grand tale each album. Every issue must be a grand epic; presumably Mr. Wakeman's next effort will be entitled *The History Of The Universe*. 87 synthesizers will musically orchestrate the Big Bang theory, etc.

Some fleeting passages are more than tolerable, ringing of embryonic compositional ability. Yet for the most part, all Wakeman is doing is copping centuries-old licks and running them through a bunch of superhip toys. *Criminal Record*? It may be a misdemeanor that this record was released. —*shaw*

## MTUME

**KISS THIS WORLD GOODBYE**—Epic 35255: *Theme (For The People) (Opening); Just Funnin'; Kiss This World Goodbye; Insert; The Closer I Get To You; Love Lock; Funky Constellation; Closer To The End; Metal Flake Mind; Phase I; Day Of The Reggin; This Is Your World; Theme (For The People) (Exit)*.

Personnel: Mtume, lead and background vocals, keyboards, congas; Reggie Lucas, guitar, vocals; Tawatha, lead vocals; Hubert Eaves, keyboards; Basil Fearington, bass; Howard King, drums, vocals.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

This is a gem. Never mind the shortcomings, it is still a gem, an album that sparkles with talent and the kind of exuberance which comes from playfulness and self-enjoyment. A lot of fun and ease, but also extraordinary musicality went into *Kiss This World Goodbye*. Almost the only thing that did not go into it is a sense of business, for Mtume's funkiness and contemporary sound notwithstanding, this self-produced album is eager and honest in the pursuit of its ambitions, from penetrating ballads, to racy instrumentals, to slapstick, to a dreamy, transported down-the-road song and, in a minor mistaken experiment, to tracks consisting of ten second "overtures".

Most of the lead vocals are handled by Tawatha, who maintains a vibrant tension between a schooled foundation that is itching to break loose and emote and an unadorned, immediately appealing soul style. The group is further characterized by Reggie Lucas' orchestral, yet fluent guitar, Hubert Eaves' striking colorings and a precise, kinetic collaboration between Mtume and Howard King. It is this prodigious musicality that enables the group to stitch together, for example, a song as minimal as *Love Lock* which is barely more than two chordal lines suspended over a pulsating rhythmic track that tightens and loosens to buoy Tawatha's breathy, soothing oooh-aaah's, and make it one of the album's high points. Another outstanding cut is the group's own rendition of Mtume and Lucas' *The Closer I Get To You*, which of course has been one of this year's biggest hits in a version by Donny Hathaway and Roberta Flack. Here the vocal duet is shared by Tawatha and Mtume himself and this time the song, again a deceptively simple composition, takes on a freshness and joy quite different from the polished, rather lethargic hit.

Mtume's uniqueness lies in their playing superiority and freeness of approach, not in any new group sound. As a matter of fact, a few traceable touches are felt now and then, of Chaka Khan, e.g., in *Metal Flake Mind* and of B.T. Express' horn riffs in *Just Funnin'* (not to mention the songs that come to close to echoing material from *Survival Themes*, an album Reggie Lucas did in 1975 with Mtume, Eaves and King for the Japanese East Wind label), but they were soon forgotten. A more fundamental reservation, however, springs from an impression of a general cavalier attitude behind *Kiss This World Goodbye*, rooted, one suspects, in the keymembers' jazz background. Although Reggie Lucas gave Norman Connors his cross-over ticket (*Slewfoot*) and he and Mtume won their full pop music credentials with the Hathaway-Flack hit, it is the jazz musician's belief in his instrument and chops as the sole valid ingredient in a music situation that informs this album. But soul or pop requires other qualities such as degrees of involvement and immediacy to be fully realized. The overall irreverence of *Kiss This World Goodbye*—with the exception of its gracefully calculated and arranged (by vet-

cran Wade Marcus) ballads—instills a similar amount of nonchalance in the listener. A successful album, then, on the small scale—with ample suggestions that Mtume may reach the grand. —gubel

## JACKIE AND ROY

**CONCERTS BY THE SEA**—Studio 7 Records ST7-402: *Magic To Do; Cheerful Little Earful; Waltz For Dana; Born To Be Blue; The Runaround; Good And Rich; A Face Like Yours; Tiny Told Me; Who Cares*.

Personnel: Jackie Cain, vocals; Roy Kral, piano, vocals; Brian Atkinson, vibraphone; John Mosher, bass; Gary Nash, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

One of the pleasures for a reviewer is to keep bumping up against the new and unexpected. Take Jackie and Roy. I had heard an occasional track of theirs through the years on late night radio, and knew of their loyal following. But, until *Concerts By The Sea*, I had never had the pleasure of fully experiencing their intoxicating magic.

The potency of their spells derives from their youthful yet lived-in voices, pervasive upbeat bubblyness and impeccable musicianship. There are also tight arrangements, an excellent repertory and an air of polished sophistication. In addition, their vocals can be understood. Articulation and diction are crisp.

Their opener is *Magic To Do*, an inviting number from Broadway's *Pippin*. *Cheerful Little Earful* is a buoyant bouncer with a unison scat chorus that fans out to engaging contrapuntal episodes. *Born To Be Blue* is a feature for Jackie's torchy sultriness. *The Runaround* places stop-start tempo shifts from rubato to brisk in a boy-girl call-and-response dialogue built on the theme of the seven year itch.

In addition to the vocals, Roy's piano work is bright and stylish. Also commendable is the excellent support provided by vibist Brian Atkinson, bassist John Mosher and drummer Gary Nash.

Jackie and Roy serve up a musical smorgasbord that while attractive and delicious is nourishing as well. The joys of their cooking should not be missed. —berg

## MIKE NOCK

**MAGIC MANSIONS**—Laurie Records LES 6001: *Magic Mansions; Twister; Enchanted Garden; Hybris; Blackout; Everglad; Mumbucaba*.

Personnel: Nock, keyboards; Charlie Mariano, soprano sax; Ron McClure, basses; Al Foster, drums; Nacho Mena (1, 3, 5, 7), percussion; Lyn Williamson (3, 7), vocal.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

Mike Nock is among the handful of pianists who is making real progress integrating electronic keyboards into genuinely improvisatory contexts. Eschewing the formulae of disco and funk, Nock's electronic efforts are bona fide extensions of the piano's timbral and pitch-range limits.

Abetting Nock's quests are soprano saxist Charlie Mariano, bassist Ron McClure, drummer Al Foster, percussionist Nacho Mena and vocalist Lyn Williamson. Recorded after a week of exuberant performances at Sweet Basil in New York, producer Teo Macero said, "Let's do it."

First up is the title track, a tough yet lyrical outing with exciting festive overtones. Nock's pungent harmonies on acoustic and Mariano's feverish soprano playing are stand outs. *Twister*, an electronic soundstorm, generates upswep swirling energies. *Enchanted Gardens* is a magical celebration with Nock's elec-

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tronic conjurations. *Hybris*, a pensive waltz, offers a reflective Mariano.

The second side opens with *Blackout*, an ominous nocturnal nightmare that evokes all those things that go bump in the night. Underpinning Mariano's and Nock's walks on the wild side is the powerful and threatening electric bass work of McClure. *Everglad* is a tight tense coil springing dazzling solo trajectories by Nock, Mariano and McClure. Foster's crisp, sizzling drum and cymbal accents push things even higher. Last is a supercharged samba with effectively deployed overdubs and energetic dances by Mariano and Nock.

—berg

## HELDON

HELDON IV—Aural Explorer 5001: *Perspective I; Perspective II; Perspective III; Perspective IV; Virgin Swedish Blues; Psylocybine*.

Personnel: Richard Pinhas, electronics, guitar, Mellotron; Philibert Rossi, Mellotron; Coco Rousel, percussion; Michal Ettori, guitars; Gerard Perovost, bass; Alain Bellaiche, brass guitar; Patrick Gauthier, mini-Moog; George Granblatt, Mellotron.

★ ★ ★

The electronic age in music is a mere 20 years old, dating from Edgard Varese's historic and much copied *Poem Electronique* for the 1958 Brussels World's Fair. Since then electronics have been widely introduced into rock, jazz, and even easy-listening music to emulate traditional instruments or to add gimmicky effects to spice album tracks. Meanwhile the tradition of pure electronic music as such has passed through a number of manifestations, from the abstruse mathematical approach of the Columbia-Princeton school through the more eclectic visions of pioneers like Terry Riley and Steve Reich, to the popularized conceptions (e.g. Mike Oldfield, Michael Hoening) that grace not a few of today's more successful film soundtracks.

It is to this third generation that Heldon belongs, a generation that has taken this once forbiddingly severe idiom into the realm of mass appeal. To the minimalist, modally static conventions of the Reilly/Reich genre Heldon's mentor Richard Pinhas has added the colors and rhythms of rock and blues and has adapted his tonal palette to suit the less sophisticated tastes of an audience weaned on the Beatles and Bee Gees. The result is a sort of acid-muzak that shifts from a reassuring background drone to a pulsating amphetamine throb. The use of electric guitar in conjunction with synthesizers lends an element of familiarity that provides a further bridge to the rocked-out generation.

*Perspective I* is an ersatz symphonic dirge of shifting major chord inversions that sounds like British art-rock slowed down to 16 rpm. *Perspective II* features a repeated piping synthesizer riff that warbles in birdlike fashion like a cross between Stravinsky's *Petrouchka* and an ad for digital watches. On the third *Perspective* the synthesizer supplies a hyperkinetic ostinato blues vamp to counterpoint a soaring guitar lead, achieving a speed-freak's rock fantasy. After a soothing ECM-acoustic interlude, the Perspectives conclude with a three chord rhapsody enlivened by Varese-like gong and percussion effects over the inevitable electronic drone.

*Virgin Swedish Blues* is likewise built over a pulsating drone from whence an embryonic melody arises, followed by a wailing McLaughlin-esque guitar exercise. The violin-like fusi-guitar continues through the closing *Psylocybine*, silhouetted against the stiff

38 □ down beat

metronomic throbbing of a thick bass tone.

Judging by the number of recent releases, electronic music is making increasing headway in the marketplace. Heldon and its counterparts represent a trend toward the popularization of what has been until lately an esoteric medium. Today even the pathfinders in the field are moving toward more conventional rhythm and harmony while retaining the refrigerator-like hum and endless robot repetition that have characterized this genre. While Heldon makes no striking or original contributions it does manufacture an agreeable brand of background music, particularly with the volume turned down low. —birnbaum

## COUNT BASIE/ LESTER YOUNG & CHARLIE CHRISTIAN

LESTER YOUNG/CHARLIE CHRISTIAN 1939-1940—Jazz Archives JA 42: *Swinging The Blues; Time Out; Roseland Shuffle; Don't Worry 'Bout Me; Clap Hands, Here Comes Charlie; Louisiana; Green Bay; Memories of You; AC/DC Current; Till Tom Special; Ad Lib Blues; I Never Knew; Charlie's Dream; Wholly Cuts; Lester's Dream*.

Personnel: Basie Band—Ed Lewis, Buck Clayton, Harry Edison, Shad Collins, trumpet; Dan Minor, Dickie Wells, Benny Morton, trombone; Earl Warren, Lester Young, Buddy Tate, Jack Washington, reeds; Basie, piano; Freddie Green, guitar; Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums. Goodman Sextet—Benny Goodman, clarinet; Lionel Hampton, vibes; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Christian, guitar; Art Bernstein, bass; Nick Fatool, drums. Goodman Sextet #2—Goodman, clarinet; Young, sax; Christian, guitar; Clayton, trumpet; Basie, piano; Green, rhythm guitar; Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

COUNT BASIE AT THE FAMOUS DOOR, 1938-39—Jazz Archives JA 41: *Indiana; Nagasaki; Doggin' Around; I Haven't Changed A Thing; Out The Window; Ta Tu; Love of My Life; John's Idea; King Porter Stomp; Yeah Man; Jump For Me; Moten Swing; Darktown Strutters Ball; Rock-a-bye Basie; Indiana*.

Personnel: Same as Basie band listed above except on first ten tracks where Herschel Evans replaces Tate; delete Shad Collins; add Helen Humes, vocal.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Jazz Archives is a vital independent label that has been hauling up sunken treasures for about five years now. And none are more impressive or exciting than these two chapters from the Dead Sea Scrolls of modern jazz.

The Young/Christian set is a brilliant specimen of swing at its creative peak. Each artist is presented in his natural habitat of the period—Young in the great pre-war Basie band and Christian in the ultimate chamber group of jazz, the Goodman Sextet—and finally together in an extraordinary one-time summit meeting Goodman called in Columbia's studios to experiment with a possible working lineup that ultimately never materialized.

The Basie band performances are among the dwindling supply of broadcast air shots which have never hitherto appeared on LP. They are from a series produced in the U.S. by the BBC for English radio audiences on American big bands, a series never actually heard however on American radio. *Swinging The Blues* is both faster and longer than the Decca recording. *Time Out* and *Roseland* are almost solid Lester, with Young taking the first four bars of the former instead of Evans, as on the original record. The sound is satisfactory, but it fails to capture the steely perfection of the rhythm section. These are extensions of the and not substitutes for the originals.

The Goodman Sextet with Christian provides a less impressive picture of the guitarist

in his working environment. *AC/DC* will be familiar to all who own the series of MGM (or Verve) Goodman broadcasts. This is the same one. *Memories Of You* is relaxed and lazy. *Till Tom* is the best of the regular sextets. Christian's electric guitar is devastating.

The centerpiece of the LP is the Young-Christian-Goodman-Basie-Clayton experiment, a unique all-star lineup in jazz history. One might imagine sitting in on an evening of conversation between Freud, Dostoevski, Einstein and Shaw to assess the dimension of this gathering. Only the original *Spirituals To Swing* concerts on Vanguard approach such an imposing grouping. Yet one must not lose all perspective entirely in commenting on the final product—the music. As a group, the interplay is sensitive and occasionally playful (Goodman especially), but never inspired or abandoned. These are heavyweights all, to be sure. But this is no heavyweight championship battle, only a sparring session.

If the combination never really gells as a group, the solos make for scintillating conversation indeed. Lester comes billowing out of Clayton's last few bars on *Charlie's Dream* like a sexy genie disguised as a gorgeous plume of evaporating mist. Clayton is occasionally thick but graceful and agile. Christian is restrained but loaded with ideas. No one seems to enjoy it more than Goodman himself, who plays with panache throughout. (NOTE: This session was issued before by Jazz Archives but subsequently discontinued because the LP contained Goodman Sextet alternate takes owned by Columbia and not licensed for reissue. This version contains no commercially recorded material.)

The Famous Door was a 52nd Street band spa of the late '30s with a CBS radio wire for remote broadcasting. It was Basie's booking there in August, 1938 that established his first national reputation. These are therefore historically important performances for they are the work of young men in the process of becoming world famous. An exciting moment to contemplate via these souvenirs, since Basie himself is today a living legend now pushing 75.

At the heart of the Basie band was its extraordinary rhythm section. But the sound limitations of the master material, while otherwise thoroughly listenable, tend to surpass its full glory. Also, at this early stage Basie's book was still small. While in Chicago nearly two years before, he had borrowed several charts from Fletcher Henderson. Three of them (never formally recorded) are heard here: *Nagasaki*, *Yeah Man*, and *King Porter*. They are uncharacteristic of the pure Basie sound. So too, to a degree, are *Indiana* and *Darktown*, even though they swing mightily. So this then is not the ideal program of material. And finally, Lester is less prominently featured here than of the broadcasts of JA 42.

If this is not the perfect Basie LP, though, it can surely be recommended heartily for the superb sound of Harry Edison on *Moten Swing* and sparkling versions of *John's*, *Doggin* and *Window* among others. *Rock-a-bye Basie*, featuring Buddy Tate, is practically a Xerox of the original Columbia record. Only three cuts have been previously issued on LP.

Frank Driggs has provided fresh background information and perspective in his annotations for both LPs. Both young listeners and long time Basie fans will find his comments interesting. —mcdonough

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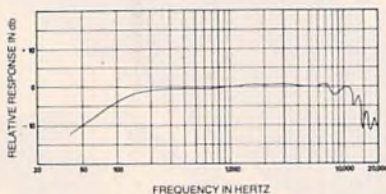


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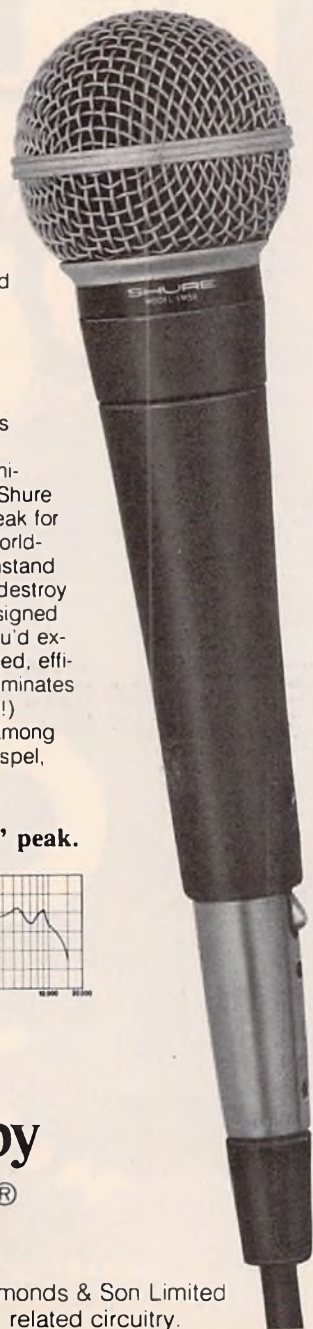
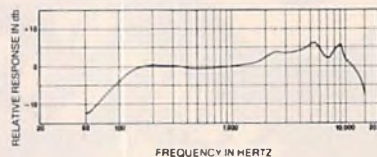


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# BLINDFOLD TEST



## Toshiko Akiyoshi

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Toshiko Akiyoshi did her last solo blindfold in *db* 11/14/68. She shared a test with Lew Tabackin that appeared 1/29/76. In the almost three years since that last test, there has been a tremendous change in her image. No longer a trio leader, she is accepted as one of the jazz world's most brilliant composer/arrangers.

Although the band she and Tabackin had formed in 1973 was well-known in Japan, where they were under contract to that country's RCA affiliate, in early 1976 they had yet to see their first LP released on the American label.

Since then, of course, there have been several U.S. releases; the orchestra has gained slowly but steadily in international prestige, scored at Newport in '77, and had a series of triumphs this year, starting in March with its memorable appearance at the Women's Jazz Festival in Kansas City. In the last *db* Critics Poll, Tosh ran second in four categories, third in another.

Shortly after returning from a tour that broke several barriers for the band (first Chicago gig, first New York night club date at the Village Gate, and first European bookings), Toshiko relaxed and listened to records involving big bands, pianists or both. She was given no information about the records played.

**1. BUDDY RICH.** *Bouncin' With Bud* (from *Class of '78*, The Great American Gramophone Co.). Bud Powell, composer; Barry Keiner, piano; Gary Bricbeck, tenor sax; Buddy Rich, drums.

I know the tune; I used to play it . . . I think *Bouncin' with Bud*. The first record I heard was a small group with Bud Powell, Fats Navarro, I think Sonny Rollins . . . a good record.

Anyway, the pianist plays very well. The tenor player sounded really good, too. For the big band, I like to hear actually the straight rendition of the original arrangement. They added another chorus with the tenor. Harmonically, I'd like to hear it a little thicker. All the solo players are very good; as a big band, it leaves something to be desired.

I always think of this particular tune as associated with the bebop era, which is not really the kind of feeling you get from this big band. It's a little bit on the old-fashioned side. I don't like the world old-fashioned . . . maybe a little bit pre-time, before bebop. I think that's the problem, and I'm the one, too, facing that: a big band has a certain tradition, and there are certain things the drummer has to play, because playing with a certain horn player, certain things have to be played. Yet, at the same time it can have a more modern feeling. I would like to hear a little bit more solution to that.

I have no idea whose band it was; at first I thought it might be Louie [Bellson]. I wasn't quite sure because the player I normally associate with him wasn't quite the same. And then I don't really know too many big band drummers. The recording of the bass was a bit too loud, so that made it even worse when the saxophone solo came up. It made it sound thinner. Three-and-a-half stars.

**2. ROLAND HANNA.** *Majorca* (from *Sir Elt Plus 1*, Choice). Hanna, piano; George Mraz, bass; comp. based on Etude #6 by Chopin.

I have no idea who that could be. I think the composition is very nice. Mainly that's what I enjoyed. Lately I don't play piano that much, so I don't feel quite right about making a comment on the pianist. I probably would like to hear more . . . the piano is a total instrument. I would like to hear more use of the piano, more harmonies, bigger sound. Also I think it was recorded too close, the microphone

was too close to the strings. It sounded like it doesn't give enough room for the natural acoustics to stretch out.

The pianist seems to have neglected or chosen not to make use of a lot of keyboards to make a fuller sound. That would be, in my humble opinion, more interesting. I enjoyed it mainly because the tune was nice. But from a jazz point of view, I don't think there's much content in it.

The bass player sounded very good; good intonation and he's very musical, but I'm not hearing anything particularly outstanding. It could be he was complementing the pianist. Three stars.

**3. BILL WATROUS.** *Sweet Georgia Upside Down*, from *The Tiger of San Pedro*, Columbia). Phil Kelly, arranger; Ronald Julian Davis, drums; Bill Watrous, trombone; Derek Smith, keyboards.

I liked the recording very well. It's a very clean recording. The drummer is super, he catches everything. This kind of writing is very good; it's almost as though they all came up from the same school, that's what they all sound like: a lot of unison. There is too much unison for my taste. But for this kind of writing, it's very well written and played.

The saxophone solo was played very well, but I don't find it particularly super. But the whole thing flows very well; I think it's more the performance than anything else. Would you mind if I heard it again just from the beginning?

(Later) It maybe meant to be that way, but while having the electric piano solo, the tempo went up very fast . . . I don't know whether that was purposely done. Trombonist had a lot of facility; he sounded very well.

I think a lot of times I find it hard to get a message . . . sometimes people talk a lot, but fail to make a point. Every once in a while I get confused about what I'm hearing—whether I'm not receiving any message. I think a lot of people neglect that part. His facility, compared to the old days, was so high because of all the training; but very often a player can miss the point. In the old days the facility was much simpler, so making a point was relatively easy, maybe. But this player has a lot of facility and he makes a point. I think that, maybe, is what the goal is for the solo.

All in all I enjoyed it. I think the performance was very good. I'd give it three-and-three-quarters!

**4. HAROLD DANKO.** *Intensity* (from *The Harold Danko Quartet Featuring Gregory Herbert*, Inner City). Danko, keyboards; Herbert, tenor sax.

Lately I don't really get the chance to hear other people's music; I'm just up to my neck in my own work. So I really can't tell who that could be, but the tenor player sounded very good. I felt a kind of slow energy in the pulse of the composition; the best part of this recording was the middle part when they improvised. His solo was really good, I really enjoyed that. The head played at first and the very last part—as a formality, I guess—didn't do anything for me.

If I were to have this kind of rock-oriented strong pulse in the music, I kind of like to hear it a little bit stronger, more energetic. It's kind of in-between, this one.

I have no idea who it could be—Joe Farrell . . . ? The pianist sounded good, but electric piano a lot of times is very deceiving. There are many things which played on the piano may not sound quite right; you can play on electric piano and get away with it. I think you can say the same thing about the vibraphone. Some of the things played on vibraphone sound okay and you can get away with it; if you play exactly the same thing on the piano, it's not quite right.

**Feather:** You seldom use electric piano?

**Akiyoshi:** I like to use it as an effect. But for playing, I stick to acoustic, I was raised on that. I like the colorings, which I don't think you can do too much on electric.

I really can't make a fair judgment. The pianists who have this equipment all sound pretty much the same to me—unless it's Chick Corea or somebody like that. But it sounded very good, and I would give the solo part three-and-a-half, nearly four. But overall, I would say three.

**5. MCCOY TYNER.** *Naima* (from *The Greeting*, Milestone). Tyner, solo piano.

I like to hear piano recorded like this; I really enjoyed the recording. It's really good when you can hear all these sounds swimming, you can hear it's a full concert size and when he gets loud and plays a lot of notes, they're there. And when he plays soft, it's there too. That's the way piano should be recorded.

I think it's McCoy Tyner. It sounded really gorgeous to me. This particular music I really think is great. I recognize the composition, although I can't remember this title. It's a standard tune. I would give this five stars for the solo piano piece.

**6. GIL EVANS.** *Aftermath The Fourth Movement Children of the Fire*, (from *There Comes A Time*, RCA). Hannibal Marvin Peterson, composer; Dave Sanborn, alto sax; Gil Evans, arranger, conductor; Ryo Kawasaki, guitar.

This, to me, is more like a sound effect; it has a certain structure, but is very much a visual music, more visual than the music itself. It kind of felt like *Dante's Inferno*—I maybe have a preconception about it . . . I kind of like it, but it's a new kind of music that probably needs other dimensions. I don't think it stands as music by itself. For some reason—maybe it's just me—but I just get certain visual things.

It's done very well; I think there's a lot of thought. I really don't hear any particular individuals. The first theme seemed kind of like a Japanese theme, sort of repeated, then the horn came in and a kind of child element was introduced there.

It was all very well thought out, but I don't know, it's not my cup of tea. At the same time, I enjoyed listening to it. I don't know whether it has anything to do with jazz. But just taken as it is, it's very well done—maybe a bit too long for this kind of music. There was some serious thought in it, derived from contemporary music. I give four stars for this kind of music.

# PROFILE

## L. SHANKAR

BY LEE UNDERWOOD

Some of the most daring, exuberant, and technically proficient improvisational music of this decade has cascaded from the fingertips of Indian violinist L. Shankar.

He is 28 years old, and hails from Madras, South India, where he was born April 26, 1950. He is most widely known in America for his stunning

contributions to guitarist John McLaughlin's innovative Indian acoustic group, Shakti, and for his most recent work on electric violin in McLaughlin's jazz/rock ensemble, The One Truth Band.

Listeners in America are finally beginning to recognize the extraordinary technical virtuosity, the brilliance of tone, and the fiery radiance of spirit Shankar brings to his music. Last year's **db** Critics Poll listed him next-to-last in the TDWR category; this year, however, the Critics Poll listed him fourth among Established Violinists, and second in the TDWR division.

In India, Shankar's star has already risen. The most recent of his 13 classical albums, released August of 1978, was entitled *L. Shankar*. He performs from 40 to 60 Indian concerts annually. In

addition to his work in India, he tours internationally. In 1977 alone, he played 246 concerts in England, Scotland, France, Poland, Germany, Denmark and elsewhere. Several American record companies are expressing serious interest in recording him.

"It is important to me that people understand my classical background, because I am doing an educational thing, you know? I am not just an electric rock violinist. I have gone through and absorbed the traditions, and I am known in India as the number one classical violinist.

"Without that background, I wouldn't have the sensitivity, the control, the feeling, and the knowledge to play what we play. Once the background is acquired, it is much easier to step out of the bounds of tradition and create your own things."

As a boy, Shankar heard music constantly. His five older brothers and sisters played music, and his father, V. Lakshminarayana Iyer, is an esteemed Indian violinist himself. By the time he was three, Shankar could hum many of the complex lines of ancient Indian compositions. For his fifth birthday, he received his first violin. He played his first solo concert at age seven.

"By the time I was 13, I was taking music very seriously, but my parents and brothers wanted me to study to be an engineer. I always hated school, and I was always a poor student, even though I attended the best school available. I used to cut classes and borrow my friend's violin and practice in the dormitories. I am very stubborn.

"By the time I was 15 or 16, I was in demand for concerts, playing all over India with big-name musicians.

"In India, the violin had always been relegated to a secondary instrument, an instrument to accompany a vocalist or flutist or whatever. I wanted to remove it from its secondary accompanying position and elevate it to a featured solo instrument.

"So, between seven and 15, I played a lot of solo violin. I got jobs from big names who couldn't make it to the gig. They asked me to fill in for them, and I would play a solo concert for two or three hours.

"By the time I was 16 or 17, I was playing many solo concerts, and other people had started doing the same thing.

"The violin was no longer a secondary instrument. Now, today, it is a very big solo instrument. I was in great demand; I had many records; and I was regularly on national TV. That's what I had wanted. I now have the respect of the traditionalists, and I have a whole new audience of my own as well."

Jazz and pop musicians who have been entranced by Indian music include John and Alice Coltrane, the Beatles, Oregon, John Handy (with Ali Akbar Khan), Don Cherry, and Sun Ra. In spite of the efforts of these and others, however, Indian music for years remained alien to Western ears.

"By 1969, when I came to Wesleyan University in Connecticut to study Ethnomusicology and to teach music, I knew I wanted to popularize South Indian music in the West. Ultimately, I would like to bring the East and West together. That, I think, is my role.

"If I wanted to, I could simply remain in India and live very, very comfortably. By coming here, I have assumed difficult responsibilities. Every year, I go to India, play 50 to 60 classical concerts, and earn a lot of money. But I can't bring a penny of that money out of India. I can't use that money to promote my career here.

"If I am to pursue my goal, I must forego the money. I really feel it is my duty in this life to do this, to really play, and to unite East and West as much as possible."

In 1972, L. Shankar and John McLaughlin met at Wesleyan, where McLaughlin was privately studying the vina (an ancient Indian stringed instrument). "We played together for three or four hours, composed our very first piece together, and had fantastic rapport. It was as if we had already been playing together for many years.

"Until that time, I had worked with many jazz musicians, but they were never able to cross over into my sphere. I had to do all the bending. When I met John, I was delighted, because he could join



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me at that point where East and West meet, where the Western musician can meet the Eastern musician and learn. We took lessons from each other constantly, and still do. I work with him learning harmony and jazz; he works with me learning ragas, rhythms, and ornamentation (slides, bends, shakes).

"The first Shakti album that was released was recorded at a private concert on July 5, 1975, at South Hampton College. It was called *Shakti*, which means creative intelligence, beauty and power. Then came *Handful Of Beauty* and *Natural Elements*.

"I have taught many orthodox Western classical musicians about Indian music, but they all play a concerto exactly the same, and they don't know how to improvise. They are incredible violinists, of course, but from childhood they have been taught how to play mechanically. They try to master their instruments, and then deal with real artistic problems and concepts.

"In India, the children are taught how to improvise, how to explore themselves, and how to appreciate the ancient traditions.

"It is therefore difficult, but not impossible, for a Western musician to learn Indian music. John, as an example, was born in England and since 1969 has lived mostly in America. He is Western, but he

has an amazing command of his instrument; he is very, very intelligent; and he was sincere about learning Indian music.

"Indian music and jazz have improvisation in common. To play Indian music, you must first have mastery of your instrument, and you must be able to improvise. In John's case, he had the mastery; he knew how to improvise; he had the mind, the talent, the sincerity; and he had the desire to work very, very hard.

"Jazz and Indian music both demand great discipline. In India, I tell people they should listen more to jazz and learn it. Here, I tell people about Indian music the same way. The best thing a Western musician can do is to study his own culture, and then study Indian music. That way, he can have the best of John Coltrane, Miles Davis and others here, and the best of Indian people like Palghat Mani Iyer (who plays mridangam—a two-headed drum) and Rajaratnam Pillai (who plays nagaswaram—a double-reed instrument, similar to the oboe).

"In my opinion, Shakti is the first group in which the East/West blend was properly represented. It is not me writing the Eastern part and John writing the Western part. We work together.

"John knows the Eastern system, and I know the Western system. To write better music for Shakti,

we had to study each other's systems. So the music is not artificial.

"I do not use the traditional Western violin tuning, GDAE. Instead, I use a tonic-dominate tuning, EBEB, or DADA, which allows the harmonics to ring, and enables me to bring my Indian soul out so I don't sound like everybody else. I have a five-string violin, too, which gives me the viola range.

"My name sometimes confuses people, because in India there isn't a family 'last' name that stays forever. In India, we take the father's name and use its initial in front, and add a different 'last' name. My father's name is Lakshminarayana. The 'L' in my name is for Lakshminarayana. My son or daughter would take my name, Shankar, and use the letter 'S' as their initial, with a different 'last' name.

"I am not a blood-relative of Ravi Shankar's. Recently, however, my brother married Ravi's elder brother's daughter, so Ravi and I are distantly related by marriage.

"Like John, I love doing different things. Shakti was a milestone for me, a milestone for John, and a milestone for music. Shakti is by no means over. We will always play concerts and do different things. Meanwhile, I am thoroughly enjoying the electric music we are making today, some of which we recorded on *Johnny McLaughlin, Electric Guitarist*. db

## ZBIGNIEW NAMYSLOVSKI

BY BRET PRIMACK

I spent 20 years as a well known musician in Poland and Europe. But when I came to New York, it was 'Who are you?' It's hard to do something here when no one knows you."

These are the words of Zbigniew Namyslovski, perhaps Poland's finest jazz player. A listen to his first American release, *Namyslovski*, on Inner City, reveals an alto filled with power and passion. Interestingly enough, his jazz is also sprinkled with a Polish folk feel. But even though the man has obviously got some chops, he still has to pay his dues as an unknown in the Apple.

Namyslovski arrived early this summer, at the suggestion of his long-time friend and working partner, violinist Michal Urbaniak. There were two other American visits. Once, in '62, with a Polish group, The Wreckers, that included Urbaniak. The band toured the U.S. and played the Newport Jazz Festival under the auspices of the State Department. The second visit was early this year, when Namyslovski joined Urbaniak's group for a gig at the Bottom Line. Considering his limited exposure to the American tongue, Namyslovski spoke excellent English. "Every jazz musician and every jazz fan has to learn English. It's the jazz language!"

Sipping a cold glass of spring water after a long bike ride from Staten Island to my Upper West Side lair, Namyslovski was enthusiastic about jazz in Poland. Before 1956, jazz was forbidden; even Willis Conover's Voice of America broadcasts were jammed. The scene was totally underground, with back alley jam sessions and black market American albums selling for big bucks. Then, after

a change in government policy, the music flourished. Today, jazz is big. "There was a period in the late '60s when there was a rock explosion in Poland. At that time, jazz was a little less popular. Now, it's in a very strong position. There are many good musicians."

In Warsaw, there are five jazz clubs. One is strictly professional. Another is run by the Polish Jazz Society. The others are student clubs, run by the House of Culture. There is also a big festival. "Every October, we have an international jazz festival, the Jazz Jamboree in Warsaw. We have groups from all over the world. Because of this, we have more contact with live American jazz. Besides this festival, it's hard to get Western musicians because of the currency problems. We can't pay dollars and that's what everybody wants. This is a problem." Other recent visitors, with the help of the American embassy, have been the big bands of Thad Jones and Mel Lewis, Woody Herman and Stan Kenton, and the smaller groups of Stan Getz and McCoy Tyner.

Another benefit from jazz's popularity is an overabundance of work. "There is certainly no difficulty in finding work in Poland. Polish radio is very jazzy. Anytime we want to record anything for the radio, there is always a studio available. I did many hours of jazz for Polish radio. In fact, I still work on Polish radio. I have to make 220 minutes a year. Of course, I can do more if I want. Also, the situation for concerts is very good for jazz musicians. If we wanted to play concerts every day, we could. Not in Warsaw, but traveling around Poland."

Namyslovski reports that Polish jazz musicians learn mostly by listening. In addition to organizing concerts, the Polish Jazz Society holds bi-annual seminars. "I taught there. Young players come and learn. But it's not enough. There is only one conservatory in Poland where light music is taught. Only one class. It is in Katowice, not Warsaw. In high schools, they teach only classical music. It's forbidden to play jazz in high school, but it's okay if you're a student in a conservatory."

Born September 9, 1939, in Warsaw, the day the German bombing began, Namyslovski, something of a child prodigy, began music school piano lessons at the age of six. By ten, he also played cello and trombone. After his first exposure to jazz, via the Voice of America, Namyslovski started playing trombone with dixieland groups. But even though he was winning Polish jazz polls as a trombonist, Namyslovski switched to alto at 19. "I never planned to play alto. I was more interested in tenor players. It just happened that I bought an alto and started practicing. But I always tried to play like tenor players." His early alto influences were Bird and Art Pepper.

After playing dixieland, he graduated to modern jazz, leading a variety of groups. "I was also inter-



ested in the fusion of jazz, rock and folk. In '62, I organized a band called the Jazz Rockers. Jazz/rock as a music didn't exist at that time but we played something similar to contemporary jazz rock. Michal Urbaniak was also in that band."

Namyslovski's interest in folk music goes back to his childhood. "I was always influenced by Polish folk music, the music I was born with. I think Polish folk music is very interesting, especially the music of Polish highlanders, the people who live in the mountains. My compositions are very influenced by Polish music."

In 1964, Namyslovski's quartet broke up the Jazz Jamboree. "Afterwards we had many invitations from managers in Western Europe. We made a record for Decca in England, played European jazz festivals, India, New Zealand and Australia. This was a very successful period for me."

In 1971, Namyslovski got into free music. Besides the all-powerful influence of Trane, Namyslovski was turned around by a visiting group, the John Surman, Barre Phillips and Stu Martin Trio. After that, "... my group played free jazz without arrangements. We just felt each other. After a while though, it got more and more organized and arranged. I wrote more and more compositions. But times change and I no longer play this music."

Namyslovski, who plays a Selmer Alto with an Otto Link mouthpiece, has made ten albums in Poland. But due to sellouts of limited printings, the LPs are scarce. Recent activities have also included: scores for radio, film and theatre; song-writing (one of his tunes won second prize at the Polish Song Festival—"But what I compose is for my group. I'm not planning to be a songwriter!"); and an album featuring the Namyslovski alto backed by a symphony orchestra playing his compositions and arrangements.

During this visit, Namyslovski was impressed by the live music of Corea, Hancock, Duke, Airtio and Flora. "I also like very much, Mike Brecker and his mix of funk and Coltrane. This is the style I like the best."

Namyslovski hopes to remain in New York. "I'd like to stay in the United States for some time now.

But making a living here isn't easy. I had a reputation in Poland. I was one of the best Polish musicians. It was really easy to play quite often but it's better for me to work harder here. This is where

the music is happening. But it's very hard to get into the American market. I hope my next record will help. I'm planning to make a commercial record and then a straight jazz record. Then wait. db

# CAUGHT!

## SCOTT HAMILTON- WARREN VACHE QUINTET

STORYTOWNE  
NEW YORK CITY

**Personnel:** Hamilton, tenor sax; Vache, cornet and flugelhorn; Chris Flory, guitar; Phil Flanagan, bass; Chuck Riggs, drums.

The 24-year-old Hamilton, winner of the 1978 db Critics Poll TDWR award on tenor, joined forces with the polished young trumpeter Vache for some straightahead, swinging jazz at Storytowne. Unfortunately, the large room was only about one-third full on a Friday night, resulting no doubt from the club's very steep cover charge plus the usual summer-weekend exodus out of the city.

Their first tune, *Lover Come Back To Me*, began at a slow tempo, the theme tentatively played by Hamilton with a Websterish

breathy tone, as Vache played fillers behind him. The beat was picked up for Vache's warm, muted cornet solo, Riggs bouncing and jabbing away with brushes. Hamilton soloed well, running lithe lines together and playing with much rhythmic variety. Flory's guitar followed in a riffish Charlie Christian manner, resolving choruses in fresh, unpredictable ways. *Don't Get Around Much Anymore* featured excellent solos by the same three. Hamilton's was sinuous and Lester Youngish, although Zoot Sims was recalled even more. Vache was biting and humorous. Flory topped them both, improvising with a rich tone and chording most tastefully.

On *Broadway*, Vache got off quick-fingered, stabbing runs and booted the beat along unmercifully. Flory again soloed impressively in his Christian-based style, combining catchy riffs with unclipped single-note lines, contrasted by full and thick strummed chords. Hamilton started his solo with the airy Webster tone, but then quickened the pace and became jaunty and coarser, driving aggressively like Coleman Hawkins, with the strong, two-fisted Riggs pushing him to the fullest. Hamilton soloed first on the lovely ballad *Blue And*



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*Sentimental*, low-keyed, cool and mellow, with a smooth, kissing tone. Vache used his flugelhorn, getting a more cutting, penetrating sound on it than is usual, and played a well-formed, original solo. Hamilton's coda was sweet as they come, beautifully recreating Webster's foghorn sound and majestic authority.

Vache's muted cornet was featured on a quick-tempoed *Three Little Words*, and his solo was full of provocative ideas, fused together by a bountiful harmonic framework. Flory was showcased next, playing a slinky blues line called *Glide On* that brought to mind some old Kenny Burrell-Jimmy Smith things. He built chorus after insinuating chorus and sustained interest right up to a riffing conclusion.

The band ended the show merrily with *The Walker*, and Hamilton and Vache (on muted cornet) sounded a great deal like Hawkins and Roy Eldridge did when they recorded the tune for Verve in the '50s. Hamilton's solo was easily his best, throbbing and rhythmically captivating, utilizing a succulent tone. Vache wailed despite the mute—he is one of the most expressive muted brass players around.

The more traditional jazz styles are being kept alive by young players like these, and that's as important for the future of the music as it is for the past. —scott albin

## SONNY FORTUNE

THE QUIET KNIGHT  
CHICAGO

**Personnel:** Fortune, alto & soprano saxes, flute; Charles Sullivan, trumpet; Eric Gravatt, drums; Charles Eubanks, piano; Wayne Dockery, bass.

Fortune is to the alto what Hank Mobley has been to the tenor, a solid, self-effacing, straightahead hornman for whom craftsmanship means more than showmanship and who can pack more undiluted music into a 45 minute set than some swaggering "stars" deliver in a month. His recent albums have been leavened with a commercializing dose of electronics and have suffered accordingly from a touch of blandness, but there was nothing bland about the five-piece acoustic combo he brought to Richard Harding's comfortable North Side venue. The small but attentive audience was rewarded with a smoking performance by the talented quintet, which included the searing chops of up-and-coming trumpeter Charles Sullivan and the driving tempos of Sonny's fellow Tyner alumnus Eric Gravatt.

Fame has seemingly eluded Fortune, doubtless because of his unflinching musical integrity and unprepossessing onstage demeanor. His opening night set was a model of raw hard-bop improvisation, consistently informed by the Coltrane influence but never in its thrall. The overall approach drew heavily on the models of Blakey, Silver, and similar small combos of the '50s, with catchy but loosely performed heads giving way quickly to extended solo blowing. Gravatt, making a dramatic appearance with shaven head and abbreviated drum kit, infused the set with post-'60s energy, playing with a sense of taste and maturity he sometimes lacked during his tenure with Tyner and Weather Report.

The band kicked off with an uptempo 16 bar extended blues in 6/8 time, harmonized in

Silverish thirds. Sonny's alto reverberated in keening wails, then broke into quicksilver scalar inventions, reflecting more the influence of such tenorists as Trane, Shorter, Rollins, and Mobley than that of any of his fellow alto players. Sullivan followed with a slashing solo, his flat, hard tone and cutting attack uncannily reminiscent of Lee Morgan and showing more potential than any trumpet hopeful has displayed in years. Pianist Charles Eubanks performed a brief but tasteful bop excursion, comping chunky chromatic chords against bluesy modal arpeggios, while Wayne Dockery, Workman-like on bass, plucked dark variations on the melody as he articulated rich lines with full-bodied vigor. Throughout, it was Gravatt who provided the momentum with crisp stickwork on the high-mounted ride cymbal and crackling shots to the snare.

Eubanks introduced the second tune with an extended piano interlude that was one of the highpoints of the evening. His Chopinesque rhapsodizing gave way to a richly chorded gospel theme steeped in jazz sentiment, lush and romantic and yet supple and restrained. Dockery joined in with a Coltrane-Tyner ostinato and Fortune harmonized with the haunting low tones of his flute. The elegiac theme segued into an uptempo bridge behind a quick Latin beat and then back to the bridge for a long fiery solo, soaring brilliantly over Gravatt's surging pulse, his knife-like tone cutting through the instrument's entire register at breakneck speed, quoting finally from *A Love Supreme* before turning it back to Sonny. As a flutist, Fortune lacks the emotive urgency he displays on saxophone, but he negotiated the sinuously twisting bop configurations with the same admirable fluency. Eubanks displayed traces of Tyner, Powell, and Silver during his extended break as Gravatt pressed him forward with relentless drive.

To close the set Fortune chose the standard *Invitation*, which the quintet steamed through with unballadic velocity. Dockery walked the bass through a propulsive solo, the thick-toned notes resonating around the changes with the chunky solidity of a woodsman's axe. Sonny then traded fours with Gravatt, his alto churning with rising frenzy after each percussive explosion. He continued to pour on the heat after that, adopting a Tranish inflection as he soared through a blizzard of notes, his alto ringing with plangent metallic urgency as it strained against the twisting configurations of the angular boppish lines. Sullivan kept the pot boiling with some of the evening's hottest licks, coaxing his horn ever higher until the tone threatened to shatter. Finally the group turned to the head for a last chorus, leaving the audience hungry for more.

Fortune's current band has to be one of the cookingest ensembles presently on the scene, so it is a shame that they are not attracting a wider public. Sonny's approach may be somewhat monochromatic, but within his chosen groove he is one of the most solid and swinging altoists around. Eric Gravatt seems to have found his muse at last and must be recognized for the master percussionist he has become. Eubanks and Dockery may be relatively new to the scene, but seem destined to gain more exposure before long. As for Sullivan, who has been featured on Sonny's last several albums, I would rate him up alongside any of today's trumpet heavies right now.

—larry birnbaum

## JOE FARRELL QUARTET

DONTE'S  
LOS ANGELES

**Personnel:** Farrell, tenor sax and flute; Jaco Pastorius, bass; Victor Feldman, acoustic and electric piano; John Guerin, drums.

The dark but cozy Donte's in North Hollywood was enlivened recently by the intense, exploratory sax of Joe Farrell. In the first of two sets, Farrell thrilled the 150 or so patrons with five tunes, some his own, others classics in jazz. His performance on tenor, characteristically energetic, with sweeping melodies and impromptu excursions into the dissonant, and flute, with its sweet, fluid phrasings highlighted the show, may have overshadowed the electric bass wizardry of a lean young man with hair pulled back in a short pony tail.

Until he was introduced following the second tune, the only clue the audience had to this bassman's identity was the rapid, unorthodox method by which he hammered out precise and calculated melodies and rhythms. And when Jaco Pastorius, winner of this year's down beat Critics Poll as the top electric bassist in contemporary music, was introduced, the small crowd let out a thunderous ovation.

Both Guerin and Feldman gave excellent solos at different points in the set, first Feldman in a beautifully moving electric piano piece on *So What* and later Guerin in an expansive and probing duet with Pastorius in the midst of *Everything Happens To Me*.

But this show belonged to the saxophonist and bassist. *So What* kicked off the set and immediately Farrell was issuing rapid blasts and bleats. The tense sound—a seeming musical impatience to get on to the next note, next bar, next phrase, next movement—was offset by virtuosity. Farrell made deft use of the low register while improvising in the tune, which is largely founded in the higher notes. He also showed an intensive and attentively cultivated feel for instantaneous time changes that did not interrupt the tempo but which offered new tones in the context of what seemed to be the same breath.

As a leader, Farrell shined on *Silver Lace*, a cut from his latest album, *Night Dancing*. He ventured into this ballad with a full, commanding tenor solo and later with an upbeat solo on flute, reminiscent of his work on the LP *Rites Of Spring*. In both solos, he inched ahead of the rest of the band, offering the other players a few bars of improv for them to latch onto and respond in kind. All answered with ease and confidence, especially Guerin, who was particularly outstanding in catching the melody and molding rhythms for it. But the drummer was not content with simplistic beat lines; rather, he willingly accepted the spontaneous challenge and met it with haunting, often ominous riffs and rides that differed with every note. There was no repetition here, simply unadulterated, continuous creation.

After an old Kenny Dorham tune and *Everything*, in which Pastorius and Guerin interacted with ease and clarity, it was time for the bassist to shine once again.

Introducing Charlie Parker's classic *Donna Lee*, Farrell said Pastorius was the only bassist

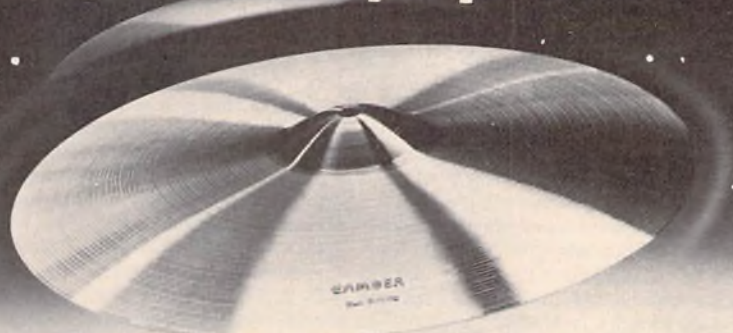
he has ever known "with the guts" to adapt a Parker tune for electric bass. The number started out even enough, with Feldman and Farrell leading the melody, and bringing the tune to a snappy height before giving way to Pastorius.

From that point, the music seared with excitement. Although the bass lines were weakened slightly by a stage amp speaker, Pastorius compensated by unleashing a powerful, relentless attack on his instrument. His body shaking with the jolting tension of the beat and reacting to the undulations of each chaotic line, Pastorius sped from lows to highs, blending free form with the melodic, venturing up and down the fret board with graceful tenacity. Each note was crisp, the tonality clean. There were so many different

sounds coming out that at one point the other band members stopped their accompaniment to watch Pastorius wail. Not since I witnessed an Eberhard Weber concert have I heard such a splendid array of sounds mixed so excitedly and with such remarkable continuity into the context of one piece—and Jaco didn't have five strings.

Farrell had to walk over to Pastorius to get his attention—Jaco had exceeded his time limit. As if awoken from a trance, Pastorius stopped with a rather startled expression, then smiled and laughed reassuringly. The band picked up again and Farrell climaxed the first set with a ceaselessly energetic free-form piece that had the crowd on its feet with appreciation for an altogether stirring performance. —*Chris Shuey*

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from the previous one."

Masucci is outwardly confident about the future, though Columbia's commitment to the Fania All-Stars is up for renewal. He reports that Pacheco has already started on a new album with the All-Stars for '79 release. Chattaway, too, believes the labels' association is secure: "The commitment will surely continue, because the records are making money," Chattaway says.

Still, rumors abound that the All-Stars sales history has fallen below Columbia's expectations. Fania itself has tapes in the can which it would release were the agreement with Columbia dissolved, but '78 has been a slow year for salsa generally, according to a recent *Billboard* article headlined "Salsa Sales Plummeting." It quoted an anonymous record company executive: "While the Spanish speaking audience, according to our surveys, still outnumbers the fully bi-lingual and primarily English components of the Latin audience, the shift in favor of English has already begun and should be complete across the U.S. within the next three years."

Will Columbia, a major label and a powerful musical force in the marketplace, be patient for three more years, awaiting the evolution of a folkloric music, or will it try to hasten the trend? Perhaps an English-speaking Latino artist will make the breakthrough outside of the salsa tradition, as Carlos Santana did. If salsa's success is predicated upon English language lyrics, what will become of the vocal improvisation which singers of salsa have refined to such a high art that their utterances are expressive beyond language lines?

Will salsa enthusiasts hold their breath until the '80s, satisfied with pale imitations while the music of tradition lapses back into barrio anonymity? The All-Stars, after all, had few Stateside performances in 1978. After the Garden, a July 4th date at Belmont Park race-track, and two West Coast gigs they headed for Venezuela, where a rapidly growing audience will see Pacheco tour with his own small band, abetted by Celia Cruz, this autumn.

Has salsa's popularity peaked, or is it still growing?

"Let me tell you this," offers Jerry Masucci, "what didn't happen, we haven't had any pop hits. Everyone's looking for it. But as far as growth, as far as sales, and as far as personal appearances goes, it just keeps getting bigger and bigger. This year we sold out the Garden again. The music is sweeping across South America, and even creeping into Mexico, which is very nationalistic. So it's growing one way or another."

Will Latin music continue to gain exposure?

"I think so," says Johnny Pacheco. "In the past the old guys really stuck to one thing only. We're more flexible now. If a trend is on the way, we try to put a little flavor of it in there. We're not so strict. We're definitely reaching more non-Spanish speakers with the All-Stars, through Columbia—they're doing a hell of a job reaching certain elements we couldn't get to through Fania."

"You know, Europe is a little slow yet. But we did a concert at the Lyceum in London, and we sold out, and people flipped out. There were a lot of kids from Puerto Rico in the Army over there, and they started dancing, and the English, when they saw that, tried to imitate them. Well, they had a ball." **db**

48 □ down beat

and I'd be playing the tympani. I was into anything I could possibly find.

And young drummers should get involved in music theory, keyboard harmony mainly. Keyboard harmony teaches you about music itself and how to deal with the sound of other instruments.

After you've absorbed all that, then don't listen to anything but yourself. For awhile, after you've got all that together, then you look for your own individual personality. After you've saturated yourself on all this other stuff, and you're satisfied with yourself there, then you don't listen to anything, you seek yourself out, which is the hardest part of it. Develop your own individuality. One of the most difficult things for all human beings, because of our condition, is to accept what we are, the way we look, the way we talk, the way we walk, especially the way we sound. You have a tendency to listen to your first recording and you want to hide when somebody says, "Hey, I want to play this for you, you're on it." I don't want to hear it! That's just a tendency. We criticize ourselves. That all comes from education.

Our education system is so goddamn one dimensional, at times it's Germanic. Although we may come out of an American university with a doctorate, when we go to a culture outside of the standard Germanic cultures, we're just like the most naive people in the world. We criticize the way other people sleep, eat and what the hell kind of music is that you're playing on those metal instruments! The first time I went to Japan it was, Jesus Christ, what kind of bathroom is this? What is this sleeping without a bed? Raw fish? I remember I went to Sweden, I couldn't read the menu, I was out by myself at a restaurant and I saw Stake. I said, OK, I was trying to be sophisticated but after it, it had the word Tartare, which is raw meat. Now I never eat raw meat! They probably knew I was an American. I said, "Would you please take this back and cook it for me." Later on, I found out you just don't do things like that. But I'd never seen that. It wasn't a familiar thing in my environment.

I'm saying our educational system doesn't prepare us, many times, to deal with that part of us that would open us up. The system says you got to be an "A," otherwise you're wrong. It's a difficult thing to criticize because, being in education, you see a lot of things. But we frighten students to death. You should do the ultimate you possibly can, but at the same time you're not supposed to inhibit a person so that he's afraid to make a mistake. Students, young musicians, young drummers, should not be afraid of that.

Just take everything in and after you do that, then shut everything out and go for yourself. And that's good advice, not only for drummers but for anybody who is trying to develop some kind of personality that's identifiable only to them. Be strong and brave enough to stand up and say, "It's me!" If they want to throw tomatoes at you, stand up and take it. If they throw flowers and money at you, take that too. But don't be afraid of saying, "Oh shit, it didn't make it with the public that time." Take that and keep right on going. So it isn't easy, but it's a lot of fun trying to do it.

**Primack:** What are your thoughts on the tremendous popularity of artists like George Benson?

**Roach:** I think it's all relative, really.

George is such a fantastic musician, such a great guitarist. He reminds me of King Cole in a sense. King Cole was such a fine pianist. The way Benson sings, he sounds like a cross between maybe Stevie Wonder and someone else. But when he does sing, he's very musical with it and that comes from the fact that he's such a fine instrumentalist, a musician in general. What Stanley Turrentine, Freddie Hubbard and them are doing . . . I hear rumors sometime that they're unhappy with it, but they're making money. They're happy with the capitalistic society. Your success in the arts is measured by the acceptance that you get publicly. They still are playing, though. Stanley blew that way when he was working with my group, he sounded like that then.

Now I don't have much respect for a player like Sonny Rollins, who now all of a sudden because a record company executive tells him to coattail on this kind of groove, he plays it. He's playing the intelligence of the public cheaply. For him to say now I'm going to be a Stanley Turrentine because somebody told him to. Stanley's like that honestly. When he was with me, he sounded like that, big and bold, not as complex as a Sonny Rollins. For Sonny to do that, it's like someone insulting your intelligence. I don't know whether Sonny realizes that or not, whether Orrin Keepnews does or not. I don't have any respect for that. Sonny can get into it if he likes. It would be like if Basie's band all of a sudden turned into Maynard's style because Maynard was selling a lot of records. It would sound strange to me. It would be like, is Basie trying to bullshit me? That kind of thing I don't quite dig. I really don't. That's insulting. I don't think he's making that kind of money either. I really don't think Sonny comes out honest and sincere.

Mingus is trying to do the same kind of thing. I don't think they're going to sell as many records as Fleetwood Mac and that crowd. They're bad, those guys, honestly. They don't even attempt to do the things that Mingus and Sonny are doing, they're where they are and they do whatever they do well and they're handling it businesswise and using all their smarts. They're certainly not letting people take advantage of them.

**Primack:** What young players do you respect?

**Roach:** Well, there's a young saxophonist, Sulieman Hakim. I like him very much. I think he's going to be significant. He's a hard worker. He came up to the university but he's in Europe right now. But they're all across the country. You know, one thing about this music is the fluidity of it. Although I could name people, I know this music allows each generation to produce. It's not like traditional European fare, or traditional Indian music where things have to be this way and the people of coming generations will never have a chance to be heard because they can never get past the Bachs and the morning, noonday and evening music of India. This is why I think this music is so infectious all over the world. A lot of people are engaged in it. Because we had a Coleman Hawkins didn't mean we couldn't have a Lester Young and then on up to a Charlie Parker or a John Coltrane. Because we had a Louis Armstrong didn't mean we couldn't have a Dizzy, a Miles or a Freddie Hubbard. So this music has always allowed every generation to function. We got Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder and I know there's going to be more all on down the line. . . .

**Primack:** But nobody's really come along



since Bird and Trane to turn it around.

**Roach:** There will be. I'm sure there will be. 'Cause Lester turned it around, Hawk turned it around when he first got here. So it's always there. Johnny Hodges turned it around and then all of a sudden came Benny Carter and Bird. And then there was Ornette. He may not have had the kind of impact that Bird had but he still has to be seen. People ask me that question. Where do you think the music is going? I say, the fluidity means there's always going to be somebody there who will come up with it. It's not a closed shop. It's an open shop. It can come from anyplace.

**Primack:** But considering our educational and economic system, most inner city kids don't get a chance to learn this music.

**Roach:** What we're doing at U Mass is setting up the Fletcher Henderson Scholarship Fund, that will deal with the inner city kids predominately. We'll give benefits and things like that to finance it. We're on the verge of talking to some recording companies to give us some assistance on that. That is a problem. The only way it can be solved is like the NEW MUSE situation that Reggie Workman is involved in out in Brooklyn. We need little community centers throughout the country, in the inner city, because these kids really don't have an opportunity to go to college.

One of the biggest problems with getting the jazz major approved at the university was the entrance exam. To get into a conservatory setting or a music department in a school of higher learning, you have to have an entrance exam. An entrance exam is almost like these damn SAT tests. It's like, you go into the instructor with whatever instruments you're playing, and if you're playing piano, you have to play some two part inventions. You have to read a little music. You don't have to be proficient at it but you have to show you're familiar with it. Inner city kids, you say play a Bach two part invention, easy as it is, they wouldn't know what you're talking about. But by the same token, they may sit down and play music for you on an instrument but they wouldn't be accepted.

Now percussion players, they have to play some of the repertoire. You play a little something on the mallet instruments, a little something on the tympani, nothing really hard but it's just a question of familiarity. Maybe you've had a little of it in high school. So what we decided was, and we fought for this, if someone can come in and sing like Aretha Franklin, give them the opportunity now to study theory and writing and all the things. But don't go and destroy all that quality and try to make her into a Beverly Sills or someone like that. Just take what she has and give her the tools. And this is the way we enter students now.

Before, a kid could come in and they'd say play this Marcel Mule thing or that. He might have had problems because he doesn't know what that is. But in the meantime, if you said, play Lester's solo or Bird's solo, he could run it right down. So our entrance, see that was a big thing. These kids were blocked out in the beginning because they didn't know what the entrance exam was. Oh, you can't read? It wasn't are you a musician, but if you can't read. . . . So we had to break that down which we did.

Before, Erroll Garner would have been turned down, Art Tatum would have been turned down. Louis Armstrong would have been turned down. So that's the big problem

continued on page 50

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with the inner city thing. Now U Mass has solved that problem, our music department has, but I think that's only one way of doing it. I think there's room for a conservatory within the inner city community and I think it should be sponsored by the recording companies.

Berklee's doing a good job. A kid can go to Berklee, he can learn something and go out there and get a job now. He can work in a rock band, maybe get some studio work, he can do some arranging, maybe go with a Basie or Ferguson, he can go with Buddy, he can go with anybody—he's trained to sit in. Those who are learning the traditional fare in the Germanic fashion have to wait till somebody dies in a symphony orchestra, or get a job teaching. But the teaching thing is overloaded. Or get a job in Schmirer's music department or at ASCAP or BMI, monitoring. Or just forget about it and go into some other business altogether.

But these kids that come out of Berklee can make money almost immediately because they can deal on some kind of situation that is, they're part of what is being bought and sold in music today. That's what it teaches them. And all the conservatories are not even looking at it like that. They don't even deal with American music. They look down their noses at bluegrass, country and western. It is part of us accepting ourselves, that's where it's at. And you don't hear it no place in the world but here! We should accept all that stuff and deal with it in schools of higher learning.

They'll argue with us about it. And jazz comes under that category, of course. I think it's damn unpatriotic, I really do. I mean, they talk about patriotism and nationalism. Music

departments are so interested in promoting operas that were written so long ago. Not that they are bad, but it doesn't give today's people an opportunity to deal with anything. They've got to be subservient. But to do something new and difficult—that reflects what's going on here and now. It's very difficult.

**Primack:** Do you think this music can be taught in the university setting?

**Roach:** Well, heretofore it hasn't been taught on a formal level except in a clinic situation. Now at the university, we're trying to do that. Here was a music that everybody had to know from listening to records and going to joints and clubs and watching the older guys and asking questions and figuring out everything for themselves. Which is a good way to become an individual. That system is good.

But now to take that and not corrupt it and put it in a formal setting is the problem, because it's loose. To be like Charlie Parker, as far as being as profound as him, but not to sound just like Charlie Parker.

To teach a person that kind of thing, you've got to give him almost a free setting and say okay, you can analyze this and that and the other. The way it was been going along, everybody has had to do it on their own in a sense.

To take that kind of loose learning process and put it in a formal setting is going to be a trick 'cause it is contradictory to the way things are taught. When you go to music school and learn counterpoint, it has to be done a certain way and everybody has to sound and do it the same way. It's not individualism. Everybody has to play Beethoven a certain way. When you say you're going to

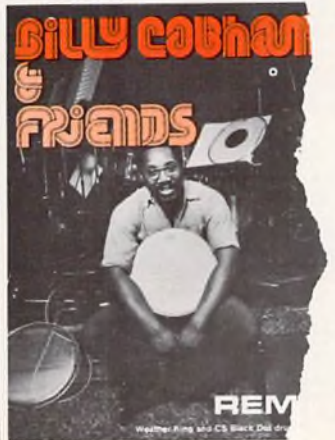
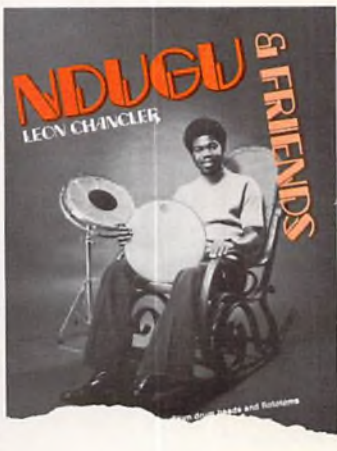
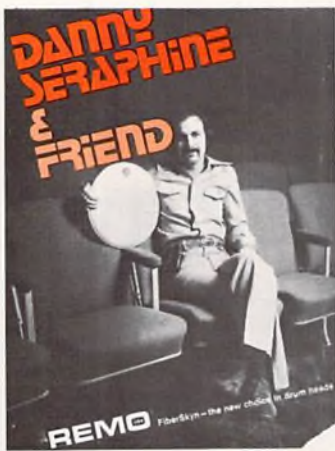
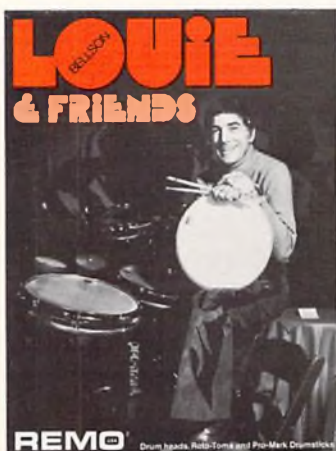
play the *Fifth*, it's got to be a certain way, otherwise it's wrong.

I remember when Abbey Lincoln, who is a very fine lyricist, wrote a lyric to one of Theolonious Monk's pieces. She decided to record it, and to do that, you need the consent of the composer, naturally. In this case, Monk was invited to the studio when she was doing the piece. In between takes, he walked over to her and said something very quiet to her. Later, after the session was over, I asked her what he said. She told me, "You know what he whispered to me? Make a mistake! What did he mean by that?" I said, "Well, he was trying to say, 'loosen up.'"

Mainly he was saying don't be afraid to make a mistake. Don't sing so that it doesn't have any feeling. Give it some humanity. Just 'cause he was there, she was trying to sing it, everything just correct, straight as he had written it. Monk never plays his own music that way himself. But it was a nice way of putting it. That was an education. He was saying something profound but the way he was saying it was short, succinct, to the point. He said, "Make a mistake." She said, "Well, I always heard Monk was strange." Now that was really something! db

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made. There were many beacons, but in jazz none shone so brightly as John Coltrane. To a generation of musicians Coltrane epitomized the unrelenting search for realization and peace; the affirmation of love by a man searching for sainthood in a frantic, often brutal world.

"The biggest thrill I got when I was playing in Chicago was the time Coltrane came to town. It was at a place called McKee's Lounge. I used to go down there to play in the jam sessions. So I was there one night, and Elvin disappeared for the last set. So Coltrane was going to go up, and probably would have gone up without a drummer, but McKee said, 'Hey Coltrane. Let Jack go on. He comes out and sits in, and he's a good drummer.' So Coltrane didn't even bat an eye. He respected McKee enough to say okay, and we went up and started playing immediately. *Let me tell you, I was scared shitless—I mean, Coltrane.* I held my own, but I was very nervous playing with Jimmy Garrison and McCoy Tyner. That was the most fantastic feeling in my life—playing with Coltrane. And he was like a train. He was like a locomotive. I felt this magnet pulling on me, he just had so much energy. I played three tunes, and I was just about to play *My Favorite Things*—and I said, wow, I'm going to play *My Favorite Things*—when Elvin came back [laughter], and said 'Thank you, baby.'

"When I first heard Elvin play with Trane, using those triplets that could go anywhere against the harmonic structure and the 4/4 beat, I said *that's the shit.* And it wasn't stiff, the feeling of Elvin's time was so loose and perfect. He'd never rush tempos. If anything he laid back more than he moved ahead. And Elvin had so many other things together that just fit perfectly with what Trane was doing, like that dang-du-dang, du-dang-dang cymbal ride.

"That quartet was one of the greatest groups ever. I know some people think that Coltrane was playing anger through his horn, but his music was just very intense. Coltrane's music is about love to me, and love can be intense and honest, and honesty can be very deep and cutting. To a person who is not in tune, it can appear to be very negative, and very angry. And that's not what I get out of it. Coltrane's music is very uplifting—it brings me to the point of tears it's so powerful. Now he said he saw God at one point; his music was a religious experience to him—a revelation. He saw man and the universe as One, at peace with each other, when he played his horn. He saw peace and harmony in his music—everything was in its right place. His music was a projection of love and peace; it was medicinal; it was a healing force.

"Now that's one of the things that's missing in music today. I mean the Art Ensemble has it. That's why I've started to choose those people who have that spirit about them, like Lester Bowie. Cats that have that wisdom. *People aren't reaching for things anymore.* There are still a lot of things to reach for.

"I could have stayed in Chicago and been a good piano player or a drummer, but I was searching. I'm still searching. And New York is the place. I remember Muhal saying to me, 'Well, Jack, you don't have to worry about going to New York because Chicago has prepared you for anything you might meet there.' There was this big thing about coming to New York. I guess things started changing in Chi-

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## DeJOHNETTE

continued from page 51

Chicago used to be partying town—lots of sessions—but then commercial organ trios started to come in and there were less and less places to play, so finally I decided to leave because I had exhausted all of Chicago's possibilities. And New York is the place. I was inspired to come to New York by my first wife Deatra, who was always talking about how I was going to New York. In April of 1966 I took my drums and \$28 to New York, just for the weekend. I never came back.

"The first place I went when I got here was Mintons. I sat in on drums and piano with a band that included Blue Mitchell and Junior Cook. One of the people in the audience that night was the organist John Patton. He heard me play drums, and he said 'Hey man, you workin' with anybody?' And I said no. And he said 'Well, you've got a gig.' I told him I had to go back to Chicago, and he said 'Man, you might as well stay.' So we did a gig at the Galaxy with Harold Vick on tenor where we played for strippers. That's how I made my first money in New York, and I was lucky there was no cabaret card scene.

"I stayed at the Sloan House YMCA on 34th St., and then Pat Patrick helped me out. He let me stay at his house for two weeks until I saved up enough money to get my own apartment. At that time Slugs had just opened up and Birdland was still operating. I used to hang out at Birdland and I met the people I'd heard on records, like Hank Mobley, Philly Joe Jones, Art Taylor, Walter Perkins and Tony Williams. Tony had a good influence on me in terms of cymbals—he influenced a lot of people. And I took Tony some steps further.

"I became friends with a lot of drummers, and I began incorporating all of the drummers that I liked into a style. People like Milford Graves, Sunny Murray, and Donald Bailey.

"I haven't heard Milford in a long time, but whatever he's doing I know he's taking care of business. Milford's energy is ridiculous and his movement is beautiful. Movement is so important to a drummer, and Milford puts everything into his movement. The last time I saw him it was like his hands and feet were in constant motion. It was fantastic—he was like a puppet on a string.

"Sunny Murray was good because he wasn't so much interested in playing time as in opening up space, and creating color and motion.

"Now Donald Bailey is a cat that most people aren't hip to. Where some drummers might suggest one, he would play over the beat. Roy Haynes is another cat that does that. They would back the beat up and turn the beat around, and you really have to know where you are to play with them. I used to play with them on my melodica, and it was cool because I dug where they were coming from.

"I began to freelance around New York with a lot of people. I even played again with Coltrane at the Plugged Nickel and at Slugs. And I mean I worked that gig. We'd start around 9:30 and go until 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning, and I'd be so wiped out from the gig that I'd go home and sleep until four the next afternoon. On the breaks Coltrane would go into the back and practice, and Rashied [Ali] and I were like at each others throats at that time.

"We were from two different schools of drumming. I mean I was playing very loud at that time, and Rashied had a way of playing in-

tensely without volume so much. I dug what he was doing at the time, but I didn't hear it come together until the quartet with Alice played Newport. Rashid just made this stream of sound so that Coltrane could go anywhere. You could watch him and see what he was doing, and even though you knew what he was doing, you still couldn't figure out what he was doing. He played broken paradiddles in sixs, sevens and nines, but Rashid's playing is very deceptive. He always had his flute, so he was aware of melody and harmony and how what he was doing would fit."

Even he doesn't know how he does some of his effects, I suggested.

"Well of course. You're not thinking five stroke roll or whatever, you're going for the sound. You can't be spontaneous and think in rudimentary terms. It has to be like automatic pilot so that your technique and emotions come together in that one instant."

\* \* \* \* \*

DeJohnette went for the sound, and musicians went for him. Jack freelanced with McCoy Tyner, Joe Henderson, and Charles Tolliver, and with singers Abbey Lincoln and Betty Carter.

"Abbey and Betty were a high point in my career. I was honored that they chose me for their drummer. Working with singers is great because you have to push them and still maintain dynamic control."

DeJohnette's Sunday afternoon sessions at Slugs with Charles Tolliver led to a stint with Jackie McLean that lasted on and off for three years, starting in 1966. At about the same time Reggie Workman, who had played with Jack in Abbey Lincoln's band, called DeJohnette to tell him that Pete LaRoca had left Charles Lloyd. Jack joined the band, which later regrouped with Keith Jarrett and Cecil McBee on bass (Ron McLure played bass after McBee) to become one of the most popular bands of the late 60s.

"Charles Lloyd was the first jazz band to play the Fillmore—it was us and Gary Burton. The group also went to Russia, which was just like being in a movie. We were invited over by a Russian jazz society, and we went to play for no money. George Avakian scraped together expenses.

"It was a thrill to play for those people. When they heard us doing free form improvisation they just freaked out. It's still debatable as to whether, if had Charles been white, he would have been more successful, because the amount of press we got was unbelievable. But the band didn't get the recognition it should have in terms of what it was."

After leaving Charles Lloyd, DeJohnette played with Bill Evans, Stan Getz and Jackie McLean. "Miles came by way of Jackie McLean. Tony Williams had been discovered by Miles while he was with Jackie. So Miles started to come around to hear Jackie to hear me.

"Jackie said to me, 'You're going to be Miles' next drummer, and I know, because I always get the drummers first.' I had just quit Stan Getz, when Dave Holland called me and said that Tony had just quit to form Lifetime. So I called Miles, we haggled about price, and I joined them for a gig the next week in Rochester. That band was a lot more avant garde than people were ready to admit. Miles and I learned a lot from each other in three years, and when I got tired of it, I left.

"When I left Miles I wanted to do something different but I wasn't ready for my own



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band yet, so I got into Compost. Compost was more or less a group of friends who got together to present what we thought was commercial-type music, which turned out to be not jazzy enough for the jazzers, and not rocky enough for the rockers. We were left in limbo by the record companies—which were becoming very powerful and corrupted at that time. As far as the music business was concerned, Compost was a great eye opener. I learned for one thing not to have a manager. The pressure of being a big superstar was something I didn't want to deal with, and the music became more business than pleasure. Our manager was Brian Lane, who was also Yes' manager. At Columbia we had to have a manager, because you couldn't get any type of a deal without one, which is how the big time works. So we ditched Brian Lane, who really wanted to ditch us because we weren't the real rock and roll band he thought we would be. Columbia only wanted us because they wanted Yes. We were about to put out a single, when I just decided I'd had enough. I remember a statement which was really funny. We were up to the company and a Columbia executive told us, an executive mind you. "Well, what you need is to go out and get yourself a bunch of groupies. If you don't want to hang out with them, get your roadies to ball them. Groupies spread the word."

From that point on DeJohnette took the steps that lead to his current unit, Directions. He had done two solo albums for Orrin Keepnews on Milestone, *The DeJohnette Complex*, and *Have You Heard*. Next came *Sorcery* with Mick Goodrick, Dave Holland, and his guitar alter-ego, John Abercrombie. Then *Cosmic Chicken*, which marked the inception of Directions. The group went through numerous personnel changes and made two albums for ECM, the second—*New Rags*—one of the most powerful fusions of classical, jazz and rock elements ever recorded. When reedman Alex Foster decided to leave, DeJohnette got tired of sax players for a while, and he was pleased when Lester Bowie agreed to join the group. Eddie Gomez had been Jack's partner in Bill Evans' trio, and Abercrombie retained the guitar chair. "I thought that with the diversity of styles we contained, if we could make it work it would be tremendous." The album *New Direction* is a measure of the band's successful integration of unique stylists.

Jack DeJohnette continues to work on a variety of projects, including the Gateway trio (with Holland and Abercrombie) on ECM. The new album, *Gateway 2* seems to mark a mellowing in DeJohnette's playing. Something to do with his peaceful Willow, N.Y. surroundings, and the spacious ECM concepts.

"The new Gateway album isn't as frantic as the first because it was more directed. I don't mean laid back, but getting the most out of the energy—making everything count. As something develops, certain parts of it become more refined, and in other parts the rawness tends to get redirected. Space can be as intense as a lot of notes.

"The value of economy is that you can get almost the same reaction with it as you can with frantic energy. When that frantic energy is gone, you come down real fast. But when you get that energy that sort of seeps into you—captures you before you know it—when you go off into that it tends to lay with you for a

long time afterwards. It's also a matter of developing or getting older or getting in tune. I mean, even in Coltrane's later things you can still hear him searching in his playing, but there's a place where he's found some peace.

"You know, there isn't a good environment for musicians to play in like when I was growing up in Chicago. They all have to come to New York and deal—get record contracts. It's not like when I grew up—the schools were in the street. The music has to get back into the streets again—become more tribal before things get too comfortable. That's something people have to watch. Even though you get your bread, and your house, and the car and whatever it is materially, that's no reason to lose your intensity. Miles and Coltrane had the material thing down, but there was still that edge, that challenge in their music. And I still feel that way. Even though some people might think it's tapering off or mellowing, that's okay. There's nothing wrong with being mellow. Mellowing out is very deceptive, because what's on the surface may be raw, but it won't stay that way all the time. Invariably your nature has to change, be broken down, refined; and then something new has to come out of that. We're constantly being recycled through phases. Everybody has to go through those changes to get to their next level—their next synthesis. People just follow that pattern. I think that's where things are at right now."

Jack was all talked out for the afternoon. He got itchy and started to walk around outside. Jack had swooped to the country five years before, but there is still an awesome urgency to much of his playing. During dinner Jack talked excitedly of new projects he had in mind: an album with David Murray, Arthur Blythe, and Peter Warren; a date with Mick Goodrick, Eddie Gomez, and John Surman; some projects with Phillip Wilson and Don Moye; a maybe project involving Wayne

Shorter. And always a positive remark about the sensitivity and power of his new band. He wanted to let them know in this article just how much love and respect he had for them as people and musicians.

DeJohnette and Lydia returned me to Kingston via Karl Berger's Creative Music School in Woodstock. Within a large room in the school was the most awesome array of percussion I'd ever seen. Rows of Paiste gongs and cymbals, mallet instruments, drum sets, tuned garbage cans, and Henry Threadgill's hupkaphone—a set of automobile hubcaps from Rolls Royce on down.

Threadgill, Anthony Braxton, Don Moye, Joseph Jarman, Thurman Barker, Malachi Favors, and Roscoe Mitchell had been rehearsing a Mitchell percussion suite. DeJohnette and his cohorts from Chicago embraced and exchanged current news. Don Moye entered, resplendent in white robes. Unconsciously, Moye and DeJohnette came to the conga drums and began a casual exchange of rhythms. Before anyone knew what was going down they were playing for keeps.

Streams of sweat pored down their brows as the 6/8 ceremony became molten with emotion. Students from around the school began gathering to see who was responsible for the magic sounds. DeJohnette and Moye continued their dialog for more than half an hour. When it was over, Roscoe Mitchell looked up from the floor where he'd been listening and said "Man that made my day."

Moye laughed at DeJohnette and told him "Your hands are going to kill you in the morning."

"They be screaming now," said DeJohnette. When we emerged from the school DeJohnette lingered to marvel at the bejeweled sky. I remained in a stunned twilight state the whole trip back to the city. The peace of the country and the power of the drum dialog lingered with me all the while. db

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HOW TO welcomes a guest.

From time to time, acknowledged experts contribute to this column. This time—and with pure pleasure—HOW TO welcomes a jazz giant, Louie Bellson, whose thoughts on a variety of percussion subjects follow.

Dr. William L. Fowler

# HOW TO

## DEVELOP A CHOIR OF DRUM SOUNDS

BY LOUIE BELLSON

Many years ago, after a concert with a full orchestra, a very reputable violinist walked up to me and said, "You know, you have your own choir of sounds—all the highs and lows that come from a symphony orchestra. Come to think of it, you are an orchestra all by yourself."

These words have been with me ever since. They have more merit and logic as time goes by. It is true, we are not dealing with actual tonality as from a tympani or from mallet instruments. But the great relative sounds we can achieve from our sets will indeed help the band or orchestra. When a player has the emotional touch and quality of an artist, the results are those of a good orchestra.

A choir of sounds—yes.

SOPRANO—snare drum

TENOR—large tom tom (tenor drum)

ALTO—small tom tom (alto drum)

BASS—bass drum

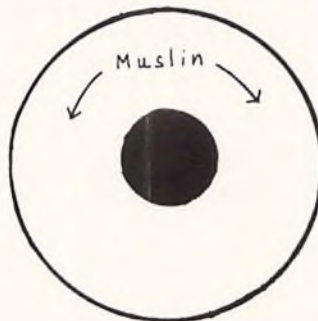
Since the tympani is the only member of the membrane group that produces a definite pitch, we must rely on a relative pitch. An exception, however, would be the ROTO TOMS. They are magic, and come the closest of any drum to actual pitch. By the way, the combination of ROTO TOMS and the set drums is very good.

The standardized way of tuning for years has been to tighten the batter head on each drum tighter than the opposite side. Today, we find that by tightening the opposite side a little tighter, we gain flexibility on the batter head. Fine tuning is required, but I am sure you will be happy with the results. One old process for fine tuning is throw-off snares. Place a finger or thumb at the middle of the drumhead and press slightly. Using a stick in the other hand, tap lightly near the rim at each tension rod point. Make sure the sound is the same all the way around.

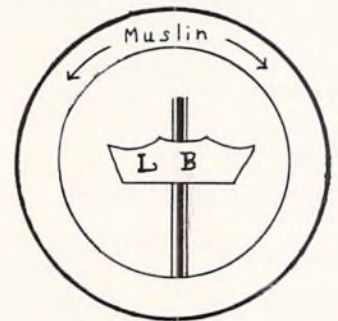
On the bass drum, I use a fine muslin cloth available in any department store. I use this cloth because it's just the right texture for muffling.

Back (Remo C.S. head)

Front (Remo regular head)



Muslin covers all but the black dot area



Muslin covers two-inch strip

This idea of muffling eliminates the strip idea and produces more of a center sound out of the bass drum. The front head of the bass drum is a good sound, too. It all depends on whom you are playing for and what you personally desire.

Drummers who record a lot or are in the studios 90% of the time are naturally conscious of the sound. Some players use Duc tape. Others use moleskin pads. Some even loosen tension rods to get the flat (not ringing) sound that is popular today.

It is important to change heads. A drum head does wear out and loses its sound after a certain period. I use Remo DIPLOMAT heads for the batter side on the snare drum and tom tom's. For the bottom on the snare drum, I use an AMBASSADOR head. On the ROTO TOM's, I use medium Remo FIBRE SKYN heads. I use these heads because I can use brushes on the heads for dynamic effects.

I use a model stick similar to a 5A. I use both an all-wood stick for solos and a plastic-tip for cymbal work—a light weight or medium stick on cymbals (especially for jazz) produces just enough cymbal sound along with the stick sound.

Drummers today are aware of the rhythm section and tune their drums to fit that particular sound. The type of group, the size of the group, and the style of music it plays is a big factor. All-

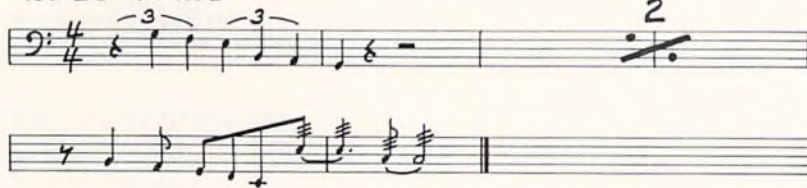


ways be open for new ideas and listen to what is going on. For example, rock drummers use a more muffled sound as opposed to jazz drummers, who produce a more open sound.

With all this in mind, it is still important for the drummer to develop a personal sound and style of playing. As Duke Ellington used to say, "Style is the man himself."

Recently, my band recorded direct to disk. One of the tunes was Ellington's *Don't Get Around Much Anymore*. Remo set up a series of nine ROTO TOM's so I could handle that particular drum part. There were three 8" drums, four 10" drums, one 12" drum, and one 14" drum. I had the melody in the beginning:

### Roto Toms



Drums are like a car. They need attention, like changing heads, oiling tension rods, and checking snares. If your equipment is of top quality and the drum heads are in good condition you should be able to produce your own choir of sounds.

Always think musically when applying your own sounds to other members of the band or orchestra. It is important to practice alone, of course, but it is also important to play with other instrumentalists. This is where you get experience in blending your own choir of sounds with any band or orchestra. This is where you can prove yourself as a musical drummer.

Here are a few examples of rhythms that will help you develop your choir of sounds. For your convenience in capturing the *feeling* of each pattern, they are all recorded.

### "Ostinato"

Lalo Schifrin

R.H. - on bell of Cymbal  
 L.H. - stick on rim of snare drum  
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## perspective

BY LEE UNDERWOOD

### Concord Records' Carl Jefferson

"I believe in musical purity, not manufactured music," says Carl Jefferson, 57, the man who founded Concord Records in 1974. "The music we're putting out now goes back 40 years. It's never died. It's always been there, and it always will be. It's got a lasting quality. It's very sophisticated music, rather than very boring modal music.

"With the exception of a few younger artists like Scott Hamilton, Dave Frishberg, and Grant Geissman, most of the artists we've recorded are people who have already gained their reputations and established themselves in the music business." A few of the established artists who have appeared on Concord include Bud Shank, Art Blakey, Herb Ellis, Al Cohn, Hank Jones, Tal Farlow, and the late Joe Venuti.

"Although it happens that *Scott Hamilton II* has been on the charts for six weeks, we didn't design the record to do that. I'm not interested in trying to sell gold or platinum albums; I'm not interested in that at all because, in the first place, in order for it to be jazz, that's not going to happen.

"The so-called 'charted' albums aren't jazz per se. Fifty percent of them aren't even in the area of jazz. Jazz in itself is a relatively small slice of the total market to begin with, and we are just a segment of that. What we're going for is musical purity in the American art form, which is jazz.

"I don't think we're in 'bop' music at all. We are in an area that is unfortunately referred to by less professional people as 'mainstream jazz.' I don't really know what that is. Most of our music is with acoustic instruments; it has excellent rhythmic qualities; and, strangely enough, it has melody lines. I guess it all boils down to some terrible thing—like it's got the clap or something—called 'mainstream jazz.' To me, it's only really good music. I'm a strong defender of the art, of the state of the art, and of the people that perform.

"Fortunately, there are many people who like our music. We're doing well both domestically and internationally. Apparently, there is a keen appreciation of quality production as well as quality music. By October, 1978, we will have released 75 albums."

Carl Jefferson, a third-generation Californian, grew up in and around San Francisco, where, as a lad of 14, he was already "bopping around in clubs like Jack's Tavern and the Club Alabam. I got hooked on jazz at an early age," he avows.

He was in the service twice, after which he instituted the Concord Summer Festival in 1969 and maintained it for eight years.

Carl, who "just accidentally got into the recording business," feels that an independent

label such as Concord is forced to buck some heavy odds.

"The major companies in the industry can control the receptiveness of the audience. They control the media. They can hype the music. They can release a record and actually *make* the consumer like it. But an independent label such as ours can't afford to do all those things. That makes it difficult for us."

According to Jefferson, the rock music of the '60s did not succeed because it reflected and expressed the deepest emotions, values, problems and aspirations of its millions of adherents.

"I can't buy the rationale that music succeeds because it's 'the music of its time,'" explains Jefferson. "Does that mean rock wasn't hyped? Of course it was hyped. Rock was not the music of musicians. It was the music of business. You could certainly never state that it was an outgrowth of marvelous musicianship. It was just *marketed* as music. The rock period of the '60s was a horrible wipe-out. It just about eclipsed jazz musicians from the entire scene."

Nor, according to Jefferson, was the demise of jazz in the '60s due to what Chick Corea called "musicians painting themselves into abstract, esoteric, dissonant little corners that nobody cared about except those few elitists who played it for each other, eliminating any concern for the needs of the listener."

"Jazz did *not* paint itself into a corner," said Jefferson. "Jazz just didn't have the money to hype itself, nor did it have the social situation that rock had—the Viet Nam war, the protesting, the rise of various kinds of narcotics.

"I think we have a serious renaissance of musical minds going on right now. A lot of musicians, the Herbie Hancocks and so forth, are reassessing their positions. They've been molded into doing things commercially that were artistically desensitizing experiences for them. I've heard a number of established artists say, 'I'm tired of playing this crap.'"



Jefferson feels strongly that the business of Concord should revolve around the artistic integrity of the music. "Some people in the record business approach music purely from a dollars-and-cents point of view. A lot of things get sacrificed because of that.

"A record maybe should have been recorded on a 16-track, and maybe it should have been remixed, but it often doesn't get done that way, because it costs money. Not only does the recording turn out poorly, and it's pressed on a crappy piece of thin, recycled

# books

**THE MAKING OF JAZZ: A COMPREHENSIVE HISTORY**, by James Lincoln Collier. Houghton Mifflin Company, 543 pp., \$20.00

**DUKE ELLINGTON IN PERSON**, by Mercer Ellington, with Stanley Dance. Houghton-Mifflin Company, 236 pp., \$10.95.

More jazz records are being issued these days than ever before. And so it seems, too, with books. Publishers have discovered the music once again. Arlington has brought out important discographies. Abrams has given us a fine picture essay by Brask and Morgenstern. And MacMillan is due this year with an anthology edited by John Hammond called *The Golden Era Of Jazz*. For these two volumes here, however, we can thank the Houghton-Mifflin Company.

The Collier book is quite simply the finest general survey of jazz history since Marshall Stearns' *Story Of Jazz* nearly 20 years ago. And since Stearns is somewhat obsolete at this point, *The Making Of Jazz* now must be considered the basic jazz history in current publication. It is strongly recommended as a primary text in any serious high school or college course on jazz history.

There are several reasons why it's so good. First, it is even-handed and relatively immune to romanticism. It is not the sort of book that traditionalists can throw down before the avant gardists with an arrogant "I told you so." Nor is it one the contemporary listener can use to smite the heroes of swing or bop. Collier finds value in the contributions of virtually all the major figures. All, that is, except the free jazz mavins who seem to violate his basic artistic principles a bit too much.

To Collier, free jazz came a cropper over its hangups with black ideology. It espoused individualism and collectivism at the same time. Furthermore, it rejected standard music theory, substituting instead the random expression of raw emotions. The result, particularly in ensemble playing, was total disorder, a complete absence of rational relationships. "I submit that the direct expression of emotion is not the point," Collier writes. "A baby's cry, a slap in the face, the thrashing of the body in orgasm . . . are direct expressions of emotion. Art, we have always held, is something different: the organizing of symbols in such a way as to call up a response in an audience. It is not the artist's emotion that matters; it is the listener's." This orientation affects his view also of Cecil Taylor and John Coltrane.

Collier has little patience with any messianic interpretations of a musician's career, and Coltrane is no exception. He describes how his "sheets of sound" style brought a half century of chord system development in jazz to its most intricate plateau—"the end of the road." Collier describes Trane's movement into modes, which started with his work on Miles Davis' *Kind Of Blue* LP, and how he added a polytonal element by using two chords at once. But his drift into free jazz and his growing inclination to believe all those articles that called him a genius made his final

years somewhat muddled. There is a noticeable lack of enthusiasm in Collier's attempts to come to grips with these most recent seminal figures.

His chapter on Miles and the M.J.Q., however, is most revealing. He brings into sharp focus the break that separates bop from contemporary music. One cannot understand the greatness of Miles unless one accepts his relative mediocrity as a musician. On that simple premise, Miles succeeded in reversing the dominance of virtuosity in jazz. Clearly not able to play in the same ballpark as Dizzy, Howard McGhee and others, he built his own ballpark instead, spare of architecture, lean in design. He became influential, in part, because his music was more easily accessible to younger players, his technique less commanding. More important, however, his lack of emphasis on virtuosity was complemented by a corresponding simplification of the basic principles of the music itself. In an effort to escape from the thickening web of chords that jazz had been drifting into since bop and Miles' own *Birth Of The Cool* sessions, Davis looked to modes, i.e. clusters of notes or a scale, to provide the basis of improvisation. Beginning with *Milestones*, he fully explored modes in *Kind Of Blue*. It was Davis' spare simplicity of style and the modal framework he ultimately created for it that made him a major figure.

The simplicity of the modal approach was also very attractive to rock musicians and jazz-rock groups in the '60s, who adopted its simple principles widely. It was ideally suited for a rising generation of self-taught guitarists who desired immediate gratification. Collier touches on an interesting point in the Coltrane chapter: "The nature of Coltrane's wider audience is significant. It consisted of young people . . . of the Woodstock generation. Rock music of the time was essentially modal. Consequently the modal sound of [*A Love Supreme*] was more familiar to these listeners than to older jazz buffs." Therein lies the bridge that connects jazz to the fusion movement, but unfortunately Collier fails to cross it. It's perhaps the most significant omission in this otherwise magnificent study. The fact that fusion amounts to little more than teenybopper jazz doesn't put aside the fact that many confuse it with the real thing. Just look at any *Billboard* chart of top "jazz" LPs. Collier owes it to his readers to put this offshoot in perspective.

A major strength of the book is the way Collier so clearly sorts out the musicological issues and makes them understandable, with a little effort, to the untrained reader. Points are made in terms of specific performance citations to which the reader can turn. Even the most seasoned fan will probably learn much from this work.

There are always points one may dispute in a volume as vast as this, particularly when it is intelligently provocative. Collier makes a serious mistake, I think, in his discussion of Louis Armstrong, which dwells in great detail on his work from 1923 through 1928 but dismisses the great orchestral masterpieces of the early '30s with little more than a brief, passing mention. Performances such as *Basin Street Blues* (1933), *Sweethearts On Parade* (1930) and *Sleepy Time Down South* (1933) surpass all but a handful of his '20s work in tension, inventiveness, passion and sheer drama. Yet, Collier passes them by completely here.

It is nevertheless refreshing to hear the es-

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established gospel on performances such as *Blue Seven* by Sonny Rollins challenged, even if the challenge somewhat misses the points made by Martin Williams and Gunther Schuller years ago.

Perhaps the most interesting sub-theme of Collier's history is the almost Spencerian strain of rugged individualism running through it. Herbert Spencer, you may recall, was the 19th century philosopher who spun Darwin's theory of natural selection (i.e. survival of the fittest) into a program of social policy. Spencer, Emerson and a stern sense of Presbyterian discipline combine here in a way that permits the author to make a distinction between talent, which any critic is entitled to judge, and character, which is a rather new way of approaching jazz.

The first important writing on jazz was done in the '30s by young writers very much influenced by the idea that individuals were suffering from the failures of the social system. The New Deal years were a time when the best minds looked for ways to make society safe for the individual. I mention this because this view seems to have dominated the way jazz writers have dealt with the many tales of personal chaos that have affected the lives of certain musicians—Beiderbecke, Berigan, Powell, Parker, Holiday and so on. More often than not, writers have preferred to blame self-destructive life styles on racism, poverty, crooked managers and the general social milieu rather than admit that a hero like Lester Young might simply have been weak in character.

Collier gives little quarter to such rationalizations here. Of Bix, he says, his "troubles were mainly of his own making." Of Billie: "a staggering lack of self-esteem." Of Charlie Christian: "a naif who died of foolishness." Fats Navarro "allowed his life to take a chaotic turn." And so on down the line. Collier excuses Parker for his excesses on the grounds that he was a certifiable lunatic and presumably, therefore, not responsible for his actions. But others are held strictly accountable for their careers. "Art is shaped not just by talent," he says. "It is cut with the chisel of character as well. . . . To blame blacks' emotional troubles solely on Jim Crow is simply to say that blacks do not have the strength to accommodate themselves to the strain." And what do you do with the Red Rodneys, Chet Bakers, the Bixs and Bunnys?

It follows that character also shares a part in success. Of Gillespie, he writes, "One of the few of the early boppers who did not destroy himself. He ran his career with intelligence." And of Ellington, "What is perhaps most instructive is the matter of character. Ellington was a mature, completed personality. He had taste, intelligence and a nature that allowed him to select sound artistic goals and move towards them. He did not get involved with drugs; he learned to control his eating and drinking; he went on studying and learning and letting his art grow. In 1926 Bix was five years younger than Ellington, but nearly ten years ahead in artistry. It is stunning to think

what he could have achieved had he had Ellington's character. But it was Ellington who had the character, and it counted for more than talent."

Mercer Ellington gives us an extraordinary look into this amazing character in his book, *Duke Ellington In Person*. Written with Stanley Dance, Mercer proves himself an articulate, intelligent portrait painter of his father.

It is really almost too sketchy to be called a biography, although his account does follow a general chronological order. It is more a profile, full of anecdotes and observations that bring us closer to Duke than we have ever been before. A few samples: "I think what put him into show business in the first place, more than anything else, was that it was a good way to get a girl to sit beside you and admire you as you played the piano." "Despite the fact that he was involved with so many women, I would say that, apart from his mother and sister, he had a basic contempt for women." "Pop's attitude toward drugs was governed by the fact that the musician was an artist, and he recognized that artists were given to strange ways of living. He never admonished anyone for anything he did that was wrong in the eyes of society." "I firmly believe that from around 1950 onward, Ellington began to develop a pronounced form of paranoia. He blamed different things on different sets of people. When something bad happened on the international level, he often saw the handiwork of communists, financiers or both." "He surprised the hell out of a late party in Houston by airing his belief in a Faggot Mafia."

Mercer gives us also liberal doses of stories about the incredible characters Duke surrounded himself with in the band—Paul Gonsalves, Ray Nance, and more. How the band was blacklisted in Las Vegas for several years, Duke's preoccupation with his health, and the relationship with Billy Strayhorn—all are also discussed in interesting detail.

While we might have hoped for more, Mercer's portrait is still a delight, as well as one of the more valuable discussions of a remarkable figure of 20th century music. It is highly recommended.

—John McDonough

PERSPECTIVE

continued from page 58

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NEW YORK

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## KANSAS CITY

**White Hall (Topeka):** Dan Hearle Quartet, Gary Foster Quartet, Clark Terry Quartet, Carol Corner Quartet, Paul Gray's Gaslight Gang (10/22); call (913) 273-0186 for times.

**Jewish Community Center:** Monte Alexander Trio (11/19).

**Ramada Inn (Overland Park):** Pete Eye Trio (Mon.-Sat.).

**LeCarousel (Muehlbach Hotel):** Mayer/Robinson Trio (Tue.-Sat.); Occasional name jazz acts.

**Mark IV:** Jimmy McConnell Quintet (Mon.-Sat., 9-1).

**Boardwalk (Seville Square):** Mark Hart Trio (Sun. 7-11 pm).

**Alameda Plaza Roof:** Gary Sivils Experience w/ Lou Longmire (Mon., Tue., Fri., Sat.); Steve Miller Trio w/Julie Turner (Wed., Thurs.).

**Crown Center Hotel (Signboard):** Blend w/Leslie Kendall (Oct.); John Lyman Quartet (Fri., Mon. 4:30-7:30 pm).

**The Inn:** Jim Buckley's Big Band (dixieland, Tue.-Sat.).

**Eddy's South:** Greg Meise Trio (Mon.-Sat.).

**Women's Jazz Festival:** Jazz Party (11/12); Write P.O. Box 22321, K.C. Mo. 64113 for further information.

**Strawberry Patch:** Amdahl Wolfe (Mon.-Sat., 9-1).

**Club Swahili:** Bill Hemmans Quartet Jazz Lunch (Mon., Wed., Fri., 11 am-2 pm).

## SAN DIEGO

**Le Chalet:** Bruce Cameron Quartet (Sun. aft., Mon. night); The Jazz Corporation (Tue. & Wed.); Farrar Four (Thurs.); Anita Robbins/Marvin Robinson (Fri.-Sun.).

**Sports Arena:** Foreigner (10/26); Styx (10/27); Merle Haggard (10/28); Billy Joel (10/31); Pat Travers/Rush (11/16).

**India Street Jazz Festival:** Call 298-8111.

**UCSD Jazz Fest:** Call 452-2303.

**Old No. 7 Distillery:** Storm (Sun.).

**Prophet Vegetarian Restaurant:** Bill Coleman/Fred Rath Group (Wed.); Lori Bell/Pam Soper (Fri. & Sat.).

**Community Arts Gallery:** Ceta VI (Wed.-Sat.).

**Albatross:** Nova (regs.).

**Fat Cat's:** Boogie Woogie Blues Band (Tue.); Dodge City Peace Commission (Wed.); Joe Bozo Progressive Band (Sun. & Mon.).

**Chuck's Steak House (La Jolla):** Butch Lacy/Hollis Gentry Quartet (Fri.-Sun.); Joe Marillo Quintet (Mon.-Thurs.).

**Crossroads:** Bruce Cameron Quartet (Thurs.-Sun.).

**Moonlight Gardens:** Call for update on Charles McPherson Quintet, others (436-1447).

## BUFFALO

**Klienmans Music Hall:** Maynard Ferguson Orchestra (10/22); George Shearing with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (11/9).

**Shea's Buffalo Theatre:** Ramsey Lewis and Freddie Hubbard (10/20); Count Basie Orchestra (10/28).

**Fillmore Room (Univ. of Buffalo):** Jazz symposium with Monroe Berger, Benny Carter and others (10/27); Benny Carter in concert with trio and with University of Buffalo Jazz Ensemble (10/28); call 831-3411 for information.

**Clark Gym (Univ. of Buffalo):** Phoebe Snow and Dan Hill (tent. 10/15); Billy Cobham (tent. 11/5).

**Moot Hall Night Club (Buffalo State College):** "Buffalo State Loves Jazz" with: Buffalo State Jazz Ensemble (11/3); Mark Murphy and Sonny Rollins (11/4); Sun Ra and Sam Rivers (11/5); live broadcasts on WBFO-FM and WEBR of certain perform-

ances; jazz workshops in the afternoon with Rollins and Murphy (11/4) and with Sun Ra and Rivers (11/5); call 862-6728 for details on other events.

**Traffamadore Cafe:** Jazz (Thurs.-Sun.); local groups (Thurs.); big names (Fri.-Sun.); call 836-9678 for schedule; live broadcasts on WBFO-FM and WEBR.

**Downtown Room (Staller Hilton Hotel):** Jazz (Wed.-Sun.); Barbie Rankin and Friends (formerly the New Wave) (10/4-7, 10/11-14, 10/18-21, and 10/25-28); Paul Gresham Quartet (tent. 11/1-4, 11/8-11); T.B.A. (11/15-18); call 856-1000 for information.

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

**Tara Manor:** Jack Bacon and the Morgan Street Stompers featuring Eli Konikoff (Fri. & Sat.).

**Quincy's:** Dick Griffo Quartet (Tue.).

**Northwest Community Center:** Jazz instruction sessions led by the Buffalo Jazz Workshop. (Wed., 3-5 pm; Thurs., 4-6 pm; Sat., 1-3 pm; call 876 8108 for details.)

**WBFO (88.7 FM):** Jazz Mon.-Fri. 2-5 pm, 11 pm-3 am; Sat. 3 am-12 noon, 12 midnight-6 am Sun.; Sun. noon-2, 11 pm-8 am Mon.; Jazz Alive (NPR) Thurs. 9:30 pm; Stephane Grappelli and David Grisman (10/19); Oregon and John Coates Jr. (10/26); Tito Puente/Machito/Mongo Santamaria (11/2); Carmen McRae/Don Menza Sextet/Sam Most Quartet (11/9); Wild Bill Davison All Stars/Urbie Green All-Stars/New Black Eagle Jazz Band (11/16); call 831-5393 for program guide.

**WEBR (970 AM):** Jazz 8:05 pm-1 am.

## LAS VEGAS

**Landmark:** Charlie Schaffer Trio/Carol Stevens (Skytop Rendezvous).

**Sahara Vegas:** Helen Reddy (10/12-18); Tony Bennett (11/5-15).

**Sahara Tahoe:** Diana Ross (10/6-19); America (11/3-5); Kenny Loggins (11/10-12); Lou Rawls (11/17-19); coming: Chicago and Donna Summer.

**Sands:** Sonny King/Bob Sims Trio (nightly).

**Convention Center:** Fatback Band (10/14).

**Frontier:** The Goodfellers (lounge).

**TBA Reno:** Rush/Pat Travers (11/12).

**Tropicana:** Chris Fio Rito (lounge).

**Larry's Lariat:** New big band policy.

**Chateau:** Peer Marini (Fri.-Wed.).

**Blue Heaven:** Sonny & Jack Cordare/jazz jam (Fri.-Sun.).

**Jody's Lounge:** Jazz jam (Sun., 4 pm).

**Stardust:** Copeland Davis Group (regs.).

**Musician's Union:** Big Band Rehearsals (Wed. & Fri., 10 pm).

## MONTREAL

**Rising Sun:** Art Ensemble of Chicago (10/24-29).

**Rainbow Bar & Grill:** Bug Alley Band (10/23-26 & 10/30-11/2).

**C.J.'s:** Ivan Symonds (Mon.-Sat.).

**La Grande Passe:** Jam sessions (Tue.).

**Rockhead's Paradise:** Nelson Symonds (Wed.-Mon.).

**Café Mojo:** Sayyid Abdul Al-Khabyr (Thurs.-Sun.).

**Station 10:** Jazz Knights (Thurs.).

**Chateau Madrid:** Maple Leaf Jazz Band (Fri.).

**Museum of Fine Art:** Pepper Adams (11/5).

**El Casino:** Vic Vogel Big Band (Mon.).

**Les Deux Pierrots:** Jacques Jourdan Big Band (Tue.).

**SAW Gallery (Ottawa):** Houle/Stepien (11/15).

**Beacon Arms (Ottawa):** Jazz Ottawa jazz session (Tue.).

**Wildflower Café (Ottawa):** Local jazz groups (Thurs.-Sat.).

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

**Four Seasons (Ottawa):** Local jazz groups (Sat. aft.).

**The Pub (Carleton University, Ottawa):** Stephen Barry Blues Band (10/19-21); Downchild Blues Band (11/9-11).

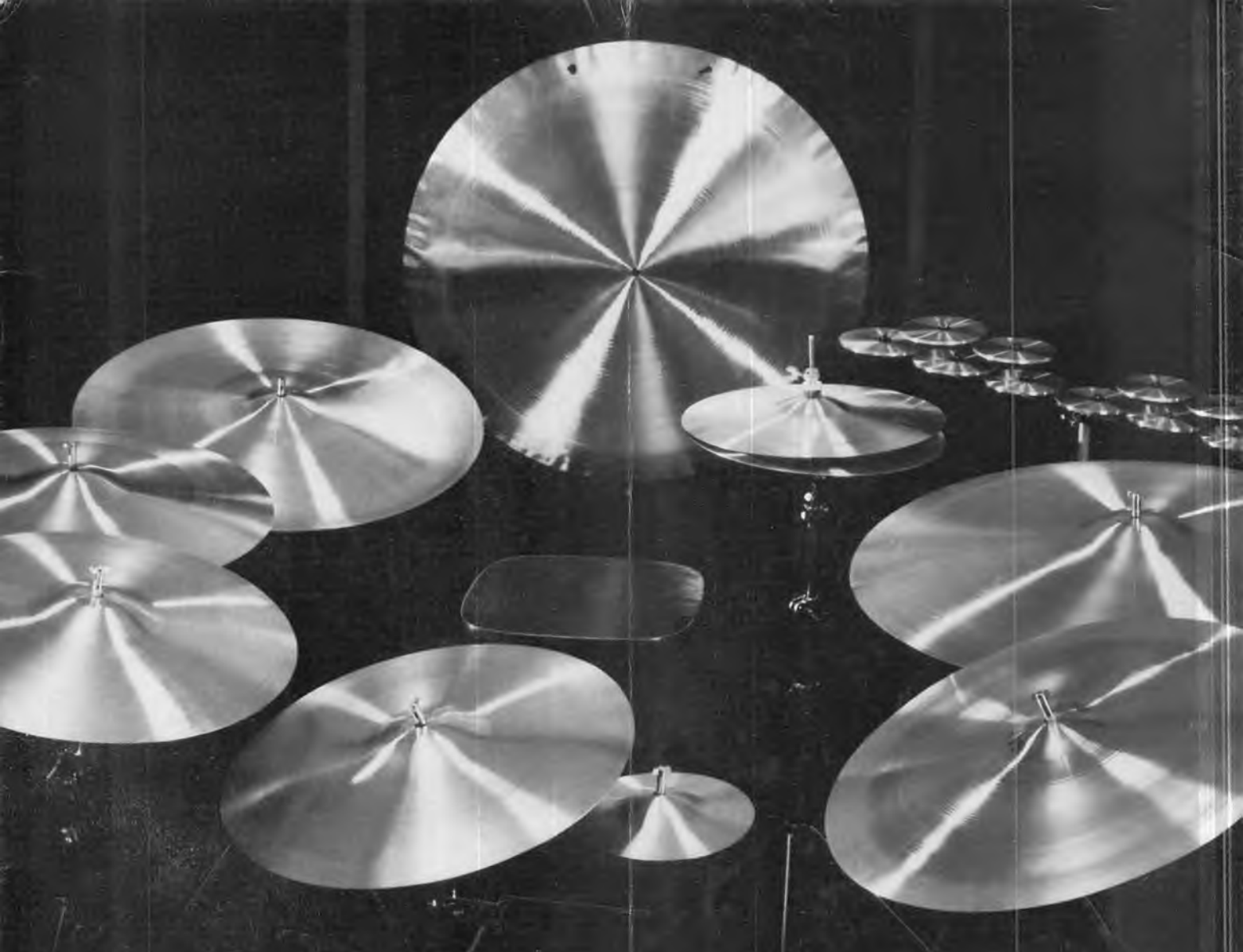
**Theatre de l'Ile (Hull):** Air Raid (11/13).



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