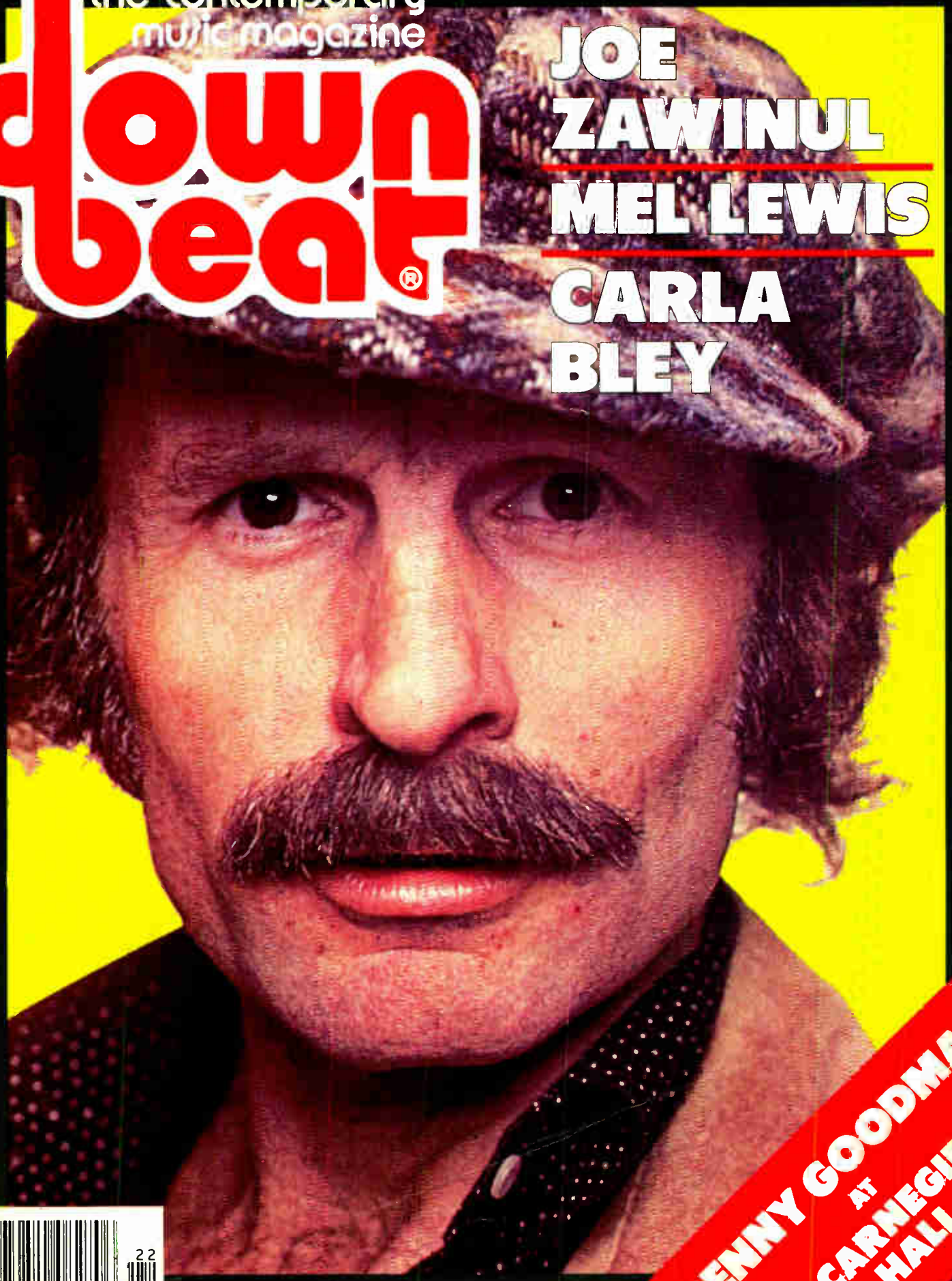
JUNE 1, 1978 60¢

the contemporary music magazine

down beat®



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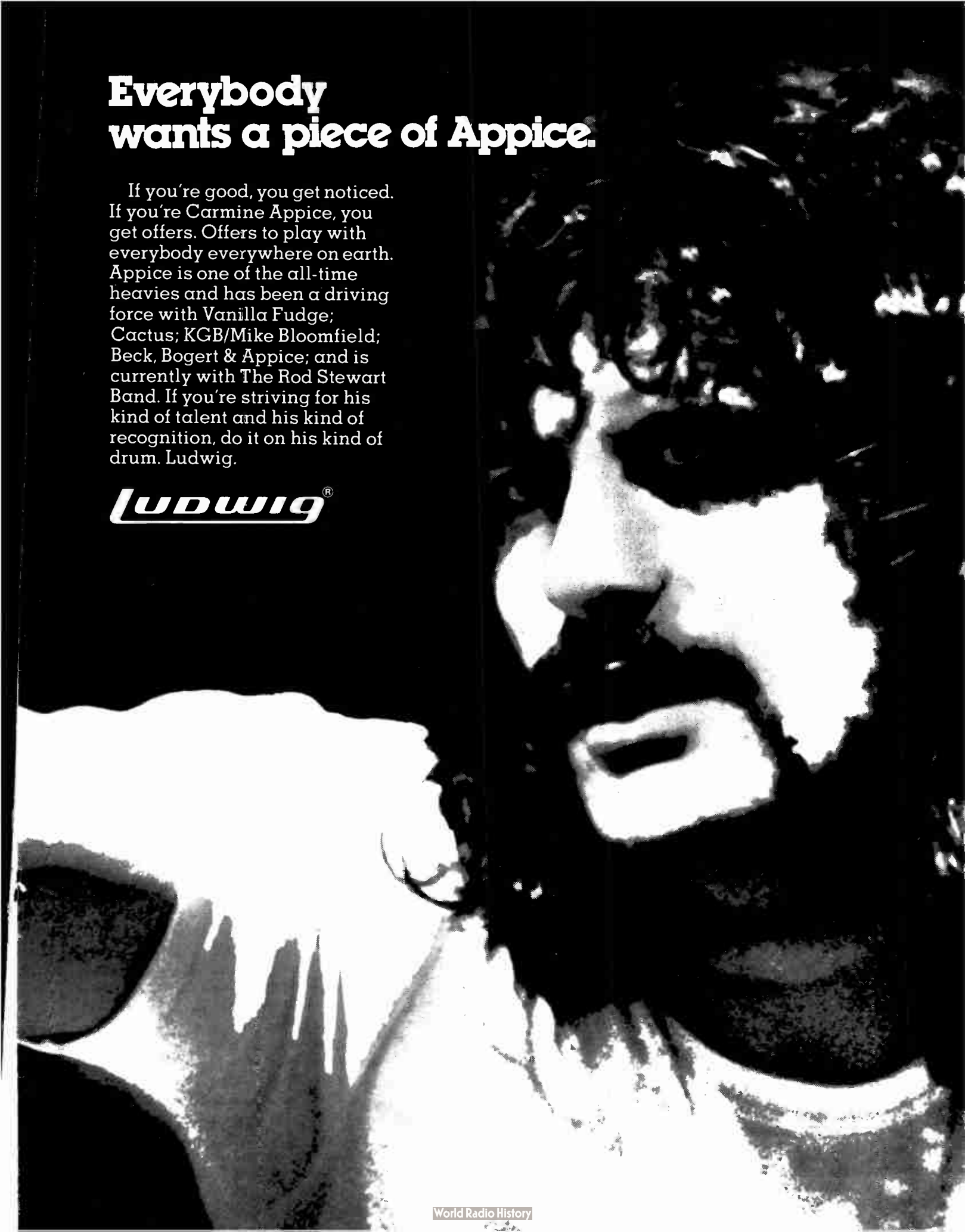

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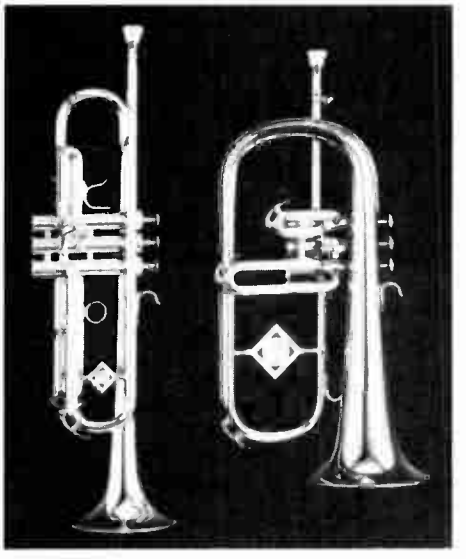

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education in jazz

by Clark Terry

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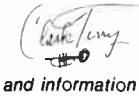
The Berklee teachers also have the kind of dedication it takes to turn out students who are aware of discipline, self-respect, sharing with one another, and who know the value of love in yourself and in the music.

My personal ties with Berklee and its staff go way back. In fact, I remember playing in what is now their new Performance Center when it was a movie and show "palace". Now it's one of the best halls in the country . . . another plus for the students and Berklee.

Because of my past associations with Berklee and its staff, I'm honored that they are establishing a scholarship in my name.

What with festivals and tours and clinics, I do a lot of traveling. And it seems no matter where I am in the world, there's a Berklee trained musician wailing through the charts—keeping our music alive and growing. That's got to be the best recommendation any school could have.



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the first chorus

BY CHARLES SUBER

Along about this time of year, our mail bag is heavy with inquiries about jobs and schools. Because it's impossible for us to answer individual letters, please consider this column an attempt to hit on the most frequently asked questions; such as, *How do I get a job as a (studio musician, teacher, manager, engineer, and on like that)?*

Getting a job in music is not very different from getting a job in any profession that requires facility, creativity, and the performance of a service. There is no formula; there is very little luck other than what you make for yourself. It starts with dues paying: learning, listening, and hanging out.

As is so evident in the Joe Zawinul and Carla Bley interviews in this issue, there is no substitute for learning all the technique and all the theory however and wherever you can—street education and/or school education. But learn you must; there is no faking technique.

Listening is really the foundation of contemporary music education. To again mention Bley and Zawinul, they learned most of their considerable craft by listening to the masters of yesterday and today. But listen, LISTEN with both ears again and again and again.

Both Bley and Zawinul, and virtually any musician I ever met, got their first gig from hanging out with their betters. One musician recommends another, there is no better reference or job agency.

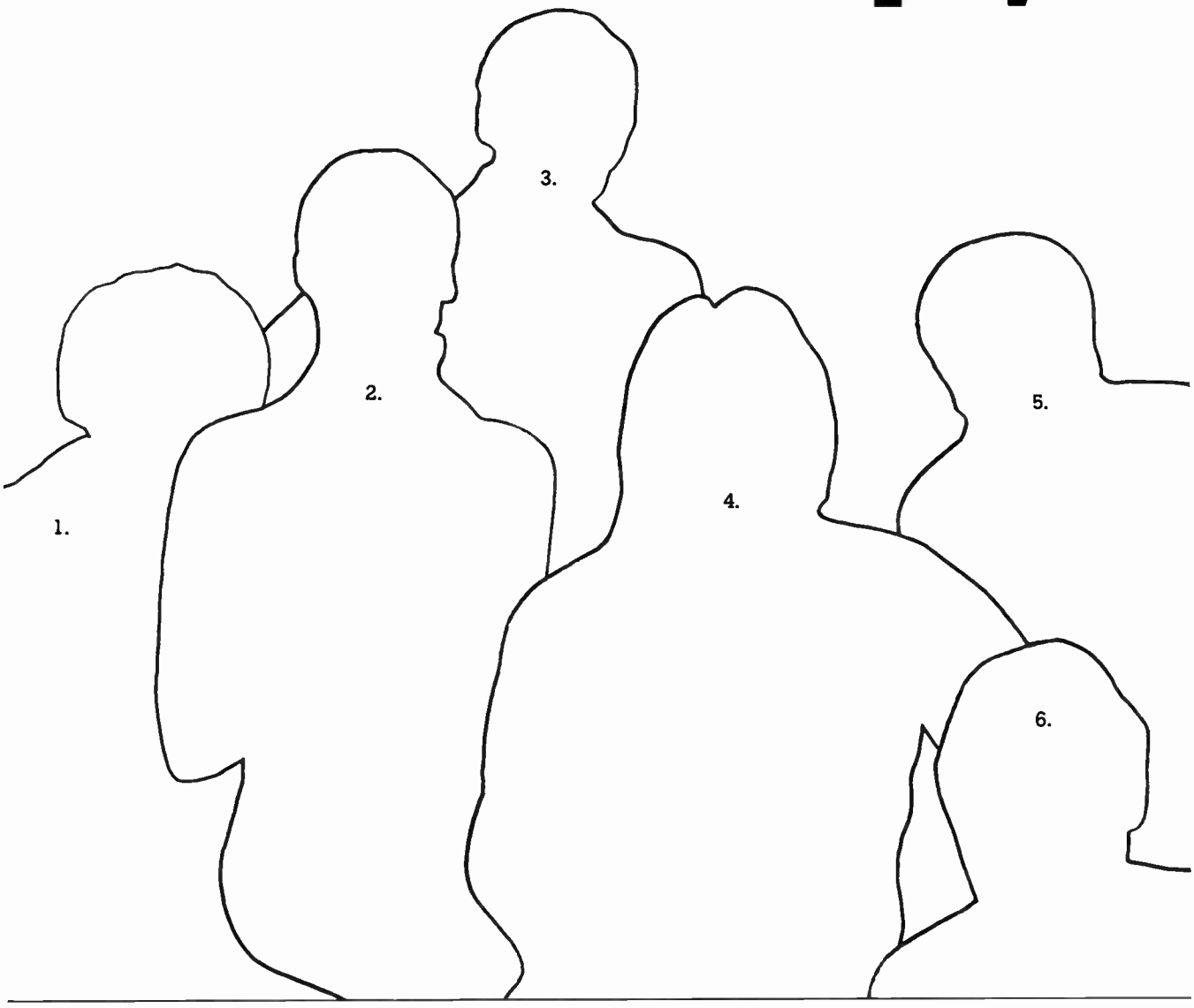
Getting a job in a non-performing career is essentially the same as catching on as a player. A teacher must learn teaching techniques as well as the musical things. A prospective recording engineer must know about boards and related matters. And hanging out—mixing with prospective employers and established job-holders—is similarly important.

For those of you who want further information on careers in music, suggestions on school jazz studies and commercial music education, we suggest **down beat's** annual yearbook, *Music Handbook '78*. In addition to career information, *MH '78* includes combo charts by Matrix and Woody Shaw, an overview on jazz education by David Baker and transcribed piano, guitar, and trumpet jazz solos soon-to-be-published by **db** Music Workshop Publications. Also there is a buyers guide on top quality music instruments and related equipment, names and addresses of music organizations, record companies, managers/bookers, and lots of other useful things. Price: $1.95 from **db** Chicago office.

Please keep writing. We do like to hear from you even if we can't answer each letter individually.

Next issue features, in addition to Zawinul II, the current careers of John McLaughlin, whose wondrous ways continue to inspire, and Freddie Hubbard, who is making noises signifying a possible jazz homecoming; plus new intros to Little Feat, Carmine Appice, Domenico and other talents . . . and the only Bulgarian to ever take the Blindfold Test, Milcho Leviev. **db**

Introducing "The Writers." You know them as the players.



1. Anthony Jackson, bass guitar... 2. Frank Floyd, vocals... 3. Ralph MacDonald, percussion... 4. Hugh McCracken, guitar... 5. Jerry Peters, keyboards... 6. Jeffrey Mironov, guitar.

If you are in the music business, we don't have to tell you who these gentlemen are. As the most sought-after session men in the world, their credits would fill page after page. But we would like to tell you that these superb musicians have joined forces to form an exciting new band, with each individual contributing original music as well as playing time. Which is why these players call themselves "The Writers."

"The Writers." They write as well as they play. On Columbia Records and Tapes.

Produced by Ralph MacDonald for Antisia Productions. Ralph MacDonald appears courtesy of Marlin Records, a division of T.K. Production-, Inc. Jerry Peters appears courtesy of Tabu Productions.

CHORDS AND DISCORDS

Bottom-Line Boogie

I just caught up with Chuck Berg's article in the Feb. 28 issue which contains a sneering reference to "some labels" releasing old Anthony Braxton product, which might be construed as a slam at our recent reissue of Braxton's first album, *Three Compositions*. With the trend towards monopoly in the record business today, we small labels don't need that sort of thing, so I thought I might take a few moments to express myself.

We recorded *Three Compositions* back in 1968 when no one was interested in recording the music of the AACM and no major label had an avant garde artist beyond Coltrane or Shepp under contract. There was a vacuum and labels such as ESP, Delmark, Freedom, etc. were filling that vacuum. We did not sell many records and if we were short-sighted we would have quit even before that time. No, we went along with the low-hundreds sales of that day, expecting that the music and the artists would be recognized one day. Long-term investment is the name of the small-label game: record great music and sooner or later it will be recognized. In 1968, Bell Records, Arista's forbear was not involved in jazz at all. Small labels and Impulse was where it was at. The bottom-line boys were into rock.

Now the times, and public taste, have changed. Jazz isn't on the charts much, but there's real growth in the jazz audience—and this time around the jazz fans are more broad-minded than ever before. Mr. Backer seems unhappy that jazz taste isn't being channeled (as it was in the past) into a situation where superstars can grab all the gravy and leave a lot of creative artists out in the cold.

Sorry, but I don't think the sale of 2500 copies of *Three Compositions* will seriously hurt chances for Anthony's new Arista, but in case it doesn't injure Columbia Picture Industries' jazz operation, I must plead ignorance to Arista's release schedule and if there is a conflict, I'm sorry—but only because Braxton is the kind of guy whom you can only wish the very best.

But if I may, what about Arista's big commitment to jazz? Doesn't it involve a lot of product of independent labels? Doesn't it involve those nasty reissues? And has Arista recorded even one single musician on his premiere album? Why doesn't Mr. Backer let Michael Cuscuna record one of the many talented musicians who haven't even played a sideman gig in the studio? No, it's easier to let the small labels function as unpaid talent scouts—which is all right with me—but please don't kick us in the teeth as our reward.

Finally, why not remember that we small-label guys have to watch our bottom lines as well, even if we drive Fords and Plymouths instead of Cadillacs and Buicks or whatever conveyance Mr. Backer and his bosses use.

Bob Koester — Chicago, Ill.
Delmark Records

Minus Five Stars

I am writing this to disagree with your review of the album *Guitar Interludes* (3/23). Your reviewer gave it one star—I give it minus five.

Recorded in 1968 and recently dredged up, the producer attempted to *pass* it off as a recent work by omitting the year in which it was recorded. This is unfair to both the public and the artist.

My only defense is that I didn't like it when I recorded it and I certainly don't now—if I could have stopped its release, I would have.

As Pete Welding said, it's just fate will be "returns in excess of quantities shipped."

Joe Pass — Northridge, Cal.

Monomaniacal Outrage

George Benson's insipid bullshit about his tax shelters and his monomaniacal fantasies about his wealth are really nauseating.

Your printing of it is an outrage.

John Okas and James Hagen — East Hampton, N.Y.

Intervallic Praise

I found Dr. William Fowler's pragmatic approach to keyboard visualization most interesting. It should be very helpful to music students because it presents some very basic matter in a very clear manner.

In presenting this material from a non-traditional perspective, Dr. Fowler has given the teacher, as well as the student, an additional method of visualizing intervallic relationships. It is an excellent approach.

Billy Taylor — New York, N.Y.

Innovative Priority

Thanks for the well written, informative article on Jack Wilson. I have recently moved to California from the Midwest and while enjoying the abundance of great jazz listening on the West Coast discovered this talented man and his music. Mr. Vercelli's article brought out the great depth of the artist and his art. Although his innovative album has top priority in my record collection, hearing Jack Wilson live is a most exciting experience.

Your magazine is a "must" for the jazz fan and, in particular, this issue was read cover to cover.

Kathie Heine — Whittier, Cal.

NEWS

RUSSELL STORMS VANGUARD

RANDI W. HULTIN

NEW YORK—With Thad Jones and Mel Lewis on tour for six weeks, Max Gordon assigned George Russell the task of keeping Monday nights alive at his Village Vanguard club. And alive it stayed.

Russell brought in a 19 piece unit for the period and tore the place up. Ricky Ford, Roger Rosenberg, Marty Ehrlich and Carl Atkins comprised the reed section, each soloing with gusto. Atkins, who tours regularly with Russell as co-conductor, was on baritone and bass clarinet for this visit.

Lew Soloff, Teramaso Hino and another Russell regular, Stanton Davis, were in the trumpet chairs. Davis, who just released his first album on Outrageous Records, *Brighter Days*, was on fire as he traded eights and fours with Hino's cornet on Russell's *Ezz-thetic*. The two showed what technical proficiency is all about. Soloff, on piccolo trumpet, rendered some great bebop licks for *Stratusphunk*. He was joined by trombonist Gary Valente.

Dave Taylor and Janice Robinson rounded out the 'bones, while another capable soloist, John Clark, was on french horn.

Other standouts were Cameron Brown, bass, Masabumi Kikuchi, Yamaha electric piano, Warren Smith, drums, and Sammy Figueroa, congas. Figueroa was featured on *Cubano Be, Cubano Bop*.

Russell came prepared with an entire briefcase full of pieces. He played each with that first-time feeling—*Electronic Sonata For Souls Loved By Nature, All About Rosie* and *New York, N.Y.*, from which comes the oft-quoted line, "New York, New York; town so nice, they named it twice."

Pitt Activity

PITTSBURGH—Jazz fans in this city were treated to a night of pleasant surprises and very hot music. Showing up at a Larry Coryell/Stanley Clarke concert was Clarke's former RTF colleague, guitarist Al DiMeola. Mentor Coryell persuaded DiMeola to surprise Clarke by walking on stage and temporarily recreating half of the great Return To Forever band.

Not only did this surprise appearance spark Stanley and his group to their most exciting music of the evening, but it also served to give the audience an electrical charge they soon won't forget. Exclaimed an ecstatic Coryell: "This is great! Those two guys are fantastic, they ought to be playing together more. They were made for each other."

After the concert, Coryell and Clarke's drummer, Daryl Harrison, joined saxophonist Eric Kloss and Spider & Company at Sonny Dayes' Stage Door for two hours of heavy-duty jamming. The band and the crowd hung around until 3 a.m., and in Pittsburgh that does not often happen. There were plenty of satisfied smiles both on and in front of the bandstand.

Amidst all the excitement, drummer Spider Rondinelli chose to announce the opening of a new Stage Door Lounge in the South Hills of Pittsburgh. Pat Martino was set as the opening act, with many more to rapidly follow.

POTPOURRI

Woody Herman and his band will do a concert on Wednesday, August 2 at the summer jazz clinic on the DeKalb campus of **Northern Illinois University.**

●

George Shearing received the **Horatio Alger Award** at the **Waldorf Astoria** in New York.

●

Supplemental cash grants for 1977-78 in the amount of $83,000 have been voted to writer members of the **American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers** by the Society's Popular and Standard Awards Panels, ASCAP President **Stanley Adams** has announced. The total amount awarded for 1977-78—monies over and above royalties paid for performances of works in the Society's survey of performances—is $871,650. This raises the total given by the Society since the inception of the program to more than eight million dollars.

●

Winner of the **Juno Award** for the best (Canadian) jazz recording of 1977 is *Big Band Jazz*, a two-record set recorded by **Rob McConnell's Boss Brass** for the direct-to-disc label **Umbrella.** Other records nominated were *Ed Bickert* (PM), **Moe Koffman's** *Museum Pieces* (GRT), **Phil Nimmons'** *Transformations/Invocation* (CBC) and **Don Thompson's** *Country Place* (PM).

●

Drummer **Elvin Jones** has returned from a three week tour of Japan sponsored by **Bunka Radio** and the **American Embassy.** It marked the first time in more than a decade that the drummer had been permitted to perform in Japan (he had been banned in 1966 following a drug hassle). The tour included concerts, television and radio shows and recording.

●

Chuck Berg, db contributor, is co-author of a recently published text on jazz improvisation, *Lookout Farm: A Case Study Of Improvisation For Small Group* (Almo Publications, 1978), which presents the collective perspectives of reedman **David Liebman,** pianist **Richard Beirach,** bassist **Frank Tusa,** drummer **Jeff Williams** and percussionist **Badal Roy** on contemporary improvisation.

●

Keith Jarrett's *Survivors Suite* was chosen as best jazz recording of 1977 at Germany's **Grosser Schallplatten Preis** awards. Others honored with the prestigious award were **Steely Dan** and trumpeter **Egberto Gismonti.**

●

Rumors abound that **Weather Report** and **Joni Mitchell** will be collaborating on an upcoming special for the **Canadian Broadcasting Company.**

●

Frank Zappa led a full-size symphony orchestra in Vienna's 10,000 seat **Stadthalle.** The program featured El Zap's own compositions.

●

Roberta Flack Enterprises has run afoul of the Internal Revenue Service. The vocalist's tax deductions for 1973-74 have been questioned, with the IRS claiming Ms. Flack owes them a whopping $959,500 (penalties included).

●

Pablo has resolved its differences with **RCA.** The **Norman Granz** operation has signed a new agreement whereby RCA will handle all domestic distribution, with Pablo assuming the duties of seeing to manufacturing and promotion of material.

●

The Swedish label **Sonet** has recorded an album collaboration between Danish violinist **Svend Asmussen** and vibemaster **Lionel Hampton.**

●

The **North Texas State University 1 O'Clock Lab Band** will be featured at this year's **Spoleto Festival U.S.A.** in Charleston, South Carolina. The festival will be held from May 25-June 11. Among guest artists slated to join the band are **Joe Williams** and **Ella Fitzgerald.** db

CHICAGO PLANS TO ROLL ON

BEVERLY HILLS, CAL.—The jazz-rock group Chicago has announced that it will resume performing and recording. The group was recently shocked by the unexpected firearm death of lead guitarist Terry Kath, who had been an integral member of the unit since its formation in 1969.

The group had originally considered disbanding after Kath's demise. But they decided to go on, according to drummer/spokesman Danny Seraphine, because "We're still here . . . we have to do something."

The new guitarist for the group is Donnie Dacus, a veteran axeman whose performance credits include stints with Boz Scaggs and Stephen Stills. The group is currently preparing for a tour of Russia, with a new album to be recorded following the completion of the trip.

NEWS

COREA GOES WORLDWIDE

LOS ANGELES—Chick Corea and his new 13-piece band have embarked on a major concert schedule that will take them around the world this year. The first leg of the tour is three months long with concerts in Great Britain, Europe, Australia, Japan and Hawaii. The band will play several festival dates and selected concerts through the summer and will embark on a major North American concert schedule in mid-October.

The touring band consists of Corea on keyboards; Gayle Moran, keyboards and vocals; Rick Laird, bass; Tom Brechtlein, drums; Dave Liebman, reeds; Al Vizzutti, 1st trumpet; Bob Zottola, 2nd trumpet; Jim Pugh, 1st trombone; Ron Moss, 2nd trombone; Charles Veal, 1st violin; Carol Shive, 2nd violin; Judy Geist, viola, and Paula Hochhalter, cello.

Upon completion of the first leg of the world tour, the new band will record a new album for Polydor.

Clinical News

SOUTH BEND, IND.—Ken Morris, president of the National Jazz Clinics, has announced that the Famous Arrangers Clinic will be held at the same time and place as the next Mid-Winter Combo/Improvisation Clinic. Both clinics will be held on the campus of North Texas State University (Denton), Jan. 1-6, 1979.

Jamey Aebersold, alto saxophonist/author/teacher, will again head the Combo/Improvisation Clinic faculty, which will include David Baker, Ed Soph, Dan Haerle, Rufus Reid and other top jazz players-educators. The faculty will be announced soon.

Further information on these clinics is available from National Jazz Clinics, Box 221, South Bend, Ind. 46624.

NEW RELEASES

The latest batch from **Warner Brothers** includes *Scarlet Fever*, **Scarlet Rivera;** *Hermit Of Mink Hollow*, **Todd Rundgren;** *Shine On*, **the Climax Blues Band;** *Deep In The Night*, **Etta James;** *Takin' It Easy*, **Seals and Crofts;** *The Last Waltz*, **The Band;** *The Louisiana Man*, **Doug Kershaw;** *Rough Diamond*, **Madleen Kane;** and *For You*, **Prince.**

●

Fresh wax from **Capitol** includes *Don't Ask My Neighbor*, **Raul de Souza;** and *The Man Machine*, **Kraftwerk.**

●

New items from **Mercury** are *Moonscapes*, **Bennie Maupin;** *Under The Lights*, **Moxy;** and *Sweet Cheeks*, **Duke Jupiter.**

●

ABC newcomers include *Midnight Believer*, **B. B. King;** *Tonight's The Night*, **Roy Head;** *Doin' What You Wanna Do*, **the Dramatics;** *Bop-be*, **Keith Jarrett;** and *Sex And Violins*, **Martin Mull.**

●

New Music Distribution is handling *Funky Donkey*, **the Human Arts Ensemble** with **Lester and Joseph Bowie;** *First Feeding*, the debut disc by the New York-based **Ensemble Muntu;** and an album by pianist **Jack Scalese** and his trio.

●

The latest batch from **Chrysalis** includes *Heavy Horses*, **Jethro Tull;** the debut outing from the jazz group **Auracle;** *Please Don't Touch*, **Steve Hackett;** *Double Trouble*, **Frankie Miller;** and the initial waxing by the English group **Generation X.**

●

New blues goodies from **Delmark** appearing on the **Pearl** label are *Windy City Boogie*, **J. T. Brown;** *Memphis Slim—U.S.A.*, **Memphis Slim and His House Rockers;** and *Bricks In My Pillow*, **Robert Nighthawk.**

●

Atlantic's catalog has been enriched with *Still Here*, **Ian Thomas Band;** *The Best Of The Spinners;* *Brazil—Once Again*, **Herbie Mann;** *You're Not Alone*, **Roy Buchanan;** *Inner Conflicts*, **Billy Cobham;** *Sky Blue*, **Klaus Doldinger's Passport;** and *Electronic Music For Dance*, **Bulent Arel and Daria Semegen.** db

FINAL BAR

Ray Noble, popular British-born orchestra leader, arranger and songwriter, died April 3 of cancer at the London home of a relative where, following several weeks' hospitalization, he had been taken in late March. He was 74.

Born in Brighton in 1904, Noble first began to attract the attention of the musical world following his appointment in 1929 as music director at HMV Records, British affiliate of RCA Victor. Over the next five years he was responsible for the production of hundreds of popular dance records, many of which he arranged as well. Issued under his own name and that of the New Mayfair Dance Orchestra, these recordings, which featured many of the leading British musicians of the day, were considered among the most striking and forward-looking of their type, and were deservedly popular with British audiences.

With vocalist Al Bowlly and drummer Bill Harty, Noble came to the U.S. in late 1934, soon repeating his earlier success with an orchestra he assembled early the following year. He performed at leading hotels, nightclubs and ballrooms and recorded extensively, first for Victor records and later for Brunswick and Columbia. While he determinedly pursued a popular dance vein in his music, Noble consistently employed jazz musicians in his various orchestras, among the most notable of whom were Glenn Miller, Claude Thornhill, Bud Freeman, Will Bradley, Sterling Bose, Pee Wee Erwin, Milt Yaner, Charlie Spivak and George Van Eps. Jazz soloists often were featured prominently on his recordings, particularly those of the late 1930s during the height of the swing craze.

Noble achieved even greater prominence through regular network radio broadcasting. For some years he served as music director for the popular radio comedy team of George Burns and Gracie Allen, following which he undertook a similar association with humorist-ventriloquist Edgar Bergen that lasted through the early 1950s, during which the entertainer (and his dummy-sidekick Charlie McCarthy) made a successful transition from radio to television, for a time broadcasting simultaneously in both media.

While he never was associated with jazz as such, Noble's interesting, often sophisticated, songs long have been favorite vehicles for jazz players of every school. His most frequently performed composition *Cherokee* (originally titled *An Indian Serenade*) also has served as the basis of a number of compositions written by jazzmen on its harmonic structure, Charlie Parker's *Ko Ko* being but one example. Others of his compositions include *I Hadn't Anyone Till You*, *The Touch Of Your Lips* (a recent jazz version being found on Bill Evans' latest LP, *Alone Again*, Fantasy 9542), *Love Is The Sweetest Thing*, *The Very Thought Of You* and the perennially popular prom-closer *Goodnight, Sweetheart.*

Noble is survived by his wife and two brothers.

●

Harold Money Johnson, trumpet player and singer, died in an auto accident in New York on March 28. He was 60 years old.

Johnson was killed instantly after his car rammed a construction site on the Long Island Expressway while he was on the way home from a gig in East Hampton, L.I. The autopsy report stated that Johnson had suffered a heart attack prior to the crash.

Johnson, whose nickname stemmed from the fact that he always had enough money to lend, began playing trumpet at age 15 and began performing publicly soon afterward in his home town of Tyler, Texas. He joined Horace Henderson's Orchestra in 1942, staying for two years. He also appeared briefly with Count Basie ('44) and Cootie Williams ('45).

He alternated between Williams and Lucky Millinder's band during the late '40s. The 1950s saw him with Louis Jordan, Lucky Thompson, Panama Francis (in South America), Buddy Johnson, Cozy Cole and Mercer Ellington, among others. He appeared regularly with Reuben Phillips' band at the Apollo Theatre in N.Y.C. during the 1960s. Johnson was an active studio musician and toured Russia with Earl Hines.

Money garnered much attention during his stay with Duke Ellington in 1968, and again from 1971 until Ellington's death in 1974. His speciality was a rather silly impersonation of Louis Armstrong singing *Hello, Dolly!*

He also played with Sy Oliver in 1970 and was last seen in the on-stage band in the Broadway hit *Bubbling Brown Sugar.*

Johnson is survived by his wife, composer/guitarist/singer Emma Bishop.

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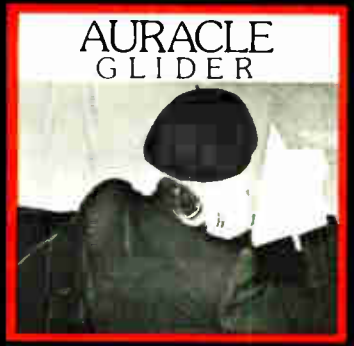

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Didn't like it?

Not because of the instrument. I just didn't like being told what to do. No musician does. But when I started concentrating on the Rhodes, I came to appreciate all it could do. Bach would have loved it.

Bach? The Rhodes?

Sure. My background is classical, and I still play acoustic piano. I was influenced by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Bartok, Stravinsky. Anyway, Bach didn't really write for the acoustic piano. He probably would have done a lot of experimenting with a Rhodes.

That's quite a leap—from classical to jazz.

Not really. You can't get into any branch of music without knowing the basics. I've also been influenced by Ellington, Miles, Coltrane, Charlie Parker. They were fundamental musicians, too.

Is that why you've never limited yourself to any one school of jazz?

Sure. It's like the controversy about going from mainstream to crossover. A musician has to create, to explore, to play what feels good to him. All music has validity.

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JOE ZAWINUL *Wayfaring Genius*

BY CONRAD SILVERT


BERNIE SENENSKY

Although a compelling argument can be made that jazz has become the world's most international art form, suffering from few barriers of geography, language or race, it remains true that the great majority of jazz innovators have been American blacks. The clearest exception to this rule has been the emergence of Josef Zawinul—a white man born in Austria—as one of jazz's prime innovators. As co-leader and chief composer/orchestrator of Weather Report, with his remarkable adaptations of synthesizers to uncannily natural sounds that give life to the band's very humanistic music, Zawinul has created much of today's most vital and forward-looking instrumental music.

Not that Zawinul's work has gone unappreciated: among many polls and awards won, Weather Report has been voted band of the year six years in a row by **down beat's** readers, who have given the same top honor to five of Weather Report's seven albums (the eighth is about to be released), to Zawinul's keyboard playing, to Wayne Shorter's soprano saxophone, and, in a second place photo finish last year, to Jaco Pastorius' bass. Japan's leading jazz magazine, *Swing Journal*, awarded its "Silver Disc" to *Heavy Weather* last year, *Playboy* chipped in with jazz band and jazz record of the year awards, *Record World* with "Instrumental Group of the Year," *Cashbox* with "Record of the Year," and Zawinul received a Grammy nomination for *Birdland* as best instrumental composition, right alongside the themes of *Rocky*, *Roots* and *Star Wars*. This is a partial list.

Born in Vienna, Austria on July 7, 1932, Zawinul grew up in the city and in his grandparents' small house several kilometers away. From the age of six he was playing accordion, mostly folk and gypsy melodies. He was never far from the cosmopolitan influences of Vienna, with its tradition-laden culture and sophisticated attitude toward the arts.

Zawinul had a natural aversion to diligent, everyday classical studies, and his dislike was aided by the massive interference in his youth known as World War II, part of which he spent studying piano in a huge private country estate as part of a government-sponsored program to get all the top students out of war-torn Vienna.

After the war, Zawinul, now in his teenage years, began making a living playing music, and was introduced to jazz by a few older musicians. While Vienna was rebuilding, he played piano in several bands all over Europe (mostly in Austria and Germany), including a stint on bass trumpet with Friedrich Gulda.

In January of 1959, after gaining a reputation as one of Europe's leading jazz musicians, Zawinul used a scholarship to Boston's Berklee College as his ticket to the United States. He stayed in Boston a few weeks, got a call to audition for Maynard Ferguson's band in New York, made the band, and put an end to his scholastic career.

After a few months, Ferguson fired Zawinul for "insubordination," but work was around the corner. Zawinul accompanied singer Dinah Washington for the next 19 months, worked briefly with Harry "Sweets" Edison in a quintet that backed singer Joe Williams, and then began his well-known nine and a half year association with Cannonball Adderley. It was with Cannon that Zawinul fully absorbed the American jazz idiom and began making his own significant contributions. As the '60s progressed, Zawinul wrote an increasing number of tunes for the band, including Cannonball's first hit, *Mercy, Mercy, Mercy*, a funky, happy tune that seemed to refute the author's geographical origins. By now it was clear that not only was he "one of the most valuable imports from Europe in recent years," as Leonard Feather had written in 1960, but that he was fast becoming the first European to have a major influence on jazz, that most American of musics.

Although Zawinul had become a good friend of Miles Davis, who first saw him play with Dinah Washington, he declined Miles' request to record at that time (1959), feeling he was not ready. He went with Miles in 1968, and wrote the title composition for Miles' now-legendary *In A Silent Way* album, on which Zawinul played organ along with Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock (electric pianos), John McLaughlin (guitar), Tony Williams (drums), Dave Holland (bass), and, significantly, Wayne Shorter on saxophone.

Zawinul wrote a few more tunes for Miles, played on the also legendary *Bitches Brew*, and recorded, aside from numerous dates with Adderley, two solo albums, *The Rise And Fall of the Third Stream* (Vortex) and *Zawinul* (Atlantic). The first of these featured the writing and arrangements of William Fischer; for the second, Zawinul composed music that foreshadowed his work with Weather Report.

In A Silent Way wasn't the first meeting for Zawinul and Shorter. They had played together briefly in Maynard's band, and, while Zawinul was with Cannonball and while Shorter spent ten years with Art Blakey and with Miles, the two became good friends. But it wasn't until after the *Silent Way* session that the two musicians began plotting a band of their own, in which they would make a different kind of music growing out of what Zawinul has referred to as "the new mind."

Without even listening to the demo tape that Zawinul and Shorter had made with Miroslav Vitous and Billy Cobham, Columbia signed the new band. The name "Weather Report," chosen by Shorter, reflected Zawinul's early description of the band's music as "changing from day to day, just like the weather." But the first edition of Weather Report—Zawinul, Shorter, Vitous, Al Mouzon and Dom Um Romao—played almost completely improvised, often harmonically and rhythmically free music that possessed a fragile, delicate beauty.

Through eight years of steady artistic evolution and considerable shifting of personnel (Zawinul and Shorter have remained the continuing nucleus), Weather Report's music developed a powerful, often funky rhythmic underpinning and an increasing stress on clearly defined—though complex—composition. Zawinul has composed about half the band's recorded tracks, and has applied ever-more-detailed orchestrations to the music.

In many ways, Weather Report's development parallels Zawinul's growing expertise with synthesizers, specifically his two Arp 2600s and the Oberheim Polyphonic. His experience with electronic keyboards dates back to some early organ playing, but it was the acquisition of an electric piano half-way through his tenure with Cannonball that marked the real turnaround. In the past five years or so, Zawinul has discovered many original ways of creating synthesized sounds that strike the ear as anything but artificial. He has likened these sounds to "native instru-

ments not yet discovered."

In the studio (the band is now completing work on album number eight) Zawinul is a perfectionist who doesn't hesitate to drive himself and his engineer to near-distraction in search of subtleties that only the most discriminating ear, and the finest playback equipment, could detect. On stage, he is executing ever-more-difficult feats of multi-keyboard prestidigitation. Zawinul has a restless, intense and quick-moving manner that is part of his music. But a strong sense of history and a seemingly instinctive adherence to ancient, basic theatrical values, keep that music very much of the heart as well as the mind.

Much more than a technically-oriented analyst of the electronic age, Zawinul is a philosopher, an intuitive mystic, an interpreter of the human condition. Experiencing Weather Report's music for several years brings one to the logical conclusion that this band more than any other is defining the decade's instrumental direction.

In addition to being a musician, mystic and showman (maybe even a bit of a shaman), Zawinul may be something of a prophet.

What follows here and in the next issue was distilled from about a dozen afternoons spent with Zawinul at his Pasadena home and at the Devonshire Sound Studio nearby, from October '76 through March '78. Zawinul is a small, wiry, physically active man who prefers to conduct his interviews sitting by his pool or pacing the grounds surrounding his Spanish-styled, hilltop home, where he lives with his wife Maxine and three sons, Anthony, Eric and Ivan. Numerous plants, a swinging hammock, several tall trees, a fenced-in area that once housed a pet goat, a semi-active garden area and a lawn that doubles as a soccer field and badminton court provide Zawinul with plenty of outlets for his outdoors proclivities.

Zawinul's English is unique. His speech is a mixture of an urban Slavic patois translated into English, and black American colloquialisms plucked verbatim from the streetcorner. He sounds like a Viennese urchin adopted by an American jazz-loving family.

Zawinul speaks with a great deal of pride in his voice, tempered now and then with blushes of humility. There is likewise a mixture of steely strength and touching vulnerability that underlie the man's warm, earthy character. He does not suppress his emotions.

One of Zawinul's grandmothers was part Hungarian Gypsy. So, he says, "I am not only gypsy at heart, but in ancestry. I am Czech and Hungarian. My parents are still alive and I visit them often. My mother is 69 and my father is 71. They are healthy—my mother doesn't have a gray hair. They are out there every day boogieing, living in the country right outside of Vienna. My momma is one of 24 children. My father worked for the gas company, but he started so early he was able to retire at the age of 50. His father was a wild man, got in trouble a lot; he drove a truck. My mother's father was 79 when he died—he fell on the ice December 25, 1943. And in 1961 my grandmother had the same accident on the same spot, the same day—December 25. She was 85 years old.

"I only had a twin brother who died when he was four years old. My mother's sisters and brothers all had six, seven kids, but there was unemployment, hard times, and my parents were smart. You don't survive a war, man, unless you know a lot of shit. Especially when the war is going on in the street right by your house. You got to know how to move, to get food, get street-wise. It's instinct more than anything, and the same thing happened with me in music, because I never enjoyed practicing. I didn't even have a piano until I was 12 years old.

"In Vienna, I lived with my parents in a two-room apartment. In the country we had a family house with three big rooms, about one hour from the city, but in a small village surrounded by woods.

"During the war, I remember, one night after curfew my cousin and I stole a horse—we took it from the wagon train right from under the noses of the Russian soldiers while they slept. It was 1945. We took the horse to the stable, but it was blind, its hair was falling out from grenade burns, and when I sat on the horse it broke down. So we shot it, my aunts ground up the meat and we ate it.

"I remember when we had to sell our cow. Our little village had 56 people and it was surrounded by thick Vienna woods for miles, so we had to walk the cow two and a half hours to sell it, and then walk another two and a half hours back through the woods. In those days we had to keep the doors of our house open because the Russians came in every day. One day, my uncle Josef, who had six kids, was shot to death. One of the kids took the key out of the wine cellar door in the back of the house, and the Russians hammered at it, but no one could find the key. So they shot through the door with a machine gun and hit my uncle.

"We had to put make-up on my little girl cousins, to make them look ugly and keep the Russians from raping them. I was managing the family's survival system and I even made friends with some of the soldiers. They set up radio communications in our house, which kept us from being bothered too much. These soldiers were incredible, drunk all the time—they even drank gasoline.

"My cousin and I used to steal potatoes and hide because the soldiers had guns in towers overlooking the fields. Once we went into an abandoned grocery store, and there was nothing left but mustard. So we stole 50 cans of mustard and for three days didn't eat nothing but that. We were so hungry, off and on, you cannot imagine. But my mother worked hard and did a lot of things in the black market. We always got an extra penny here and there.

"My best friend and I were at the bicycle race in Vienna, September 10, 1944, and all of a sudden the planes came in and bombs were falling, the meanest bombardment. Severed hands were laying in the street. I hid at home, there was dust a foot high. My friend was dead along with most of his family and most of the town was burning. We had a 2000-pound water hydrant on our terrace, and a big piece of sidewalk was on the roof! We were lucky. Our house was saved, like an island, but there was not a window left within a five-mile radius.

"11 days after the bombardment, they assembled 28 or 29 students to be transferred from the conservatory in Vienna, to save them from the worst bomb attacks. They wanted the most talented young musicians to be safe for the victory of the German Reich, you know? So on September 21 we went to Czechoslovakia, and I had to practice the piano every day. I think the first time I heard the word 'jazz' was at that time, when my friend played *Honeysuckle Rose* on the clarinet. I was playing classical, but I improvised a lot too. My whole family was always singing and dancing. I could always play some free music on the accordion—in fact, I am the uncrowned champion of the accordion and someday I will play it on a record.

"After the war, I stayed in the country. There was one classroom with all the kids from one to eighth grade, and I had so much fun my parents had to convince me to go to Vienna. In 1945 I entered the Gymnasium, like college. They fired my music teacher for her politics, but she liked me and gave me lessons for free. I never practiced or did very well in school. I quit before graduation. I was angry, a restless mother——, always getting into fights.

"A famous composer told my parents that I shouldn't study composition, that I already knew it. My teacher said I should study for an international competition, but I said it wasn't my personality to be a classical musician. I was already playing neighborhood gigs, making a little money. My parents thought I should have a profession, so I went into the printing business, typesetting, for about two months. But I was bored by this—I had to get up by five and get to work by seven. I only made two dollars a week as an apprentice. We got more than that playing in an American bar, and instead of money we'd get cigarettes and coffee and a little care package—bring home a little food. When my parents found out I wasn't working at printing, they said I wasn't good for anything. But my father said, 'Momma, if he feels that strong, let him do it.'

"In 1948, it was still a chaotic time. We had to stand hours in line for water, gas—everything was rationed. But I started making money with my music and quickly started making a name for myself. I had heard a few Louis Armstrong records, and I loved the Glenn Miller band playing *Sun Valley Serenade*, and I saw the movie *Stormy Weather* 24 times, back then! It turned my whole life around. I started really digging black folks—Lena Horne, Cab Calloway, Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson, the Nicholas Brothers—they turned me on.

"My first bebop licks, I think, were from *Lullaby Of Broadway*. We had a band with an electric guitarist. I played accordion and piano, and we had a great clarinet player. We played on weekends, weddings. The clarinet player had a picture of Ellington in his house. I didn't like Ellington's music the first time, but it was my ignorance, because today Ellington is one of my all-time favorite musicians. I feel that's it is worthwhile to buy every one of Duke's records, just to check out what this cat is doing.

"Just like Ellington, I didn't dig Thelonious Monk the first time, but later he was one of my strongest inspirations. I always dug his simplicity. I learned a lot about phrasing from

"You got to know how to move, to get food, get street-wise. It's instinct more than anything, and the same thing happened to me in music, because I never enjoyed practicing. I didn't even have a piano until I was 12 years old."

Louis Armstrong and Cootie Williams, and later on from playing with Dinah. As far as writing is concerned, when I first heard Miles Davis' nonet with Lee Konitz and Gerry Mulligan, I couldn't believe it. That stuff is about as modern as you can hear up until today.

"I didn't hear Charlie Parker on record until 1956, but I heard the bebop of his followers much earlier—Sonny Stitt or Stan Getz, it was easier to get their records. I saw Lester Young with Jazz At The Philharmonic in Munich, 1953. I was so turned on, when Lester approached the microphone I almost had a heart attack. He was swinging before he even played. Gene Krupa was there, Flip Phillips on tenor, Roy Eldridge and Charlie Shavers trumpets, Oscar Peterson, Ray Brown, Barney Kessel, Ella Fitzgerald, and old Bill Harris, the great trombone player. I went to the dressing room—very friendly people, and I got autographs from them. Lester Young was nice, too.

"In 1952 I worked with Hans Koller, who at that time was the greatest jazz musician to come out of Austria. He plays tenor sax, clarinet, oboe, and he is a master painter—I have several of his paintings hanging in my house. Before joining Koller I wasn't known in Vienna, but afterwards I was a sensation. During summer I played up in Innsbruck, by the lake, and musicians knew me. I played a lot like George Shearing then, one of my heroes.

"In 1953 I joined the Horst Winter band. Winter was a singer, a violin player and a good clarinetist. We took the Woody Herman book down from the records—there was no way to get the charts—and I learned a lot. From May to September the Winter band played the same place, at eight in the evening for 45 minutes, then an intermission, then another 45—and then the group split in two, because after ten the music had to be kind of soft. We'd have seven or eight pieces playing Argentine tangos with flutes. I was out there, man, dancing with some of the most beautiful women in Vienna.

"I joined Johannes Fehring in 1954 and stayed with his band almost two years. And then I formed my own band for the first time, with Karl Drevo, who played tenor, clarinet, piano—we all played everything. If it's needed, we play it. We played in Seefeld, up from Innsbruck in the summer of '56, went mountain climbing, had one radio show a week, and did the music to a movie.

"A new club opened in Vienna called the Tabarin, and we played there. I was with Fatty George's band from October through April, with every night sold out. The club held a thousand people—it was a dancing place. You see, 1956 was a turning point, right after the Hungarian Revolution, and Austria bought itself off from all the occupations, and there was *life* in Vienna. All the greatest painters in the art club—I met Hundewasser and Ernst Fuchs, Jean Cocteau and Paul Hindemith.

In 1955, Friedrich Gulda has just returned from making his first jazz record at Birdland in New York. He has a radio program in Vienna and was commissioned to write 80 compositions. I played bass trumpet with him and ended up writing 25 of the tunes. The first time I met Gulda was at the art club in 1952.

"At the Tabarin club we had eight pieces plus a black singer from Memphis, Fats Edwards. To celebrate our opening we rented animals from the circus and rode through the streets on elephants. We were the hottest shit there was. It was very sophisticated but also street-level, and that's why they talk about 'legendary,' because those times will never come back.

"My friends and I used to go to the English Reading Room in Vienna to read **down beat.** There were maybe two copies in the whole city, but it was our main connection to find out about all the great musicians and maybe gain a little knowledge about the English language. I still read it every issue.

"Many times I wanted to come to the United States, and many times I never wanted to leave Vienna, there was so much going on there, such good vibes. But I won a scholarship to the Berklee College in Boston after I sent them a record I had made. The deal was free school if you can make it over, and you have to pay your own food and lodging.

"I knew that to be successful in America I would have to do a lot of learning, not in school, but out there with the musicians. I knew it wouldn't be easy, because I had no relatives, didn't know a single person in America. But when I came over on the boat, in January of 1959, I did it with the purpose to kick asses."

"My first afternoon in New York I went down to the musicians' union and met Wilbur Ware. And the first night I went to Birdland, which was the dream of all the young musicians in Vienna, I met Louis Hayes—the next night I met Babs Gonzales. Then I went to Boston on the train, and the second day of school, a Thursday, we had to write the chords to *Darn That Dream.* I had already written dozens of good tunes myself, and in two or three minutes I wrote out the first eight bars. The teacher said 'There ain't no reason for you to be here.'

"A few days later there was a call at the school that the piano player got sick at Storyville, George Wein's club. It was the intermission group while Ella Fitzgerald was there. So I sat in and earned my first $20 in America. Jake Hanna was the drummer, and that same night he called Maynard Ferguson, who was looking for a pianist. I flew down and made the audition right on the stage of the Apollo Theater.

"Slide Hampton was Maynard's musical director, and we had Frankie Dunlop on drums, Bill Chase was playing lead trumpet, Slide and Don Sebesky on trombones, and me and Slide got Wayne Shorter in the band. We wanted to get Freddie Hubbard in the band, too, and we tried to convince Maynard to let me and Slide share the musical direction—we were enthusiastic idealists. But Ferguson freaked out and fired me and six other cats, about three months after I had joined. Wayne had already joined Art Blakey's band.

"Before I was fired, we were playing in Atlanta, opening for Dinah Washington at the Magnolia Ballroom. I was staying at the same hotel as Dinah, and she said, 'If you ever need a job, it's yours.' Later on, in the summer, I was living in Brooklyn and decided to go down to Birdland, which I did almost every night when I wasn't working, for years. And talk about timing—just as I walk down the steps, Dinah is walking up. She said, 'Tomorrow night I'm opening at the Vanguard. Why don't you come play a tune with me?'

"So I went down, and Kenny Burrell, Richard Davis and Roy Haynes were there as a trio alternating sets with Dinah. Richard was with both bands. The club was smoking, loaded to the brim. Dinah spots me and says, 'Hey, man, come on up'—she was high and happy, people were loving her. She was the greatest singer I ever heard. I sat in with her, and never left for about two years. A few days after that first night, she called me for her record date and we made *What A Difference A Day Makes.* It was her first hit.

"I felt very happy with Dinah. In the first six or seven years in this country I was so much in the black world, it was unbelievable. With Dinah, the manager was black, all the places we played were black—I hardly knew any white people at all.

"Once we went to Birdland, Texas. Jerome Richardson was with us. That was the name of the town—Birdland—nothing but dirt roads, all black, shack city, you know. And *What A Difference A Day Makes* was just a hit. We were there with Hank Ballard and the Midnighters, a black r&b band. A big club in a small town, holding about 1500 people, almost unbelieveable. Now dig this—we're ready to go on, and the only white person there, a big woman sheriff, comes over to me and says, 'Boy, where you goin'?' I said, 'I'm going to go and play.' She said, 'You ain't playin' nothin' here.' So Dinah says, 'If he don't play, *I* don't play.'

"So the owner of the club, a black dude, be on his knees, crying, 'Please, Dinah, please.' She said, 'Man, I'm not playing without my piano player. I don't give a shit about segregation.' People were getting restless, so we split by the back kitchen window, went out on the road and hit it. The next day we saw Hank Ballard and he said, 'Man, they tore the goddam club *up.*'

"This type of thing happened often in the South, but I never had any problems. We always stayed in black hotels or with black families. When I was with Cannonball's band, I stayed in this one house in Florida with this little old lady about 75. And she never knew that I wasn't black. I always had a tan and looked kinda funny, you know—'That light-skinned boy sure is nice!'

"After nineteen months with Dinah, I left. She had a great show, but we were in Chicago and hadn't been paid in three weeks. She died I think December 13, 1963. I was in Buffalo and got a call from Cannonball. He was always the one to call me about the people who died—he told me about Coltrane's death, Bud Powell, Paul Chambers, Wynton Kelly, Wes Montgomery. But it was Dinah who told me about Oscar Pettiford—she had a dream. She was psychic, even played the numbers with her dreams. And the woman always won some money.

"I left Chicago and went to New York, and then I worked about a month with Harry Edison behind Joe Williams. Once I took a plane home from Detroit, and dig this—I had an apartment in the Village, still by myself. I walk in the door, and the phone is ringing. It was Cannonball asking me to play in his band. I went down and rehearsed the tunes with Sam Jones and Louis Hayes, but not with the whole band. I took all the music down from the records—Riverside sent them.

"It was a hell of a challenge. Either you make it or you don't."

(This concludes part one. Part two, in our next issue, will cover Zawinul's growth with Cannonball; his experience with Miles; the *Silent Way* date; the history of Weather Report, with sidelights on Zawinul's composing methods; his attitude towards electronics; his philosophical ideas on the relationship between music and life in general; a description of his inverted keyboard technique; and a preview of Weather Report's next record.)

MEL LEWIS

STAUNCH BUT SWINGING

BY ARNOLD JAY SMITH

Mel Lewis is a loquacious, affable human being. He also happens to be a co-leader of the best big band in the world.

The Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra has been at the Village Vanguard for 13 years. With Thad's charts and drummer Mel's pulse, the band's adventurous horizons appear to be limitless.

In two long conversations, Lewis recently discussed a wide range of topics. His ruminations were characterized by his friendly and candid demeanor.

Smith: Let's begin with your drum set; have you played Gretsch all of your life?

Lewis: All of my professional life. I play a standard setup. I own four sets of drums of which the number one set, the road set, is a Gretsch maple with a two tom-tom setup on top, an 8" x 12", 9" x 13" and a 16" x 16" on the floor. There's a standard snare, 5½" x 14", and a 20" bass drum. That's small for big band, but I never switched. I still use calfskin heads on the bass and snare. It's the old sound and feel. That's why the bass has such a nice, big sound.

I keep a walnut set at the Village Vanguard. There's only one tom tom on top, 9" x 13". Everything else is the same. I have a smaller set I use for small group work which is the same, except I use an 18" bass drum, 8" x 12" and 14" x 14" toms. It's also a maple outfit. Snare drums are always the same size. I also have a little ASBA, a French set given to me by Daniel Humair. It's a tiny bass and snare that I use for trio dates, a novelty set. The original plastic heads are still on them and have been for at least ten years.

Smith: What's the difference between plastic and calf for you?

Lewis: Calf is better than plastic any day. It's a richer sound, but harder to keep in tune. You have to tune it all the time. I never cared back in those days. It's all I played on; it's all I knew. Plastic has never come through. It doesn't have that feel, that sound.

Smith: Soft or hard?

Lewis: Tension-wise, medium. With plastic there's no in-between. It's either got to be tight or almost tight. When it's loose it's almost unplayable. When my heads are loose they are still absoultely playable.

Smith: What about the cymbals?

Lewis: One on the bass drum, and two floor stands plus hi-hat. There's a 16" or 18" to my left, depending on the size of the group, a 20" ride and special cymbals. There's a very old A. Zildjian with a couple of pieces cut out. Buddy Rich once asked me for it. He told me I could have anything I wanted from his set for it. I bought it in 1944, so I don't intend to give it up now. With the band I use a 20" Zildjian with two rivets, which is all I ever use. I use them all for crash *and* ride. I'm the reason they are being used today. They have one at Zildjian they call the "Mel Lewis Cymbal."

Smith: Is that the one that sounds like a garbage can cover?

Lewis: Yeah. To me it's a beautiful sound. Jake Hanna had an 18" which he used with Woody's band. Very nice. Mine's a powerhouse; I really wail on it. Mine is a custom-made cymbal made for bashing or light playing. Anything. It's made to my own ear when I am there at the factory. It's spun in my presence.

As for my hi-hats, I use two 14" band cymbals. In marching bands they would be played with two hands—you know, for accents. Gretsch also makes my sticks, which, by the way, take less of a beating on Ks than on As. The sticks have evolved as I chose them to suit me. I originally used 7a, a good seller for the company. Now they are a 3a body with a 7a tip which gives me weight and a great sound on the cymbal.

Plastic or rubber covered tips may last longer, but I never used them. Steel sticks, mostly made for practicing, tend to make you muscle-bound. I say practice with what you normally play with . . . if you practice. I never do. I used to play along with the radio when I was a kid. That was it. I don't condone that; it's pure luck that I can play as well as I do with that attitude. . . .

I'm a good listener and I remember what I hear. I listened to everybody! Every band. Every drummer had something to offer me. Basically, there were Gene Krupa and Jo Jones. Later, Shadow Wilson and Davey Tough. Those were my main men. There was also Teddy Stewart with Dizzy's big band, and Kenny Clarke with Gillespie also. I was listening to Klook with small groups, Max (Roach), too.

Smith: Weren't you a contemporary of them?

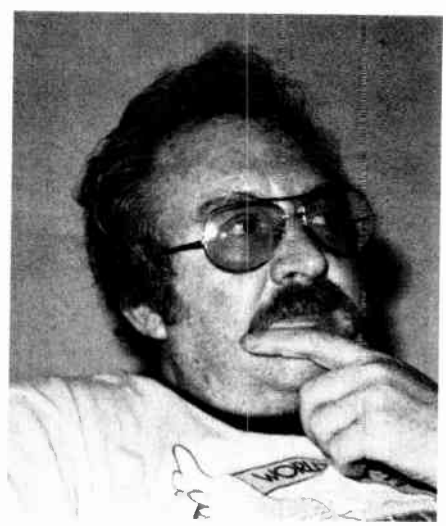
Lewis: Sort of, but I was in Buffalo and they were big time. They are about five to ten years older than I am (48). They were out there in the late '40s. Consequently, they were two to three years ahead of me. They were recording already. I fell into the bebop scene from the day it started through recordings. They were always coming through Buffalo—Bird, Diz, guys like that.

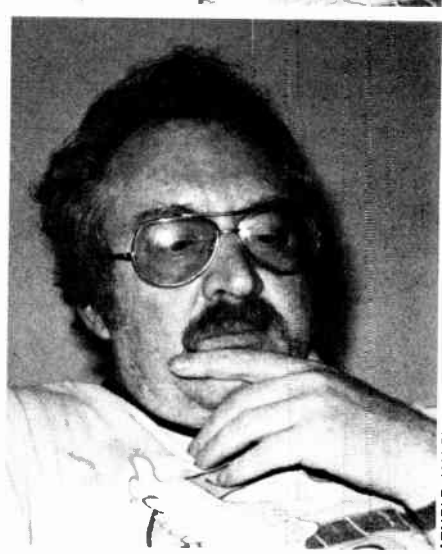
* * * *

Lewis had no formal education in music. He is self-taught both in rudiments and reading. He began on baritone horn and later switched to English horn. He picked up reading techniques in grammar school and received a set of hand-me-down drums at the age of six. Prior to that he played his father's set. His first purchased set, a Gretsch, came at age 15.

Lewis: I believe in the instrument I'm playing. I'm not endorsing the company to get free drums. I see guys going from drum to drum and I don't feel they are believers. They are out for what they can get. I bought Gretsch, and I bought Gretsch, and I bought Gretsch until I joined Stan Kenton's band.

I was offered other drums when I was with (Ray) Anthony. I turned them down because there was a big difference in the sound. It's a matter of preference, of course. It's indescribable. But I get a "sound" from Gretsch. You can't tune them that way. It's in the con-





ARNOLD JAY SMITH

struction. There's a lot of junk out there now, but the older companies are *all* good.

Smith: You are one of the few drummers who even own a pair of brushes. Why you and the other "older" drummers, and not the younger?

Lewis: I like to play the drums. I don't play for money. I get money for playing but I play for love. There are a lot of sounds you can get out of the drums. The brushes are an integral part of drumming. If the young drummers owned a pair, they wouldn't know how to play them anyhow. If they could play them, they couldn't play them on their drums because they have so much junk and tape all over their snares. On the kind of heads they use, with those black dots sticking up, you can't play brushes. There's no finish on those see-through heads. You can't play on them. They're plastic and they are not made for brushes.

Remo's head, with its rough finish, is fine for brushes when it's brand new. As soon as it starts to wear, it's not good any more. All those blue ones, purple ones, orange ones—you can't play with brushes on them; they are perfectly smooth. The best drums are made out of wood. The best heads are skin, if you can get it. Plastic is good *if* you know how to use it. It still has to do with how you play.

Remo is trying to make a head that is plastic with the feel and sound of calf. That's the ultimate. If anybody can come up with such a head, Remo Belli is the one. That's when I'll switch. He's the best. He's always letting me in on his progress and I know he will eventually find it. But until then calf is still the best. I'm not a head breaker; I'm not involved in the bust-your-drums rock scene.

Most drums built today are for blockbusting. But for good, tasty drumming you don't need plastic heads or heavy metal sticks, huge cymbal stands or double-duty foot pedals, everything weighing tons and costing a fortune and needing many people to carry it.

We didn't need that; show me any of the new guys today who are better than the idols I mentioned.

Smith: How about Billy Cobham?

Lewis: He is a fine technician. He's not a *great* drummer. In the rock field he is one of the best. I don't think any of them can play jazz. You know how hard it is to get back to playing with a touch and a feel once you have left jazz and gone to rock? Learning to relax again after you've left all those "great" chops at home? You don't need those kind of chops; you need ears and taste . . . and a touch . . . and a feeling . . . and a love.

I have a technique, too. It's not a fast one. It's a musical one. I think musically when I play. I don't ever think how fast I can play. Some drummers don't think about the composition when they play. They think about themselves.

My whole playing is what you'd call reaction. Whatever I hear I react to. That's from listening. I automatically play what goes with what is around me. I augment, complement, round out. I can make anybody sound good. I have a sound and a style of my own, but I listen to anyone that I play with. I let them play the way they want to.

No matter who was playing drums before me in any band, it sounds different when I play with them. I do not conform to the band's feel, only to its sound. The beautiful part of our band is that, no matter who is playing lead trumpet, no matter what new arrangements are coming in, it will always have that same feel because my feeling will never change. Of course, we're lucky that way, because I'm the only drummer this band will ever have.

Smith: Elvin Jones sat in when your father passed away.

Lewis: Elvin doesn't know how the band is supposed to be. I think Elvin could kick a big band if he spent time in one. Frankly, Elvin is Elvin and I like him the way he is. He's got a strange thing going in his beat, but it's very potent. He is a real swinger, a romper. I don't think he would play that far behind the beat if he was behind a big band. He would come up to be on the beat, like me. Most big band drummers think they have to play on top of the beat. I play what I feel like playing. Sometimes there may not even be the two and four punctuation.

Most young big band drummers will sit there scared stiff, afraid somebody isn't going to like what they did. There's an awful lot of fear in big bands. Everybody picks on the drummer.

Smith: Why not? It's like driving a bus. How about young Peter Erskine with Maynard Ferguson?

Lewis: I've never heard Peter play jazz. I've only heard him play very loudly with Kenton, a lot of Latin. Now he's with Maynard, so that's all he will ever be doing. I've never heard Erskine play bebop but he plays the other stuff very well. He's very loud, I'll say that.

I don't know if any young drummers can be genuine beboppers. They didn't grow up with it and they certainly haven't heard enough of it to really get into it. Most of them aren't going to work those kinds of gigs that much.

"African music has nothing to do with jazz. They don't play like we do here. It started here. Black Americans created jazz in America. No African cats invented jazz."

Smith: What is your feeling about bebop as a musical form?

Lewis: It's the ultimate form of jazz music. If you are a good bebop player you *are a good player.* That's the highest ground. In order to be a good bebop player you *must* be an absolute master of your instrument. You've got to have a sound, good time, great ears, and total knowledge of chords and scales. You have to be an excellent reader. You are trying to be in a class with Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, old Miles, Fats Navarro, and on and on. No one has proven any other music to be better or more complicated. Rock, even the things Chick Corea is doing, and the electronic things—all you need there is a lot of chops.

Smith: That isn't all bad, you know.

Lewis: All you need is 30 tom-toms in front of you, or even ten, all tuned, and to show how fast you can get over them in single stroke rolls. What is that? All you *need* is fast chops! And how heavy and loud you can play and how many heads and cymbals you can break—does that prove how good you are? Versus Max, Roy Haynes, Kenny Clarke? Come on.

Smith: Those drummers all played matched grip. Is it more comfortable, especially for rock drummers, because they have to move about so much?

Lewis: Yeah, yeah. That's why. I rarely use matched grip. It's really for speed and solos. None of them use it for time playing. It helps you get to those tom-toms up there. You don't have the power the other way.

Smith: Why can't lefty drummers play time with their left hand?

Lewis: Oh, lefty drummers, yeah. Most play right-handed. Stan Levey played left-handed. Some guys used to play right-handed set ups and the time with their left hand.

Look at the polls. I never see me in them anymore and don't expect to. My band is number one and that's important. If my band is great I feel that's a reflection on my playing. I'm not into soloing although I did do some on my own album (*Mel Lewis & Friends*, A&M/Horizon). I'm getting commentary about how some people didn't even know I knew how. I solo more when Thad and I do small group things, and I only use bass and snare. How do I get so much out of so little? I *have* to! It's easy to get a lot out of a lot. Not so with a little. You have to think a bit more and that's the challenge.

Smith: How important is sitting and relaxation?

Lewis: I am very relaxed. The reason we have these little round-shouldered affairs in posture and these little bellies (mine is not little anymore) is because you sit in a relaxed position. You are not supposed to sit upright.

Smith: Like a pitcher's arm is not used to throwing screwballs, neither is a drummer's posture. . . .

Lewis: Oh sure. You develop back trouble, trouble with your fanny.

Smith: I was always taught in athletics that you use your arm as an extension to whatever it is your are hitting with.

Lewis: We are not supposed to be using our arms. We are supposed to be using our wrists and our fingers. The arm is just something the wrist is attached to. I sit in a very comfortable position and use very little arm movement. And I don't use my toes, but my feet. I don't sit *up;* I sit *down.* And that's why at age 48 I can play fast for 40 minutes without getting tired, without my body aching. If you stay in good shape, have lots of muscles and work out, then you are going to sound like it on drums. But that can be overdone, too.

Smith: Even a drummer who plays for someone like Peter Nero has to have a lot of facility. Is it a specialty? What about playing for someone like Oscar Peterson?

Lewis: Nero's drummer has got to be able to play fast. As for Oscar Peterson, Bobby Durham comes to mind. He's a hell of a drummer. You have to be good to play with the best. The best will remain. They all forget about Sam Woodyard with Ellington.

Smith: I disagree. I feel, for Ellington, Woodyard is a forgettable drummer.

Lewis: Not to me, he's not. Who was better?

Smith: Let's start with Sonny Greer and Louie Bellson.

Lewis: Sonny is a great musical drummer and Louie Bellson is another kind of drummer altogether.

Smith: I wouldn't put Woodyard up at the top of Ellington drummers.

Lewis: He's had worse. I won't say who. I think Woodyard swung. He didn't do much. But he was fighting some of the bass players and Duke's time wasn't the best. Sam was able to go straight ahead against all that.

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Carla Bley

INDEPENDENT RINGLEADER

BY HOWARD MANDEL

HERB NOLAN

For her first U.S. tour, composer-pianist Carla Bley, who is given to no small projects, and her mate, Michael Mantler (himself a composer, trumpeter, financial wizard, and partner with Carla in the New Music Distribution Service, WATT Records, and Grog Hill Recording studios) assembled eight-odd musicians, a sound man and seven widely scattered gigs.

Then, following various routes to allow for family visits and sightseeing, the Carla Bley Band hopscotched about, creating manic scenes wherever they united and fine, loose new music at their concerts and club dates.

The tentet was a varied troupe. British tenor saxophonist Gary Windo, full of fast Monty Python humor, was dubbed "the living Leslie" for spinning completely around during his solos. George Lewis, in overalls, took over with apparent ease the trombone spot originally created for Roswell Rudd. Philip Wilson, once an AACM stalwart and formerly with Paul Butterfield's Blues Band, sat at the drums; BluGene Tyranny, a teacher at Mills College in California and sometimes sideman to Iggy Pop, helped with the keyboard parts.

Alan Braufman doubled on alto sax and flute, John Clark doubled on french horn and electric guitar. Patti Preiss played bass guitar and Bob Stewart was on tuba. Mantler blew trumpet, and Carla, in snap-brimmed cap, slacks and sweater or shawl, conducted ensemble passages then darted through the instruments to her keyboard perch.

The band played music both 20 years old and tunes that were arranged within two months of their tour. It was all Carla's music, filled with witty, cutting humor, informed by a trunkful of influences (from scraps of marching band music to a medley of Spanish Civil War songs), with solo space aplenty, startling small-big-band voicings and strangely familiar melodies. Those melodies, which Carla Bley has written, have been recorded by Gary Burton, Art Farmer, George Russell, Charlie Haden, Tony Williams and NRBQ, among others.

What have those musicians heard in Carla Bley's snips of song that inspired them to interpret her music? Why have *Vashkar, Ida Lupino, Sing Me Softly Of The Blues, King Korn, Dreams So Real,* and *Drinking Music* been recorded and re-recorded? Perhaps the players are trying to pin down the ambiguity that lurks behind the conversational phrases they hear in her tunes. Maybe they're trying to capture the essence of her wide experience, her major resource as a self-taught composer, and her strength in organizational activities, too.

It's not improbable that Carla Bley should head a band—after founding the Jazz Composer's Orchestra Association, arranging for Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra, composing and conducting the ambitious, hilarious, mysterious *Escalator Over The Hill,* and running the steady New Music Distribution Service.

"Oh, you want to visit me at Grog Kill" I must warn you, Mike and I are completely different people there," Ms. Bley said over the phone, a week before her tour commenced. "A nice introspective interview for **down beat** would be okay. I'm very serious and introverted, composing all the time, at home."

I never did make it to Grog Kill, the professionally equipped studio in the woods near Woodstock, New York, where Mantler, Carla and 11-year-old Karen Mantler live and work. Maybe she *is* different at home; each time I saw her, at her New York City office and on the road, she was laughing, improvising and composing: refashioning ideas, restating themes, replenishing her own enthusiasm and the energy of her companions. She's a tall, slender woman with high cheekbones and bangs, long straight blond-brown hair. It comes as small surprise to learn her home town was Oakland—there is more than a touch of Bay Area hippieness about her, still.

About that ambiguity: Carla Bley's throwaway lines may or may not tell her tale.

"I like to lie, it's so creative," she mentioned, referring to an article that had her married to bassist Charlie Haden for ten years. "I like to make mistakes, it makes me think up ways to correct them."

It's not just generous to say Ms. Bley's deceptions are defensive ones, and her mistakes the results of unsuspected contradictions in her work. Whether creating false impressions or correcting them, Carla Bley loves to talk, and working in her office she spoke of business.

"The New Music Distribution Service is *not* a glamorous activity." She is standing over a desk where she's pasting up an offset newsletter promoting NMDS, her band's American tour and the two new WATT releases: *The Carla Bley Band European Tour 1977* and Michael Mantler's *Movies*, a quintet fleshed out by Larry Coryell, Steve Swallow and Tony Williams.

Beside her large desk and huge bed, a grand piano dominates the room. Atop it sit scores of everything Carla has ever written—the complete *EOTH* goes for $10, the thinnest volume of songs for $3, and everything else in between is also available from NMDS (6 W. 95th St., New York, N.Y. 10025).

"We believe in the distribution of indepen-

SELECTED BLEY DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader/composer/conductor
ESCALATOR OVER THE HILL—JCOA Records EOTH
THE CARLA BLEY BAND EUROPEAN TOUR 1977—WATT 8
DINNER MUSIC—WATT 6
3/4 FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA—WATT 3
TROPICAL APPETITES—WATT 1
A GENUINE TONG FUNERAL (with the Gary Burton Quartet and orchestra)—RCA LSP 3988

as an arranger
CHARLIE HADEN'S LIBERATION MUSIC ORCHESTRA—Impulse AS 9183

with Michael Mantler
THE JAZZ COMPOSER'S ORCHESTRA—JCOA Records LP 1001/2
MOVIES—WATT 7
SILENCE—WATT 5
NO ANSWER—WATT 2
THE HAPLESS CHILD—WATT 4

"My music is difficult because it demands state of the art reading, and a naivete and freshness that comes from not knowing how to read music."

dent records, and we operate as a non-profit service; we can't depend on getting government or subsidy money, so we run the office as a small business trying to break even to survive. We distribute over 200 labels—without any exclusive agreements—and when there's too much work for us, we cut it off. We've had to get rid of our most successful records, like Chick Corea's *Return To Forever*, Gil Scott-Heron's *Winter In America* and the whole ECM line. Distributing them was just too much for our small operation.

"I don't think there's anything wrong with graduating from NMDS to the bigtime," Carla shrugs. "There's a machine that serves commercial music very well, but new music or art music not at all, and a machine must be concocted to serve that. This is not your typical capitalist office. We believe in art and expression. Business is an art form I'm trying to learn. Or is art a business form?

"Anyway, we have to try harder than the big companies, and we do; we print throwaway promotional newsletters, give writers gin-and-tonics, and it's just hard work. There were no silver spoons or linings; we've built what we have and anyone can do it, as long as they have the work ethic.

"All the work we do is not just on our branch of new music, but on the whole tree down to its roots. Any way of promotion that doesn't require money we'll try, and all 200 labels have their own schemes, too. WATT does better than most of the labels, because we work very hard on everything.

"NMDS is one of the few cases in the world of the customer being able to make a total choice not screened by middlemen. Our whole reason for being is to distribute everyone in our designated area of work, new music, who needs distribution. We don't pass judgement or even listen to all the records that come to us. There's no other group in the world that wouldn't pass judgement on the work they distribute, but we don't because Mike and I were never among the chosen, and we never knew anyone who was. We can't be bought out.

"But it's not altruism—we do new music distribution for selfish reasons and that's why it works. In the seven or eight years of our existence we haven't changed our ideas; when we started under the JCOA banner, we charged nothing for record distribution. Then we learned we couldn't do it that way, we had to charge 25¢ per record. Now we charge exactly what the commercial distributors do. That's business.

"It would be stupid *trying* to fall down while trying to do something good. If we were to collapse it would be very bad; only 20 or 30 of the labels we distribute would find the means to survive at all.

"I'm not one of those who will, or would consider, or would ever want to graduate from NMDS to the bigtime. I am one who believes so strongly in total control over everything I write, play and say, I'm so spoiled musically by doing exactly what I want to do that I couldn't let a record company tell me anything. I know what I like to buy on record, and others do, too. I wouldn't want to fool the mass audience. And when we started we were so small we knew everybody we sold to. I wouldn't want to lose my audience by following a record executive's tastes instead of my fans'."

Besides, what could a record executive tell a woman who engineered the first bootleg Ornette Coleman recordings, and recorded her own three-record chronotransduction starring such diverse talents as Jack Bruce, Gato Barbieri, Don Cherry, Charlie Haden, Paul Jones, Sheila Jordan, Howard Johnson, Jeanne Lee, John McLaughlin, Don Preston, Perry Robinson, Ros Rudd and Linda Ronstadt? Certainly not how to travel.

Barnstorming with the Carla Bley Band would be no less fun than watching over the monkeys in a one-ring circus. In her recent recordings, Carla exercises her ideas in unfamiliar contexts, with the mellow aid of the Stuff men on *Dinner Music* (WATT 6) and the totally classical approach of a chamber orchestra on *3/4* (WATT 3). But on tour, the music remains the same and the faces change but slightly, while the places are completely different. Shortly after a one-nighter in Evanston, Illinois' Amazingrace, Carla, Mantler, Gary Windo and I sat down to breakfast in a Holiday Inn. Members of the musical entourage approached the table to confer with Mantler as though concerned about the weather ahead. Bob Stewart joined us briefly and John Clark sat with us quietly, as Carla talked and talked.

Bley: I'm so sorry you heard that set last night, we completely burned out on our first show. We went into the dressing rooms at intermission and were drinking gin and we realized we couldn't go through with the second show, but we had to so we did. Everyone made mistakes during the second show that they had never made before in their entire lives, mistakes that were impossible to make. People came in at the stupidest, most awkward places. I was at the organ trying to get my hands around something, and not being able to. It was just terrible.

Mandel: You told me the first three gigs would be like rehearsals, so that was like a dress rehearsal. You folks seemed to be having a great time onstage, and the audience certainly enjoyed you.

Windo: There's a gig like that on every tour.

Mantler: It is really tough playing two full concerts. . . .

Bley: . . . for two different audiences. They didn't have to do that in the old days, did they? So the whole thing started going completely downhill, we all made mistakes and I was glaring at the band, then Gary Windo saved the night. When his solo came I said, 'Gary, save me.' He usually fritters around on fife for about 15 minutes, doing some cockamammy thing, or blows through his mouthpiece. But he put all of his everything into saving me last night.

Windo: Twirling around. I usually do it in a kilt. Used to practice that in my living room till I was dizzy. As it made me dizzy the sound bounced off the four walls, going wraum, wrawum, wrawum, wrawuum. . . .

Bley: Then a smile crossed my face, I could feel it coming, cracking this mask of horror and pain . . . and we got through the evening. See, there's a problem. When I'm playing piano I'm not conducting, and they stand there whining, "Nobody cued me in." But if I hadn't played piano, how would the rhythm section have held together?

Mandel: Is this the transient JCOA comedy group?

Bley: No, we never planned that. If we're in a bad mood we play serious and straight. If we're in a good mood we can't help but just exuberate all over the place. When everything had fallen in shambles around the bend, Bob (Stewart) still didn't make a mistake.

Mandel: I'm amazed you people are up so early and cracking jokes. How come?

Bley: I've been up since 8:30 am. We're not really touring musicians. Mike and I are serious home people, composing at desks, working in studios. This is just a lark for us. We're used to getting up very early in the morning and going to bed about 11 pm. We don't live the typical musicians' lives.

Mandel: If you get suddenly successful will you have to live it?

Mantler: We'll do it to a certain extent, but not six months on the road.

Mandel: Does a hassle come up because you're a woman?

Bley: Never. I'm a much better composer than any of the guys. They don't dare hassle me. Man, if they were as good composers as I am they would have their own bands. That could be better put, I suppose.

Windo: It just doesn't come into it. She chooses people who aren't going to do that.

Mantler: The point of the band is that it's *her* band.

Bley: Anybody in the band would have to respect the music. It's not like I'm sitting up there playing some bullshit.

Mandel: Not the musicians so much as the audience?

Bley: It's never happened. Never, never. Asking me about it puts me in a very defensive way. When these subjects come up, it's like acknowledging the existence of a problem that I refuse to even acknowledge, that I've never understood or felt.

One time I went to Europe and somebody said something about white and black, do the black musicians give you a hard time? I swore at her and said, "No, they don't. I don't think so." This girl said, "Well, I hear a couple people don't like you." And I said don't tell me about it. I've never heard that myself, and it's cruel to point out something that someone isn't suffering from. So no, I don't suffer from being a woman, I don't suffer from anything, because I don't feel any suffering. Of course, someone could point it out—like Gary just pointed out to me that one time in France, somebody shouted "Go home and wash the dishes" but I didn't hear it.

Windo: About 35 of our people grabbed him. . . .

Mandel: It seems you've gone ahead and done what you've had in mind right along. Would you mind talking about the origins of *Escalator Over The Hill?*

Bley: Love to. It's really strange how it began. I'd never written any music with words, and Paul Haines had never written any words with music. He sent me a piece—a poem? I don't know what you'd call it, "poem" sounds weird. At the same time I was writing a piece of music and had gotten stuck at a certain place. I put the poem on the piano and as I read it ideas for a piece of music came into mind. I realized it was the piece I was writing, and the whole thing formed itself in a magical growth.

Such a stroke of luck, I guess, was a coinci-

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BENNY GOODMAN RETURNS TO CARNEGIE HALL: FOUR VIEWS

DAN MORGENSTERN • ARNOLD JAY SMITH • JOHN McDONOUGH • DON NELSEN

On January 16, 1938 Benny Goodman brought jazz to "legitimate" Carnegie Hall. On January 17, 1978 he returned. Although Goodman's pronouncements before the return engagement seemed designed to de-fuse the expectations of those of his fans who were preparing for a reunion or re-creation of the original historic event, hopes ran high nevertheless. Witness the almost immediate box-office sell-out and the level of excitement in the hall—a quasi-religious anticipation reported by virtually all writers in attendance.

Preconceptions usually disappoint, and by all reports this night was disappointing. To put events in some sort of perspective, we are running two reviews of the London double album from the concert, and two reviews of the performance itself. Additionally, an intrepid **db** reporter interviewed two of the musicians involved in the night's activities.

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People were leaving throughout the second half of the show, although no survey indicated who was leaving because of the quality of the show, and who fled because of the winter storm outside. Long delays between tunes contributed to an uneasy atmosphere, and many in the audience were put off by Beatles' tunes and a dab of Borscht Belt humor. Sound-balancing in the hall was another problem. Complaints about an evident lack of a proper rehearsal were voiced by critics and musicians alike. One player involved told **db**, "The rehearsals weren't like they should have been. Benny would pick four bars and then drill those four bars for hours instead of running the whole thing down. He'd contradict himself about the way he wanted phrasing—he drove everybody crazy."

As BG told John McDonough in our 11/17/77 issue, "I can go out with six or seven guys for one date and just play. But I can't with a band. It takes a lot of woodshedding to sound like anything."

Another musician on stage that night told us, "The main fault was the people who work the mikes at Carnegie Hall. That hall was built for acoustic music, and when you start setting up mikes on a drum cymbal and mikes all over, you just completely destroy the sound of the band. If the concert was considered a fiasco, I really couldn't say it was Goodman's fault. I really think it was the microphones. One reviewer said that all you could hear from the stage was the cymbal. Well, on stage the cymbal wasn't that loud."

Goodman tried to deal with this problem. But given the totally different perspectives of sound among audience, band and sound crew, the situation must have been hopeless. The so-called sound men simply served to aggravate the sound problem, Goodman, the players, and the audience. A band member described one episode: "When Lionel Hampton came out, the rhythm section really started to cook. Then Benny started to quiet them down. They weren't overriding Lionel, just enhancing his thing. Benny shooshed them down to the point where he had Mike Moore stop playing the bass. At one point, Connie Kay just got pissed off and stopped playing the drums. We couldn't wait to get off. It was embarrassing—we had to sit up there while the sextet played. Normally he would dismiss us, and we would just come back for *Sing Sing Sing*.

"I really don't like to talk about it because I'm trying to forget it. I wanted it to be more than it was, but it wasn't even that. But he can still play the clarinet."

THE PERFORMANCE: MORGENSTERN

Personnel: Goodman, clarinet; George Young, Mel Rodnon, Frank Wess, Buddy Tate, Sol Schlinger, reeds; Victor Paz, Warren Vaché, Jack Sheldon, trumpets; Wayne Andre, George Musso, Johnny Messner, trombones; John Bunch, piano; Michael Moore, bass; Wayne Wright, Cal Collins, guitars; Connie Kay, drums.
Guests: Martha Tilton, vocals; Mary Lou Williams, Jimmie Rowles, piano; Lionel Hampton, vibes.

There can be no doubt that Benny Goodman's 40th anniversary concert at Carnegie Hall was a puzzling and disappointing event. The pacing was poor, with interminable stage waits between numbers as Goodman collected his thoughts and decided on tempos. The sequencing of the program made no sense, the performers frequently appeared to be as bewildered as the audience, and the show was far too long.

Nonetheless, a lot of good music was played, and though I haven't cheated and listened to the record before writing these comments, I'm certain that the album will be much more pleasurable than the concert itself. It is even quite possible that Goodman himself was more concerned about the record than about the audience. He did mention the recording in a semi-apologetic aside justifying the inordinate length of the concert's second half.

In a sense, the concert was more like a dress rehearsal than a finished performance. At 68, plagued by a chronic back ailment, Goodman prefers a less taxing context for his public performing, and one wonders if he was well advised to tackle the anniversary concert in the first place. Certainly it was not a good idea for him to function as musical director, principal soloist, a&r man, master of ceremonies and over-all producer—a herculean task. If he had any real assistance from backstage, it was well hidden. There were many instances when some discrete coat-pulling would have been quite in order, but no *deus ex machina* emerged.

This is not meant as an apology, but as an explanation. Goodman's absent-mindedness is notorious; on this occasion, it was carried to an extreme. He had three excellent pianists at his disposal: Mary Lou Williams, John Bunch, and Jimmy Rowles. The latter was totally wasted, appearing only as an accompanist to singers: first to Goodman himself (whose rendition of *I Love A Piano* was delightful, but came much too early in the program), with Bunch as second pianist; then to Jack Sheldon, whose two comedy songs were entirely out of place at Carnegie Hall but rather belonged in a Las Vegas floor show or on Merv Griffin's program. Ms. Williams, well used on such numbers as her own *Roll 'Em*, was kept on stage during numbers obviously rehearsed with other pianists, such as *Clarinade*, a complicated Mel Powell big band chart on which she soon gave up playing. At one point, Bunch simply jumped in and took over, showing a presence of mind and capacity for decision-making that set him apart from the general tenor of the evening.

The ultimate victim was guitarist Wayne Wright, who sat next to colleague Cal Collins all night, getting to strum a few notes only during Sheldon's routines. Trombonist Wayne André, a capable bop stylist, was assigned the solo role in the octet version of *That's A Plenty* and in the *String Of Pearls* spot during the medley of hits, while George Masso twiddled his thumbs. Masso, a Lou McGarrity disciple, would have been perfect for *Pearls*, one of Lou's classics, and is a first-rate traditional ensemble trombonist.

The medley was a disaster. Arranged by Mike Abene, a good musician with no particular affinity for the classic Goodman style, it had been equipped with transitions between numbers. As one of the performers told me, Goodman (and almost everyone else involved) didn't care for these transitions, and it was decided at rehearsal that they would be replaced by bridging material improvised by Benny. At the performance, however, he apparently forgot this plan of action, so the band remained silent and nothing happened. Only Connie Kay's unflappability insured that at least the pulse was maintained.

Martha Tilton (who, along with Lionel Hampton and Goodman himself, was the only performer present both in 1938 and on this occasion) was brought on far too early in the show, and thus fell rather flat. Nor was it logical that two of the three selections she had been assigned were identified with her predecessor, Helen Ward. Her biggest number, *And The Angels Sing*, was buried in the instrumental medley, but even at this point, it would

have made sense to bring her back on.

The big band, a fine ensemble despite the absence of "big" names, was never given a chance to play several numbers in succession, and thus never warmed up to its potential. I was told that during rehearsals not a single big band number was played through in its entirety, which makes the band's good showing on so complex a chart as *Clarinet A La King* doubly impressive. My informant was chagrined, since Goodman is a superb big band leader. "He knows exactly what he wants, and how to convey his ideas to the band. It's a shame he never saw the charts through," my friend said.

In short, the concert was a model of wasted opportunities, missed cues, and general aimlessness. It is a tribute to Goodman (albeit a backhanded one) that some things came off as well as they did. Among these: a kicking big-band reading of Fletcher Henderson's splendid *I've Found A New Baby* chart; the aforementioned *Roll 'Em*, with Mary Lou pacing the band through some great blues stuff; a wonderfully relaxed *Jersey Bounce*, a combo effort with Hampton aboard and Benny in great form, during which Benny spontaneously cued in (and fed) the big band for some supportive riffing, demonstrating what the concert might have been; and the band (notably the reed section) and Benny on Gordon Jenkin's opulent new arrangement of *Stardust*.

These were whole numbers that worked well. Good individual and group playing abounded elsewhere. Trumpeter Warren Vaché, the junior member of the ensemble, was great every time he came to bat (*Baby, Angels, Plenty* and *King Porter Stomp*, on which he brought Bunny Berigan back to life; fire, swagger and all). Hampton, who alone among the Goodman stars of the past had the grace to come out and play, was both driving and tasteful, though Goodman seemed determined to keep him from breaking out, and added a much-needed touch of real excitement. Buddy Tate made the best of the few chances he got. Collins, a gifted young guitarist, had nice moments. Mike Moore, a BG regular, was a dependable, alert bassist. And Benny himself proved time and again that he still is a marvelous player.

One point should be made: Goodman deserves credit for refusing to turn the concert into a nostalgia orgy. He deliberately avoided most direct references to 1938. The material he chose was representative of his career from start to present (would that the sequencing had been more fitting), with the Sheldon caper the only gaffe. But Goodman obviously enjoys Sheldon's brand of humor.

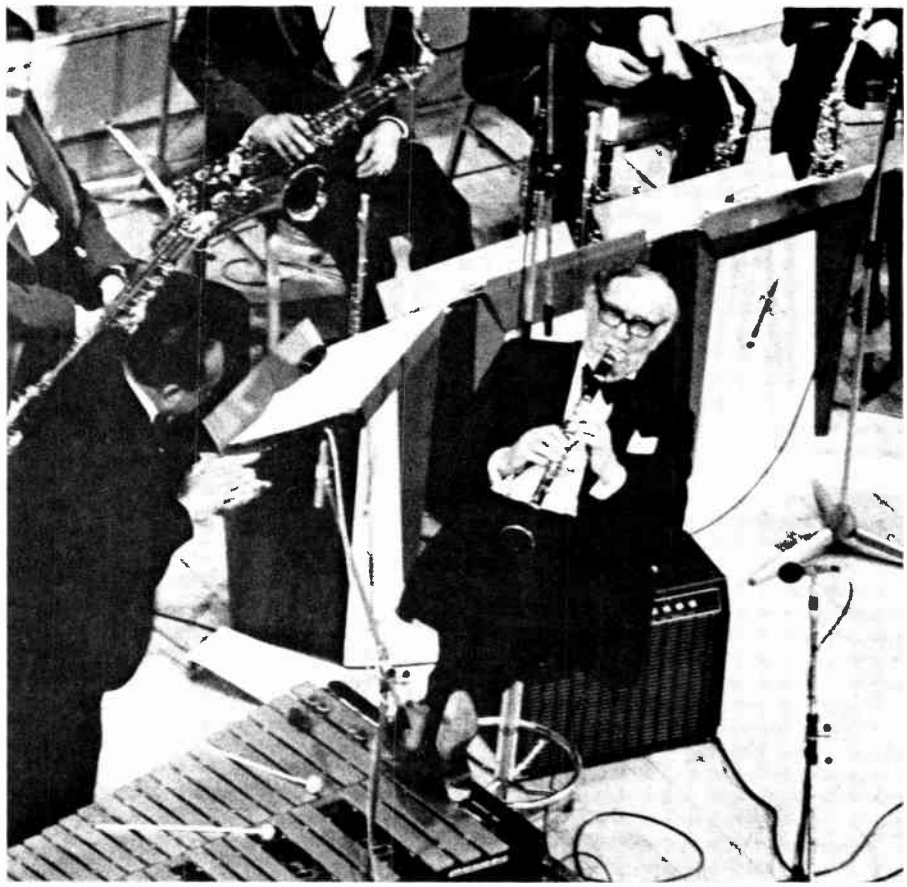
It won't be much consolation to the bewildered fans, many of whom were on their way home to suburbia well before their beloved *Sing, Sing, Sing* came along in a truncated version near the medley's end, that their man has the taste and integrity not to coast on nostalgia. That being the case, perhaps he should have avoided this public celebration of a notable anniversary altogether, though he did give fair warning of his intention not to recreate the event in various pre-concert interviews.

In the future, I hope that Goodman will stay with the more relaxed small-group format that suits him best these days. But if he should get similarly ambitious again, let him hire a top-notch producer-musical director who can relieve him of a burden that obviously is too much for him to carry alone.

THE PERFORMANCE: SMITH

Benny Goodman was here to celebrate the 40th anniversary of his historic, breakthrough 1938 Carnegie Hall concert. The superb clarinetist has always surrounded himself with musicians who sometimes (and to Goodman's credit) outweighed his ability to swing. In times past, however, he gave his sidemen more opportunities of their own. This night, it seemed that not only was Goodman himself not up to his previous standards, but that whatever else could have gone wrong did.

The band appeared to be poorly rehearsed, and with the exceptions of Vaché, Tate and Bunch in the regular band, and Williams and Rowles (all-too-briefly) among the guests, performances were mediocre.



MITCHELL SEIDEL

After a standing ovation for BG when he entered from the wings, the concert started with Weber's *Let's Dance* theme. Feet began to tap and the hall was charged with excitement. It was understood by all that this was a *major event*—the band wore tuxedos and even the critics in the audience had disintered their sport coats. But then the debacle began to unfold into what was, for me, an embarassing and insulting performance.

The first album I ever owned was of the 1938 concert, and the first collection of 78s in my home was a set called *Let's Dance With The Benny Goodman Orchestra*. I knew by memory virtually every Goodman band from 1935 through the '50s.

I neither expected nor wanted to hear reproductions of these bands—none could replace them. But 40 years and a day after jazz was brought to these hallowed halls, I did anticipate some electricity.

Clarinet A La King came too early in the program. The chart was badly read, and the balance began to slip as the sound system became shrill. Kay, a laid-back drummer in any case, was also poorly miked, and seemed to drag everything down with him. Goodman squeaked his way through *Send In The Clowns*, not allowing for improvisation either by himself or the band.

Martha Tilton, a fine band singer in the old days, was elevated to star status tonight. She read three tunes, two belonging to the book of Helen Ward, and left. Ward, in the audience, was not even mentioned, let alone introduced. I found that simply rude and thoughtless.

To keep awake, my mind kept musing on the '38 highlights and the musicians who created them. Among the missing tonight were Teddy Wilson, Harry James, Chris Griffin and Jess Stacy; all are alive and performing well around the country. In the absence of a celebration, a reunion would have been *something*.

I Found A New Baby swung (at last), thanks to the efforts of Vaché, who almost succeeded in lighting the much-needed fire. Kay lagged, but we were getting used to it. It appeared that good readers had been hired for this band at the expense of swingers, and I wondered who contracted them. Collins took an all-acoustic solo on *I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good*, but poor miking swallowed many of his nuances. Wright and Moore were affected by the same problem.

One of the early highlights was a delightful reading by Goodman of the vocal verse and refrain to *I Love A Piano*, with Rowles playing about 16 bars. Goodman's vocals are entertaining, and are taken lightly by performer and listener alike. *He* knows he can't really sing, and so do we—but it's all in good fun.

Mary Lou Williams came out with *Roll 'Em*, a tune she wrote for one of the early Goodman bands. She managed to save it from disaster, although Kay's quasi-boogie woogie backbeat was an anchor. Mary Lou romped through it with vibrant, extended choruses, as Tate followed. Unfortunately, at this point the band looked afflicted with an ennui such as might come from 32 straight weeks of high school sock hops. Nonetheless, BG loved it all, taking his best solo of the night, and even fanning his bell for effect.

Following the intermission, the band played a non-swinging *King Porter Stomp*. Jack Sheldon provided some Borscht Belt comic relief (funny, but out of place), and then it was back to music with three Lennon-McCartney tunes (also out of place). An attempt at dixieland lacked inspiration except for trumpeter Vaché, who sparkeled on each solo. Mercifully, Goodman then played some of his prettiest *Stardust* ever.

Hampton was his usual effervescent self, and instilled momentary excitement until Benny hushed both him and the sound system to a barely audible level. The best moments were Hamp on *Moonglow*, and the interplay between Goodman and Hampton on *Lady Be Good* and *Seven Come Eleven*.

Then, to the disbelief and consternation of a large segment of the audience, Benny introduced an obviously frightened and inexperienced female singer—no two of us heard the same name. While she did her damnedest to get over, Goodman proceeded to put his feet up on Lionel's vibes and opened his jacket. He may as well have scratched his belly and yawned for all the attention he paid his protégé.

A medley of some Goodman favorites seemed to be Benny's way of saying to his faithful: "Here. Are you happy now?" The tunes were frightfully read and had as much flair as a candle in the sun. Vaché, however, managed to shine during the *And The Angels Sing* segment.

The inevitable *Sing, Sing, Sing* came too late, as much of the audience had unceremoniously marched out during earlier distractions.

All right. Benny Goodman does not want to look back—and he does stand up rather well in today's musical moments. But the feeling of this writer was that he didn't care. What could those who had never seen or heard the beauty and invention, the excitement and electricity that was formerly the great Benny Goodman, possibly be thinking? Someone who *did* know summed the night up in an exaggerated stage whisper: "It was a lousy farewell concert, Benny."

THE RECORD:
McDONOUGH

LIVE AT CARNEGIE HALL, 40th ANNIVERSARY CONCERT—London 2PS 918-19: *Let's Dance; I've Found A New Baby; Send In The Clowns; Loch Lomond; Star Dust; I Love A Piano; Roll 'Em; King Porter Stomp; Rocky Raccoon; Yesterday; That's A Plenty; How High The Moon; Moonglow; Lady Be Good; Jersey Bounce; Seven Come Eleven; Someone To Watch Over Me; Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone;* Medley: *Don't Be That Way, Stompin' At The Savoy, And The Angels Sing, Why Don't You Do Right, String Of Pearls; Sing Sing Sing; Christopher Columbus; Goodbye.*

Personnel: Goodman, clarinet; Victor Paz, Warren Vache, Jack Sheldon, trumpets; Wayne Andre, George Masso, John Massner, trombones; George Young, Mel Rodnon, Buddy Tate, Frank Wess, Sol Schlinger, reeds; Jimmy Rowles, John Bunch, Mary Lou Williams, piano; Lionel Hampton, vibes; Michael Moore, Cal Collins, guitar; Connie Kay, drums; Martha Tilton, Debi Craig, Jack Sheldon, Goodman, vocals.

★ ★ ★

There are too many fine moments on this album to write it off as a failure. Yet there are too many mistakes built in to call it a success. What makes it so maddening is that the mistakes are not a failure of talent. They are just plain stupid—failures of common sense. The mistakes are at two levels. Since Goodman assembled the concert in the first place, they can be said to originate with him. But since he did ultimately provide enough satisfactory material for a good album, perhaps a great *single* LP, he can be forgiven for his strike-outs.

It is London's shocking failure to make the most of what they had that is more difficult to excuse. Rather than forget the duds and concentrate on the high spots, producer Tony D'Amato seems to have made a conscious attempt to do precisely the reverse. Why, for example, would he elect not to include two of the concert's brightest performances—Mel Powell's *Clarinade* and Eddie Sauter's brilliant *Clarinet A La King*. Benny played them both, but neither one is to be found on these records. Instead we hear three of the most boring embarrassments of the concert—Goodman's croaky vocal on *Piano* (why do brilliant instrumentalists want to be bad vocalists?), Jack Sheldon's night club act featuring *Rocky Raccoon*, and a five-tune medley. (In fairness to D'Amato, London says it was Goodman who programmed the LPs.)


MITCHELL SEIDEL

The album also suffers from lack of prior coordination between Goodman and London Records. D'Amato arrived in New York only days before the concert and apparently took no role in program planning. Considering the money the company must have sunk into this, it had a right to insist that Goodman not duplicate selections performed on two relatively recent London albums. If you have the excellent *Benny Goodman Today* (London SPB 21) you will find no less than six numbers repeated here; and with one exception, each is generally inferior to its predecessor: *Let's Dance, Roll 'Em, Don't Be, Stompin', Sing, Pearls,* and *Goodbye*. Only *Roll 'Em*, with Mary Lou Williams as soloist and Benny pacing himself wonderfully, is thoroughly worth the encore.

There were other exciting moments too, and perhaps we should give credit where it's due. The band never sounds better than on the opener, Fletcher Henderson's *New Baby*. Benny jumps into it from the first bar, and plays with great bite through his first full chorus. The next two become increasingly unsteady, suggesting that he said all he had to say in the first 32 bars. *That's A Plenty* is energetic with BG, Buddy Tate and Warren Vache maintaining a nice momentum.

Then Lionel Hampton comes out and the real excitement begins. After a full minute of rambling runs, marking time until a tempo is set (none of which belongs on the record), Hamp launches *How High The Moon*. Benny slides in, then takes the first solo chorus. He charges into high gear for his second, and the excitement spreads through the house like a brushfire. Lionel then takes six. But he was plagued throughout by a horrible balance in the house sound system. It's not that it bothers Hampton so much, but Goodman was thoroughly bugged and frustrated. Twice during the concert he asked publicly that the system be turned down, and then shut off. When he was ignored by Carnegie's notoriously incompetent soundmen, he sought to control the sound by controlling the musicians. At the 16th bar of Lionel's first solo, Mike Moore's bass suddenly disappears at Benny's direction, causing the entire bottom of the performance to drop out momentarily. Goodman also tended to sit on Lionel as well, and it's evident on the record, as Hampton never really settles into a secure groove. The two then get into an a cappella chorus before taking it out in rousing style.

Side three is the most completely satisfying of the set. There is a beautiful reading of *Moonglow*. *Lady Be Good* follows and grows into the climax of the night. Connie Kay drops out at the first bridge as Moore doubles to 4/4. Mary Lou plays well, although her left hand is a bit too heavy for a small Goodman group. Lionel then builds a chorus around a single riff, and Goodman brings the entire band in as Hampton goes into his second. By the third and final chorus everybody is into a hell raising climax. *Jersey Bounce* is next. It's clean and pretty with John Bunch's light touch replacing Mary Lou on piano. Cal Collins is delicately swinging. Side three concludes with a scorching *Seven Come Eleven*, familiar material for all concerned and good fun all around. Lionel breaks it up before BG reenters to bring it in for a seat-of-the-pants landing. Moore never quite manages to bring the bass counter riff in properly, but perfection is a poor substitute for excitement. And this is exciting.

A young vocalist called Debi Craig (Benny introduced her as Jeannie Crain) does two short numbers effectively. Her delivery is gentle, shy and unaffected, rather like a Midwestern Astrud Gilberto.

Next up is a rag-tag medley, poorly arranged, without transition bridges and played in a hesitant, fumbling way. Kay's hi hat intro goes on for 6 bars before the band starts *Pearls*. And they don't even start together. Medleys of this sort are designed only to give audiences a few capsulized samples of the big hits so they can say they heard Benny play them once. They certainly don't belong on an important record album. On *Sing*, the final number, I don't think I've ever heard a band sound more uncertain of what was expected of it. Only Kay's powerful tom toms plow into the material with the needed force and bite. (It would have been nice to hear Hampton try this one on drums.) For reasons unexplained,

the first 8 bars of the *Christopher Columbus* theme (by the trombone section) are missing. In part two, all orchestral interludes are dropped. But Hampton breaks it up in a beautiful free form flight, and Benny is violently aggressive in his swan song of the night.

Two other beautiful moments should be cited. First, a gloriously evocative arrangement of *Star Dust* by Gordon Jenkins; and second, a definitive instrumental version of *Clowns*. Both are among the quiet climaxes of the record.

Martha Tilton, who performed at the original concert, casts an authentic deja vu spell over the house with a bright *Loch Lomond*. Her voice is a tone or two lower than before, but otherwise a cheerful freeze-dried replica of the way it used to be. Her distinctive phrasing is indomitable and delightful.

One final observation on the band generally. This was an ad hoc group, assembled for one show. No one knows better than Goodman that it takes more than a few rehearsals to produce a real Benny Goodman band. The best Goodman bands don't sound the way they do by chance. They don't confuse volume with swing, for one. And they have a distinctive dialect, a special way with ensemble phrasing that can only come from a lot of woodshedding. What is heard here is a reasonable facsimile. Five rehearsals were held in a relaxed and good humored atmosphere in Studio 58 of the Wellington Hotel. Nobody should expect a miracle on that basis.

One could expect a better rhythm section, however. Connie Kay's two-beat snare work drags both the band and its soloists more than once. More important, he fails almost totally to put drive, emphasis or body English into the reed and brass ensembles. He takes advantage of none of the opportunities in *King Porter, New Baby* or even *Pearls*. It's as if he isn't listening to what the band is doing. He just doesn't respond to the music, and plays like a metronome.

I suppose the real point is that Goodman is no longer a band leader in any real sense of the word. He shouldn't pretend otherwise. He remains a brilliant artist and musician capable of extraordinary feats in small groups. A monumental contemporary talent. Had there been more emphasis on the interplay with Hampton, Tate and Vache, less attention to the band, and better sound-system planning last January, we would probably have a better album today.

THE RECORD: NELSEN

* * *

"You missed nothing," a friend told me when I returned from vacation. "The concert was terrible. Dull. People began leaving early."

This set me back, if only because Goodman has always been meticulous in his presentations and it seemed impossible he would blow the 40th anniversary of his 1938 Carnegie concert. After all, he was in a real sense saluting himself, and he is not known for self-deprecation.

Maybe London's sound engineers and tape editors were in better shape than Goodman. For one thing, this two-album set is not bad at all and at times even exciting. For another, the applause seems indefatigable, especially after *Sing*, as if everyone were digging his or her utmost.

But this is not top Goodman; over the past couple of years Goodman's legendary agility has been evident only erratically. What is surprising about this performance is that much of the music has a definite '30s-'40s sound, despite the fact that Goodman has a different band with different charts and that he definitely did *not* want to re-create the '38 occasion, historic as it was. *Sing*, even with Sheldon's boppish solo and Hampton's appearance, could easily be a '38 replay. On *Lomond*, however, Sheldon manages a very creditable Harry James imitation, just as Vache embodies the shade of Ziggy Elman on *Angels*. *Lomond* is a metaphor for the '38 tunes replayed here. Tilton, whose pipes have aged remarkably well, is in better vocal shape here than in '38, but she gives the song pretty much the same reading, and with Sheldon's solo and Goodman's short accompanying vocal, we're way back when.

Further, much of the "new" (i.e. different) material is somewhat lackluster. *Send In The Clowns*, for example, should be sent *out*, having been deadened by innumerable performances. BG's dirge-like treatment does nothing to enliven it for us. The Beatles' *Yesterday*, practically a solo effort, lasts a bare two minutes. The melody is stated languidly and that's about it. No development, really. It's pretty, but little more than an aside.

There are a few rousers to offset the snorers. *A Plenty*, with its charming Chicago-style ricky-tick vigor, and the numbers which feature Mary Lou Williams and Lionel Hampton are examples. These two musicians seem to feed and invigorate Goodman, who plays his best music of the evening on *Moonglow, Lady* and particularly *Seven Come Eleven* and *How High*.

The latter represents Hamp at his humorous and you-can't-stop-me best. A few bars of kidding intro and then he's off, accompanying himself with his usual array of "yeahhhhhhs." He's irrepressible. Williams again pulls us into the piano and Kay's crisp, efficient stickwork contribute to an outstanding piece.

On *Lady*, Williams begins by recalling Monk's *Well, You Needn't* and later hands in a solo that is all her own, regardless of the references to Monk. The finish is a stomper. As Russ Connor points out in his informative notes, the band picks up on a Goodman coda riff played with the sextet and rides it out to a roaring conclusion, Goodman soaring above the riff. This is vintage BG.

In this concert, Goodman introduces singer Debi Craig, who does not fare well on either of her contributions. Flat almost all the time, rarely hitting a note squarely, she makes *Watch Over Me* and *When I'm Gone* embarrassing. Yet she displays a warm, breathy approach and uses intervals reminiscent of the late Beverly Kenney. Maybe her problem was simply nervousness.

There were some dandy individual solos, however, aside from the stars and guest stars. Cal Collins, an exceptional musician, and Bunch produced a string of pearls of their own on *Bounce* and Tate's outings on *Sing* and *Roll 'Em* are stirring indeed. Alas, the great Jimmy Rowles appears only once and then in combination with Bunch accompanying Goodman's middling vocal of *Piano*.

A Goodman votary would feel nice and comfy with these recordings, happy that his preconceptions weren't disturbed. db

RECORD REVIEWS

★★★★★ EXCELLENT / ★★★★ VERY GOOD / ★★★ GOOD / ★★ FAIR / ★ POOR

WOODY SHAW

ROSEWOOD—Columbia 35309: *Rosewood; Every Time I See You; The Legend Of Cheops; Rahsaan's Run; Sunshowers; Theme For Maxine.*

Personnel: Shaw, trumpet, fluegelhorn; Joe Henderson (tracks 1, 3-6), Carter Jefferson (tracks 1-5), James Vass (tracks 1-3, 5), Rene McLean (tracks 1-3, 5), Frank Foster (tracks 1-3), Art Webb (tracks 1-3), woodwinds; Steve Turre (tracks 1-3, 5), Janice Robinson (tracks 1-3), trombones; Onaje Allan Gumbs, piano; Clint Houston, bass; Victor Lewis, drums; Lois Colin, harp (track 3).

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

With Miles' horn mostly on the shelf and Freddie Hubbard apparently content to boogie to the bank on the shoulders of synthetic funk, Woody Shaw is one of today's leading contenders for the world's heavyweight trumpet crown.

Shaw's first real shot at the title is *Rosewood*, his debut for Columbia. A triumph on every card tallied thus far, *Rosewood* is the deserved big break that should put Shaw in line for the main event.

Woody has pursued his climb to the top with uncompromising stints for no-nonsense players like Eric Dolphy, Bob Powell, Horace Silver, McCoy Tyner, Andrew Hill, Joe Henderson, Art Blakey and, most recently, Dexter Gordon. He has also recorded a string of solid wins for Contemporary and Muse. These have made Shaw one of the most respected trumpeters on the current scene. Now with the promotional muscle of CBS behind him, Woody should be able to widen his appeal.

Shaw, however, is clearly his own man. He has marched to a beat pulsing with his own inner visions. As indicated by *Rosewood*, the trumpeter has continued the good fight. If victory is to come, it will be on his own terms.

This album offers the two presentational modes Shaw has worked with over the past four years. The first of these is the Quintet. This, however, is the *new* five-piece dynamo featuring saxophonist Carter Jefferson, pianist Onaje Allan Gumbs, bassist Clint Houston and drummer Victor Lewis. Their compact intensity make the brisk *Rahsaan's Run* and tasty *Theme For Maxine* tautly coiled forays.

For the other tracks, it's the Woody Shaw Concert Ensemble. Beyond the personnel of the Quintet and Henderson, there are reedmen James Vass, Frank Foster and Art Webb, plus trombonists Steve Turre and Janice Robinson. Additional musicians, such as harpist Lois Colin, were called in as needed. The great advantage of the Ensemble is that it gives Shaw the best of both big band and small group worlds.

With Victor Lewis' *The Legend Of Cheops*, for example, flutes, harp and percussion are deftly employed to create pungent shifts in texture and timber. These form dynamically exotic backdrops for the foreground manueverings of Shaw and Henderson. For Gumbs' *Every Time I See You*, rich woodwind sonorities frame poignant trumpet and piano essays.

Overall, *Rosewood* presents contemporary acoustic playing at its best. Rooted in the traditions of bop and modality, Shaw and his cohorts fly both inside and out. At center stage, however, is the provocative trumpeter. Simultaneously tender and tough, Shaw cuts across all categories to connect directly to the head and heart.

—berg

ORNETTE COLEMAN

COLEMAN CLASSICS VOL. 1—Improvising Artists 37.38.52: *When Will The Blues Leave?; Crossroads; Ramblin'; How Deep Is The Ocean?*

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

★ ★ ★

Coleman Classics is something of a misnomer for this collection, although it does make a certain temporal sense: Aside from a pair of albums for the Contemporary label in the late '50s, this is among Ornette Coleman's earliest known recordings. It appears now with no annotation and only sparse recording information, and it also appears, I understand, with only the full knowledge and consent of "producer" Paul Bley (Bley owns the Improvising Artists label). For the record, it was recorded in the same period and place as a companion Bley volume recently issued on Inner City—at Los Angeles' Hilcrest Club in mid 1958.

Basically, this is a seminal edition of the Coleman Quartet that outraged and transmuted the jazz world of the early '60s, but with the addition of pianist Bley, which, of course, makes it not a quartet at all, but a quintet. That suffix, in the case of the music Coleman was about to make, was a crucial one. Atypical of jazz ensembles—and of jazz notions altogether—up to that time, the harmonic and percussive latitude traditionally afforded by keyboards only served to bridle Coleman's aims. Ornette was ready to embark on an unparalleled quest to liberate the inevitability of melody from the constraints of harmony, and although Bley was one of the more intrepid pianists of the late '50s, his bop propensities were still too limiting for Coleman. Chordal development—even in modal terms—imposed a certain set of "proper" options at any given point in composition or improvisation. Ornette simply believed too deeply in strict linearity and open-ended tonality to graft his dreams to a piano's provisions.

But still, the Coleman-Bley pairing of 1958 was an invigorating and amiable one, and a particularly productive interval for Coleman. Two of his best early compositions surface here, *When Will The Blues Leave?* and *Ramblin*, cast as heady bop abstractions. Coleman essays in both with extensive, uncommonly lucid blues lines, curling his phrases with a sweet, Johnny Hodges-like inflection, and quoting bop axioms as devices for motivic elaboration. Although his solo constructions were more memorable and imaginative in the subsequent Atlantic sessions (*The Shape Of Jazz To Come* was only a year away), they bear scrutiny here for their archetypal inversions, the peculiar way he imbues his melodies with off-pitch inflections and off-tempo cadences.

Bley, for the most part, is barely audible in this monophonic mix. But when he pokes through, he can be heard playing complex, jagged blues patterns and flowering dissonant counterpoint solos, sounding something akin to a double-tracked Monk. Coleman's principal tonal foil, trumpeter Don Cherry, seemingly loses his verve here on his solo stratches, resorting to a colloquial, non-musical tone that pours over the proceedings like cement over a transmission. Perhaps it was just an off evening, or perhaps Cherry had just not yet found his voice. In either case, it was a short-lived deficiency. Bassist Haden and drummer Higgins slap, chop and transfigure the tempo with a single-minded rampancy, establishing themselves, even at this early juncture, as one of the most awesome and tough-minded rhythm sections modern music has known.

Coleman Classics, like the discord among the principals over its release, is a boisterous and irresolute early attempt to knock the crutches out from underneath jazz and help it stand anew. It's one that ultimately succeeded, and with it, the victory of unbridled melody. God knows it's a spirit we could use again.

—gilmore

JIMMY OWENS

HEADIN' HOME—A&M Horizon SP-729: *Home; New Tune; Dreaming My Life Away; Never Subject To Change; B.S.; Sweet Love; Exercise (Dis'Go, Dis'Way).*

Personnel: Owens, trumpet, fluegelhorn; Brian Brake, drums; Billy Cobham, drums (track 7); Gary King, bass; Chris White, bass (tracks 5 and 6); Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, keyboards; Kenny Barron, keyboards; Stanley Cowell, keyboards (track 7); Errol "Crusher" Bennett, percussion; George Davis, guitar; Carlos Alomar, guitar; Mantwila Nyomo, guitar (track 5). Following personnel on track 7 only: Wayne Andre, Al Peterson, Janice Robinson, Earl McIntyre, trombones; Cecil Bridgewater, Virgil Jones, Jon Faddis, Charle Sullivan, Victor Paz, trumpets; Alex Foster, Jerry Dodgion, alto sax, flute; Seldon Powell, Harold Vick, tenor sax, flute; George Bargow, baritone sax, flute.

★ ★ ★ ★

Too often the problem with crossover albums is tentativeness on the part of the crosser and crassness on the part of the producer. A lot of jazzmen *want in* on the dance music-airplay scene, but usually they're saddled with someone's dubious MOR concepts. Too often the results are neither jazz nor commercial success, only frustrated ambition.

It's nice to report that Jimmy Owens and producer-keyboardist Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson have hit upon an amiable formula with *Headin' Home*. Owens, a proficient master of modern trumpet styles (Gillespie, Davis, Navarro, Brown), has been an "up and coming" figure since the early 1960s. More renowned among musicians than the public, Owens didn't even place in the most recent **db** Readers Poll. Owens has decided to crossover on *Headin' Home* with disco-funk arrangements that are showcases for his improvising, and which generally avoid the use of strings and other artificial sweetners. Only on *Sweet Love* does he resort to excessive aural filler, but the use of a large brass section (and Billy Cobham) on *Exercise (Dis'Go, Dis'Way)* is

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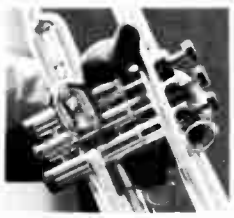

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HOLTON

very exciting, the best tune on the date in fact.

The two guitar/two keyboard rhythm sections play in a direct uncluttered manner appropriate to the genre. It is Owens' ability to function with integrity in these simple settings that makes this date click. His soloing is consistently incisive and lyrical. The Caribbean-flavored *Dreaming My Life Away* has a charming hook and some beautiful long fluegelhorn notes, while the hustling *Never Subject To Change* contains aggressive high note constructions and a tasty break from guitarist George Davis.

One might be more taken with this record were it not for the general anonymity of the other participants—they aren't required to stand out or interact, merely to groove. *Headin' Home* won't turn on a mainstream jazz listener but it should ingratiate this gifted horn player to discophiles. Hopefully Owens won't be flash frozen by his new following.

—stern

HAMIET BLUIETT

BIRTHRIGHT—India Navigation IN 1030: *Doll Baby, aka Long Service; The Mighty Denn; The Village Of Brooklyn Ill. 62059; Ballad For George Hudson; My Father's House (1. Hamiet, 2. Deborah, 3. Karen); In Tribute to Harry Carney; Ebu—Helen.*

Personnel: Bluiett, baritone sax.

★ ★ ★ ★

The one-man concert is an awesome undertaking for any musician. For the player of an essentially one-note-at-a-time instrument like saxophone, the challenge is even greater. To make it work, the harmonic slack must be taken up by other means. Hamiet Bluiett, a pioneer in the solo concert field, has found those means and met the challenge.

What makes Bluiett's approach work? Basically, it's a combination of a comprehensive technique, an innate sense of structure, a dash of humor and a compelling urge to express his life through sound. As for technical devices, Bluiett uses widely varied attacks, a full spectrum of dynamics, a range of tonalities running from growls to ethereal musings, honks, harmonics, overblown double and triple stops and pad clicks.

Conceptually, *Birthright* is an intensely personal autobiographical sketch. *Doll Baby* honors Bluiett's grandmother; *The Mighty Denn* is a father's revelation to his son; *The Villiage Of Brooklyn, Ill. 62059* pays respect to the baritonist's hometown; *Ballad For George Hudson* is an appreciation for a music teacher; *My Father's House* devotes three movements to Bluiett's father, mother and sister; *In Tribute To Harry Carney* does just that; while *Ebu—Helen* is a recognition of Bluiett's wife.

Bluiett's one-man project, though an audacious undertaking, is one that connects as drama and emotional experience. It is Bluiett's *Roots*.

—berg

PAUL MOTIAN TRIO

DANCE—ECM 1-1108: *Waltz Song; Dance; Kalypso; Asia; Prelude; Lullaby.*

Personnel: Motian, drums, percussion; David Izenzon, bass; Charles Brackeen, soprano and tenor sax.

★ ★

Extremism in the pursuit of the surreal is often no vice. Yet when gauche hues haphazardly land on the palette, with no form or function, then one is left with neither form nor substance.

The culprit here is Brackeen. Now I like atonality as much as anyone, but on most of the tracks, Charlie lands on random phrases with no thematic development and pure paucity of patterned thought. How can we excuse his aimless and frantic high notes on *Water Song* or his nonsensical blowing on the title track, done with an unforgivable steely rigidity? Brackeen does contribute lyrically to *Prelude*, and merges appropriately via concentric notes with bassist Dave Izenzon during *Lullaby*. But these pleasant aberrations from aimless tonality are not enough to forgive him.

Izenzon is hardly better. There's nothing wrong with chainsaw demonstrations, yet they are much more appropriate at the Sears hardware department than on ECM. Save for some lively walking on *Lullaby*, Izenzon darts in and out at will, lacking either pulse or compositional input.

Motian is the record's only saving grace. As always, he consistently swims through time, although his cohorts make passage difficult. There is no supportive rhythm or theme for him to feed off of. What we have in essence, then, is a trapper cast adrift in his own creations. Everything else is incidental, and highly annoying to the ear.

—shaw

JOHNNY BURNETTE/ THE ROCK 'N ROLL TRIO

TEAR IT UP—Solid Smoke S001: *Train Kept A-Rollin'; Lonesome Train (On A Lonesome Track); Oh Baby Babe; All By Myself; Blues Stay Away From Me; Sweet Love On My Mind; Rock Therapy; Please Don't Leave Me; Rockabilly Boogie; Drinkin' Wine Spo-Dee-O-Dee; Tear It Up; You're Undecided; If You Want It Enough; Eager Beaver Baby; Your Baby Blue Eyes; Butterfingers; Honey Hush.*

Personnel: Johnny Burnette, lead vocal, acoustic rhythm guitar; Dorsey Burnette, upright bass, acoustic guitar, vocal (tracks 5 and 6); Paul Burlison, electric lead guitar; Eddie Grady (tracks 3, 11, 12), Murrey Herman, Jr. (all tracks except 3, 11, 12), drums; Grady Martin, acoustic guitar (all tracks except 3, 11, 12).

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Maybe it's due to the unexpected death of Elvis last year, maybe it stems from the rising success of rawmeat rockers like Robert Gordon and Elvis Costello. Whatever, the phenomenon that was and is rockabilly is currently enjoying a spirited revival. Various rockabilly anthologies are appearing with astonishing regularity, especially in Britain where the Charly label is already deep into its comprehensive assessment of Sun Records via two multi-volume series tagged *The Roots Of Rock* and *The Legendary Sun Performers*.

The major stateside labels have lagged in picking up on the reissue rockabilly craze, so the task of hunting down these obscure treasures has been assumed by avid collectors and discophiles. Enter Solid Smoke Records, a San Francisco-based label that recently purchased these Johnny Burnette masters from the vaults of MCA (they originally appeared on the defunct Coral label). The Burnette Trio has long been a legendary unit among rockabilly fanatics and the 17 tracks included on *Tear It Up* demonstrate why. Recorded in the brief span between May, 1956 and March, 1957, the Burnette group was notorious for its hard-driving, uninhibited approach, a style that has left its mark on many latter-day British bands. Incredibly enough, the Burnette Trio failed to attain commercial success with these recordings and disbanded in the fall of '57. It would be a few long and lean years until both Johnny and Dorsey re-emerged in separate guises, with such slickly-tailored hits as *Dreamin'* and *Big Rock Candy Mountain*.

The earliest Burnette sessions were produced by Bob Thiele, the veteran overseer best known for his work with Coltrane and other assorted jazz greats. The three Thiele-produced tracks included here are every bit as untempered as the remaining 14. The distinctive sound of the Trio stemmed from the biting lead guitar of Paul Burlison, a Tennessee-style picker who could compete with the best of Sam Phillips' sessionmen. Johnny Burnette himself had deep roots in urban and rural blues as well as New Orleans boogie, as his versions of Sticks McGhee's *Drinkin' Wine* and Fats Domino's *All By Myself* and *Please Don't Leave Me* attest.

Many other classics are also found on *Tear It Up*, including *Train Kept A-Rollin'* (made famous in the '60s and '70s by the Yardbirds and Aerosmith respectively), *Blues Stay Away From Me* (a classic mourner by country crossovers the Delmore Brothers), and *Honey Hush*, the Big Joe Turner hit. Add the handful of Trio originals and you have one of the hottest rockabilly collections currently available. Keep your eyes on Solid Smoke. If this effort is any indication of forthcoming projects, it's more than time to put your cat clothes on again.

—hohman

EDQ

THEY ALL BE ON THIS OLD ROAD—Ogun 410: *Naima; Dede-Bup-Bup; Nancy; Easy Living; Overdoing It; Not Too Much.*

Personnel: Elton Dean, alto sax, saxello; Keith Tippett, piano; Chris Lawrence, bass; Louis Moholo, drums.

★ ★ ★ ½

It may be said that all musicians travel the same old road, but some travel further than others. In this case, the Dean quartet has progressed to a loosely woven treatment of the experimental sounds of the late '60s, sounds which come across as almost conventional today. At a time when most records are overproduced for commercial reasons, it is almost refreshing to listen to one that is actually underproduced. But the raw sound of this live session might have benefited from a good studio remix. Dean's avant garde approach represents a solid journeyman effort, but reflecting the backwardness of the relatively isolated English scene, it pales beside the more cohesive and integrated "loft musics" of New York and Chicago.

The musicians are London stalwarts, mostly veterans of the old Brotherhood Of Breath ensemble, and yet there is something tentative and unsure about their music, as though they were not quite accustomed to working together. No single influence is dominant, although the styles of Trane, Ornette and Ayler are clearly evident. It is equally evident that these are accomplished players, well-grounded in tradition, who have the ability to play challenging and creative music unfettered by commercial shackles. While the realization doesn't always measure up to the vision, they demonstrate sufficient potential to merit a more general awareness.

Dean, who has worked recently with Carla Bley, gives a particularly good showing, improvising expansively over a loose background structure. His spacy excursions indicate a penchant for risk-taking and exploration, albeit over roads already paved by others. The raw quavery tone of his alto often seems less than fully controlled, but his feeling for the idiom is more certain. By turns plaintive and playful, he pays respectful tribute to Coltrane's *Naima* on side one and

follows with a series of bop-oriented originals and standards on side two. Tippett's open latticework on piano aptly frames Dean's weavings, although the two tend to wander off in separate directions. Lawrence is deft but slightly monochromatic on bass and the South African Moholo a bit choppy on drums, but despite the independent proclivities of the musicians and the exploratory nature of the music they manage to maintain a sense of continuity.

The quartet's rendition of *Naima* is a pale shadow of the original and yet it remains truer to the experimental conception of the Trane version than the rote imitations of so many who have followed in the master's wake. *Dede-Bup-Bup* features a catchy hard bop head before stretching into a series of variations a la Ayler. Dean's weak tone detracts from his subtle modulations on the ballad *Nancy With The Laughing Face;* here again conception outshines execution. After Moholo and Lawrence duet in a rather directionless fashion, *Not Too Much* pulls the set back together for the closer as Dean cops a bit of Rollins for a Caribbean touch over Tippett's repeating vamp. It makes for what is on the whole a tasty and thought-provoking effort marred by some rough edges. *—birnbaum*

PHAROAH SANDERS

LOVE WILL FIND A WAY—Arista AB 4161: *Love Will Find A Way; Pharomba; Love Is Here; Got To Give It Up; As You Are; Answer Me My Love; Everything I Have Is Good.*

Personnel: Sanders, tenor and soprano sax, percussion; Norman Connors, timpani, drums, percussion, gongs, vocals; Phyllis Hyman, vocals; Lenny White, James Gadson, Raymond Pounds, drums; David T. Walker, Wah Wah Watson, guitar; Alex Blake, Eddie Watson, Donny Beck, bass; Hubert Eaves, Bobby Lyle, Khalid Moss, keyboards; Kenneth Nash, congas, bongos, paiste cymbals, gongs, percussion; The Water Family, background vocals; Ernie Watts, reeds; Oscar Brashear, Charles Findley, trumpet; George Bohannon, Lew McCreary, trombone; William Green, Terry Harrington, sax; Vincent DeRosa, Sidney Muldrow, french horn.

★ ★

I guess I'm old fashioned. Optimally, when an artist has nothing new to say, it is immeasurably preferable that he sequester himself in some mountain retreat until the Muse strikes again. Yet, beset by bills and the doting yet persistent demands of record labels for new product, many a musician has invaded the studio semi-annually, conscripted 17 horns, nine backing vocalists, a flotilla of digital delays, equalizers and sequencers, and come out with another platter full of listenable, yet listless, flotsam.

Our friend Mr. Sanders has now joined the assembly line. One wistfully recalls his dreamily eloquent Impulse material, his quasi-atonal mystical musings, which in the light of their early chronology, predated our latter day Lonnie Liston Smith mush, and, quite frankly blazed new trails. Vistas of melodic chaos were paved.

Now, all we have left of Sanders' emotively eloquent adventures are a few flashback licks. The cursory squeaks and growls of *Pharomba* are infused into a cymbal-laden, magnetically attractive rhumba. Ken Nash, a criminally underrated percussionist, enhances via paiste cymbals.

Yet is the rest of this record necessary? The lilting strings of *Love Is Here* are more appropriate for Grover Washington, Jr. than Sanders. Vocalist Phyllis Hyman, while thankfully avoiding the banshee wailing of less talented colleagues, traffics in warmed over Chic Afrique romanticisms. Norman Connors joins her on the even more inane *Everything I Have Is Good.*

Happily *Love Will Find A Way* is short on imbecilic funk. Yet this bag too becomes apparent on a rendition of Marvin Gaye's *Got To Give It Up.* Gaye, composer and vocalizer of some of the better soul classics of the past 15 years, finds perhaps his silliest, two-chord goofoff to date portrayed by staccato drums, literal sax lines and a horn arrangement worthy of the Grambling College football pep band. On the other hand, *As You Are,* weighted down by strings, is black Muzak.

Enough residue of previous musical lifetimes exists here to avoid blanket indictment. Should the passionate side of Sanders be restricted to stolen moments in the coda of *Love Is Here* or *Pharomba?* In the meantime, does the world really need another Hank Crawford? *—shaw*

SHELLY MANNE

ESSENCE—Galaxy GXY-5101: *What Am I Here For?; Yesterdays; Take The Coltrane; Ain't Misbehavin'; Essence; Soon; Body And Soul.*

Personnel: Manne, drums; Lew Tabackin, tenor sax, flute; Mike Wofford, piano; Chuck Domanico, bass.

★ ★ ★ ½

ROY HAYNES

THANK YOU, THANK YOU—Galaxy GXY-5103: *Thank You, Thank You; Bullfight; Quiet Fire; Processional; Sweet Song.*

Personnel: Haynes, drums; John Klemmer, tenor

Not all selections offer such substantial differences, however. *South, Closer Walk, Bourbon Street* and *That's A Plenty* are alternates only in the technical sense. In fact, the latter is almost certainly not an alternate. Moreover, it appears as if the first three choruses of *Avalon* are from the original take, which was spliced after the vocal and relieved of Fuller's excellent clarinet choruses. It would have been helpful if the liner notes had been more specific on such details. Nevertheless, there's exceptional Armstrong here in what was probably the closest he came to an outright blowing session in his last years.

The *Snake Rag* LP is comprised of alternates from what was originally released as *Louis Armstrong Plays King Oliver*. It is more sedate, more structured and leaves less to chance. That was the way Louis preferred to live in his own house. Working here with his regular band, there are no outsiders to shake things up.

Two new titles not part of the original are included here. *Snake Rag* is a powerful recreation from the Oliver Creole Band book with Trummy Young assuming Honore Dutrey's role and Hucko teaming with Louis for the descending breaks. *Tempo* is slower than the original. *New Orleans Stomp* is the other new title and features a trumpet that is beautiful and concise in a modest sort of way.

Although Louis' lead is crisp and strong throughout, there are few surprises, and still fewer solos of consequence. *Chimes Blues* has an easy melodrama, but lacks a couple of the subtle twists in the original issue. The solo on the alternate *Dr. Jazz* is different—no *Turkey In The Straw* quote—as is the interesting opening eight bars on *Nobody*. But Louis' work in *Hot Time, Panama, Kentucky, Butter And Egg Man* and several others is confined to simple ensemble choruses. The solos on *Chimes* and *Jelly Roll* are well-crafted but unchallenging. For many, however, the mere sound of Louis' trumpet is sufficient reward. For them this LP will be a satisfaction. *—mcdonough*

RICHARD BEIRACH

HUBRIS—ECM-1-1104: *Sunday Song; Leaving; Koan; Oxiris; Future Memory; Hubris; Rectilinear; The Pearl; Invisible Corridor/Sunday Song-Monday.*

Personnel: Beirach, acoustic piano.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The acid test for any pianist is the solo album. Without musical and psychological support from sympathetic colleagues, the soloist must rely entirely on his own resources. It therefore constitutes a rite of passage that either confirms or denies acceptance into the pantheon of giants.

With *Hubris*, Richard Beirach presents a brilliant solo recital that places him shoulder to shoulder with acknowledged masters such as Evans, Tyner and Corea. His deepening maturity and growing accomplishments should come as no surprize.

After graduating from the Manhattan School Of Music in 1972, Beirach took postgraduate studies with Stan Getz's quartet, which included heavyweights Jack DeJohnette and Dave Holland. In 1973, he linked with Dave Liebman to form the provocative Lookout Farm. When the group disbanded in 1976, Beirach formed Eon, the fine acoustic trio with bassist Frank Tusa and drummer Eliot Zigmund. Beirach has also recorded with Jeremy Steig, Lee Konitz, Freddie Hubbard and Chet Baker. Most recently, he triumphed at the Berlin Jazztage with guitarist John Scofield.

In *Hubris*, Beirach emerges as a reflective romantic whose mature musings are filtered through a tripartite grid of lyrical invention, dark harmonies and superb technique.

Sunday Song, a deceptively simple meditation, derives strength from Beirach's sensitive touch and discreet use of tremelo. *Leaving*, a poignant examination of the upheavals of separation, features an evocative section in which chordal cushions support right hand exploratory thrusts. *Koan* is a delightful miniature based on the interplay between pungent ostinatos and sprightly right hand inventions. The shifting harmonies of *Oxiris* allude to the Egyptian fertility god's potency while *Future Memory* is an optimistic glimpse into the unknown.

Hubris opens the second side with brooding lyrical intensity. *Rectilinear* is a technical tour de force in which angular geometric configurations provide contrast to Beirach's essentially flowing approach. *The Pearl* is a powerful sketch that imbeds its softly glowing center in shrouded, swirling currents. *Invisible Corridor/Sunday Song-Monday* opens on an ominous soundscape activated by judicious use of space, octaves, plucks, strums, dampenings, suspensions and overdubbing. A seamless segue to *Sunday Song* turns the emotional ebb to more hopeful realms.

Hubris is the kind of singular achievement that should catapult Beirach to the forefront of the current scene. He has met the challenge of the solo project and prevailed. *—berg*

BLINDFOLD TEST

David Friesen

BY LEONARD FEATHER

It is a rare event when the surprise show-stealer of a major jazz festival turns out to be a bass player. Such was the case last fall at Monterey, when, during his set with Ted Curson's combo, Dave Friesen played a spectacular unaccompanied solo number, *The Children Of The Kingdom,* that brought mid-solo applause and rave reviews.

Just a year ago, Friesen's first album as a leader, *Star Dance* on Inner City Records, earned him a five star review in **db**. A follow-up set on the same label, *Waterfall Rainbow,* has also earned critical acclaim.

Born May 6, 1942 in Tacoma, Wash., Friesen for years resisted playing bass. He took up accordion at ten, then ukulele and guitar. Around 1961, during his Army service, he tried out the bass and began a long process of mastering it to a degree that finds him today among the handful of complete masters.

He has worked with a wide range of combos: Joe Henderson, Stan Getz, Woody Shaw, John Handy, and two years with Curson, who said without hesitation: "Dave is a genius. Time, sound, ideas, he's got it all. And he listens. He can fit in anywhere."

This was Friesen's first blindfold test. He was given no information about the records played.

1. MIROSLAV VITOUS. *New Orleans* (from *Majesty Music*, Arista). Vitous, Clavinet, electric piano, acoustic bass, mini-Moog, composer; Francesco Centeno, electric bass; Lenny White, drums.

I think all the artists are capable of playing, however I didn't hear anything that stimulated me—it didn't sound like a very creative track. I can't comment on the whole album because I didn't hear it. It sounds like maybe it was a bass player's album, since the bass was the dominant instrument—at least on this set of speakers it was difficult for me to hear the rest of the musicians playing.

It had a funky groove and I think it was pretty contemporary music. I don't listen a lot to this kind of music. For my personal taste, I'd like to hear something a little more creative and a little more inventive melodically and rhythmically. I don't think in terms of contemporary music which might appeal to the masses. I think the masses might enjoy this record, frankly. On their behalf I could rate it maybe three or four stars. On my behalf, I can't rate it as creative music.

The drummer sounded very good—he had a very clean sound. The bass player sounded very capable. It sounded like a Fender bass. I don't play Fender bass so I'm not really that knowledgeable about what it takes to play it well, but he seemed to be able to play it rather clean. But this sounds like something that a record company has influenced the musicians to do to keep up with the trend of music that's on the streets today.

2. ANDY SIMPKINS. *Younger Than Springtime* (from *Happying*, Studio 7). Simpkins, bass; Joey Baron, percussion; Dave Mackay, keyboards.

I thought I knew who this was for a moment . . . it sounded a little bit like Niels-Henning Orsted Pederson, but I know it's not now. I think the bass player had a wonderful feeling. I felt sometimes the intonation suffered somewhat because of his singing—it was a little hard to discern the focus on the intonation. But the time and the feeling he was generating was beautiful.

I enjoyed the piano player also, and the drummer. I particularly enjoyed the way the drummer accompanied the bass player behind his solo. So many drummers are so boisterous and too bushy, but I thought as a unit they sounded very good. It made me feel good. I felt like dancing, you know, moving my body, and that's usually a sign to myself that I'm enjoying the music.

Concept doesn't mean too much to me, whether it be classical or rock or whatever. But this seemed to have substance, and I enjoyed it. I would rate it . . . I'm going to reserve five stars for something that is very, very special, but I would definitely give this a four star rating.

3. CHARLES MINGUS. *Moanin'* (from *The Age Of Charles Mingus*, Atlantic). Mingus, bass. Recorded in 1959.

That sounds like it could have been a remastered tape because it was done in stereo; but it sounds like a group that recorded quite a few years ago. I enjoyed all the solos very much. Just from the way the bass player and the drummer were playing, and the rhythm, it seemed like music that was perhaps in the '30s or '40s—quite a few years ago.

There wasn't the articulation that is present in some of the music I hear nowadays. I didn't hear the technical proficiency in the rhythm section, or as far as the recording quality is concerned. But what I like about this music, which intrigued me, was the excitement and the dedication. There seemed to be a real purpose for what they are doing, and I find this is missing a lot today in the music I hear. For that reason I really enjoyed this very much.

I think the head—the melody could have been shortened somewhat. The arrangement, I think, left something to be desired. If I had written the tune I would like to have edited it and put it a little bit more in focus. But those are small things. I think the main importance is the substance that I heard. And though there were several what musicians would call mistakes—time mistakes—and parts of it that perhaps were not swinging as much as they could, still it made me feel very good. On that basis I would rate this at least four stars.

4. JACO PASTORIUS. *Donna Lee* (from *Jaco Pastorius*, Columbia). Pastorius, bass; Don Alias, congas.

Yeah, that was a tune called *Donna Lee*, I believe, and I don't recognize the drummer, but I enjoyed what he did, and the bass solo. It was a Fender bass player who has an incredible amount of technique, but my ears failed me through parts of it, for intonation. I lost track of the melody of that song for some reason. There were parts of it, and I don't know if it was a recording fault, but it left something to be desired in the intonation.

I enjoyed the harmonic things he did. Maybe that's what threw me off. As great as this bass player sounds on this track, I can't hear the substance inside the note. I think perhaps he might be a younger musician because of that. Usually the older musicians are just like wine. It takes time to age. There's an ingredient there that's so very dear and very gentle and very special.

So as far as musicianship and technique, it's wonderful. But as far as substance, it left something to be desired. Overall, I could rate this maybe three stars.

5. GIL GOLDSTEIN. *Carin'* (from *Pure As Rain*, Chiaroscuro). Goldstein, piano, composer; Jeff Berlin, bass; Ray Barretto, congas; Bob Moses, claves.

This is a very interesting song and very interesting 7/4 rhythm. I liked the percussionist and the pianist and the bassist. Especially the bassist.

Goodness, I don't know who that is. There are a couple of bass players that come to mind when I hear that sound. It's a very sweet sound, a very singing sound on the instrument. Jaco gets that. Eddie Gomez gets that feeling. Niels Pedersen—his name came to mind. They all play a little bit differently through their solos. It seems like I should have known who that was. I liked him very much. There was emotion in his playing, his intonation seemed in focus.

The piece could have been a little more creative. I would have liked to have heard it stretch out in other directions, maybe going into a different time to connect with that 7/4. It seemed like they were all bound up in that 7/4 rhythm, which happens sometime when you're playing odd time signatures.

It seems like an adequate recording. Maybe the drums were a little bit underrecorded. This happens sometimes; they record the drums way in the background. It happens sometimes when you put reverberation in the studios in the mix. I like to hear drums recorded dry and hear things up front, so it sounds like you're in the same room.

I liked it. I would give it maybe three and a half stars.

6. OSCAR PETERSON. *On The Trail* (from *Oscar Peterson In Russia*, Pablo). Peterson, piano; Niels Pedersen, bass; Jake Hanna, drums.

This almost sounds like a Scandinavian audience, just from the pulse of the rhythm of the audience. I don't know. It sounds European anyway. Maybe not.

That sounded an awful lot like Oscar Peterson on piano. That would be my immediate guess. There were some things that didn't sound like the Oscar I knew, but I think it was Oscar. He has an incredible amount of technique, to say the least. Wow. Nice little up tempo tune, right? I know the tune but I forgot the name.

On musicianship I'd have to rate that four and a half stars. **db**

PROFILE

WALTER DAVIS, JR.

BY BRET PRIMACK

Walter Davis, Jr. plays piano and writes. Born in Richmond, Virginia under the sign of Virgo, he's comped for Bird, Newk and Jackie. But in his first gigs in high school he played some riverboat rides which Babs Gonzales sponsored.

As part of Babs' group, Three Bips and A Bop, the adolescent Davis first encountered two men who changed piano history—Bud Powell and Thelonious Monk. "They were playing so much! My ears were really cocked for them, all the time. But when I heard Bud, that really changed a lot of what I wanted to do because I was really trying to play the classics, thinking about the concert stage. I heard what Bud was doing and the music Bird had going, and this made me see what I wanted to do."

Mastering chords came first. "I played a gig and the guys would give me a bunch of chord changes. They were calling off standards like *Body And Soul* and *Stardust*. Now I wasn't aware of these things. So they wrote out all the changes for me. Then I got these keyboard harmony books and ate them up. I just wanted to know the technical structure of the chords. Then I started breaking them down and changing the chords in all the classic tunes, to give them a certain kind of strength that I wanted. All the time I was playing more and more."

And while our hero was getting his chops together, he was also hanging out with his idols. "When I met them, as young as I was, they interested me mostly because of what they were playing. This is what I wanted to do. I dug these men. They gave me their time, showed me different things and commented here and there where they could. I would leave school and come right to New York to catch Bud, or go by 63rd Street and catch Monk. I'd hang out 'til the next day and go to school in Jersey from uptown. I really loved to rap with these cats. Really enjoyed their energy.

"I used to watch Bud practice. I watched the way he broke down songs and the different ways he'd play them. He'd see how many different ways he could approach something, key-wise or whatever."

Davis' acceptance into the inner circle was unusual for that time. "The cliques weren't into giving out anything. You had to be in a particular circle to get any kind of information. You'd play something wrong and wrong again at a session and nobody would say anything, they'd just make faces. But there was always a certain group, like the horse's mouth; that's where it came from. It was good to be around these guys to see how they turned tunes around and why.

"Everybody could play. There were so many concepts going. Everybody would be developing their licks for that night when they would get in a session and play. Every day they had a fresh approach to their instrument. Everybody was constantly grinding on their axes like that. Every minute! They kept their horns sharp because they never knew who they'd find at a session when they went to play.

"One night I was playing a session, I think it was with Dizzy, and I came off the bandstand to find my accounting teacher in the front row. He said, 'You like this kind of work, huh Walter?' Shortly after that, my parents were summoned to school; they had a few words with the school authorities, and I was asked to leave. But a gig was happening in Montreal with Three Bips and A Bop that I wanted to make. Babs insisted I finish school but as soon as I got out, I ran across the street and called him. 'Hey man, I can make that gig. They just got me out of school!"

In addition to jazz gigs, Davis worked with r&b groups, doing some of his first on-the-road work with Sticks McGhee. "It was funny because we were playing real r&b. Every time he'd go out to the box office to check the money, the band would start playing *Confirmation*. He'd run back in screaming, "Fellas, fellas!' and start back in on 'You got a nickel, I got a dime, let's get together and buy some wine, drinkin' wine, spodee-oo-dee drinkin' wine.'"

In the early '50s, Davis worked Jersey sessions, playing with local groups that backed visiting bebop stars. One night, Max Roach stopped by. "The night I worked with Max, he said, 'This is my group! You are going to work with me from here on out.' I kept thinking about all the dynamite cats in the city, playing all that music, man. Kenny Drew, Walter Bishop, Elmo Hope, so many guys. And Max dug us! Sure enough, next week we worked with Max at the Apollo Bar uptown and Bird led the gig.

RAYMOND ROSS

"After that, we made some more gigs with Bird. Bird used to introduce me and say, 'He's Virgo like me.' Bird taught me a lot. He told me about learning the lyrics to a song so that you know what you're saying when you solo. And if there's one change in a song that you don't know, you don't know the song. As far as playing, Bird would really break it down for you if you wanted him to. The man was highly developed . . ."

After Bird moved on, Davis stayed with Max. "Max is a beautiful musician who should always be respected—he plays polished drums. He's done so much on the drums through the years, you can hear it in any drummer today. I remember him playing with Benny Carter's band, years ago. He was way up on the top of the stage, playing a drum solo on *I Surrender Dear* that was dynamite. He tore the drums up!"

After several years with Max, Davis joined Dizzy's quintet. In the mid-'50s, Dizzy decided to bring back his big band. "Dizzy gave the old arrangements to a crew of arrangers to get it together and rehearse the band. He went out with Jazz At The Philharmonic to do a tour, so Ernie Wilkins, Melba Liston and Quincy Jones—I hope I haven't left anybody out—went through the book. What a dynamite book! We rehearsed and flew to Rome, Dizzy got on the plane and we played the first gig in Athens and man, that band tore ass!

"The cats sounded so good. Everybody loved to play and they memorized the book. Everybody just ate up and devoured the book. I loved playing so many of those original arrangements, like the ones by Tadd Dameron. I knew them so well that I could play everybody's parts on the keyboard. It just gave me so much room to play piano things in between."

After the band toured the Middle East and South America, Davis left to play European festivals with Donald Byrd. The enthusiastic reception they received led to a year-long gig at a Paris club, Le Chat Qui Peche. "We brought hard bop to Europe and they loved it. The club was packed all the time. It was really a ball and Paris was ours."

Then Davis hit the road with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers—the incarnation that featured Lee Morgan and Wayne Shorter—and also held down the piano chair in Philly Joe Jones' group. "Philly Joe always had something to play. Some new trick to pull out of his hat. He knew his drum rudiments so well. The only way to play with him was to study because he's really into technique, and on top of that, there's his Cancerian imagination."

In the early '60s, Davis cut a series of albums with Jackie McLean for Blue Note. Walter fondly remembers their first encounter. "I knew Sonny Rollins and once we talked on the phone and he said, 'You got to meet this guy Jackie McLean, he's just like you. You cats will love each other. I really want to see you hook up.' While we were at the Apollo Club, Sonny came by and brought Jackie. Bird and Max were there too. They introduced us. We hugged each other and it's been love ever since."

In the mid-'60s, Davis went somewhere else for a minute. Tired of the ups and down of the music business, he turned to tailoring—designing and constructing clothing. He started his own business, making men's suits and ladies' wear, but all the while continued to play musical gigs. He finally grew weary of the nine to five world and plunged back into playing full time. A friend opened a club in Jersey called Mr. Wonderful and Davis went there to lead the house trio, playing opposite Motown acts. "But people were scared to come into the place because it was just too plush. It seemed like it had to be a rip off, even though it wasn't, so the club died." Later, the same friend started a record company and hired Davis to arrange and produce acts. "I got a nice piece of change for that. I was saving all the big bills in a shoebox and one day the box got full and I went to India."

Davis spent the better part of a year researching breathing techniques and chanting in the Himalayas. After these experiences, he returned home via Europe, where he played a trio gig in Paris and did session work in London with Dr. John and the Rolling Stones.

The '70s have found Davis gigging and recording with longtime chum Sonny Rollins, and working another stint with Blakey's Messengers. "You know, as you go on, you find out who's responsible for so many of the things that are happening. Like rivet cymbal. Who knows that Art Blakey did that. He needed a cymbal, whatever the situation was, and he put rivets around it. But don't nobody say they're playing an Art Blakey cymbal. But Art, he swings hard all the time!"

Lately, Davis has been working on putting his own group together. He's recorded two albums for Nippon Columbia that have been released in Japan. "I would like to have them here, where I live. But I don't know what's going to happen. Right now I'm uptight for self-expression. I got my own tunes that I want to play. Art's recorded a few of my tunes and I liked his treatments but I have a lot of things I'd like to express. I need a business situation where I can get my stuff out. I've been strongly thinking about this group for a long time. I just want to play man. Just want to play!" db

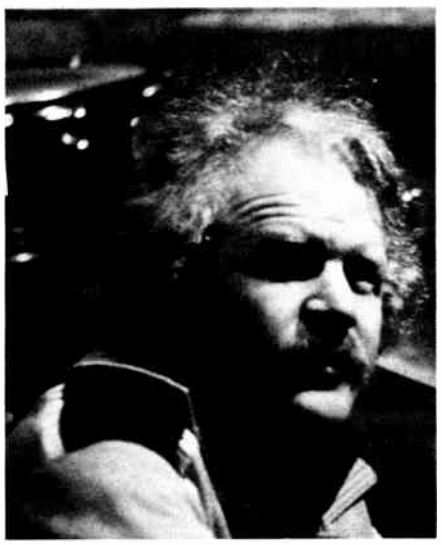
PETE MAGADINI

BY MARK MILLER

"The important thing for a musician is to keep on learning—that never stops unless you want it to."

In the 20 years and four cities where Pete Magadini has been a man about drums, he has led the triple existence of player, teacher and student, juggling these usually-concurrent activities with much the same ease as he handles the polyrhythms he has helped introduce to jazz, and integrating them into a philosophy of music which sees "lessons" learned—formally or informally—applied as a player and passed on as a teacher.

Magadini, now 36, was born in Great Barrington in the Berkshires of Massachusetts. Taken at six to Palm Springs, he remembers playing in a first-grade rhythm band there, before taking up snare drum in earnest in the fifth grade. At 15, not long after his family moved on to Phoenix, he was inspired to get a set of drums. The story is familiar. "My mom took me to hear Duke Ellington. The drummer was Sam Woodyard. They played at the Sombrero Playhouse—the stage was backlit in pastel colors. I'll always remember *Skin Deep* with Woodyard sitting up there in silhouette against an orange backdrop. That did it. I had to have a set of drums!



MARK MILLER

"The year I graduated from high school, my band teacher, Clarence Shaw, gave me a small scholarship to study with Don Bothwell, a marvelous teacher who produces fantastic drummers—he's done so much for so many young players coming out of that area. If it wasn't for him I wouldn't be playing drums in this capacity, I wouldn't be a professional in a highly-competitive field. But he took a great interest in me, and through him I also became interested in teaching." Indeed, Magadini's teaching career began with pupils that Bothwell couldn't take on himself.

The young drummer's playing career started at roughly the same time. "I began playing '50s-style rock 'n' roll, and was working professionally at age 17 in a country and western band." Pete was involved, if only peripherally, in the flurry of rock 'n' roll recording activity in Phoenix of the late '50s, including some now-obscure sessions produced by Phil Spector and Lee Hazelwood. "To this day I remember doing a certain amount of 45 record dates, but I can't remember what they were, where they went, who used them or whether they were released.

"Don Bothwell let me enjoy this part of my playing, because at that time I *was* enjoying it. . . . I was playing professionally, I was making money. Finally, at one point in my studies he took me to the record player. He put on Max Roach. And we listened. I knew immediately that he was introducing me to something special in my life. He had waited until he thought it was the right time. I was about 17, which is fairly late, you know—kids in New York are playing by 17, and here I was just starting to listen a little.

"After studying with this man for two years, I went to Arizona State on a band scholarship. . . . I was a hard-working percussionist, I liked percussion. With Bothwell I studied mainly at the drum set, but also some snare drumming. I became a very good reader, and a very proficient—I think—concert snare drummer. And for a while there I thought that might be the field I wanted to get involved in." In fact, later years would find Magadini playing—though not often at the snare drum—as an extra in the percussion sections of the Oakland Symphony Orchestra, the Tanglewood Orchestra and the Toronto Symphony, among other such organizations.

At Arizona State he found little sympathy for his interest in jazz. "You literally had to hide out to practice! In a negative way that probably helped me as much as anything because it was *so* negative that it got me thinking in other directions: 'I better leave this environment; it's time for me to go elsewhere.' And I moved to New York. Packed my drums in my 1955 Chevrolet and drove to New York. I lived there in a loft, found some work, and met Roy Burns who became my teacher. All I did was hang out, listening to all my favorites play—all those people I'd heard on records, I was hearing for the first time in person."

After a year in New York, and an academic make-up year at Phoenix Junior College, Magadini enrolled at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music in 1962. There he studied for three years with Roland Kohloff, who is now timpanist with the New York Philharmonic. On graduation with a Bachelor of Music degree in 1965, Magadini spent a summer at the Society for Eastern Arts in San Francisco, studying with the North Indian tabla player Mahapurush Misra, then a member of the Ali Akbar Khan ensemble. It proved to be a remarkable experience. "I had never been exposed to anybody who played so much drums in my life! There was no comparison to *anybody* I'd ever heard, *anything* I'd ever heard, or any concept I'd ever heard."

Such was Magadini's introduction to polymeters, and to the Indian approach of layering various metric cycles within a constant temporal space. "I began to see that in jazz we have all the chances to do these things. They take a little time to learn, but they're very musical and they're very logical. They're another dimension in rhythm that a lot of us haven't got to yet. Some jazz musicians do these things naturally—Elvin Jones plays marvelous polyrhythms naturally—but a lot of musicians don't. Once you master being able to improvise in two metres at the same time, imagine what you can do when you're just playing straight four!"

The results of Magadini's enthusiasm have been three books for study: two volumes of *Musicians' Guide To Polyrhythm* (for all instruments) published in 1969 and 1970 respectively, and *Poly-Cymbal Time* (expressly for drummers) published in 1973. Application of these studies can be heard on Magadini's first album, *Polyrhythm*, a quartet recording on his own Briko label with saxophonist Don Menza, pianist George Duke and bassist Dave Young which, according to the press it received, easily transcended its origins as a demonstration disc.

"Oddly enough, people think when I go on a job, I'm going to be playing all these things. I don't. I'm really a straightahead player!" During his San Francisco years (which would see him return to the Conservatory as a teacher), Magadini played alongside Charlie Haden in a John Handy group (the one before the famous Monterey band), then worked for about a year and a half—1965 to '67—at the Half Note with George Duke, first as a trio with bassist John Heard and later as a quartet with Al Jarreau.

By 1967, though, San Francisco meant Haight-Ashbury and music came quickly to revolve about the Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead and company. "It was a drag because I was right in the

middle of my jazz career, and what was a really good jazz town changed overnight to rock. For awhile I was a real diehard. I didn't want to make any changes. After you put ten or 15 years into a certain kind of music, it's difficult to change immediately. It was for me. It took Jack DeJohnette, Tony Williams and other drummers to show me new directions."

Magadini's response was a move in 1969 to Los Angeles. There he taught at the Professional Drum Shop, worked with Don Ellis (a natural association, it would seem) and went out on the road with singers like Diana Ross and Bobbie Gentry. It was with Gentry, in fact, that he made his first visit to Toronto. In 1971 he returned as a master's student at the University of Toronto. While there (he graduated in 1973), Magadini taught, worked in studios and local clubs, and recorded albums with trumpeter-fluegelhornist Fred Stone for Radio Canada International, and with pianist Dick Wellstood and saxophonist Jim Galloway *(Three's Company)* for Sackville. (He has appeared also in recent years on recordings by Tim Weissberg and Jay Migliori, and on an as-yet-unreleased Choice date with Buddy DeFranco and Montreal accordionist Gordie Fleming.)

However, the manufacture and marketing of a bass drum pedal he had invented in Toronto necessitated a return in 1974 to Phoenix, ostensibly as a stopover on the way to San Francisco. "I found myself starting to get busy. I put a band together with some jazz musicians I had idolized when I was young, musicians who had taught me a lot about playing—Printz Shell and Jim Zoeckler, piano and tenor saxophone respectively. They've lived there all their lives—they're not big names or anything—but they're really fine players." Completed by bassist Curtis Glenn, the Magadini quartet worked a year and a half at the El Bandido, latterly bringing in guests from Los Angeles. And in the end, Magadini never did get to San Francisco on a permanent basis. Instead he returned in 1976 to Toronto, where his various activities—teacher, player and student—have come into focus, even as they have diversified.

His teaching has led him into two new areas: classes in music appreciation for elementary school children (inspired by his own son's interest in music), and clinics in drumming given under the auspices of Norlin Music, distributor for Pearl drums. Both began on his return to Toronto. Perhaps as a result of his own on-going studies, Magadini has adopted an approach to teaching which is especially sympathetic to the pupil's interests and perspective. "All of my teaching is based on what the student wants to do with his playing, not what *I* want to do with *him*." The principle applies equally to his work with children. "I try to be as flexible as I can, to try and see music through *their* eyes . . . my idea isn't to make them musicians, it's to make them aware of music."

As the scope of his teaching has broadened, so too, apparently, has the range of his playing. "Here in Toronto the talent you have to offer is what you get called upon to use. Now my background is diverse; I've had a lot of different hats as a player." Consider a three-week period—late January and early February—in which he played two nights each with Eddie Daniels and Zoot Sims at Bourbon Street, subbing for another drummer; appeared in two "pops" concerts with the London (Ontario) Symphony Orchestra under Arthur Fiedler; participated in the premier performances of two works, a mass *African Sanctus* by English composer David Fanshawe, and a piece for drum set and four synthesizers *A Wave And A Bird* by David Jaeger for the Canadian Electronic Ensemble; and gave two clinics in the city.

At the same time his on-going activities, apart from teaching, include the preparation of an eight-piece fusion band co-led with bassist Terry Quinn for its spring debut, and anticipation of the spring release on the Sackville label of *Bone's Blues* with Don Menza, Dave Young and pianist Wray Downes.

And what of Pete Magadini, student? "I'm studying African drumming with Russell Hartenberger, and I'm applying African rhythms to the concept of independence at the drum set. And they're working beautifully!" **db**

CAUGHT!

MUHAL RICHARD ABRAMS

AXIS IN SOHO
NEW YORK CITY

Personnel: Muhal Richard Abrams, solo acoustic piano.

Abrams' Sunday afternoon solo recital at Axis in SoHo was a cogent lesson in how to make music of the past, present and future coexist. His ability to resolve stylistic tensions into a unity made his improvised suite fascinating.

Abrams couldn't just play Axis' Steinway without first performing a ritual over it. He struck a deeply resonant Paiste gong, blew a police whistle, beeped a horn and shook some bells around his neck to announce to audience and piano that the ceremony had begun. He kept all of these sounds going while turning on a rather sour tape recording of his piano. Against this din he played with the strings inside the piano: first harp-like scrapes and arpeggios, then drumming away with mallets. Finally he leaned into the piano, repeatedly blew the whistle at the strings (to scare away the evil spirits?), struck the gong, and sat down at the keyboard.

Abrams intoned a low moaning oceanic theme, making the bass notes boom like a gong. Soon he introduced a progression of spidery staccatto counter-melodies. The rhapsodic elements of the first theme reappeared and were juxtaposed against fast criss-crossing lines and exploding tone clusters. All of the elements in his musical stream of consciousness seemed to vie for ascendancy. Using a touch of Rimsky-Korsakov romanticism as an interlude, Abrams resolved the issue with a rollicking abstraction of a barrelhouse stride bass, a very raggy rag indeed. Abrams's hand independence and tone control were exemplary. He was able to create flowing, harmonically intricate bass lines and salty right-handed lyricism unencumbered by dependance on an ostinato.

When he did resort to an ostinato, it wasn't milked dry. Abrams introduced elements of surprise and shading: a resounding two-handed figure culminated in high delicate tremolos with spacious bass accents. It was practically a lullaby, and many people were reminded of Keith Jarrett. Abrams took this dreamy mood and transformed it into a Spanish landscape with an *All Blues* rhythmic thrust, and after a duration of experiment with

JAKI OCHS

melodic variations he sought repose. He segued into slow thoughtful block chords, struck some bass clusters suggesting the opening gong, and brought his music to a cyclical conclusion.

Unlike some modernists, Abrams's pessimism and parody of reality is tempered by sentiment—and he is not afraid to draw on tradition or the vaguely familiar. The solo setting was ideal to observe Abrams's considerable resources. Unlike some solo pianists whose work is marred by rhythmical redundancy or lyrical self-indulgence, Abrams' playing is full of variety, structural logic and an omnipotent inner drive. Muhal Richard Abrams, one of the founding fathers of the AACM, is a movement unto himself.

—chip stern

ARTHUR BLYTHE QUARTET

EISNER & LUBIN AUDITORIUM
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Personnel: Blythe, alto sax; Olu Dara, trumpet; Bob Stewart, tuba; Doug Hammond, drums.

Blythe emigrated to New York from L.A. a couple of years back, and has since received nothing but good notices for his playing. But with this concert, equal attention must be given to his composing abilities, which appear to be substantial.

Having played and recorded with Horace Tapscott for years on the West Coast, Blythe has a fondness for the riff-like qualities of Tapscott's writing, as well as for his use of lower-range instruments like the tuba in ensembles and to set up very catchy, propulsive ostinatos.

Stewart's tuba substituted for the traditionally-present bass in this quartet. Stewart began several tunes with throbbing, walking, bass-like lines that grabbed the listener immediately. Behind soloists, in addition to offering the kind of support one would expect from a bassist, Stewart emitted growls and whines that could never come from a bass, adding an extra textural dimension.

Complementing Stewart perfectly was Dara's vocally-expressive trumpet style. Dara has both great chops and a preference for sparse improvisations that much rely on tonal coloration for their effectiveness. Dara's playing provided a fine contrast to Blythe's more verbose improvisatory style, especially on *Illusions*, where Dara's solo utilized one rhythmic fragment of the theme in a very simple way. Then Blythe complicated that same motif in his solo, using long runs interspersed with rhythmic allusions to the theme. (Stewart was allowed solo space here too, but unfortunately Dara and Hammond offered distracting percussion support that made it hard to concentrate on the tuba.)

Several other Blythe compositions—and their performances—should be acknowledged. *Bush Baby* was reminiscent of Herbie Hancock's second version of *Watermelon Man*, but had an impish buoyancy all its own. Stewart's tuba backing, Blythe's inventive solo, and the clarity and decisiveness of Dara's tone and playing made the piece a complete success. *Spirits In The Field* was a brilliant, haunting tune that served as a semi-feature for Blythe's alto. His gorgeous, full and warm sound was a joy to the ear, as was his well-crafted, memorable solo. *The Grip* was another Blythe-composed gem, and he cleverly peppered his solo with apt and witty blues licks. Dara opened up more here than elsewhere, revealing a larger portion of his formidable technique in an intensely riveting solo.

The concert's final two tunes, *For Fats* and *Down San Diego Way* (the latter an encore after much sustained applause by the audience) were, like most of Blythe's writing, joyfully melodic and highly rhythmic. They provoked playful, yet rousing and challenging, solos.

Some of the concert's music can be heard on Blythe's new, recommended LP, *The Grip*. He is a player/composer of the utmost quality.

—scott albin

LITTLE FEAT

ARAGON BALLROOM
CHICAGO

Personnel: Lowell George, guitar, vocals; Bill Payne, keyboards, vocals; Paul Barrere, guitar, vocals; Kenny Gradney, bass, vocals; Sam Clayton, congas; Richie Hayward, drums.

Little Feat is an odd band of rockers who can earn more money in L. A. studios than by boogieing around the country. But they tour

occasionally anyway, either to satisfy their growing fandom or to please their own souls. They brought some life to Chicago's Aragon, a once opulent '20s dance hall.

Lowell George, unshaven and tonight attired in white overalls, is the informal leader. He writes the band's most outstanding songs and gets the lion's share of vocal leads, while playing slide guitar with technique, taste and imagination unique in rock music. At a bank of keyboards, Bill Payne is an unobtrusive master at switching among his instruments without a break in the rocking. Paul Barrere picks clean rockabilly licks; his dynamic sound contrasts effectively with George, and his moves are mostly in reaction to those of the main man.

Bassist Gradney is a strong anchor. Thin of body, he is given to twitches as though receiving shock treatment, and these antics command some visual interest. The rhythm section is rounded out by Hayward, a solid drummer with chunky chops, and finally Clayton, a rather gratuitous congaist.

Little Feat plays masculine American music with touches of The Band, Grateful Dead and the Allman Brothers. The brand is their own, however—Southern party rock, loud and trebly that urges listeners to stomp, wedded to L. A. polished melodies and arrangements. Most of their songs start slowly (a friend suggests they play *everything* slower in concert than on record, to tease), and become more intense—faster, fiercer, with more feeling—during successive choruses.

Maybe that's why the end of each tune brought a roaring ovation from the packed house. (Then again, maybe it was booze, weed, the admission charge, and Feat's rare public appearance which put the audience in ecstasy.) In any case . . . Little Feat does have instantly recognizable hooks to keep the crowd boogieing, and also a trick of slamming into climactic modulations which send shivers through the nerves. George, just recovered from a serious operation, pointed to the sky while testifying on *Rock And Roll Doctor*. The man is boyishly pudgy, but cried the gospel like Ray Charles. Complete with blues licks of Little Walter and Slim Harpo, George's rollers are rough, his yodelling abandoned, and he can sing a soulful story too, as he did on *Time Loves A Hero*.

George only took a brief rest during the two-hour set, while Payne, Barrere et al got into a spacy, dramatic instrumental that reeked of jazz energy. The tune was a lengthy, collective improvisation, breaking down to a bass guitar solo that ended with a funk thumb-strum. Without pretense, Payne was a virtuoso with well thought-out musical purpose. But when George returned to the stage singing *All That You've Been*, the lights were again shining mostly on him.

Not big enough yet to be spoiled superstars, fully knowledgeable on how to pace a show, Little Feat delivered the promised thrills with *Don't Bogart That Joint*, and brought the house down with an appropriate screamer, *Teenage Nervous Breakdown*. The audience brought the band back for three encores—*Old Folks Boogie, Dixie Chicken*, and *Willin'*.

If Little Feat generates the success they commanded in Chicago wherever they play, studio work may just have to wait.

—howard mandel

[Little Feat will be the subject of a feature article by Russell Shaw in our June 15 issue.]

Louie brought a new dimension to the band. Beside being a great technician, he's a great guy. And happiness shows in his drumming. He's one of the few guys with great technique that I have admired because his personality comes out in his drumming.

Now, Buddy (Rich) has been in a class by himself. He's a special kind of drummer. He's a master of drums. I always put him on a side by himself because he's something special. I love certain things he does, other things I don't care for. There are certain things he does with a big band that I do better. That's my own ego. Maybe he thinks I do those same things terribly. But we both know we're pretty good with big bands.

Louie brought a time feeling to Ellington's band. Sonny was very musical, but his time was not that great. The band kept the time and had some good bass players like Wendell Marshall, Oscar Pettiford, Jimmy Blanton. Bellson had his share of good bass players, too—Marshall, Pettiford and Jimmy Woode. Louie also played well with Tommy Dorsey's band.

Smith: What are your feelings about record dates?

Lewis: When you're in the studios, you're anonymous and the music gets monotonous. I'm so glad to be out of that. I did all the bossa novas, jingles, swing big band collections. Thinking about it now, though, during my tenure with the studios in New York and L.A. there was some good music being recorded.

Which brings up another man I neglected to mention. Shelly Manne is an all-time great drummer in studios and on dates. His big band style stands out. He was with a Kenton band that was so heavy that it was ridiculous. His turn with Kenton was rough because the band was so musical. He had to play heavy and hard to get over. And he still managed to be musical. He is *so* musical. He made it in Hollywood because he could look at a screen and come up with all sorts of great ideas for little things.

Playing studios requires you to be on your toes. One minute you could be playing marches, Latin, rock, big band jazz, small group jazz, different leaders, different rhythm players, different everything on different days, sometimes even classical. We cut shows. It requires the same techniques as being a studio musician. We had all that on the road. We did theatre acts. For young drummers who don't know anything about it, it's a shame. They know one thing—rock—and they want to learn how to play jazz. All they have to do is listen. I mean, listen back, research. You can't start playing drums with Elvin Jones. You have to go way back and find out where it came from. It's like starting over again. Rock drummers don't have the slightest idea what it's like to play with a 12/8 feel, which is what jazz is based on, rather than 8/8 like rock.

Smith: Sounds African.

Lewis: No. It's American. African is 6/8. African music has nothing to do with jazz. They don't play like we do here. It started here. Black Americans created jazz in America. No African cats invented jazz. Maybe the idea came from there. Art Blakey will outswing them all over there.

If I sound bitter about anything, it's only because. . . .

Smith: You are.

Lewis: No, not really. I feel that people should have thought about what the media was creating. The media not only ruined the music business by pushing rock to such an extent, but it has ruined an awful lot of potentially great young musicians who are now, all of a sudden, finding themselves in the position of starting to learn to play *music* all over again because they can't make the transition.

Smith: Is education a solution?

Lewis: Maybe. I don't know if it should be formal or not, though. Thad and I teach at William Paterson College in New Jersey, in a very relaxed atmosphere. We talk to the students as we would to other musicians. They are, after all, young musicians. You don't have to *show* them how to do anything; you make them *do* it. I talk more than anything. I think it bores them sometimes. I'm sure that sometimes they think I'm full of shit. But when they come to one of my gigs everything becomes clear. It's like a demonstration of what I'm talking about. Later, they tell me they understand. I can only tell them what I know, and that I learned it from other people, by listening.

Smith: How in hell do you teach them swing?

Lewis: You can't *teach* that. You can demonstrate it and hope they understand. You can show what doesn't swing and what does.

Generally, people turned away from swing because they were in such a hurry for something new. When the idea of swing became so important, someone said, "I have to go 'outside' now." I feel it was just to do something new. Swing hadn't settled long enough and they were taking it outside. When the media left, that was the death blow. The press couldn't understand what was happening so they picked up on something simpler, like rock.

Swing is a feeling and the drummer has got to have it or the whole band won't. You can swing in 3, 4, 5, 6. I haven't really heard anybody swing in 7. When you start getting into meter counting, the swing goes out the window. No matter how well the drummer does it, he has to concentrate on the meter. There is music that doesn't swing and there are drummers who don't swing. *Most* drummers today don't swing. Many would like to, but they don't have the feeling. I guess the drummers in history who swung just knew. They were relaxed and confident.

Smith: Do any of today's drummers swing?

Lewis: I do get the feeling from someone in James Brown's band. Good soul/funk drummers swing. Jazz swinging is the most difficult to attain. It went away too fast and people want to hear it now. I think it's coming back.

Smith: What of "what's new" swings?

Lewis: Most of what is new is exciting, not swinging. It's not the kind of finger-popping, foot-stomping swing. It's more of the edge-of-your-seat nervous excitement. I never heard any fusion music that swung.

I appear to be putting down a particular type of music that I don't enjoy playing or listening to. But I *do* listen to it, all of it. It's great to give new approaches to standards and the only way to do that is to listen.

I mean, what are we really doing that's any different than we did before? You take it all in and play better as a result. Then there comes a point where you start to deteriorate like every other cat, like fighters, baseball players. "Why doesn't he retire?" they ask. You take the chance of getting worse if you don't quit. db

dence. That was *Detective Writer Daughter,* the first piece that was written about ten years ago. We said to each other, "Wow, that was magic. Maybe it will all be that easy. Let's write an opera." Paul Haines was, at that time, in New Mexico, about to move to India. We never even saw each other during *Escalator;* for three or four years he sent things he had written in India and I worked out music for them in this country. It was a correspondence opera.

After we finished it—and it was much shorter, probably one record's worth—we started trying to sell it to record companies. We took it to the major labels, and Atlantic thought it might be interesting to do, but they kept me waiting a long time. Finally we said let's go ahead and do it ourselves.

Another magic thing happened at that moment. Some guy who was a friend of Paul Haines left the system—he was a nuclear physicist or something, making one inch wide TV sets or atom bombs. He gave all his earthly goods away and I got $15,000 of it, to do the opera. That didn't last long, unfortunately. We ran out of money again and again. And *Escalator* kept getting larger and larger; the more delays we had the more stuff we'd write. It finally ended up being three records long, and the final form didn't exist until the editing. There were 70 reels of two-inch tape—that's shooting about 20 to 1.

We recorded at RCA to begin with, until we ran out of money there. Then we'd stop and try to raise more money. We finally got a big loan from a bank that a friend of ours co-signed, and we were able to finish it. Then I spent 6 months working on it in its post-recorded state up in Maine, where we had a farm. We had no electricity so I had to use a generator to work the tape recorders. Without the stress and hardship it wouldn't have been as good. It would have been too short.

You know, the whole thing was filmed. We have hundreds of reels of film; someday, if we get the money we'll put out a film of *Escalator,* of people singing their parts and the musicians doing their thing. But films cost so much money.

Mandel: Were you getting grant money at that time, too?

Bley: At that time *too*? I don't get grant money. I've been turned down by everyone, man. This year I applied for both CAPS (a New York City awarded grant) and the National Endowment For The Arts and didn't get either. JCOA is a parent organization that hasn't received funds for three years, though it has applied. I took out a loan from the musicians' union to do one of the pieces, somebody else gave me a thousand dollars—it's been begging, borrowing and stealing for years, that's all. And I could never do another *Escalator.*

Mandel: *Dinner Music* has a commercial sound, in a lot of ways. Did you just play what you wanted to?

Bley: I always got angry at musicians for playing my songs so sad and slow, knowing that my songs always wanted to be perky, pretty and without all that heavy *meaning.* So I just got people who I thought could play them light. That's how I wanted them to sound, light. By that time I'd been very disillusioned with the "jazz" mentality—for 13 years I'd been disillusioned with it. Right after a European tour I did with two screaming European free jazz musicians, where we played screaming free jazz all across Europe, Peter Brotzman and his cohort, Peter Kovald—and all we did every night, even me, was high energy hateful screaming music. And all of a sudden, I remember I was playing at Jazzland in Paris—wait, I hate to use the word screaming, but I'm at a loss for words. I'm not an improvising word artist, I can write if I sit down at the typewriter and think for an hour about a word—*self-expression* music, where you let out all of your I-don't-know on an audience; people are still doing it today so I don't want to knock it. But I got sick of it.

One night in Paris I thought "No, never, this is it, never again any blood on my fingers. I'm finished with the blood." And I went home and started working on *Genuine Tong Funeral.* That's when my life started. I stopped being part of the stream I was in and struck out as a protest to that stream. And at the time, I was mad at jazz—I'm using "jazz" in reference to musicians who like to take long solos whether they're interesting or not—that's the jazz I object to. In the last couple of years I've softened to it, and I realize that you can't look at just a small portion of the present.

JUDY COLE

You have to look at everything—at whole music, and the screaming *is* in me—it's just that I didn't like it at the moment. I preferred Ornette, and after him I just quit listening. All I can listen to in jazz now is records that are at least 20 years old. I don't like any of the modern stuff; I'd rather listen to rock and roll or classical music, without exceptions.

Mandel: Did Ornette's way of dealing with the melody affect your way?

Bley: Yes. I don't know, I believed in it so completely. . . . I don't know if it affected me, because I don't see much of him in what I do, but I believed in it completely—yes, of course, because he relieved us of the changes all of a sudden. The music could let the changes follow the melody instead of the melody following the changes. It's so hip! The changes follow the melody! But then we took the next step out and tried to free the rhythm section from following the melody, and that's where we messed up. Because that was total chaos. There are still groups today that improvise everything, that go out—one guy plays doodle-doop on the horn, another guy goes beep-a-beep, and they get a rhythm section going and they express themselves and there's no written music at all and that I don't like. I need a lot of order. I'm a very conservative person.

Mandel: Were you living with Paul Bley when Ornette and Cherry and Higgins were playing with him?

Bley: Yes, In Los Angeles. In fact I'm the dreaded engineer of those tapes Paul Bley put out. I was sitting under the piano, mixing a bunch of stolen microphones with an eight channel mixer. I would never have done that if I thought that Paul would put them out as he did. He's recorded everything I ever wrote, and he doesn't pay me copyright royalties. The nerve! He's not allowed to play any of my music any more. After Bley, George Russell was the first one to play my music, then Jimmy Giuffre, then Art Farmer put out an album called *Sing Me Softly Of The Blues*, with that tune and also *Ad Infinitum* on it.

Mandel: Do you play these tunes anymore?

Bley: Oh, I may. *Ida Lupino* must be 20 years old. *440* is two months old. So there's a 20 year range of music. Everything I think of that I can do with the band, we'll try. There are some things the band is not suitable to play, like *3/4* or any of the things from *Escalator*, but I went through it all, looking for material for us.

I've written about 200 pieces of music in my life, and the band is able to play eight or nine. Since we're working, though, I get inspired—I just did an arrangement of *Ida Lupino* in the last couple of months. It takes me a long time to do anything good. I just sit there and think and imagine—now who should have that melody? Now who should come in, which of the horns should play behind it? How many times should we do this? *Now* what should we do, what would be surprising? What would be unusual? What would be reassuring? How should we end it? I sit there, and it doesn't come quick.

Mandel: Where do the melodies come from?

Bley: God gives them to me. No. *Ida Lupino*, at the time I'd heard a group called the Four Seasons and I liked that Frankie Valli type scale, very major and it had a nah-nah quality. That's something—Frankie Valli inspired *Ida Lupino* and I never thought of it until this moment. Nah-nah-nah-nah-nah. It's so childish, that theme.

Mandel: How do you associate that with Ida?

Bley: I don't know. She always kind of overplayed, hammed things up, so those two things went together. I'm a movie buff, but I never saw any movies until I met Michael Mantler. 'Cause I was a religious person. I wasn't allowed to go to movies, never saw one until I was 14—my father wouldn't let me go. He was a piano teacher, played church music and Beethoven. So classical and church music was all that was allowed—jazz, that was the devil's music. I played my first recital when I was three, *Three Blind Mice* on the black keys with little fists. After it was over I said "That was a wonderful dress rehearsal, when is the concert?" My father said, "That *was* the concert." Then I knew I didn't have stage fright, and I've never had any.

I worked for all those Billy Graham type people, Youth For Christ. I'd play twelve variations of *Onward Christian Soldiers*, one as a waltz, one as a march, one as a polka, one with big flourishes and lots of diminished chords. Then I left the church, leaving it when I was 12. I became a roller skater and competed statewide, but I wasn't very good. As soon as I had discovered the outside world I had dropped music, as though religion and

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music were associated in some way, and it wasn't until much later that I got back to music. During that time I had a lot of neuroses; I wasn't able to leave the house and I slept with my shoes on and ate cellophane and was almost totally crazy. I dropped out of school as soon as I could, when I was 15. I was 17 when I ran away and went to New York.

I worked in Birdland and Basin Street as a cigarette girl, selling stuffed rabbits from a tray around my neck, just to stand and listen to the music.

I met Paul Bley there—he bought a pack of cigarettes from me and didn't even smoke. I must have been a fetching thing, wearing a California sun-dress, the only dress I had, and I was musicstruck. This was the very late '50s—I find I didn't write anything before '59. I think Paul was responsible for my breaking into music. He likes to save a penny here and there, and if his wife is writing music, he gets to keep the royalties. For his first album, a Gene Norman Presents album, I took the cover photo, wrote the liner notes, did everything to save him money. That's alright, remember Colette? The guy she was living with made her write to make money, which sounds like a strange beginning, but if that's what it takes to make something come up in your system . . .

The first tune I wrote was *Donkey*, and *Wrong Key Donkey*, the piece we played last night, combined the first piece I ever wrote and the last.

I had some encouragement from a couple of musicians in California. Scott La Faro would warm up on my pieces; he used to play, on the bass, *Donkey*. In those days that was amazing. He used to come over to get all my newest stuff, because it was so hard, and he needed things like that to challenge him.

My music is difficult because it demands state of the art reading, and a naivete and freshness that comes from not knowing how to read music. And Charlie Haden always encouraged me.

I'm surprised anything became of me at all. I left school before dropping-out-itus, before American youth started making it the thing to do. I thought it was all over for me, that I'd end up life as a chambermaid. I didn't have much confidence about the music I wrote for a while, but then I returned to California and met a lot of people like Ornette and Don Cherry and realized that you didn't have to go the established route. There were people just as strange as me, or stranger! Then ten years later a whole generation discovered that, and it was a wonderful feeling. Everybody stopped doing things the way they were supposed to, and did things the way they wanted to.

In my own life, that hasn't changed, though the things that I do that are socially accountable are not as visible. We're doing things our own way, just as in the '60s, but it's not so pressworthy.

I'm a good composer, probably; I think that's what I've come out with, that's my one shred of true self-respect now. It's something that I've learned and I don't even have to be modest about it. I'm a good composer and I work really hard. It's not easy for me but I'm a hard enough worker that over a period of six months I can come up with a good piece of music. That's what I'll say without modesty.

Mandel: How did you meet Michael? You seem to get a lot of support from him, and he knows the business well.

Bley: He didn't when I met him; he learned that out of necessity. He was a young composer from Austria who wrote a piece for an orchestra which was the only thing in orchestral music I thought was interesting that I'd heard coming from anybody in ten years. I heard him before I met him and thought, "That's a piece of real music." When I met him he was this cute Austrian kid so I fell in love with him and we wrote beautiful music together for years.

As life began to batter down on us, he was the most equipped person to deal with it, and he became more somebody who could talk on the telephone with someone or tell a group of people what to do, managerial things. He knew how to fill out income tax forms and he had a financial bent that was amazing. He could get more loans from more banks, and still can, than anybody I've ever met—and pay them back so slowly. . . . It wasn't that way when I met him and I feel a little guilty that he's had to become that to keep us both going. But I have a few things he doesn't have, too, so between the two of us, we can survive. It's very rare that you find one person who can survive without the help of another person.

Mandel: Was the JCOA an extension of both your talents, or was there a larger committee?

Bley: No, there was no committee around. It was just Mike and me, and it was an extension of both our talents. But after we did it we felt we should be doing it for everybody like us. We felt an obligation. So we decided we'd never do another record until everybody that we knew of that should do it had done it. And we started checking off the composers. Everybody who had a piece for orchestra using jazz musicians we let do the piece, without really deciding. Some guy would come up and say, "I want to do one," and we'd say, "Of course." We did workshops with everybody, I think we almost covered the whole period. It's too bad we couldn't continue. We've gotten so interested in record distribution that we haven't put much energy into an orchestra of jazz musicians playing in New York for the largest number of people possible, which is the idea of JCOA. We did do something last summer with Mike Gibbs.

You know, I don't think the kind of jazz I object to has been happening longer than 15 years. I don't want to pick out long solos as *the* issue, but the record companies, which are sometimes an evil force, worked towards the good. The men who ran record companies told musicians, "Hey, don't wander out so far, play the melody, you can just fool around with that." It was important that we broke loose from that force.

Now *we're* the ones who determine what the ratio of written to improvised music is. There are some improvisers who can play and entertain you all night, but they're so rare. I play long solos at home, but I'd never do it in public for money. I don't understand it. At home we play for hours and hours, and go everywhere we want to, follow every whim, but that's private, man. When I have an audience there I picture myself in the front row and I do what I want to hear. I'm a difficult listener. I demand my attention be held, I demand I be engaged and find something interesting. I demand that my emotions be built from the beginning to the end of a set—I know what I want to hear as a listener and I have very high standards. I do that for the imaginary me in the audience.

And that's why I'm interested in composed music, because somebody thought about it, they sat there, sometimes for years, thinking about a piece of music.

Mandel: Is that the story of your composed piece, *3/4*?

Bley: That's a piece for a classical group that wanted to play a work by a jazz composer. I think they commissioned Sam Rivers and Anthony Braxton besides me. A couple other people, anyway. I worked on it for one entire year. It was a new orchestration for me, one instrument of everything in an orchestra, a chamber orchestra, and I was allowed to add a few things of my own, but the problem was that particular orchestration. I like very much what I came up with; I love *3/4* and think it's very nice. I wish I hadn't played the piano solo, but we couldn't get Horowitz. It's a piano concerto, actually.

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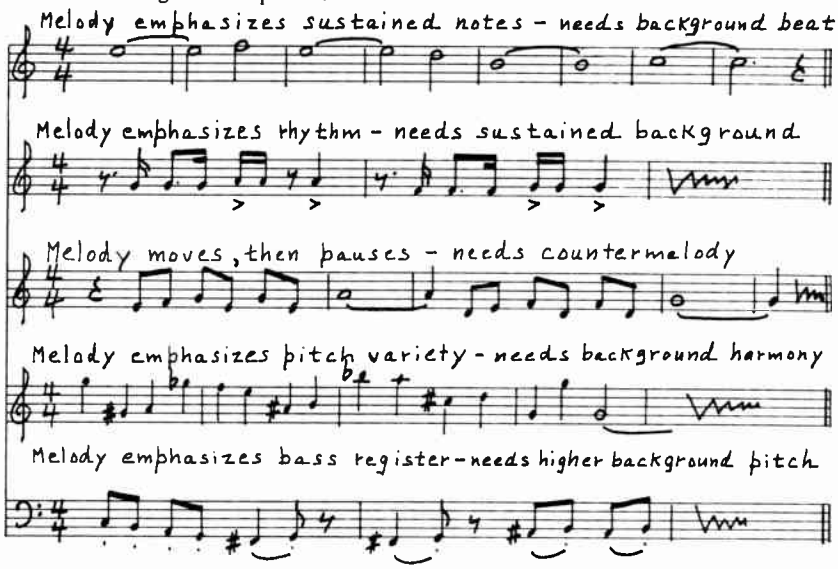
HOW TO

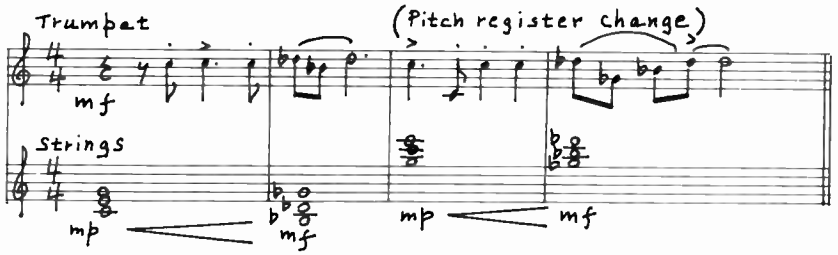
BUILD BACKGROUNDS PART III

BY DR. WILLIAM L. FOWLER

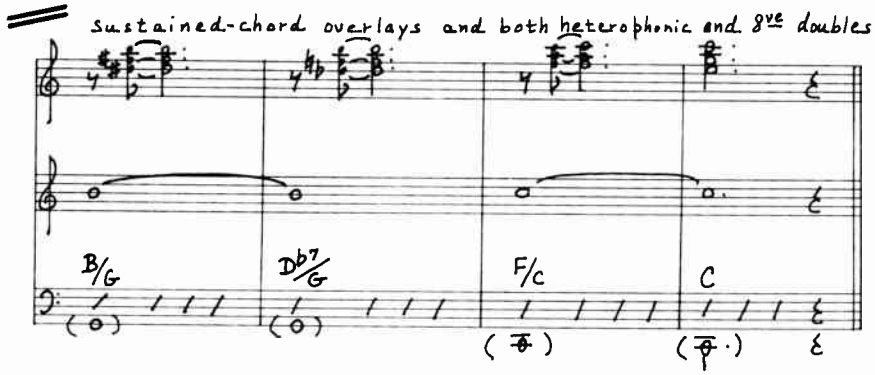
In discussing the various functions of backgrounds, Parts I and II of this article (**db**, May 4 and 18) pointed out that the main musical purpose of an accompaniment is to supply whatever musical elements the melody does not. Since different melodic types emphasize different musical elements, no one background emphasis, no one background style, no one background texture can serve all the needs of all melodies. Here, for example, are some melodic types which benefit from different background emphases:

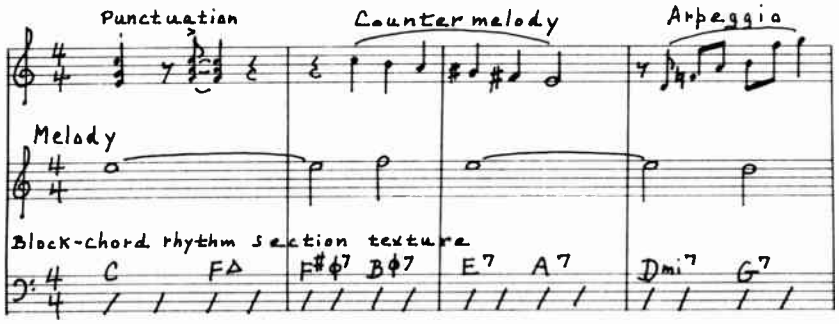


Changes in background style prove most appropriate at points where the melodic line changes style, as in the bridge of a song or from its verse to its chorus. But changing background too often for the sake of accompanimental variety risks usurping undue attention from the melody. A more consistent way of gaining variety within a background is to make changes in musical components while retaining the same texture, changes such as contrasting the timbre from time to time within a line of block chords; changing dynamics within the monophonic texture, or moving the pitch register of chords within the sustained harmony texture:



Another way to gain background variety without sacrificing continuity is to keep one texture going while adding other textures or attention-getting devices for short-term periods. Some common additives are countermelodies, chordal punctuations, arpeggios, sustained-chord overlays, heterophonic melody-doubling, and octave melody-doubling:

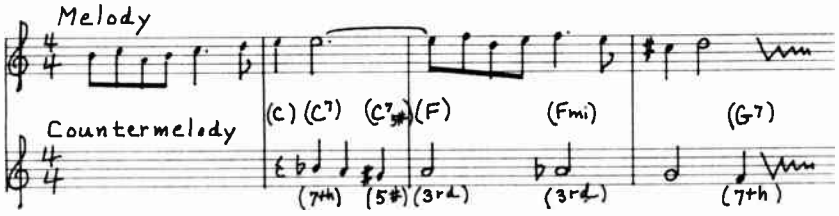




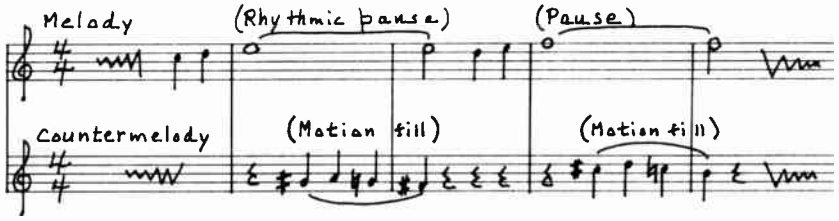
Still another way to gain background variety is to cease any part of or all of the accompaniment for short-term periods. After such background silence, the re-entry of the bass line or the harmony or rhythm instruments always refreshes the ear.

Background Countermelody

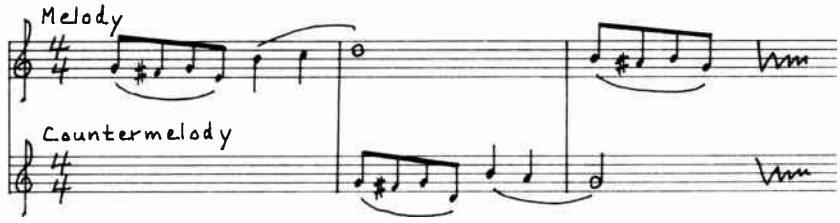
Without aid from any other background source, a single countermelody can fill several background functions. It can indicate harmonic flow by arpeggiating the chords or by sounding important notes within those chords, notes like the chord third, the chord seventh, or chromatically altered fifths:



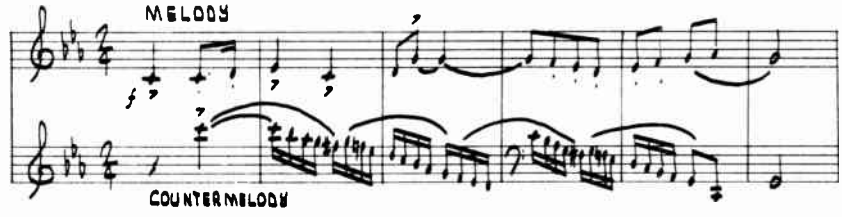
It can keep rhythmic motion going during pauses in the original melody:



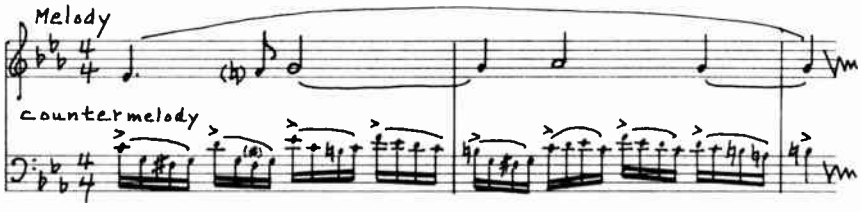
It can emphasize, through imitation, motivic characteristics of the original melody:



It can expand the total pitch area:



It can even furnish a steady background beat or metric contrasts:



When unhampered by such responsibilities, though, the countermelody can be free to establish itself as a genuine melody, not as a servant to another. The most effective, most common use of countermelody therefore is in combination with some other texture.

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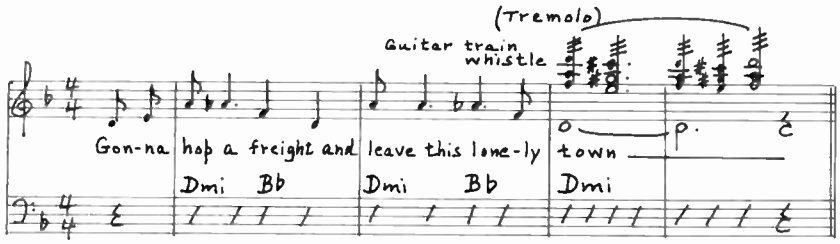
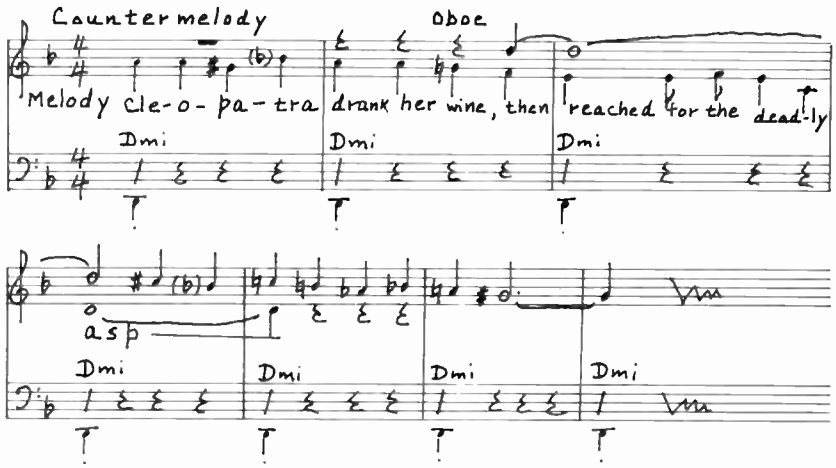
Associative Backgrounds

By imitating commonly-understood sounds, such as bee buzzes or train whistles or distant thunder, a background can illustrate song lyrics or other such expressions outside music itself.



Or by including some characteristic instrument played in some characteristic way, a background can suggest a locale—Flamenco rasgueda guitar means Spain; mandolin tremolo conjures up Venetian gondolas; blues mouth-harp in the background locks the locale within U.S. borders. In the following, the oboe playing exotic intervals makes a fitting background dirge for Cleo and her suicide snake:



The importance of backgrounds can hardly be over-emphasized. Unaccompanied melody may be fine for singing in the tub or for whistling past the graveyard, but it cannot sustain interest in modern ears.

(To be continued in the next issue)

BLEY

continued from page 40

Mandel: There must be some restrictions on what you're doing, perhaps financial restrictions?

Bley: No, there are no restrictions on me at all. Every piece of music, every gig is just exactly what we want to do. We turn down 40 gigs for every one we want to accept. It's so strange. I don't have to make money this way; I make money from copyright royalties. That's the money I use to put the band on the road.

I make my living as a composer of music that other people play. This band is like my hobby. Mike wants the band to make it, and it's a terrible financial stress trying to borrow, pay off our bills, and I don't know how long we can do it. But I don't think there are any restrictions.

I think there was a social miracle happening about five years ago when the musicians started being their own bosses. We instigated a lot of things. The musicians on records put out by JCOA all get, for the rest of their lives as long as the records sell, a certain percentage of the gross revenue. It's like a pension. When I write a piece of music, something that I worked really hard to write, if it's good enough that people will use it and it will function in the musical world, people will record it and I'll get copyright royalties. I think by doing it under your own control, by not selling your publishing and not letting a major label decide whether or not you are wanted by the world you insure that your future will be comfortable. That's a social change.

It means there's not a bunch of musicians dying penniless, alone, junkies, at 40. It means musicians having a good wonderful life with children and grandchildren and friends and no need to hurt people because there's so little to go around that you have to fight like animals to get it.

There are a lot of musicians I know who have taken control of their future. And it's harder for them now, maybe. You get a constant feeling of rejection because some of your peers are accepted by a major label and sometimes it comes down to, "Well, maybe I'm not good enough." But those who are accepted, maybe two years later the major company will decide those guys, they're not good, and they'll get shaken in the brain. I have to develop my own idea of whether I'm good or not, slowly through the fire, by organic means. Where they're always being told "You're good, you're bad"—you can get schizzy behind that. But I have to develop my own values about myself. And I feel firmly that finally I can write a good piece of music, and it doesn't matter what the companies choose to do about me, or even the magazines; I made it without a lot of support.

Gee, that was serious, whoo.

Mandel: What next?

Bley: I'm going to write a piece for Swedish

radio that I can use for my band afterwards. I'm going to Sweden in June. I'm going to work on that piece two months, then I'm going to tour Europe this summer with my band. And in the fall we're going to do another American tour. This time, I hope, probably breaking even. Mike says I can't quit now; the only way bands can do it is to start by losing money, then build until you break even, and finally make it all back. So we have to keep doing it.

Then I think I'll go back into the woodwork for a couple years and write some serious music. Music where everything is figured out and the notation is perfect. One of the problems with music that's handed down by ear, by tradition, is that in the modern world we aren't using a kind of notation that can be read in a hundred years or by somebody in China.

I found when I wrote *3/4* and the classical musicians played exactly what was written, that I didn't know what two eighth notes together sounded like. I realized what I heard was a series of triplets, and you have to stress certain of them to get the phrasing you want. In classical music every note has its dynamic indication, its birdseye or its screwdrivers at the top, or aphids climbing down the side. There's this great breed of classical musician who can play all this difficult music, he's used to interpreting it and he's got it together, he's got a language all of them understand. It used to be that jazz was handed down as an oral tradition, but I don't think that's possible today. The oral tradition should probably be translated into a language. I don't care what other people do, I would like to be able to notate a piece of music perfectly so it could be played in any culture in any time period. That's my big chore I have to do. db

CITY SCENE

NEW YORK

City Center: Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre—music by Ellington, others (thru 5/21).

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Jazzmania: *Mel Ellison, Jeff Williams, Armen Donelian, Mike Bokikio* (5/28 2 pm).

Westbury Music Fair (Westbury, L.I.): *Sarah Vaughan/Maynard Ferguson Orchestra/Stan Getz Quintet* (5/23-28), *Lou Rawls* (opens 5/30).

Spotlight (Emerson's, Paramus, N.J.): *Harry Leahy Trio* (5/17-20); *Roy Haynes Hip Ensemble* (5/24-27).

Pace University (Schimmel Center): *Thad Jones & Mel Lewis Orchestra/Tony Monte Trio* (5/20).

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The Cookery: *Alberta Hunter.*

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Studio Tangerine: *Mack Goldsbury & Jazz Explosion* (Tue.).

Wallace's (Orange, N.J.): *Mack Goldsbury Jazz Explosion* (alternating Mon.).

Mickey's Comet Restaurant (Hillside, N.J.): *Mack Goldsbury Jazz Explosion* (Thurs.).

Sweet Basil: *Arthur Blythe* (5/23-27).

The West End: call (212) 666-9160.

Creative Music Studio (Woodstock, N.Y.): Spring Session (thru 5/28).

Village Corner: *Jim Roberts Jazz Septet* (Sun. 2-5 pm); *Lance Haywood* or *Roberts* other nights.

The Public Theatre (Newman Theatre): *Steve Lacy & Michael Smith Duo* (5/19 & 20); *Ralph Towner & John Abercrombie Duo* (5/26 & 27).

John Dewey High School (Brooklyn, N.Y.): *Jim Chapin Jazz Tree/Magid Triplets/Ron Dylan & Alex Peters* (5/17).

Carnegie Hall: *Don Shirley* w/ cello & bass (5/28); *Aretha Franklin* (5/29 & 30).

St. Charles Auditorium: The Uptown Jazz Junta presents the *Red Garland Trio* plus *Clifford Jordan Sextet* (5/27).

Gulliver's (West Paterson, N.J.): *Sonny Fortune* (5/19 & 20); *Joe Newman* (5/26 & 27).

Ali's Alley: *Ted Daniels* (Mon.); call (212) 226-9042.

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Gregory's: *Al Haig* (Mon.); *Chuck Wayne* (Tue.); *Hod O'Brien, Joe Puma* (Wed.-Sun.); *Gene Roland* (Mon.-Sat.).

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Hotel Carlyle: *Bobby Short* (Cafe Carlyle); *Teddy Wilson* (Bemelman's Bar).

Three Sisters (West Paterson, N.J.): *Chuck Wayne-Warren Chiasson Quartet* (5/19 & 20); *Hank Jones Quartet* (5/26 & 27).

Village Vanguard: *Abdullah Ibrahim* aka *Dollar Brand* (5/16-23); *Milt Jackson Quartet* (5/23-28); *George Russell Big Band* (opens 5/30).

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Long March Coffeehouse: *Bill Lewis and Us* (6/9 & 10); *Keno Speller* (5/19 & 20); (6/2 & 3); *Joe McElhone* (5/26 & 27); *Gerald Benson* (6/16 & 17).

Main Point: Occasional jazz; call LA5-5825 for details.

Painted Bride: *Jimmy Johnson/Lex Humphries* (5/22); *Jimmy Oliver* (5/29).

Red Carpet Lounge: Jazz (Thurs.-Sat.); call VI4-9688.

Ridge Gallery: Weekend jazz; call 978-6587.

Royal Cafe: *Hollis Floyd Combo* (Mon., Thurs., Fri.).

Saloon: *Bunch Hammond Quartet* (Wed.-Sat.).

Second Office: *Danny Harmon Quintet* (Mon.).

Stars: Jazz (Tue.); call 627-8033 for details.

Valley Forge Music Fair: *Sarah Vaughan/Maynard Ferguson* (thru 5/21); *Diana Ross* (5/22-28).

CINCINNATI-DAYTON

Gilly's: *Ron Carter* (5/16-21); *Arthur Prysock* (5/23-28); *Michal Urbaniak/Urszula Dudziak* (6/2-4); *Teruo Nakumura* (6/6-11); *Phil Woods* (6/13-18) call 228-8414.

Holiday Inn South (Ft. Mitchell): Jazz nightly; call (606)-331-1500.

K.T.'s Den: *Don Lipman & The Jazz Apostles* (Sat. & Sun.).

Maggie's Opera House: *Herbie Mann* (6/14); occasional big band jazz; call 242-3700.

WMUB (88.5 FM): Jazz 8 pm-2 am (nightly); "Jazz Alive" (Thurs. 8 pm).

WNOP (740 AM): Jazz sunrise to sunset.

WGUC (90.9 FM): Oscar Treadwell's "Eclectic Stop Sign (midnight-2 am, Mon.-Sat.).

LOS ANGELES

Concerts By The Sea (Redondo Beach): *Dexter Gordon* (5/16-21); *Eddie Harris* (5/23-6/11); *Carmen McRae* (6/13-18); for info call 379-4998.

Lighthouse (Hermosa Beach): Name jazz regularly; call 372-6911.

Pasquale's (Malibu): *Pat Senatore Trio* nightly except Mondays; Sun. aft. jams, 4 pm; call 456-2007.

Century City Playhouse (10508 W. Pico): New music regularly; *Julius Hemphill* and *George Lewis* being scheduled; call 475-8388.

Baked Potato: *Frank Rosolino Quintet (Sun.); Greg Mathieson & Larry Carlton* (Mon.); *Bill Mays & Ernie Watts* (Tue.); *Don Randi* (Wed.-Sat.); *Plas Johnson, Ray Pizzi, Lee Ritenour* being scheduled; call 980-1615 for info.

Jimmy Smith's Supper Club: *Jimmy Smith* (Thurs.-Sun.); for further info call 760-1444.

Rudy's Pasta House (E.L.A.): Name jazz regularly; for specifics call 721-1234.

Sound Room: Jazz regulars include *Dave Frishberg, Dave Mackay, Ruth Price, Bill Henderson,* others; for info call 761-3555.

Onaje's Tea Room (1414 S. Redondo Blvd., near Pico & Redondo): New music regularly; for specifics call 937-9625.

Hong Kong Bar (Century City): Regular jazz; call 277-2000.

Cafe Concert (Tarzana): Local & name jazz regularly; call 996-6620.

Donte's: Name jazz; call 769-1566.

Parisian Room: *Dizzy Gillespie, Art Blakey, Carmen McRae, Joe Williams,* etc.; for schedules, call 936-0678.

White House (10303 W. Pico): Jazz; call 553-9625.

White House (Laguna Beach): Name jazz weekly; call (714) 494-8088.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Blues Alley: *Billy Eckstine* (5/15-20); *Clea Bradford* (5/22-27); *Monte Alexander* (5/29-6/3); *Clark Terry* (5/5-10); *Charlie Byrd* (5/12-17).

district creative space: *Nathen Page Quartet* (5/19-20); *Charles Tyler* (5/26-27); *Air* (6/2-3); *Birthright* (6/9-10); *Sam Rivers* and *Dave Holland* (6/16-17).

Harold's Rogue and Jar: Local artists (Sun.-Thurs.); *Pepper Adams* (5/19 & 20); *Turk Mauro* (5/26 & 27); *Carol Sloane* and *Jimmie Rowles* (6/2 & 3); *Cecil Payne* (6/9 & 10); *Tim Eyermann* (6/16 & 17).

WPFW (89.3 FM): 100+ hours of jazz weekly.

CHICAGO

Jazz Showcase: *Harry Edison & Eddie Davis* (5/17-5/21); *Arnette Cobbs* (5/24-5/29 tent.); *Dexter Gordon* (6/7-6/12); matinee shows Sun. 3-6 pm—fans of all ages encouraged to attend; call 337-1000 for details.

Amazingrace (Evanston): *Ben Sidran* (5/19 & 20); *Buddy Rich* (5/25, tent.); *McCoy Tyner* (6/2-5, tent.); *Gary Burton Quartet* (6/16-19); call 328-2489 for updated info.

Wise Fools Pub: *Albert Collins* (5/18-20); *Willie Dixon* (5/21); *Otis Rush* (5/24-27); *Luther Allison* (5/28); *Mighty Joe Young* (5/31-6/3); *Son Seals* (6/7-10); *Roger Pemberton Big Band* (Mon.); call 929-1510.

Uptown Theater: *Bob Marley and The Wailers* (5/27); *Grateful Dead* (5/16 & 17).

Quiet Knight: *Phil Woods* (6/2-4); *John Martyn* (5/26-28).

Orphan's: *Jo Belle and Orpheus* (5/19 & 20; 5/26 & 27); *Tom Dundee* (6/2 & 3); *Dundee* and *Blind John Davis* (6/9 & 10); *Joe Daley Quorum* (Mon.); *Ears w/ Cy Touff and Bobby Lewis* (Tue.).

Rick's Cafe Americain: *Benny Carter* (5/16-27); *Joe Venuti* (5/30-6/10); *Roy Eldridge* (6/13-6/24); call 943-9200.

WBEZ (91.5 FM): "Jazz Forum" 9 pm-midnight (Mon.-Thurs.); 9 pm-1 am (Fri. & Sat.); noon-4 (Sat.); 1-4 pm (Sun.); "Jazz Alive" 7:30-9 pm Sat. and 7:30 Wed.: *New York Jazz Quartet* (5/27); *Betty Carter and the John Hicks Trio* (6/3); *Eubie Blake/New Leviathan/Bob Greene* (6/10); *Don Ellis* and the *OSU Jazz Ensemble* (6/17).

Chicago Blues Line: (312) 248-0572.

Jazz Institute Hotline: (312) 421-6394.

MONTREAL

Rising Sun: *Buddy Guy* and *Junior Wells* (5/16-21); *Ahmad Jamal* (5/23-28); *Downchild Blues Band* (5/30-6/4); *John Hammond* (6/6-11); *Horace Silver* (6/13-18).

Rainbow Bar & Grill: Local jazz groups.

Four Seasons (Ottawa): Local jazz groups (Sat. afternoon).

Theatre de L'Ile (Hull): *Don Pullen* (5/23); *Billy Hart* (5/30).

TORONTO

Albert's Hall (Brunswick House): *Dr. McJazz—Charlie Gall* and/or *Jim Abercrombie* (Mon.-Sat.).

Basin Street: *Mose Allison* (to 5/20); *Rob McConnell's Boss Brass* (6/5-10).

Centre Island: Mariposa Folk Festival—folk and blues artists TBA (6/23-25).

D.J.'s Tavern: *Climax Jazz Band* (Thurs.-Sat.).

George's Spaghetti House: *Lisa Caplan* (to 5/20); *Moe Koffman* (5/22-27); *Phil Nimmons* (5/29-6/3); *Herb Spanier* (6/5-10); *Rick Wilkins* (6/12-17); *Moe Koffman* (6/19-24); *Steve Lederer* (6/26-7/1).

Yellowfingers: *Sonny Greenwich* (5/29-6/3); others TBA (967-9337).

PHOENIX

Phoenician Room (Registry): *Earl Heckscher Big Band* (Sun.); *Lori Johnson Quartet* (lounge).

Old Mill: *High Energy w/ Cole Hamlin* (Fri. & Sat.).

Dooley's: *Billy Cobham* (6/6).

Boojum Tree: *Monty Alexander* (5/15-20); *Nadine Jansen Trio* (5/22-6/20).

Thirsty Camel: *Joel Robin Quartet w/ Francine Reed* (Thurs.-Sun.).

Playboy Club: *Keith Greko Group w/ Sunny Wilkinson* (nightly).

Radisson Resort: *Danny Long Trio w/ Dave Cook* (Mon.-Sat.).

Dooley's (Tucson): *Billy Cobham* (6/5).

Hyatt Regency: *Che Orlando Trio* (regulars).

Twolips Cafe: *Steve Springer Quartet* (Wed. & Thurs.); *New Moon Sextet* (Fri. & Sat.); *George Carillo Experience* (Sun. jam, free chicken wings).

SEATTLE

Parnell's: *Harlequin* (5/19-21); *Inner City Jazz* featuring *William O. Smith* (5/26-27); *Jimmy Witherspoon* (6/1-3); *Jane Lanbert* (6/8-10).

Paramount Northwest: *Al DiMeola & Renaissance* (5/21).

G-Note: *Brian Butler Blues Band* (5/17-20); *Albert Collins & David Brewer Band* (5/31-6/3).

Skippers: *Nyght Galln* (5/21); *Jazz* (5/22).

Bombay Bicycle Shop: *Inner City Jazz* (5/21); *Solitair* (5/22 & 23); *Danny O'Brian Quartet* (5/28); *Oasis Quartet* (5/29 & 30).

Seattle Pacific College: *The Cozzetti Gemmill Band* (5/30).

NORTHWEST

Eugene Hotel (Eugene, Ore.): *Steve Wolf* with *Nancy King* (5/30-6/3); *Solitaire* (6/6-10).

Jazz Deopus: *Lou Donaldson* in June.

The Helm (Portland, Ore.): *Jeff Lorber* in May.

PITTSBURGH

Heinz Hall: *Tommy Dorsey Band w/Buddy Morrow* (5/21); *Ray Charles* (5/29); *Carmen McRae* (6/1); *Tony Bennett* (6/2-4).

Sonny Dayes Stage Door II (Rt. 51): New jazz club in the South Hills opening with *Pat Martino;* others to be announced; for complete schedule call (412) 881-9475.

Sonny Dayes (Original) Stage Door: *Spider & Co.* featuring *Eric Kloss* (Wed.-Sat.); jam night every Tuesday.

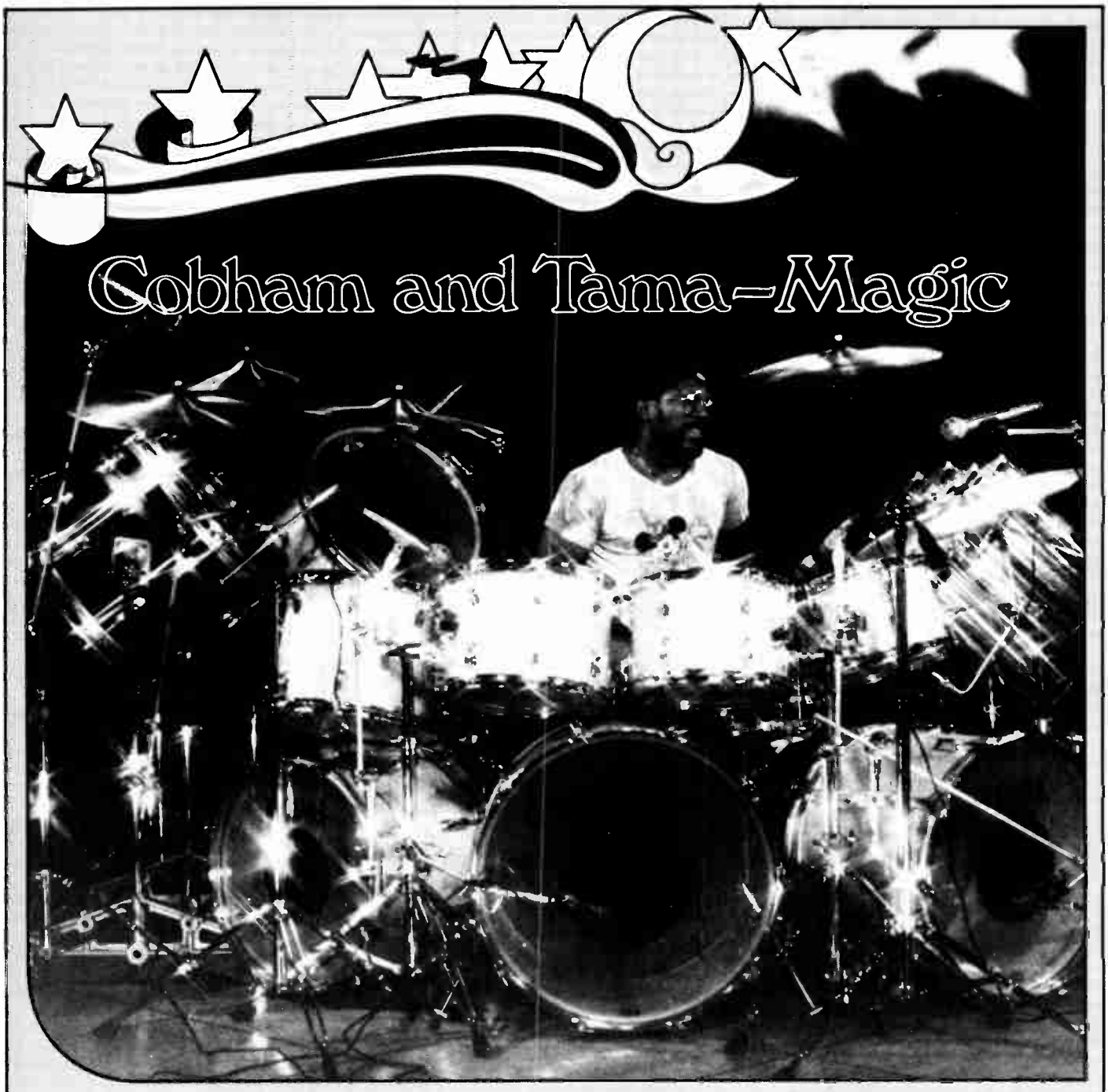
BALTIMORE

Left Bank Jazz Society (Famous Ballroom): Name jazz Sun. 5-9 pm: *Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Big Band* (5/14); *Arthur Prysock* (5/21); *Red Garland Trio* (5/28); *Yusef Lateef Quartet* (6/18).

Marble Bar: Live music nightly; occasional name jazz and rock; call (301) 685-0014.

Painters Mill Music Fair: Name jazz and rock; call (301) 363-0800.

Jazzline: (301) 945-2266, 24 hours.



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