

NOVEMBER 16, 1978

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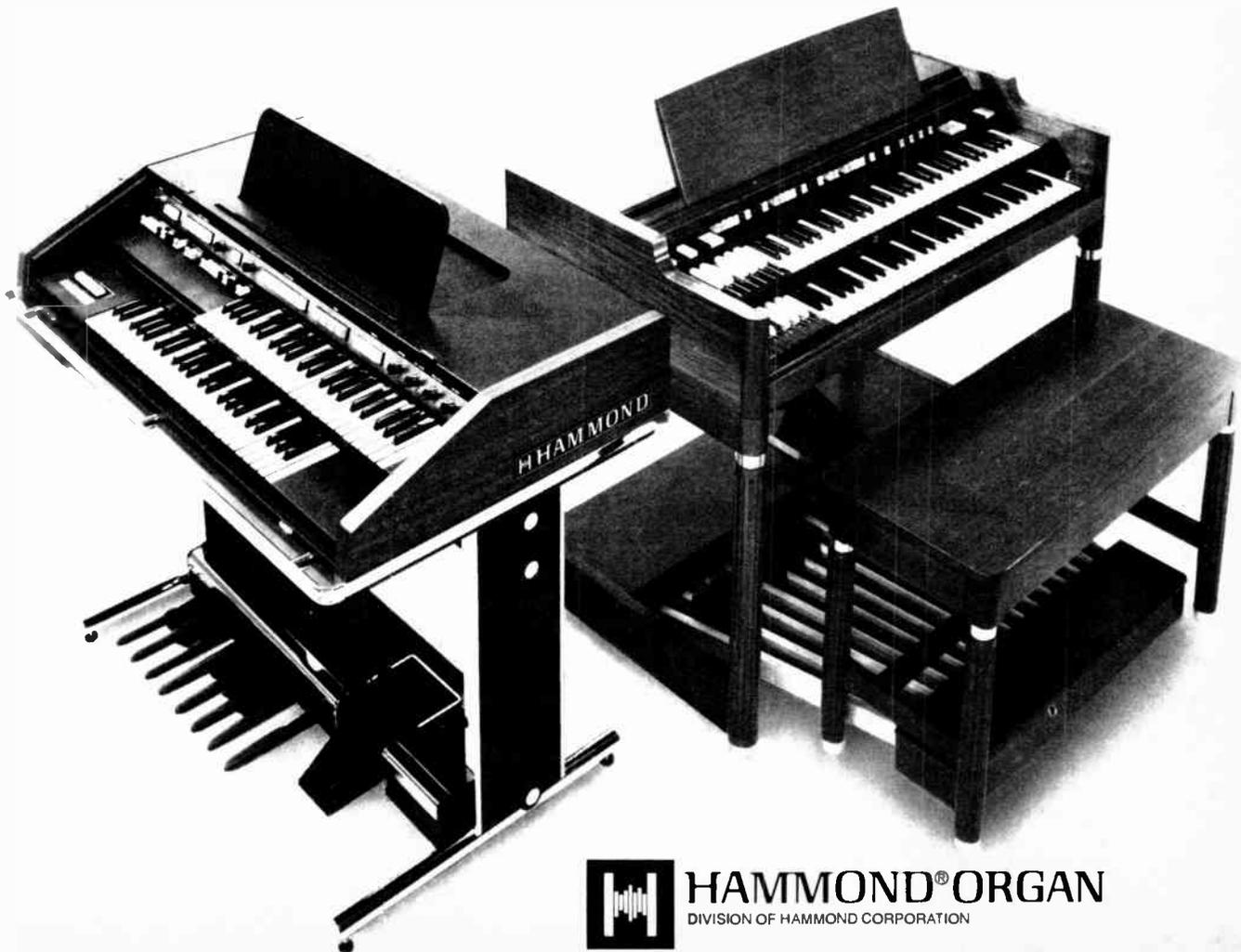
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# DRUM BEAT!

## ■ Spotlight on Ed Shaughnessy

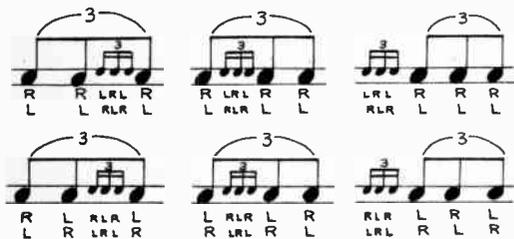
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■ **Shaughnessy "On the Road"** This fall season marks an active clinic and concert schedule. It includes the Midwest Band & Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, December 15 with the Ed Shaughnessy Energy Force Big Band. Clinics are also slated for the Long Island Drum Center, December 17th and the University of Wisconsin - Green Bay, Jazz Festival, January 20th. Ed is tentatively scheduled to appear at both 1979 Percussion Symposiums - Eastern Division at Mansfield State College July 29 - August 4, Western Division at North Texas State University July 8 - 14. Complete details on the Eastern & Western Division 1979 Percussion Symposiums will be forthcoming once faculty assignments are confirmed.

■ **"On the Record" with Shaughnessy** In addition to Ed's busy schedule with the Tonight Show band, he is active in the recording studios with three new releases; "Live From Downtown Burbank" -Tommy Newsom Orchestra, "Bish" with Stephen Bishop, and "Charlie Parker and Friends."

■ **Percussion Workshop No. 7** Variations on a standard "Ruff" is one of Ed's favorite challenging exercises. Place the "Ruff" in various locations within a triplet figure. Any of the forms should naturally be practiced slowly at first. After this flows freely you should develop it to a speed of 72 - 96 m.m. As Ed puts it "Its a great exercise for finger control . . . 'Cause them Rough Ruffs do come fast."



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

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

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



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

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

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



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

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

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I'm most impressed by Berklee's facility for every kind of player, whether it's big band, small group, or arranging. I'll always remember the guys I got to play and learn with: Rick Laird, Miroslav Vitous, Alan Broadbent, Lin Biviano, John Abercrombie, and others.

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

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## the first chorus

BY CHARLES SUBER

**F**or those who would learn more about contemporary music, this issue suggests several ideas to pursue. Following are some ideas suggested by Leroy Jenkins, John Klemmer, and Sam Rivers. (We add an occasional question for suggested additional study.)

John Klemmer defines fusion as "the intentional use by jazz musicians of elements associated with the rock, funk or pop styles." He reminds us that musical fusion is hardly new, and that jazz itself is basically a fusion of African and European forms. Klemmer tolerates fusion on commercial grounds, but believes it falls short of being an art music: "Jazz-rock and funk don't have the subtlety or sensitivity which is the beauty of the music for me."

Leroy Jenkins is less equivocal: "[Fusion] is something made by businessmen . . . for kids who are 13 or 14—or those who have minds like 13-year-olds. As a result of this process, America's musical education is like garbage."

(Does objection to today's fusion arise from an incomplete synthesis of different musical elements? Is the African-European jazz fusion so complete, without seams or gaps, that we accept the synthesis as a new and pure form? Your answer maybe qualified by Sam Rivers: "Standards develop by withstanding the ravages of time.")

Another controversial music form is "avant garde." Sam Rivers, who with Ornette Coleman, Archie Shepp, and Cecil Taylor is a product of the avant garde '60s, insists that: "There is no avant garde in European classical music and there is no avant garde in jazz. There are [only] modernists and traditionalists."

Classically trained Leroy Jenkins doesn't deny the existence of avant garde, but chooses not to so categorize his music. He talks about his studying and playing with Coleman and Shepp, and even his work with The Revolutionary Ensemble and AACM in such terms as "cerebral," "esoteric," and Coleman's "harmonic theory."

Rivers evokes a feeling of avant garde *deja vu* when he recalls the time when he and Anthony Braxton, Leo Smith and Steve McCall were chased off the stage at a Paris concert by an audience hostile to their music. A similar incident happened in Paris in 1913 at the premiere of Stravinsky's *The Rite Of Spring*.

(Do you see any similarity between today's critics of avant garde and that 1913 Stravinsky audience which has been characterized as "... those who construe as counterfeit any genuine new creative endeavor they cannot promptly assimilate.")

Next issue emphasizes jazz education: on hand are Dannie Richmond, Ted Curson, John Handy, Jackie McLean and Jaki Byard to talk about Charles Mingus Workshop; and in a class by himself, Henry Mancini tutoring film and TV scoring; plus other items of interest to the ever-learning musician, as well as all the regular features.

Also, as promised, the next issue has details on the 2nd annual **down beat** Student Recording Awards: nine categories—band, group, solo, vocal, composition, arranging, engineering, liner notes and album design.



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# CHORDS AND DISCORDS

## Male Dominance

I have enjoyed your magazine for some time. But one thing bothers me: **down beat** seems to be overwhelmingly "male." The ads, articles and reporting seem to be about 98% on men. This is out of balance with what the real jazz scene is. There are many women in the music who deserve attention and recognition from you.

Susan Sailow

Berkeley, CA

*After butting together our all-male editorial noggins, we threw up our hands and called our (only) lady correspondent, Carol Comer, in Kansas City. Dianne Gregg, President of Women's Jazz Festival, who was visiting Carol, answered the phone. After some prefatory remarks about how "anyone, to be recognized in music,*

*must reach a certain level of excellence," Carol and Dianne seemed to agree with Ms. Sailow. We think that's why they rattled off story possibilities until we collapsed from writer's cramp.*

*WJF is compiling a directory of female jazz performers, and generally acts as a clearing-house for women in the music to get in touch with each other. Write: Women's Jazz Festival, Inc./P.O. Box 22321/Kansas City MO 64113.*

## Atlanta Jazz Forum

As Chairman of Jazz Day in the Park and V.P. of Jazz Forum of Atlanta, I feel I must respond to Joe Jennings remarks in the 9/7/78 issue "that some of the better players weren't contacted to play the other festival..." Jennings is aware of the Jazz Forum philosophy of supporting local jazz groups, and in keeping with that philosophy, the Forum invited other talented local musicians who had not been invited the previous year. Atlantans were exposed to the gamut, from dixieland through avant garde.

One of the Forum's severest problems is

underfinancing, and it would have been our pleasure to have been able to have two days of jazz, showcasing as many of the local groups as possible.

Jazz Forum will continue in their efforts to promote and support local jazz musicians wherever and whenever possible. Joe Jennings, Ojeda Penn, Alan Murphy, Bill Braynon and Howard Nicholson represent some of Atlanta's finest performing jazz musicians, and it is for Forum's hope to continue to work closely with them in the future.

Susan Rosmarin

Atlanta

## Strings Attached?

Columbia records has certainly produced some fine jazz over the past year, but there is something wrong with their selection by the **db** critics as label of the year. Columbia is a big business, with the major emphasis on profits, not musical integrity. Their insistence on peddling commercial junk-jazz drowned in horns and strings is proof of that. By awarding Columbia the top spot, **db** implies approval of such activities. Does **db** approve?

I vote for ECM as label of the year. When browsing through records in the store, I don't have to waste my time reading ECM jackets to make sure there are no strings attached.

Kent Aldrich

Chapel Hill, N.C.

*The critics vote in the poll; we don't "award" any spot to anyone. While ECM certainly deserves praise for its production quality, musical content, and long-standing consistency, we can't say our critics were off base. They were probably thinking (among others) of two hot Dexter Gordon albums, Sophisticated Giant and Homecoming, V.S.O.P.'s The Quintet, and reissues by Lester Young, Charlie Parker, and Miles Davis/Tadd Dameron.*

## Tucson Jazz Society

Jazz is alive and growing in Tucson. Only half a year ago, at an exploratory meeting, 150 jazz aficionados showed up to voice their support, and pledge time and talent towards building a society aimed at the promotion of jazz in our community. By mid-July we celebrated our nonprofit incorporation with a free concert, which featured many local jazz musicians. Three thousand people sat back and dug four hours of non-stop music.

The Society is dedicated to the promotion of jazz music in southern Arizona. We already owe much to our fellow jazz societies in Las Vegas, Phoenix and Santa Fe. We are looking now for ideas to help our organization grow. We look forward to hearing from anyone interested in us for any reason.

Jeff Daniel, President Tucson Jazz Society

P.O. Box 43522

Tucson AZ 85733

## Stop The Carnival

As much as I like Maynard Ferguson, I just played frisbee with his new release, *Carnival*. The whole album is "canned" and sounds as if it were recorded in an echo chamber. And the background vocals offset any creative jazz there might have been. The coup de grace comes at the end, when Maynard discos *Over The Rainbow*. *Stella* should be renamed *Stella By Strobe-light*.

Time to buy another copy of *MF Two*.

Jeff Litt

St. Louis Park MN

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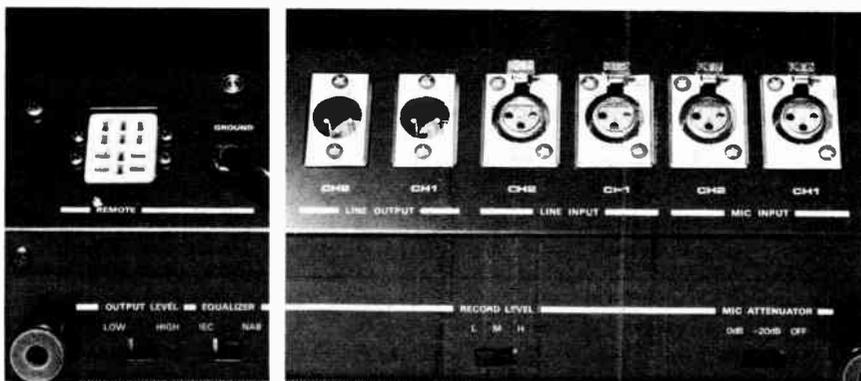
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# NEWS



DONNA P. TODD

Alto saxophonist Diane Ellis (L.) and tenor player Vicki Alexander were among the featured performers at the Jazz Institute of Chicago's Women in Jazz concert, held at Northwestern University in late September. Toshiko Akyoshi played solo piano, and pianist Judy Roberts worked with an all female combo before a sexually integrated audience of over 900. A multi-media event, the program included film clips of the great women jazz artists and a panel discussion led by local jazz writer Harriet Choice.

## Sam Jones And Tom Harrell Form Unit

WEST PATERSON, N.J.—Gulliver's, a night spot near Interstate 80 in this Jersey city, has been offering some of the finest jazz on the west side of the Hudson for many years now. Owner Amos Kaune (pronounced Kahn) from time to time brings in especially innovative talent, in addition to the roster of big stars who play the venues in New York City.

This time around Kaune presented the new sounds of a 12 piece band co-led by bassist Sam Jones and trumpeter Tom Harrell. Both have myriad experience with groups of all sizes, but they have been most prominently featured with small bands such as Cannonball Adderley and Horace Silver. Their teaming up in a big band venture was a surprise and opening night was attended by the curious as well as by those who were genuinely interested. All were satisfied.

The band featured competent soloists long accustomed to being sidemen in studios and other bands. Everyone took his turn at solo space without the slightest hesitation.

Harrell, who handles most of the trumpet chores, shared a section with Terumasa Hino and Fred Jacobs. Jacobs composed

the band's opener, *Four Real*, but it was Harrell who took the solo spot. Pianist Fred Hersch took his turns on *Walkin' The Streets*, which was penned by tenor saxophonist Bob Mintzer. Both Hersch and Mintzer soloed along with Hino, who was on cornet.

Harrell's *Before You* showed Sam Burtis to be a fine soloist on trombone. He has often been buried in a section and not given enough space. Pete Yellin, on flute here, but otherwise on alto and soprano saxes, also soloed on this bossa nova number. The ensemble passages had alto-flute-fluegelhorn leading, with Harrell soloing on the latter.

Thad Jones' *A Child Is Born*, with a deep bow to the composer's ensemble passages, was more of a musical interlude in its brevity. The concluding *Unit 7* showed much more. Soloing were Hersch, Harrell, Harold Vick on tenor, and Yellin on soprano.

Pat Patrick on baritone and Emmett MacDonald on trombone rounded out the band, with drummer Keith Copeland propelling the well-rehearsed aggregation.

They will be the Tuesday night feature at Gulliver's "for as long as they want to be," a pleased Kaune commented.

# POTPOURRI

Nathan Davis, Ph.D., jazz saxophonist, and director of the University of Pittsburgh's Jazz Studies Program, put together three days of concerts and seminars at U. of P., October 26 through 28 featuring pianist John Lewis, saxophonist Joe Henderson, guitarist/harmonicist Toots Thielemans, trombonist/arranger Slide Hampton, trumpeter Terumasa Hino, bassist Larry Ridley, and drummer Alan Dawson. *Billboard's* Mike Hennessy discussed the European jazz community and industry, and jazz film collector David Chertok screened selections from his collection; there were instrumental clinics, a Latin percussion workshop and a session on gospel music as well as a climactic Saturday night concert involving all the above mentioned musicians.

Speaking of Pittsburgh, Steel Town-based saxophonist Eric Kloss is the Grand Prize winner of the 7th International Competition for Jazz Composers, first American to take the award sponsored by Monaco's Academie de Musica under the auspices of Prince Rainer.

Due to doctor's orders, Stan Kenton bowed out of his scheduled appearance at the Monterey Jazz Festival in September. "I hope you'll give us another chance in '79," Kenton wrote festival director Jimmy Lyons; though long intending to work the fest, Stan has yet to appear there. Grover Mitchell's *Groove*, a 17 piece band with soloists Buddy Collette (saxophone), Al Aarons, (trumpet), Benny Powell, (trombone), and Red Callender (bass), filled in.

Nashville Jazz Productions, formed by trumpeter Dave Converse and businessman Wayne Oldham to book, promote, and record jazz acts from the Nashville area, has released its first LP, an album by Earwitness, a local group featuring trumpeter George Tidwell and reedman Denis Solee.

Tidwell and Solee, both established studio musicians in this home of country music recording, also hold solo chairs in Converse's Nashville Jazz Machine, an 18 piece band which performed during the summer at a Sunday night jazz series Converse produced in Oldham's Exit/In. Other groups in the series were Beegie Adair and Gyroscope, the Kenny Malone Quartet, the John Propst Trio, the Bob Homes Excursion and Earwitness. Oldham's continuation of the Sunday night series and the success of increased jazz bookings in his club support the thesis that there is an untapped jazz audience in Nashville; session men Tidwell, Solee, and Converse agree; and while the scene seems a mite incestuous, who would gainsay progress?

Press release of the fortnight begins: "Octubafest is a made-up word." Just so, but it aptly describes the October 1 through 6 festival of tuba music organized by Indiana University Professor Harvey Phillips. Featured at the sixth annual event were free concerts of solo and ensemble works for the fat horn, premieres of commissioned pieces with 50 composers in attendance, and recitals by special guest tubaists. Big fun.

## PARKS WERE ALIVE WITH WE'S SOUND OF MUSIC

NEW YORK—Studio We sponsored a series of 15 free jazz concerts in parks throughout New York City this fall. Trumpeter James Dubois, founder of Studio We, told *db*, "We presented musicians who usually wouldn't have been given any recognition, and, many young musicians who've just started out."

The series, financed by government and corporate grants, began in 1972, with the New York Jazz Musicians Festival. Among those who appeared in this year's concerts were C. Sharpe, Charles Brackeen, Roger Blank and the Melodic Arktet, Cecil Payne and Zodiac, the Mickey Bass-Curtis Fuller Cooperation, Steve Tintweiss and Milford Graves. "Next year, because of the poor condition of

the city parks, we'll probably go to the street and do street festivals," Dubois said.

Studio We, which occupies an entire building on Eldridge Street in lower Manhattan, opened in 1970 after Dubois and several other musicians took over and renovated the building. "As the years went by, we learned how to write proposals for grants. Basically, we concentrate on performers," Dubois added. "We have performance and recording facilities in the building. Also, if somebody in another borough wants to put on a concert but doesn't have enough money, we try to help them by providing funds and musicians."

After the fall series, Studio We opened it's Jazz Cafe with trumpeter Tommy Turrentine.

# Individuals.

**Woody Shaw fronts "musicians who can play it all!"**

Trumpeter Woody Shaw has demonstrated his ability to fit right in with the giants at every shade of the jazz spectrum. At 18 years old he cut his musical teeth playing with Chick Corea and Joe Farrell in Willie Bobo's band. He made his recording debut on one of the most highly-acclaimed avant-garde albums of the sixties: Eric Dolphy's "Iron Man." And he's done stints with McCoy Tyner, Jackie McLean, Dexter Gordon, and many others. Naturally, when it came time to put a band together, diversity was the watchword. And the quintet he formed for his new album "Stepping Stones" (recorded live at New York's Village Vanguard) is a back-to-basics congregation. Everyone shines...and everyone is given the space to shine. Woody Shaw says about Carter Jefferson (reeds), Onaje Allan Gumbs (piano), Clint Houston (bass) and Victor Lewis (drums), "I think I've found musicians who can play it all." He has.



**WOODY SHAW**  
**STEPPING STONES**

Live At The Village Vanguard  
including:  
"All Comes Back To You"  
"Seventh Avenue In A Capricornian Way"



**Between Parker and Coltrane there was Gordon. And there still is Dexter Gordon.**

Dexter Gordon's style influenced all of the most influential tenor players of the '40's and '50's. But it wasn't until last year that he took command of his own permanent group. And now, after playing with that group for over a year-and-a-half, he's ready to do to you what he's been doing to the New York musical community: blow you away. "Manhattan Symphonie" is an album totally lacking in gimmicks. But you've never heard anything like it before. As annotator Pete Hammill says about just one of the tracks: "It's as if Dexter Gordon is taking all his young men on a tour of the city he conquered as a boy, showing them its lights and its shadows, paying tribute to vanished legends, and asking everyone to come up on the stand and play."



**DEXTER GORDON**  
**QUARTET**

MANHATTAN SYMPHONIE  
including:  
"LTD/Body And Soul/As Time Goes By"  
"Moment's Notice"



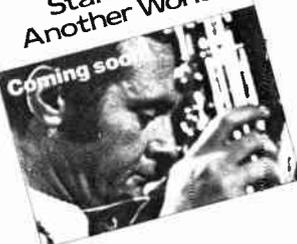
## MUSIC BY AND FOR INDIVIDUALS. ON COLUMBIA AND EPIC RECORDS AND TAPES.

**An album Stan Getz couldn't wait to record.**

Most performers who go to Montreux, Switzerland for the Festival have little time for anything else but performing and enjoying their contemporaries. Last year, Stan Getz did all about his current quintet and the musical energy that was in the Montreux air, that he went into a local studio and recorded "Another World," his new album. You've never heard Stan Getz sounding like he does on "Another World." He sounds like a brilliant, inspired kid. It's a reputation-making performance, by a living legend.



2 RECORD SET  
**Stan Getz**  
**Another World**

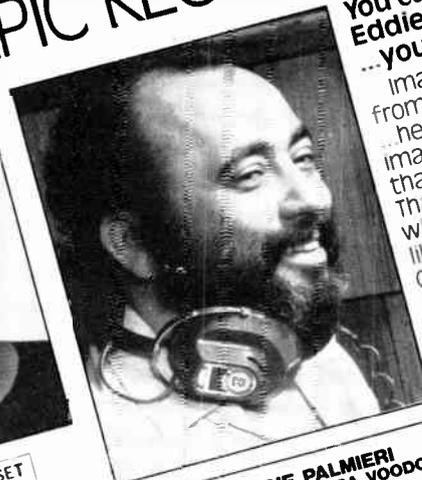


**You can't imagine Eddie Palmieri ... you have to hear him.**

Imagine a guy who once got fired from a club for breaking the piano ... he hit the keys that hard. Then imagine being able to channel that kind of passion onto record. That'll give you some idea of what Eddie Palmieri's music is like... and why it won him Grammy Awards two years in a row.

Eddie Palmieri's music is African, Cuban, jazz, classical, even disco. His new album, "Lucumi, Macumba, Voodoo," is bursting with sounds and rhythms you've never heard before. The term "inventions" has never been more appropriate in describing a piano style.

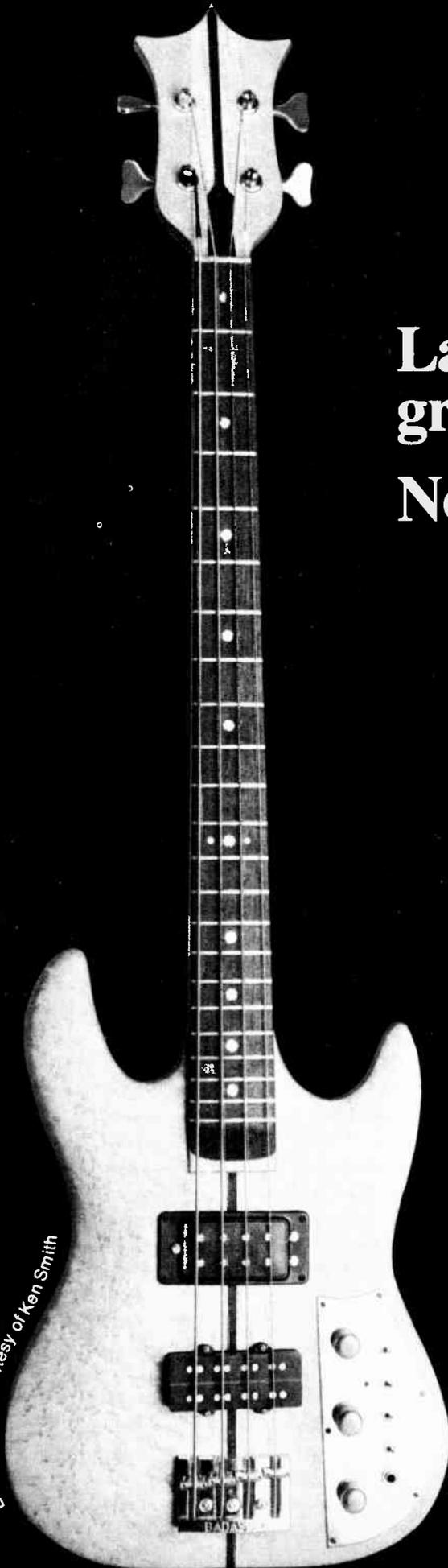
So stop trying to imagine... and listen to Eddie Palmieri.



**EDDIE PALMIERI**  
**LUCUMI, MACUMBA, VOODOO**

including:  
"Highest Good/Lucumi Macumba Voodoo"  
"Spirit Of Love/Columbia Te Canto"





**La Bella used to make  
great electric bass strings.  
Now they make the best.**

You would expect nothing less from La Bella, which is also the only company to bring you the unique advantage of *perfectly balanced* strings. *Perfectly balanced* so that when a chord is played, all the strings vibrate for the same length of time. With no notes dropping out before the others. Plus, all the strings are heard equally, without one string louder than any other, producing the natural harmonics clearly without undesired overtones. The result is a uniform sound character, with the same tension & same flexibility for each string. And being *perfectly balanced*, finger pressure can now be the same for all the strings.

La Bella makes the widest range of bass strings on the market today: flat wound, round wound, quarter-round & semi-round. Gauges come in extra light to heavy; available from short scale to extra long scale.

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**Perfectly Balanced Strings**  
**For Your Perfectly Balanced Hand**

E. & O. Mari, Inc., 38-01 23rd Avenue, Long Island City, N.Y. 11105

Electric Bass Courtesy of Ken Smith

## Ailing Reed Man Needs Aid



GIUSEPPE G. PINO

Bobby Jones, reedman with the Glenn Miller Orchestra, Woody Herman, Jack Teagar-

den, and Charles Mingus, composer and leader on two records (*The Arrival Of Bobby Jones* on Cobblestone and *Hill Country Suite* on Enja) has taken seriously ill in Munich, Germany, where he has lived since 1973.

Advanced emphysema has radically altered the lifestyle of the 50 year old musician, who has taken to arranging and guitar playing to maintain a career stopped short by the respiratory illness.

To delay the rapid deterioration of his health, Jones is in need of financial assistance to cope with medical costs and a hoped-for move to prescribed milder climates. Donations may be sent to First National City Band (CITIBANK), 1275 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y., 10028, account number 0270777397 (Bobby Jones); or Deutsche Band Munich, BLZ 700 700 10, account number 36 20 9 11. The musician receives mail at Landsbergerstr. 331, 800 Munchen 21, West Germany.

## Birthday Pace Of Lake

NEW YORK—Billed as an "Evening With Oliver Lake at Cami Hall," the composer/reedman's 34th birthday was celebrated by his collaboration "with people I haven't played with for a while ... giving them and the music exposure."

For Lake, whose usual format is a quartet, the concert was a change of pace. It opened with his solo feature, *Eraser O.T.D.*, followed by *Ose-Rose*, a duo with Lake tripling on flute, soprano and alto and Michelle Rosewoman on piano. *Suite For Violin And Improvisers* was next, featuring the accompaniment of a nine-piece ensemble: three violins, a cello, guitar, piano, trumpet and two percussionists. With the ensemble performing a written backdrop, Lake and cellist Abdul Wadud improvised freely. *Spaces* featured the violin trio; *Clevont Fitahubert* was an African delight; *Shadow Trend* and *Reference* were free in nature.

"I have always been attracted to violins, that's why I was so excited about this concert," Oliver told *db*. He continued, "Difficulties come from the unfamiliarity of the players with each other. The more people you have, the more they have to listen. The more familiar they are with each other, the more the group thing comes together. Even the audience takes part if the piece is right; it becomes communal."



CHICAGO—A major jazz reissue program is being prepared by Time-Life Books, Inc., and is expected to be launched in the spring of 1979.

A total of 33 albums are planned, each to contain three records plus a companion book of text and photos. The first 12 albums will focus primarily on individual artists, with one package each on Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, Bix Beiderbecke, Benny Goodman, Coleman Hawkins, Jelly Roll Morton, Sidney Bechet, Jack Teagarden, Fats Waller and Benny Carter. A twelfth album will be an anthology of important jazz guitarists of the '20s and '30s.

The second wave of releases will come later in '79 and include

## NEW RELEASES

**ABC-Impulse** culled from its vault *There Will Never Be Another You*, a **Sonny Rollins** concert from 1965 with **Tommy Flanagan**, piano, **Bob Cranshaw**, bass, and **Billy Higgins** and **Mickey Roker** on drums. Also previously unreleased—**John Coltrane's** *Jupiter Variation*, featuring two duets with drummer **Rashied Ali**, an extended quartet track (**Alice Coltrane**, **Jimmy Garrison**, and **Ali** back the tenorman), and a sextet including **Charlie Haden**, **Pharoah Sanders** and **Ray Appleton**.

**Ramsey Lewis** charts his *Legacy* and percussionist **Willie Bobo** has a *Hell Of An Act To Follow*, on **Columbia Records**.

Reed player **Grover Washington, Jr.** tries his skill at producing on his Motown debut, *Reed Seed*. And Motown has reissued complete albums from its catalogue by **Marvin Gaye** (*The Soulful Mood Of*), the **Four Tops** (*Reach Out*), **Smokey Robinson and the Miracles** (*I'll Try Something New*), **The Temptations** (*In A Mellow Mood*), **Diana Ross and the Supremes** (*Where Did Our Love Go*), and **Gladys Knight and the Pips** (*Silk And Soul*). While the lps contain many of the classics that made these acts soul stars, *db* record reviewer **Lars Gabel** suggests the greatest hits compilations, still available, avoid much of the filler material.

*The Main Event* is **Herb Alpert** and **Hugh Masekela's** live waxing on **A&M**, but there is also **Chuck Mangione's** soundtrack music for *The Children Of Sanchez* and *The Man*, **Les McCann**.

*Music For 18 Musicians*, by composer **Steve Reich**, has been subleased from Deutsche Grammophon and will be issued by **ECM Records**.

**Prestige** and **Milestone** two-fers by **Roland Kirk**, **Sonny Rollins**, **Coleman Hawkins**, **Benny Golson**, **Nat Adderly**, **Barry Harris**, and **Charlie Byrd** are expected shortly—also an anthology of *First Sessions* by name jazz people. **Prestige** will release new lps by **Bill Summers**, **Bill Evans**, **David "Fathead" Newman**, and **Idris Muhammad's** debut album for the label.

**Oregon** is *Out Of The Woods*, and **Ms. (Keyboard) Rushen** is simply *Patrice*, both new from **Electra/Asylum Records**.

**New World Records**, whose anthologies of American music are made possible by Rockefeller Foundation grants, has issued *Lets Get Loose* ("folk and popular blues styles from the beginnings to the early 1940s"), *That's My Rabbit, My Dog Caught It* ("traditional southern instrumental styles"), *New Music For Virtuoso*, Volume 2 by **Harvey Sollberger**, and the **Emerson String Quartet** performing works of **Gunther Schuller** and **Andrew Imbrie**.

**Marlene VerPlanck**, who sang "Winston tastes good ..." follows it up with **Hugh Martin** songs and standards, backed by North Carolinian **Loonis McGlohon's** piano and trio, on the Audiophile label (3008 Wadsworth Mill Place, Decatur, Georgia 30032). The set was first cut for **Alec Wilder's** American Popular Song radio series.

## Time-Life Reissue Program

Red Norvo, Bessie Smith, Lester Young and Earl Hines, plus anthologies on the trombone, trumpet, clarinet and tenor sax. The final group of albums will cover Count Basie, Art Tatum and these instrument and vocal categories: blues singers, jazz singers, band singers, the alto sax, two albums on piano, two further collections on trumpets, one more album each on clarinets and trombones, and a final collection on miscellaneous instruments (organ, bass and baritone sax, violin, washboard, comb, suitcase, fountain pen and gofus).

Unlike the highly successful swing era series on big bands which Time-Life brought out in the early '70s, this project will not attempt to recreate anything.

All recordings will be original ones, and material will be assembled from a variety of record labels, large and small. Participating companies include RCA, Columbia, MCA, EMI/Capitol and others. Columbia Special Products will manufacture.

The accompanying books will present a 10,000-words biography of the artist plus a further 10,000-word commentary on the contents of the album. Participating writers include Chris Albertson (Armstrong), Stanley Dance, Dan Morgenstern (both on Ellington), John McDonough (Hawkins), George Simon (Goodman) and Don DeMichael (Norvo). Philip Payne, Jeanne LeMonnier and Jerry Korn are Time-Life editors in charge of the overall project.

## IJF—Ellington Contest

NEW YORK—The Duke Ellington World Jazz Competition for Soloists and Bands has been launched, organized by the International Jazz Federation with the approval of Duke's son, Mercer, and sister, Ruth Ellington.

John Lewis, president of the American branch office of the IJF, will serve as chairman of the jury of noted jazz authorities awarding finalists in brass, reed, keyboard, rhythm, vocal and miscellaneous, and group categories Gold, Silver, and Bronze Duke Ellington medals, as well

as Berklee School of Music scholarships and Monterey Jazz Festival appearances. Participants from all nations are invited to compete, and there is no age limit for contestants but particular attention will be given to young artists. Interested musicians should submit tapes of three compositions (one by Duke) to the IJF, 1697 Broadway, Suite 1203, New York City, N.Y. 10019 by March 25, 1979. From entrees, 200 semi-finalists will be selected, and these will presumably appear before the judges in February, 1980, in N.Y.

## Bley Markets Videotape Shows

NEW YORK—Paul Bley, pianist and entrepreneur of IAI (Improvising Artists, Inc.) Records, has made four videotape-music programs available for distribution.

One features Sun Ra in concert at Axis in SoHo; another is a taping of the IAI Festival at the Great American Music Hall, San Francisco, including performances by Jimmy Giuffre, Lee Konitz, Bill Connors and Bley.

A third tape shows clarinetist Perry Robinson performing with

percussionists Nana Vasconcelos and Badal Roy. The fourth is a Marion Brown-Gunter Hampel duet, taped with a color image processor.

Also involved in the project are Bley's artist-collaborator Carol Goss, and Skip Sweeney of Radio Free America.

The programs will be available through major record chains and will sell for about \$69.95. For further details and order forms, interested persons should write IAI, 26 Jane St., New York.

## Eclipse Revives Ann Arbor Festivities



ANDY FREEBERG

Griffin (left) and Gordon, expatriate stablemates.

ANN ARBOR—The University of Michigan's student-run Eclipse Jazz organization has produced an increasingly successful series of jazz concerts here since 1975, but perhaps it was the example of the legendary late '60s Ann Arbor Blues and Jazz Festivals which inspired Eclipse to set up its first Ann Arbor Jazz Festival 1978, an ambitious musical marathon held September 21 through 24.

With 16 separate performances squeezed into five concerts in four days, the festival was criticized for offering too much music. Sets lasting over an hour led to concerts running five to six hours—too long for all but die-hard listeners. But musically the festival was a success, with playing ranging from good to great, and financially—the non-profit organization may have taken a small loss, but that's no problem since the group actually made money last year.

The festival's theme, "In Celebration of the Music of Duke Ellington" provided some continuity to the various shows. Thursday night's concert opened with pianist Mary Lou Williams in solo and duet with bassist Ronnie Boykins. Max Roach's Quartet (Cecil Bridgewater, trumpet; Billy Harper, tenor sax; Calvin Hill, bass) followed, with the first of several festival versions of *In A Sentimental Mood*. Stan Getz's Quintet (Andy Laverne, piano; Wayne Dockery, bass; Vic Jones, drums; Lawrence Killian, percussion) offered originals by Laverne and Wayne Shorter with Latin-orientation. Well past midnight Roach returned with saxophonist Archie Shepp for the American premiere of Roach's two-part suite *Force*, a concert highpoint followed with Shepp's unaccompanied encore on *Sophisticated Lady*.

14 □ down beat

Friday offered the first area appearance by tenor saxophonist Johnny Griffin, recently returned from Europe and joined by Ronnie Mathews, piano; James Leary, bass, and Eddie Marshall, drums. His strong set was succeeded by an equally strong set from saxophonist Dexter Gordon and his regular quartet (George Cables, piano; Rufus Reid, bass, and Eddie Gladden, drums). After four long numbers Griffin joined Gordon onstage for a tremendous *Blues Up And Down* and explosive "cutting contest" exchanges which brought the crowd to its feet. Freddie Hubbard's latest band (Hadley Caliman, tenor sax and flute; Marshal Otwell, keyboards; Larry Kline, bass; and Carl Burnett, drums) played in a more electronic, fusion style; having to follow the classic fire of Griffin and Gordon (and to watch the weary audience trickle out) seemed to make trumpeter Hubbard dissatisfied with his own approach to the music.

On September 23 guitarist Kenny Burrell offered the festival's only all-Ellington set, programming familiar and unfamiliar works from the master's pen in a loose jam with Harold McKinney, piano; Billy Burrell, bass, and James Brown, drums. Stanley Turrentine's disco-rock approach seemed out of place in an Ellington festival, but the two-hour performance by Ann Arbor favorite Sun Ra and his Arkestra fit perfectly. Along with the usual intergalactic spectacle the group provided versions of Ellington works like *A Train* and *Christopher Columbus* with a coarse 1920's flavor. John Gilmore's probing tenor saxophone solos were notable.

Sunday's matinee began with David Swain's II V I Orchestra, a young local aggregation whose considerable potential is in the process of being realized. Chico Freeman's Ensemble—Jay Hoggard, vibes; Reggie Workman, bass, and Don Moye, drums—was quite another matter; Freeman (son of Chicago saxophonist Von Freeman) is young enough to have won awards at the 1976 Notre Dame College Jazz Festival, good enough to deserve the three albums already out under his name. His tenor playing here was blisteringly free; his flute work on *Aegis* showed his abilities with more traditional harmonic structures. Flutist Hubert Laws (with Mark Gray, piano; Barry Finnerty, guitar; Chip Jackson, bass, and Kenwood Denard, drums) seemed most comfortable in the plugged-in fusion idiom; his set included a hot version of Sonny Rollins' classic *Airegin*.

New personnel and some new charts have moved the Mercer Ellington-led Duke Ellington Orchestra several steps down the road towards its own identity, which may upset the purists. However, most of their repertoire remains Ellingtonian, and those classic charts still work for this different band. There was an interesting piece commissioned especially for the concert by Charles Mingus, and an emotional high was achieved when vocalist Anita Moore soared over the band on *It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing*. Although it opened Sunday's evening concert, the band would have provided a fitting climax to the evening; Mose Allison's laid back blues stylings seemed tired by comparison. Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers (Bobby Watson, alto sax; David Schnitter, tenor sax; Valerie Ponomarev, trumpet; James Williams, piano; Dennis Erwin, bass) came out last to swing the festival into history.

Throughout the fest there was evidence of those touches which give Eclipse such a good reputation among concertgoers and performers, from the Bösendorfer grand piano on stage to the glossy, 20 page free concert booklet with its details about each artist. A 1979 festival seems likely; hopefully the quantity will be less compressed while the quality remains.

—david wild

# "The Leblanc has a fat sound."



Leblanc Duet No. 4, featuring Pete Fountain

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

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

That's one of the things I like about my clarinet, too. My Leblanc.

It takes more of a beating and more of a workout than any instrument I played before. I started on a Regent, then a Pensamore, and then some others. But the Leblanc's keys are harder. They'll take more of a beating. And that's especially important in my work. It's twenty years since I began playing Leblancs, and to show you how great they are, this is only my second one. This one's two years old, and has about five albums under its belt. The other one, which still plays, I recorded 43 albums with. I'm so proud of my instruments!

#### Leblanc:

What kind of sound do you like out of a clarinet?

#### Fountain:

Well, I don't like a high, screechy sound. I like it more mellow, like Irving Fazola was known for. I have his clarinet, you know, but I can't play it too often. When Faz died, his mother put it away in the case, and then left it there for possibly six years. Well, I got it and sent it to Leblanc, and I said, "Could you just recondition this, because it's my idol's." Well, after they sent it back, I started playing it, and when the wood gets warm you're reminded that Faz used to like his garlic. This garlic comes out, and it grabs you by the throat, and, I tell you, it fills up the whole bandstand. So we always say, "Fazola still lives every

time somebody plays his clarinet."

Anyhow, as I said, I don't like a high, screechy sound. The Leblanc has a *fat* sound. They say it's *my* sound, but it's got to come from the instrument.

Pete's instrument is the Leblanc 1611, an 18/7 fork B $\flat$ , with articulated G $\sharp$ . Made of the finest selected grenadilla, with gold-plated keys. It can be *your* instrument, too.

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LEBLANC 

# McCOY TYNER / SONNY ROLLINS RON CARTER / AL FOSTER

## ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆ ON TOUR ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

By DOUG CLARK

It was a well-deserved standing ovation. The audience cheered for more, and they got it. The quartet returned to the stage and lit into *I Mean You*. It was no ordinary treatment of the Monk standard, but this was no ordinary quartet: Sonny Rollins, McCoy Tyner, Ron Carter and Al Foster, known collectively as the Milestone Jazzstars. About halfway through the tune the men began trading fours, but that was too formal, so they switched to a crazy group improvisation, a madcap romp through the changes, a Marx Brothers movie. Sonny finally led the way through the head again, ending with Monk's goofy tag. Another standing ovation.

Several hours earlier, Sonny Rollins was waiting for his hotel room to be readied. He looked wiggly in red ascot, tan slacks and black tennis shoes. He is 49 but doesn't look it. There is not a speck of gray in his hair or neatly-trimmed beard. To Sonny, the Jazzstars tour was a unique occurrence. "It's the first time that this has happened and maybe the last time, because everyone has their own groups, and they really want to pursue their own careers. So it is a momentous thing."

Momentous is the right word. In the realm of acoustic jazz, it is hard to imagine a more impressive lineup. Yet like most supergroups, the Jazzstars are not here to stay. They came together to do one concert tour, and now each man has gone his separate way.

These men were not strangers to one another. Each of them had played with the others before, at one time or another. But as a group, the first time they played together (with Max Roach on drums) was last June at President Carter's jazz festival. It is not often that a jazz group plays its first gig at the White House.

Sonny Rollins is thought by many to be our greatest living saxophonist. His star was partially eclipsed by Dexter Gordon's homecoming, but now it shines brighter than before. His playing seems freer yet more accessible than ever. He seems to have an inexhaustible store of ideas, and his expressive range is astonishing.

"I'm constantly experimenting with mouthpieces and horns, trying to get different combinations of notes and different timbres," Rollins remarked. "I usually travel with five or six mouthpieces that I change from night to night depending on the hall and the condition of my chops." Whatever mouthpiece he uses, when he puts the horn to his lips exhilarating music comes out.

Ron Carter looked elegant in resplendent

threads and a choice selection from an assortment of beautiful Moroccan skull caps. He is the aristocrat of the Jazzstars, the *artiste*, because of the variety of his accomplishments. He is one of the few jazz bassists to form his own group. In his own quartet Ron plays piccolo bass. In the Jazzstars he stuck with the standard upright bass. Why?

"I only want that to be indigenous to my quartet, one," said Ron of his piccolo bass. "Two, it's really cumbersome to carry both things around. And three, I think that it works best with another bass player playing an accompaniment."

Ultimately, this tour may mean more to McCoy Tyner than to anyone else. His playing on the tour and on his most recent album should signal a change in his career and in his place in jazz. For years McCoy has lived in a landscape crafted by John Coltrane. There was rarely a concert, an interview or an album review where Coltrane's name was not invoked, as if McCoy's creative existence depended on Trane's ghost. Maybe it did. But that is not the case today. McCoy Tyner no longer stands in the shadow of John Coltrane. On the edge of 40, McCoy has come into his own as a jazz giant.

This was most obvious in McCoy's solo contribution, a ditty he calls *A Little Pianissimo*.

"It's an improvised piece, really," he explained. "It has no set form. It has a little melody that I revert back to. I play the melody and use different things underneath it."

In short, McCoy is free to do nearly anything he wants to, and he does. He plays with virtuosity: his hands are equal partners, and he utilizes the entire keyboard with stunning effectiveness. In terms of 20th century piano music, McCoy has taken up where Bartok left off.

These three men formed the core of the Jazzstars. The inspiration for the group came from Claude Nobbs, head honcho at the Montreux Jazz Festival. Realizing that Sonny, McCoy and Ron were all signed to the same record company, he approached Milestone president Ralph Kaffel about the possibility of their playing together at Montreux '78. That idea didn't work out, but it provided the impetus for organizing the group for an American tour.

There was one major problem: who would play drums? Last April the three headliners met in New York with Orrin Keepnews, that tireless envoy for jazz who now directs jazz activities at Milestone. The four of them sat

down with a list of drummers and began to hash it out. An obvious choice might have been Tony Williams, who has played extensively with each of the three Jazzstars, but there was a desire to avoid picking a star from another record company. The tour was designed as a family affair.

"It would have been no problem at all if we had a first-rate jazz drummer on Milestone," Orrin confessed. "But we don't." So the task was to pick a drummer who was of the same quality but not of the same stature as the three headliners: someone who could complement and even inspire the stars without detracting attention from them. Al Foster was a perfect choice.

At 34, Al Foster is the youngest member of the quartet. One reason he is not better known to the public is that he dislikes touring and rarely ventures outside of New York City. Another reason is that he has been with Miles Davis for the past six years, and Miles himself has been invisible for the last three. So Al was free-lancing in New York when he got the call from Orrin Keepnews. He was elated.

"When I was asked to make it, man, I couldn't believe it," said Al with a shake of the head. "I normally don't go out of town. But I just said right away that I'd make *that*."

Near the beginning of the tour Al confided, "I'm still a little nervous. I think it's wearing off a little bit each night, but playing with these cats is like going to college. I feel very honored to be asked to play with them." Judging from Al's performance with the Jazzstars, he has little reason for humility. He played with fire and excitement, not just supporting the Jazzstars but igniting them. Al Foster may have been a lesser light before the tour, but now?

With the addition of Al Foster, the Milestone Jazzstars became a reality and an itinerary was drawn up. The tour began on September 16 in Santa Barbara and ended October 29 in Philadelphia. There were 20 dates altogether: seven in the West, six in the Midwest and seven in the East. The South got short-changed.

On the West Coast leg of the tour, Orrin Keepnews strode around in a leather jacket and a bright red Jazzstars T-shirt, seemingly recovered from major heart surgery this past summer. He characterized the tour as "a spiritual descendant of the V.S.O.P. tour." Like the Jazzstars, V.S.O.P. was an all-star band playing acoustic jazz. The only musician who played in both bands is Ron Carter. His comparison of the two?

Ron Carter



DAVID WHARTON

Sonny Rollins



McCoy Tyner

DAVID WHARTON



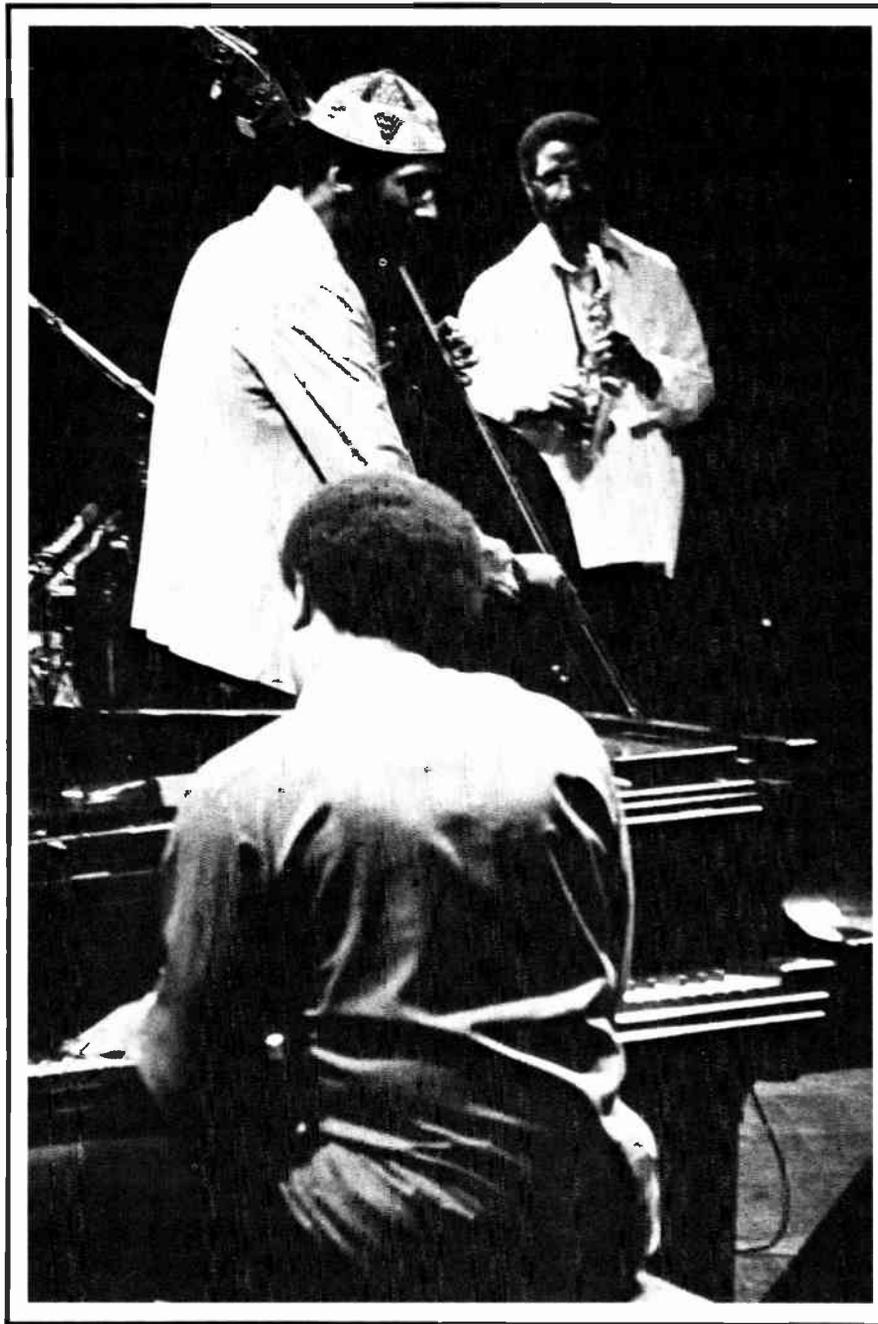
Al Foster

"The music is certainly equivalent, and the interplay between the four of us is equivalent to that of the five of us," said Carter. "If there is a difference, it's the level of camaraderie involved. I literally grew up with Herbie and Tony and Wayne and Freddie, having played with them since 1963, on and off. We were having an old-hometown reunion. The camaraderie of this tour is different in that we have come together as adults."

The Jazzstars tour was a model of promo-

#### Major Cultural Event.

Those who missed the Event should not despair, however, because four of the concerts were recorded; a double album is planned. Milestone is, after all, a record company, not a concert promotion agency and much of the hoopla was aimed at selling albums. McCoy, Sonny and Ron each have a new album out, timed to coordinate with the tour. (They are reviewed in this issue.) If they don't sell, it won't be for lack of publicity.



DAVID WHARTON

tional finesse. Milestone pulled out all the stops: extensive advertising, television appearances, autograph sessions, posters plastered all over each city. . . . Everyone who attended the concerts (about 50,000 people) was handed a classy ten-page program with biographies, pictures and words of praise. Could anyone top that? And the halls they played were among the best in the country: symphony halls and civic auditoriums, no roller rinks or coliseums. In every way this was meant to be a

Most of the musical preparation concerned the logistics of the program: who would play what, when. The trick was to design a program in which each of the Jazzstars would participate equally, slighting none of the three. The solution was simple and highly effective: to place the musicians together in different combinations. During most shows only four selections were performed by the entire quartet—one composition by each headliner plus the Monk encore piece. Each of the three stars

had a solo spot, and there were two duets and two trios of different personnel. Once the musicians became comfortable with the changes—so they didn't bump into each other or trip over wires—it worked very well, providing a rich and lively variety.

With the program set, the quartet had little trouble preparing the concert. They had a total rehearsal time of only four hours. Some people would find that hard to believe. Not Ron Carter.

"There seems to be a myth of how difficult it is for jazz players to get together. We're professional players. Our total playing time must be over 100 years."

This is not to say that the music did not change as the tour progressed.

"Any group of good jazz players will develop and evolve ideas over a period of time," Ron observed. "I can definitely see a development in thematic material in a tune last night that maybe would not have taken place two nights before. Something caused a musical reaction. Which isn't to say that it wasn't acceptable before, but jazz players are always experimenting."

The Portland show went like this:

It began with the quartet playing Sonny's tune *The Cutting Edge*. It is a great tune for jamming; everyone soloed, everyone got loose. Next came what may have been the most exquisite performance of the evening: Sonny and McCoy playing Ellington's *In A Sentimental Mood*. Sonny put on his buzziest tone, and McCoy kept pulling out new harmonies. This was followed by a trio performance of *Once I Loved* with McCoy, Ron and Al. Ron played a highly melodic solo on it. He may not have brought his piccolo bass, but he did bring the melodic freedom of the smaller instrument.

Ron continued the concert alone with a free and virtuosic interpretation of Sonny's bluesy standard, *Doxy*. (Other nights he explored *Blue Monk* or *Willow Weep For Me*.) The first half of the concert ended with the quartet playing *Nubia*, a new piece by McCoy, on which Sonny played his curved soprano sax.

After intermission McCoy came out alone to play *A Little Pianissimo*. He is a stout man, strong and thickset, and he takes the keyboard in his hands like a blacksmith bending a molten piece of metal. Then came another trio number, this time with Sonny, Ron and Al. They did *Don't Stop The Carnival*, a traditional Rollins vehicle which consists only of four basic chords with a turnaround repeated every two bars. They performed it in a highly rhythmic fashion, burning it up. Throughout the piece Sonny shifted his weight from one foot to the other in time to the music, raising his tenor high in the air and then swooping down, as if to parallel his solo. This was then contrasted by a sensitive rendering of *Alone Together* by McCoy and Ron. Then came Sonny's solo. Sonny, of course, is known for solo cadenzas which include *everything*. This time he even worked in the kitchen sink. The concert concluded with a quartet version of Ron's *N.O. Blues*, a tribute to funeral parades in New Orleans. It would have brought a smile to Buddy Bolden's face.

The concert itself brought smiles to faces on both sides of the spotlight. Afterwards, backstage, Rollins was grinning, irrepressibly pleased with the concert. Out front, the audience was standing, applauding, cheering. It was a well-deserved standing ovation for all four Milestone Jazzstars.

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# JOHN KLEMMER

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## *Success and the Echo Complex*

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By LEN LYONS

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Maybe nothing succeeds like success, but nothing arouses as much suspicion either, especially in the case of a jazz musician whose album makes the pop charts.

I confess that was the attitude with which I approached John Klemmer, the tenor saxophonist whose *Arabesque* was number 86 on the Billboard Hot 100 album chart and number 4 on the jazz chart at the time. Listening to the album, which is musically conservative in terms of harmony, melody, and rhythm, persuaded me that Klemmer had his sights set on the middle of the road and that was the end of the matter.

I was in for a surprise. Klemmer, in his early 30s, was raised in Chicago. He is lanky, an avid cigarette smoker, and—by his own description—an intense person, on stage and off. When I visited him at home in Sherman Oaks, in the hot valley northeast of Los Angeles, I found a musician with a versatile background and a distinctly non-commercial nature. His new album, *Cry*, has been in the works for three years, much of the time devoted to persuading ABC Records to release it. The format is solo saxophone, acoustic and with Echoplex, not to mention a passage played just on the horn's keys with no air blown through the reed. Not much commercial potential.

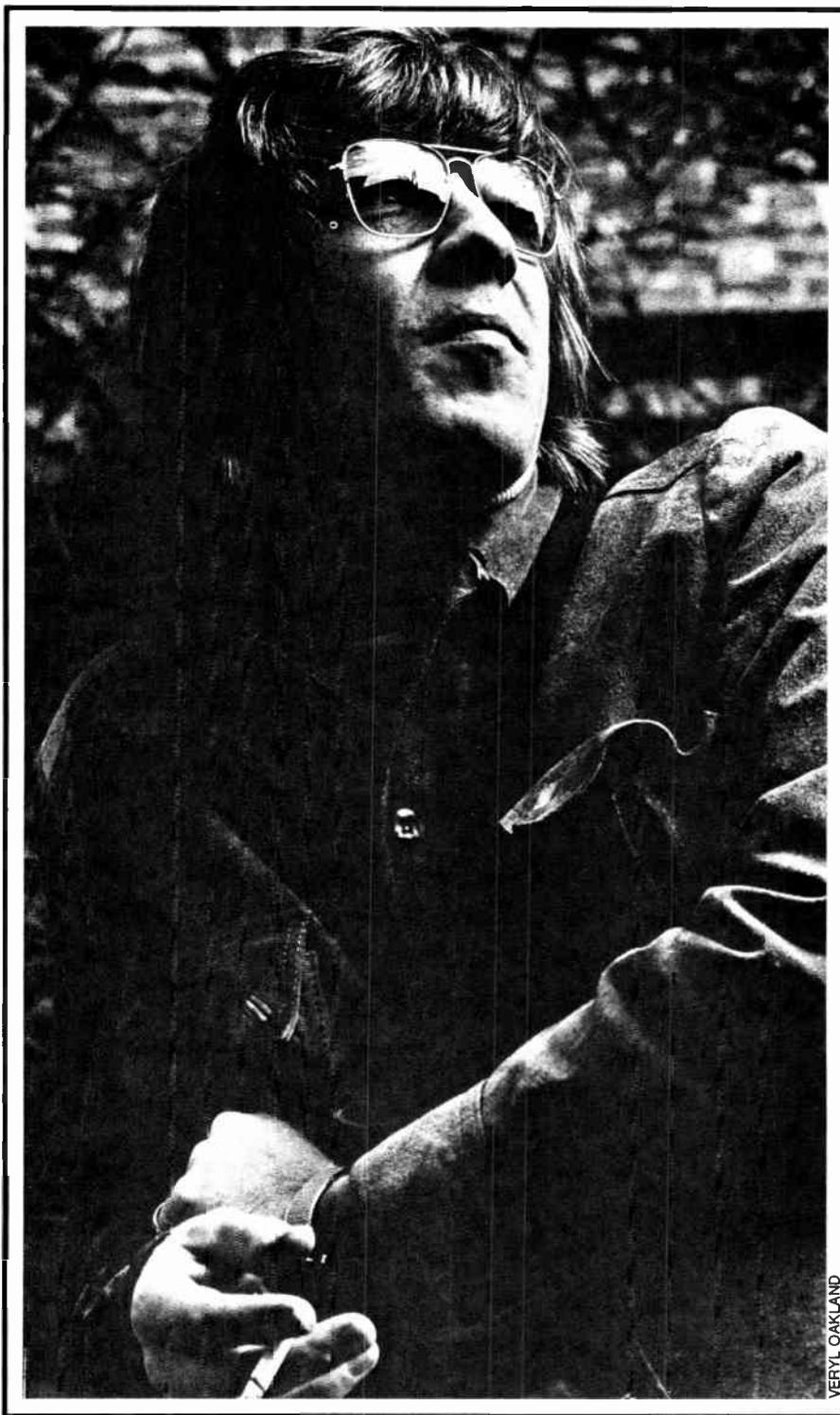
Klemmer says there is nothing remotely like *Cry*. (Stan Getz did one solo track with Echoplex on a double album recorded in Montreux, but the record was not out at the time of our interview, and Klemmer had not heard it). However, Klemmer has been taking long solo sax cadenzas when his band performs live and has been playing sax alone since his formative years in Chicago.

Use of the Echoplex comes from his experience with Don Ellis' band, which he played for in '68 and '69, just after moving to Los Angeles. "I had a natural affinity for the Echoplex right away," he recalled. "I plugged into Don's one night for a solo, and I found I could use it right away. Looking back, I can see why it appealed to me—and why I didn't find it strange. Growing up in Chicago, I spent a lot of time trying to play as fast as I could, similar to the sheets of sound approach John Coltrane was into, as a way to play chords, or to create a chordal effect. The Echoplex [because of the delay] allows me to build chords. It's what I was hearing anyway.

"I think I've also been drawn to the ethereal, the more delicate melodic possibilities, which is an aspect of the Echoplex. There's always an element of surprise improvising with it. Of all the electronic devices, like the wah-wah or ring modulator, that's the only one I take seriously."

One of Klemmer's greatest concerns for *Cry* is that listeners may think it was an imitation of something else. In general he is very sensitive to public reaction. "People are so critical sometimes, it makes me gunshy. I have to tune them out."

Are these critics right? Did he, or did he not, sell out? "There seems to be a myth in the air that as soon as you get really successful, you're not half as good as you were before. George Benson is a good example. We toured with him for a while. I like him a lot and have a lot of respect for what he's doing. He's done



a lot for music by setting an example of playing quality music and being tremendously successful with it."

In terms of *Arabesque*, Klemmer expects some skepticism "coming from the jazz purists" but insists the album displayed one of many musical hats he intends to wear.

"I do the music I like," John says, "regardless of category. I started out in Chicago in '67 making bebop records for Chess, and from there I went to *Blowin' Gold* ('69) on Cadet, which was a jazz/rock fusion, probably one of the very first crossover records. When I first joined ABC Records, I was playing avant garde, until this new phase. And I think *Arabesque* is better than the previous similar albums, like *Touch* or *Barefoot Ballet*. They were quieter and laid back. *Arabesque* is more out-front, more aggressive and rhythmic."

The variety of Klemmer's background was enriched by heavy practicing and on-the-road training in his teens. "I practiced furiously," he said. "I started out as a legitimate saxophonist, so I had piles of books and exercises—even for trumpet, flute, and clarinet. I'd play through fake books for days on end, without a pianist. Just me—trying to maintain the sound of the chord changes and the rhythm. I think I was also playing alone because I wanted to be independently strong, plus I didn't particularly care for the rhythm section I had. The drummer used to drag the beat.

"Another thing I did that helped a lot was to play along with records. I'd put them on cold and learn the tune as I went along. When I was 15 [until age 17] I was going on the road with commercial bands. We'd check into one of these hotels with piped-in Muzak, and I'd

great deal. But being with Don was eye-opening in a lot of other ways. I got turned on to electronics and to his experimental nature. Oliver's impact was not so great on me. He was just a fine straightahead musician."

Another public attitude about which Klemmer is particularly sensitive centers on his writing. He feels no one is aware of it, though almost all of the compositions on his 15 albums are originals.

"I spend more time at the piano writing than I do on my horn," he claims. "It really does bother me that so few listeners realize how involved I am in composing. I have a feeling the explanation for this is that I haven't had a hit song recorded by another group. That's often what makes people think of you as a writer. Manhattan Transfer just did my *Walk In Love*, [from *Arabesque*] which is now No. 1 in Sweden. Maybe the recognition process is beginning. The way I write is conceptual, very simple, and open. I don't orchestrate for all the other instruments. Currently, I have a lyricist I collaborate with regularly, David Batteau [who also sings on *Touch*]."

For all the records he buys, and listens to, there is very little of today's music that appeals to Klemmer. "Basically, I listen to keep informed—sometimes to know what not to do. It is possible to learn from other people's mistakes. The only thing that's really impressing me on an instrumental level is Weather Report. Their musicality, innovation, experimentation, and the fusion of all those ethnic elements is fascinating to me. I also like a lot of the things that come out of ECM. Otherwise, I don't hear anything that's knocking me out."

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## ***Out in L.A., a guy with a tenor sax and Echoplex can blow chart-bound arabesques and still find creative ways to cry.***

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stay in the room all afternoon playing with the Muzak to see how fast I could pick up the songs. I made it a point to play as much as possible and jammed with as many kinds of bands as I could find."

Sonny Rollins was Klemmer's earliest influence. After that, it was Coltrane. He also listened to Ravel, Debussy and composers he describes as "romantics." Records played a big part in his early training, and he still has shelves full of LPs and tapes in the music room of his home. But the mystery ingredient was singers.

"I've listened to an enormous amount of music—for a while, almost everything I could get my hands on. But I've always felt an affinity for vocalists, maybe because my folks used to play Frank Sinatra and Nat King Cole records at home all the time. I tried for a while to give the horn the clarity of a really fine vocalist, as if the horn were the extension of my vocal cords. There must be part of me that's a frustrated singer. I've toyed with the idea of singing, but I'm no singer, I know that, although it is the way I write. I sit at my piano and sing the melody."

The remaining background experience of some significance to Klemmer was a stint with the big bands of Don Ellis and Oliver Nelson. In retrospect, he thinks it was a mixed bag.

"On the plus side the big band gives you a great sense of structure, order, and what an arrangement is. But at the same time, it's stifling as a soloist. If you only get 32 bars to blow once in a while, you really can't develop a 20 □ down beat

The subject of today's albums led quickly to the fusion issue, the intentional use by jazz musicians of elements associated with the rock, funk, or pop styles. It elicited the following historical perspective from Klemmer: "I think fusion is new, but not entirely new. Jazz itself is basically a fusion of African and European forms. The musicians have always borrowed from here and there. It may be more obvious now because of the media coverage, but it was true in the '40s, too. I heard Bird used to listen to Stravinsky a lot.

"One thing that's certainly changed recorded music is the technology of the studio itself. With editing and over-dubbing, new possibilities have been opened up. It started with pop and rock because record companies wouldn't spend the money on jazz musicians for sophisticated stuff. Also, jazz people have a tendency to be purists, so they aren't always inclined to use what's there."

The pop element in *Arabesque* is the string section arranged by Ian Freebairn-Smith, but Klemmer says this was not a marketing decision, and he considered doing the album without it. "For one thing, the strings were recorded after the basic tracks, so they didn't interfere at all with the band, nor did we depend upon them. The fact is that I heard the music in my head with strings. They fit, which is the ultimate criterion for me.

"I'll admit that there's a lot of boring music today made in an attempt to sell records and communicate with an audience. A lot of jazz artists are overlooking their own talents—

what they do best. I think most jazz artists can do what they do naturally and still sell records. I'll put on a record often and just catch a glimpse of something very musical and think, *that's it! Why not focus on that?* This must be the producer part of me." Klemmer is co-producer of his ABC albums with Stephen Goldman.

Klemmer's current performance band consists of Milcho Leviev on piano, Bob Magnusson, acoustic bass, Roy McCurdy, drums, Ray Armando, percussion, and occasionally Oscar Castro-Neves on acoustic guitar. Though he is content with this group, he is concerned for the future because of what he observed among young musicians.

"There are so many people into funk, it's hard to find a piano player who's a sensitive accompanist, who doesn't have a heavy touch. There's a similar problem with drummers. Everyone's into a heavy rhythmic trip, which certainly isn't where I'm coming from.

"I suppose that's been one drawback to the fusion thing. Jazz/rock and funk don't have the subtlety or sensitivity which is the beauty of music to me. I'm probably one of the few so-called fusion artists who isn't into the heavy beat. I don't mean everything has to be soft and quiet. I like to swing, too. But I'm concerned because the musicians coming up are learning only one thing: how to knock it out. The quality of musicians I came up with in Chicago, who knew how to be sensitive, is getting scarce. All the pounding and bashing has me concerned for the future of the music."

Most problematic of all in his life right now is his new home, Los Angeles. He has something of a love/hate relationship with the city, which in his mind is the music-industry capital of the nation. But that is part of the problem.

"I'm having a hard time developing a camaraderie with other musicians of a similar aesthetic point of view. It's hard to find people who aren't business-oriented. I've had commercial success recently but that's not my relationship with music.

"It's also hard to get people together because things are so spread out geographically. I miss the hanging-out type of clubs we had in Chicago, or that exist in New York or other cities. The only place to meet other musicians in L.A. is at the studios, which leaves me out. The studio scene is completely irrelevant to my life. Sometimes the isolation is difficult to deal with; other times, I probably value it. It does allow me time to work on my own head—after all, that's where the music is coming from. I guess I've always been working on myself, although I can't say I have any method for doing it. I suppose it's a matter of maintaining a constant self-awareness. Still, being isolated from other artists is probably more of a problem than a benefit."

Los Angeles has lived up to its promise in one respect.

"I love to make records," Klemmer says, beaming. "It's almost like an art form itself, to me. And this is a great place to be, if you want to do something with your talents. I don't know if you can develop your talents here, but there are sure a lot of opportunities to use what you have. Lyricists are plentiful. I've had offers for film scores and producing. I haven't accepted because the investment of time would take me away from my own music. But everything is here, and it's very exciting."

Unlike *Arabesque*, *Cry* may never see the charts. But it will go a long way towards broadening John Klemmer's image. db

# SAM RIVERS

## Warlord of the Lofts

*Synthesist and survivor, Sam Rivers pushes improvisation, orchestral composition and Studio Rivbea into the '80s.*

By W. A. BROWER

“Record companies are very strange at this end of the music. It seems that I am offered contracts—it’s not a problem of getting a contract. But you get an advance from your royalties to do the record. And so what do they want to give me in advance to do a record for them? \$5000, \$6000. What kind of money is that? I can get that much up myself. I don’t need a record company to advance me \$5000. That is pennies. If they want to advance me \$50,000 then I will talk to them.

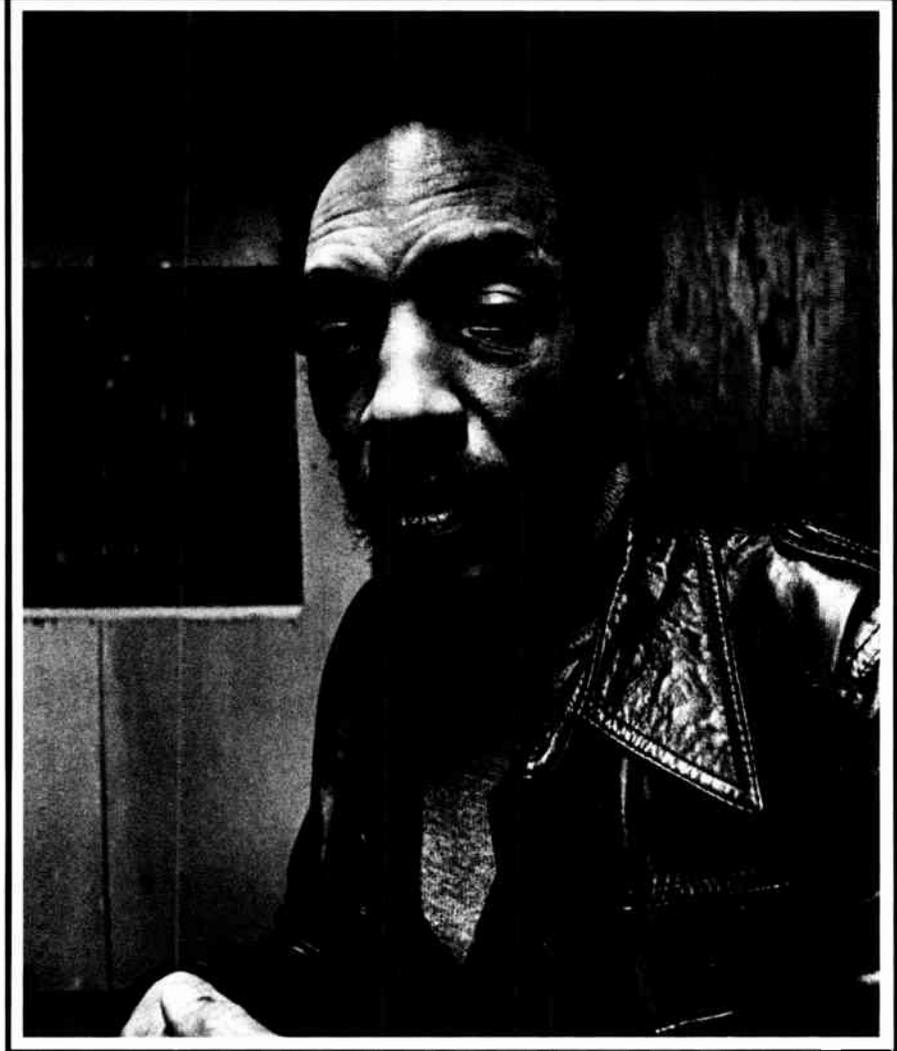
“I am not out here begging. If they want to offer me pennies they should pass it on to some of the younger musicians that are coming up. Don’t bother me with that. I feel offended when they offer me even \$7000 or \$8000 to do an album. If they are that bad off, I can get that together without their help. If they are that hung up for bread maybe they should borrow some from me.

“I am talking about all the companies. There is a time angle also. They know about me out here. It has so little to do with merit that it is unbelievable. It’s just a matter if I survive of ‘Yeah, Sam Rivers has been around.’ Probably when my creativity has peaked and I have started being redundant, they’ll come around and say, ‘He is the greatest.’ After my creative period is over. But I am still creative so I don’t expect them to come around for a while.”

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This is Samuel Carthorne Rivers at 48, his brilliant musicianship aside—proud, sensitive, independent and embattled. “They call me all sorts of things—unofficial mayor of the lofts, godfather, damn . . .” He laughs, a mixture of the incredulous and the impish. Obviously, Rivers seems to imply, the unofficial mayor and godfather ought to be worth more than “pennies.” Besides, he reminded me, “I was with Miles Davis in the ‘60s and with Cecil Taylor. I came to New York on top, set. I came with Miles Davis in ‘63. I went from Miles Davis to Andrew Hill. And then I was with Cecil Taylor for about five years. So I am part of the history of the ‘60s. I am right there! Where were these other guys?”

Even more pointedly, Rivers mentioned his most recent overseas tour. “Very few groups go on after I do. Everyone, no matter who it is, I follow them. No one follows me. They set it up all the way around the world like that. I don’t know what that means, but that’s the way it is. Buddy Rich’s band opened for me in the south of France. In Genoa, Italy, Enrico Rava with Roswell Rudd opened. In San Remo, the Bill Evans Trio opened. I tell the promoters, ‘Look these guys are more famous than I am and they have all this publicity and they are the featured acts you know.’ But over



VERYL OAKLAND

there they say, ‘Well, we’d like for you to go on last, we’d like for you to be our . . .’ Like his music which is simultaneously direct and allusive, he stopped short and hopped out an ocean. “Over here in this country though, if I go on a concert with anyone, the agents over here make sure that their groups go on first.”

So Sam Rivers is quite aware of his position in the music. Along with Cecil Taylor, Ornette Coleman and Archie Shepp, he is one of the few prominent survivors of the avant gardist upheaval of the ‘60s that was centered in New York. He rose to the top not because he was a prime innovator but because he was an excellent musician. As Rivers once told jazz critic Robert Palmer, “The ‘60s was a heck of a period. A lot of traditional musicians went right through the period and didn’t get anything out of it.” But Sam Rivers did. In fact he is perhaps foremost among the musicians for whom the revolutionary departures of the late ‘50s and early ‘60s were revelations, unlocking the doors for the natural evolution of ideas

that were pushing the limits of structural, melodic, harmonic and rhythmic conventions. So it was appropriate that June 18, 1978 found Taylor, Coleman and Rivers all on the South Lawn of the White House: Taylor and Coleman, the innovators and Rivers, the synthesizer.

When, after 15 years in Boston, Rivers got a call from Miles Davis to join the band on Tony Williams’ recommendation, he was ready. He had been composing and playing more and more adventurously. Although there was a core of musicians to work with including at times pianists Jaki Byard, Hal Galper and Phil Moore as well as drummers Alan Dawson and Williams, the circle wasn’t large enough. And Williams, with whom Rivers enjoyed a particularly creative relationship, had already forsaken Beantown for the Apple in the company of Jackie McLean and ultimately Miles.

Aware that John Coltrane’s probings had probably hastened his exodus from Miles in



the '50s, Rivers joined Davis, "knowing that I wasn't going to last too long. I knew the way the band was set up that I wasn't going to be there too long.

"I managed to set myself up in New York. I was looking for a spot in Harlem this size [referring to his Studio Rivbea], looking for this identical place in Harlem. And I found one, but when I went down to speak to the people in housing they said, 'Well, we are getting ready to build a Harlem Arts Theatre and it's going to be a complex.' I had my program all set up, same program that I am using now, in the early '60s.

"It took me five years to find this place, five years before I could even open. So I should have been open around 1966 or '67, but I didn't get there until 1970. I came in 1964 looking for the place, looking all over Harlem. I found a place, a vacant building, still vacant today, ten years, 15 years after the fact.

"The building is still there. But the guys at the planning commission said, 'No, we can't let you do this here because we are planning a complex, an arts center, and you would be in competition with us.' And they nixed me." So by default the saga of Studio Rivbea, cornerstone of the so-called loft jazz movement which showcased the new voices of the '70s, began in Soho.

What Rivers actually had in mind then and maintains today is not a loft but, as the name says, a studio, where he can work out his aesthetic in contexts ranging from his almost telepathic duets with bassist/cellist Dave Holland, to the Winds of Harlem, a woodwind ensemble, to the 14-piece Sam Rivers Orchestra. When Rivers' increasingly busy performance schedule permits he opens the studio for, "workshops, jam sessions and master classes. And young musicians know I have rehearsals going on with all kinds of different groups.

"They know that there is no place in New York like this. Uptown there is Jazzmobile and places like that, but it's all traditional. That is good, too. I am not saying anything against that, but it goes up to a certain level and it stops. So they know if they want to come in and they want everything, then it's Studio Rivbea." In Rivers' view "everything" became possible after the '60s, "the last radical opening of the music."

As a result, Rivers postulates, "There is no avant garde. There is no avant garde in European classical music and there is no avant garde in jazz. There are modernists and traditionalists. The '70s is a culmination of the '40s, '50s and '60s, putting together and using this material that has already been created and molding it in different ways. We have reached a total access to all musical elements. I can't imagine another fundamental change in the music, unless we consider the electronic—and then how can we think of music more as an engineer than musician?"

All of this, since standards develop by withstanding the ravages of time, leads Rivers to a kind of provisional aesthetic, wherein, "There is no such thing as a mistake. You go out there and you do your best. You don't worry about making mistakes, because you can't make any mistakes. Impossible. You are the creator. Creators don't make mistakes. If there is a flaw, the flaw is intentional. If there is a crack in the note, the crack is intentional. It has to be there—it came from the subconscious, it came from the physical. But it is there and it is part of it even though we didn't intend it. It is part of the creation and it sticks. It stands as part of the perfection."

VERYL OKLAND

Because Rivers' music includes both experimentation and the interpolation of tradition, he surrounds himself with only the most technically facile musicians. The members of his ensembles are more often than not composers and band leaders as well as outstanding soloists. For them, it must be stimulating to work with an acknowledged master who could not be more serious when he declares, "I am a free composer. In other words I have no rules. There is no predisposition. I approach my writing the same way I approach my playing, my improvising. My writing is improvising.

"I purposely don't have any set way to do it, because this is one of the most important things to staying creative, to keep trying out a different way. Because once you have set rules, you can only do so much. You become rigid in that thing and so you break the rules. So why set the rules up anyway?"



"But also I am a composer of many years, so I can look at something and see how it sounds—once I write it. I try to write something different every time I write a composition. There are no real mistakes. If there is a half tone interval between the trumpets, say a B or a Bb, I have done that intentionally. I am aware that these things are not supposed to be done, according to the traditional concept. I am aware. If I were teaching the traditional this would not be able to be done.

"I am aware that what I am doing would not be done were this a traditional approach to composition. I know how it's going to sound, and I know that the two trumpets are going to have a hard time playing it in tune. I already know these things, but I still might do it. My experience with composition and orchestration is so extensive that I know what is going to go down right and what is not going to go down right."

As a result Rivers produces a music of constant change. It is polymelodic and sometimes

continued on page 23

# LEROY JENKINS

## GUT-PLUCKING REVOLUTIONARY

By BRET PRIMACK

**A**lthough Chicago-born violinist Leroy Jenkins is best known for his work in "the new music," he started in jazz by playing bebop. "When I was 15, Charlie Parker was the man. I really loved his playing. That's why I started playing alto. I played saxophone during my early days, in high school. I was a Bird copier. I played Bird quite well. In fact, I made spending money in college playing saxophone. I played in rhythm and blues bands in Florida, in moonshine joints. There's a lot of those down there, sellin' white lightnin'."

During a recent visit to Jenkins' tiny Greenwich Village pad, which he shares with his wife Linda and their infant daughter Chantille Kwintana, we asked when and why he started playing violin. "About age eight. I was impressed by one of my aunties' boyfriends who played the violin and looked very astute. He always came over to the house and played and was the kind of guy every young kid would like to grow up to be. My mother bought a violin and I started studying from his teacher, Mr. O. W. Fredrick. At eight years old, that was it.

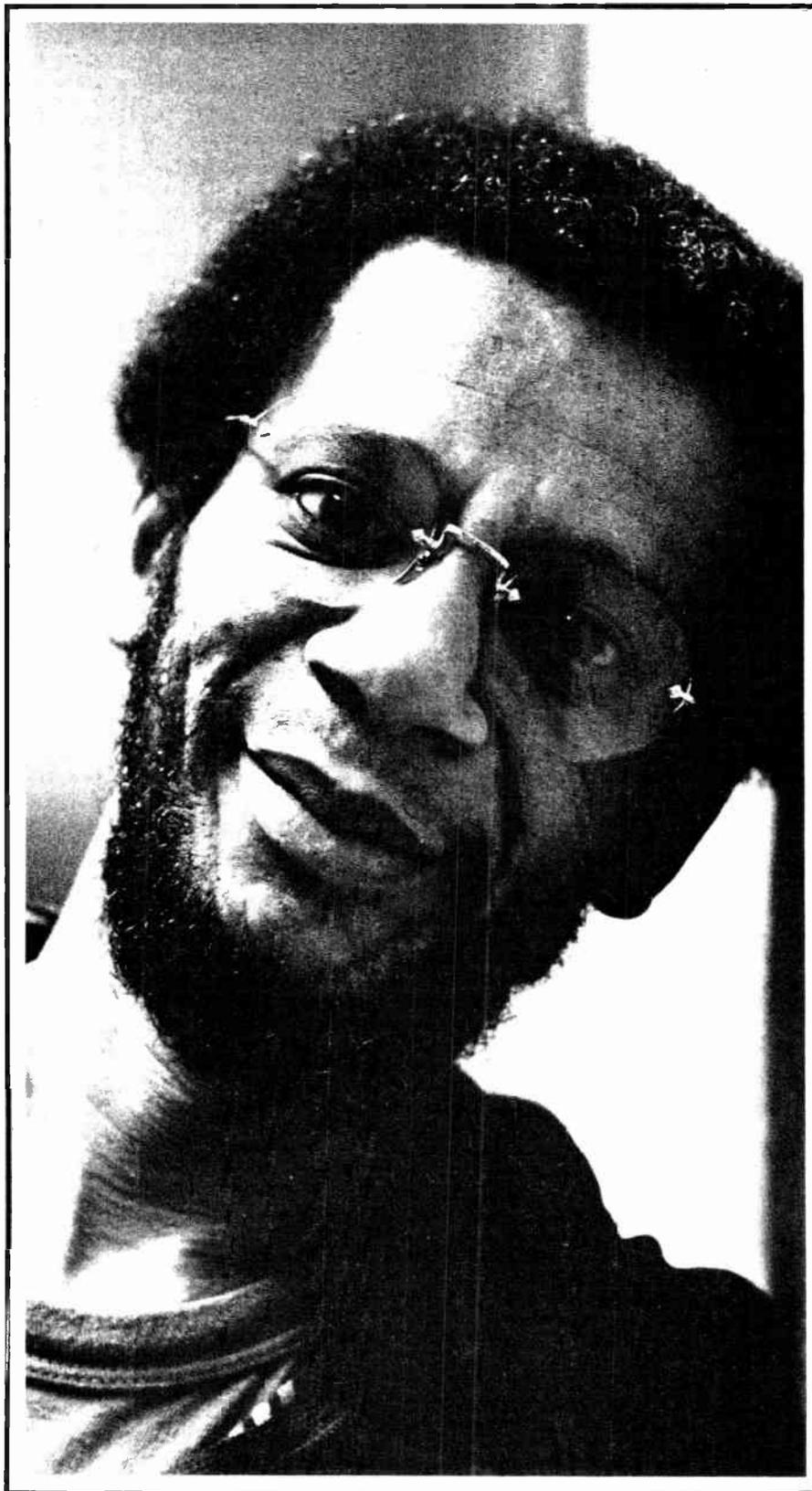
"I started playing in church from that point. I played a lot of events and that's what kept me right there, right into it because the church was very active in its programs and concerts. After just a year, I was playing in public. I played church events 'til I was 17."

At Chicago's DuSable High School, Jenkins studied with Captain Walter H. Dyett, who also taught Richard Davis and Johnny Griffin. Concentrating on the alto, Jenkins had high standards. "I've been a musician all my life and I judge guys, I'm very critical. When I first heard Bird, on records, I used to hear him squeak. Captain Dyett would say, he squeaks and his tone is bad, so I kind of put Bird down. Johnny Hodges was my model. Then I went to hear Bird in person, I heard he had the same facility as Johnny Hodges. I heard Bird really play the alto, and I was completely disarmed. I had all his records. He's had more to do with my musical foundation than anybody else, as far as influence. I still get thrilled when I hear him."

Although Jenkins was trying to make waves on the alto, it was his violin playing that won him a scholarship to Florida A&M, where he received his Bachelor's in Music in 1961. "When I went down to Florida, to go to A&M, I stayed almost ten years. It was another life for me, living in the South. But I wasn't together like I wanted to be. I felt something was missing.

"I was having trouble with my time. I came up the ropes of musical problems and that was my problem then. When I got up to jam, I had a problem playing in time. I used to play all that church stuff on the violin. But it didn't help me. I still didn't have the time right and I was upset. I couldn't understand why guys who didn't know anything could do it and why I couldn't. I was really frustrated for a long time.

"In college, Bruce Hayden was instrumen-



VERYL OAKLAND

**“The response was negatively positive. They would come out to boo us. One time we had a riot—they were actually throwing stuff at us. We just started playing back at them.”**

tal in getting me back to the violin because from 14 to 21, I was playing saxophone, for the most part. Bruce was a great player, jazz and regular violin, and a great teacher. I also studied with Elwin Adams, another great black violinist who’s now head of the department at Florida State.” To solve his time problem, Jenkins, “. . . practiced eight hours a day for four years. That’s when I really became a musician. That’s really how I became proficient. I was like a hermit. I was always flirting with it before that, known as the guy who had talent, but by that time, I was 25 or 26, I was old enough to get serious. By the time I graduated in ’61 I was a good violinist who played a little jazz in the practice room, and nothing in public but the known violin repertoire.

“When I graduated from college, I didn’t have enough money to pay the fee to graduate. I had to watch my graduation. They were cold. If you didn’t pay the fee, you didn’t march. You didn’t get a gown or nothing. I was thinking about coming to New York then. But the head of my department wisely told me that I’d probably starve to death up here. He got me a job in Mobile. They wanted a string instructor.

“As far as teaching, I’m a natural teacher. I been doing that a long, long time. But I didn’t have the business together. I was trying to get something together for 13 schools. It was a big responsibility. Actually, I was like a lot of teachers are, they just use it to make money. I was makin’ \$3600 a year. I thought that was a lot then. I found out it wasn’t. It took me four years to get myself out of it.”

While in Mobile, Jenkins’ playing career also went through some changes. “I sold my saxophone. There was no way I could make a living off it. I was much better at the violin. On top of that, Bird had died and there wasn’t anybody who was really gassin’ me that much. Sonny Rollins did, but he played tenor. So I sort of went off on the violin.

“In Mobile, I played two concerts. The first one was to a packed house. The second one was a flop so I decided I couldn’t play concert music for a living. I wanted to be active in music but I could see I wasn’t going to make it in that.

“I joined Edward Pratt’s band. When I went to Mobile, I sat in with him one night. All of a sudden, everything fell in place. I was hearing the choruses and everything because I really had done it before. So I really got it together with four years of playing with Pratt and going around the little jazz community in Mobile.”

After nearly 15 years down South, Jenkins finally came home, to Chicago. “Musically, there wasn’t no work, nothing happened right away, so I took a job with the Board of Education, as a third grade teacher. After a while, I met a principal who found out I was a musician. He told me about this government program that sponsored music in the poverty area schools. I applied for it and I got it. I started teaching instrumental music in the ghetto in Chicago.

“Around that time, through a concert of Roscoe Mitchell’s, I cut into the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians. My teacher, Bruce Hayden, had moved to Chicago. He played a gig with Muhal and Muhal told him about Roscoe’s concert. He

told me and I came. I re-met Muhal. I knew him from my earlier life in Chicago. I knew he was a musician but I really didn’t know him too well. He knew I was a church musician.

“At the concert, I was just fascinated by the music Roscoe did. He was the first person I heard do anything like that, even before I heard Trane do it. At the down beat festival in ’65, I heard Trane with Archie Shepp. They got up there and were screaming and carrying on. I didn’t like it. I was used to hearing Trane more melodic. I still say I don’t like it even though I know what he was doing. I don’t think he had it really together. They were just hoopin’ and hollerin’ up there. So that was really my first introduction to this other music. When I heard Roscoe, I was fascinated. I got right into it.

“Eventually, I went down and started playing with them in their basement. These guys took me in. They didn’t look at me weird just

## SELECTED JENKINS DISCOGRAPHY

### as a leader:

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VIETNAM I AND II—ESP 3007

MANHATTAN CYCLES—India Navigation IN 1023

THE PSYCHE—RE Records 3117

THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC—Horizon A&M SP-708

REVOLUTIONARY ENSEMBLE—Inner City 3016

### as a sideman:

LEVELS AND DEGREES OF LIGHT (w/Muhal Richard Abrams)—Delmark DS 413

THREE COMPOSITIONS OF NEW JAZZ (w/Anthony Braxton)—Delmark DS 415

ANTHONY BRAXTON—BYG Actuel 529.315

THIS TIME (w/Braxton)—BYG Actuel 529.347

NEW YORK, FALL 1974 (w/Braxton)—Arista AL 4032

CREATIVE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY (vol. 1)—Muse 5071

CREATIVE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY (vol. 2)—Muse 5097

RELATIVITY SUITE (w/Don Cherry)—JCOA JC 1006

ESCALATOR OVER THE HILL—JCOA 3LP-EOTH

WORLD GALAXY (w/Alice Coltrane)—Impulse AS 9218

COINCIDE (w/Dewey Redman)—Impulse ADS 9300

ALKABU-IAN (w/Mtume)—Strata East SES 1972-4

RAHSAAN, RAHSAAN! (w/Rahsaan Roland Kirk)—Atlantic 1575

THINGS HAVE GOT TO CHANGE (w/Archie Shepp)—Impulse AS 9212

CRY OF MY PEOPLE (w/Shepp)—Impulse AS 9231

SWIFT ARE THE WINDS OF LIFE (w/Rashied Ali)—Survival Records 112

because I played the violin. Usually around Chicago, any place I’d go and sit in, the beboppers would kind of look at me out of the side of their eyes. But with the AACM, I was able to play a little bit of both sides. I had to use the blues I knew, the technique that I knew, that’s what I got to do in the AACM when I first started. Sometimes I’d sound very classical, sometimes I’d sound very bluesy. Gradually, I started really trying to create a personality of my own.

“All my musicianship really started coming out at the AACM. I started writing. I had nev-

er done any before except when I played with school bands as a kid, but never any modern stuff. With the AACM, I had to start writing for a 20-piece band, for a trio or a quintet, different types of instrumentation. I was fortunate in that I knew about instruments because I played in a lot of bands and orchestras, so I knew about textures.

“When I got with the AACM, they were doing stuff that was quite different. I considered myself, at the time, at least, a good musician. I was searching around and I hadn’t heard anything like this music they were playing. I was surprised by this music.”

What about the public response? “It was very mixed to say the least. Mostly, they put us down. We didn’t exist, as far as the community was concerned. No black people came to see us. If anything, more whites were coming. We discovered that we were fighting for our lives in the black community.

“During those years, I really developed. I had to cut my bebop thing loose. Now and then, for fun, Braxton and I do things like *Donna Lee*, hard tunes like that, just for exercise. But in those days, at one point, the AACM got to be so radical that Muhal barred any tunes. The AACM was really boilin’ in those days!”

In ’69, Jenkins and AACM cohorts Anthony Braxton and Leo Smith split for Europe. “I had just quit my job, gotten rid of that thing. I was cutting loose all the things I was supposed to be doing. When I got to Paris, my folks and everybody who was close to me thought I was crazy. But we had to get away from Chicago. Chicago is such a mundane place. I don’t see how the music from there can be so great.”

In Paris, they met up with drummer Steve McCall and formed a group that became known as the Creative Construction Company. “Braxton and I had a villa. I was living like a composer. Those were very beautiful days. We were the most controversial band there. The Art Ensemble was there, too. They were the most popular. Our stuff was very esoteric. All of us were writing and doing a lot of playing. They were giving us the more academic type gigs, especially in France.

“The response was negatively positive. They would come out to boo us. One time we had a riot—they were actually throwing stuff at us. We just started playing back at them. It was a fight between us and the audience. Me and Braxton and Leo and Steve got up there and fought the audience back with our horns and we made all kinds of terrific sounds. We thought it was a drag but didn’t think nothing about it. When we came off, Philly Joe Jones was there, laughing. He thought it was the greatest thing he ever heard. He didn’t know what was happening but he thought the music was great.

“When we played a French modern art festival, the people booed us and they had to stop the concert. Some French officials had to get up on stage. It was all on account of our music. We were very controversial. But we were bound to break up. It was mostly experimental. We broke up finally and came back to Chicago.”

In February of 1970, Braxton and Jenkins moved to New York. “We stayed downstairs at Ornette’s Artist House, which at the time

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# RECORD REVIEWS

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

## McCoy TYNER

**THE GREETING**—Milestone M-9085: *Hand In Hand; Fly With The Wind; Pictures; Naima; The Greeting.*

Personnel: Tyner, piano; George Adams, tenor and soprano saxes, flute; Joe Ford, alto sax, flute; Charles Fambrough, bass; Sonship (Woody Theus), drums; Guilherme Franco, percussion, congas.

★ ★ ★ ★

McCoy's style has evolved but slightly over the past decade; despite various personnel changes, his ensembles have reflected the firm impress of the distinctive Tyner persona more than the influence of any single soloist or group. The present recording captures McCoy's current sextet in top form at a live performance in San Francisco's Great American Music Hall.

Here even George Adams, one of the strongest individual voices to be featured in a Tyner combo, is clearly subordinated to the sweeping conceptions of the modern master of the blockbuster vamp. Powered by the muscular pounding of drummer Sonship, the music takes wing on a soaring beam of sonic energy that never lets up until the final bar. Horns and rhythm pulsate and shimmer with stroboscopic intensity, but it is Tyner who carries the show with thundering progressions, palpating rolls, and enough ruffles and flourishes to deck out a coronation.

Excepting possibly Cecil Taylor, Tyner is unrivaled as a virtuoso in the modern idiom, but the exploratory tension of his work with Trane and the cutting edge of the freshly gelled ensembles of the early '70s have given way to a polished patina of perfection, a fully matured style which admits of few further possibilities for discovery. Nonetheless Tyner remains one of the most brilliant pianists and commanding leaders in modern music; his extraordinary forcefulness and prowess is often breathtaking despite its familiarity, and his ability to move an audience is amply showcased here.

Opening with the gentle rustling of Guilherme Franco's Brazilian percussion, *Hand In Hand* ingratiates with its repeated nursery-like gospel theme, sweetly, almost cloysingly intoned by Adams and Joe Ford on flutes. The two flutists take a spacey turn for the introduction to *Fly With The Wind*, conversing in a warbling nightbird dialogue before McCoy makes his entrance with the rolling authority of Rachmaninoff. Abruptly, saxophones and rhythm come sweeping in on a gust of energy to state the Silverish head with gleaming precision and irresistible momentum—Sonship's driving enthusiasm sparks the band with a propulsive urgency last heard during youthful Alphonse Mouzon's tenure. Adams gets down on tenor with a sinuous, quavering solo, his tremulous, coarse-toned vibrato surging through twisting modal configurations on an unbroken current of breath. McCoy swaps

choruses with the band to the conclusion, swirling through turbulent eddies of sound with ringing pedal-point chords and shimmering cadenzas.

*Pictures* features a Hancock-like theme riding over a characteristic modal vamp—McCoy alternates heavy chordal statements with modulating trills and glisses while Adams waxes Traneish and Sonship lays down an Elvin-esque barrage. Tyner plays unaccompanied on *Naima*, rendering the Coltrane standard with brooking romanticism as he meanders through moods of impressionistic reverie, anxious polyphony, and nostalgic quietude. To close, the band returns for *The Greeting*, again a typical Tyner vamp with McCoy riding the bass pedal against right-hand rhapsodies as Adams and Ford trade licks on tenor and alto respectively.

Tyner has carved out his unique piece of musical turf and he continues to mine the rich motherlode with undiminished commitment. One day we may place him on a pedestal with Oscar Peterson as a master of classical virtuosity, but today he remains a vital contemporary performer. —birnbaum

## RON CARTER

**SONG FOR YOU**—Milestone M-9086: *Song For You; El Ojo De Dios; A Quiet Place; Good Time; Someday My Prince Will Come; N.O. Blues.*

Personnel: Carter, piccolo bass, acoustic bass; Kenny Barron, piano; Leon Pendarvis, piano (track 1); Jay Berliner, acoustic guitar (track 2), electric guitar (tracks 1, 3); Jack DeJohnette, drums; Ralph McDonald, percussion; Kermit Moore, Charles McCracken, John Abramowitz, Richard Locker, cellos.

★ ★ ★ ★

With *Peg Leg*, Ron Carter's previous album, the bassist began focusing on uncluttered settings for his special sound and style as well as a format for the role he envisions for the acoustic bass as the central voice in an ensemble.

Where the last album featured Carter's performing group (Buster Williams, bass; Kenny Barron, piano; Ben Riley, drums) along with acoustic guitar and woodwinds, *Song For You* almost entirely involves acoustic strings; the woodwinds are gone along with the additional bass and are replaced by a quartet of cellos. Replaced, perhaps, is not the best term; rather, the bassist on this project is exploring another environment of textures and color.

Unlike his past recordings where additional people were brought in to arrange things like strings and horns, Carter has produced and arranged *Song* as well as composing all but two of the pieces, making it clearly his musical vision. Carter's use of a cello quartet is especially interesting because the deeper, darker textural feeling the instrument contributes complements his own sound, which at times seems to have almost bottomless tonal depth.

Carter's arrangements are properly sparse, allowing space often filled with controlled

delicacy. Where the string ensemble could be overbearing it is not; where a particular cut could have been produced into oblivion by trying to see how much can be stuffed in a small space, Carter has supplied only what is necessary. And by leaving his spaces open like broad landscapes, he has been able to fill and intricately interplay with Barron's superb piano work and DeJohnette's consistently high level of percussion.

The material here is varied, moving from Leon Russell's *Song*, on which Carter's bass carries the melody against the cellos' harmonics, through the Spanish *El Ojo* (featuring an excellent passage by Barron anchored to Carter's droning bass) and the especially moving Carter-penned ballad *A Quiet Place: Good Time* is just that, up tempo and swinging; *Blues jumps*; and on *Someday My Prince Will Come* Carter visits the familiar melody only briefly, after which he and Kenny Barron go on to investigate the changes.

Carter, of course, is a virtuoso bassist, one of only a few who can use the instrument as a leading voice in a musical unit and constantly keep on challenging and compelling. His work on *Song* with fine support from Barron and DeJohnette confirms that Carter is continuing to find new worlds for the instrument.

—nolan

## SONNY ROLLINS

**DON'T STOP THE CARNIVAL**—Milestone M-55005: *Don't Stop The Carnival; Silver City; Autumn Nocturne; Camel; Nobody Else But Me; Non-Cents; A Child's Prayer; President Hayes; Sais.*

Personnel: Rollins, tenor saxophone; Tony Williams, drums; Donald Byrd, trumpet and flugelhorn (tracks 5, 6, 7, 8, 9); Mark Soskin, electric and acoustic pianos; Aurell Ray, electric 12-string guitar; Jerry Harris, electric bass.

★ ★ ★ ½

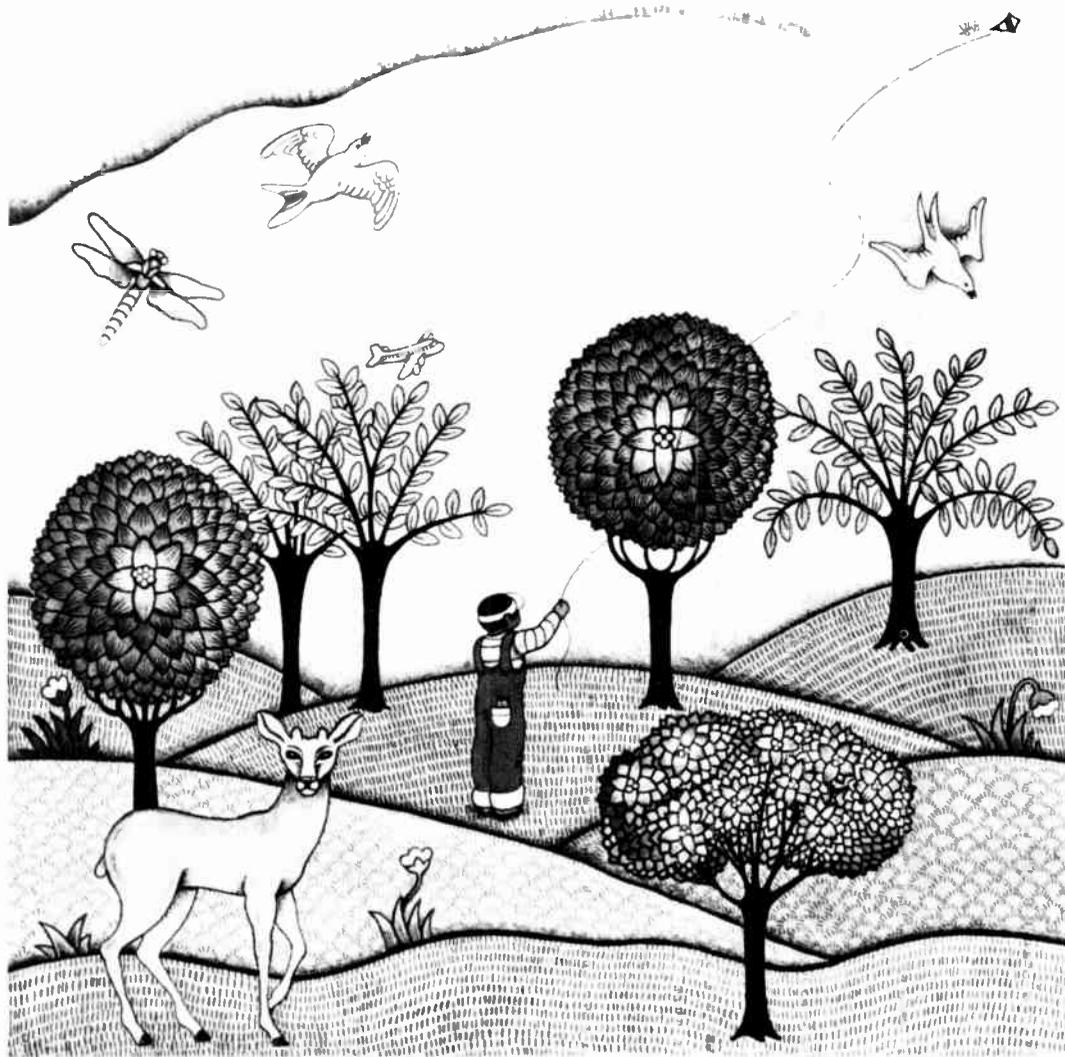
Sonny Rollins never left jazz for rock—whatever context the saxist has chosen, his emphasis has always been improvisation on melody with a strong rhythmic base. Because his recent band members employ electric axes and his latest repertoire leans heavily on vamps, Rollins himself has buzzed up his tone to match their instruments' edges, and has further developed the unaccompanied cadenzas for which he's been lionized.

This two-record album recorded in April, 1978 during a San Francisco engagement, depicts Sonny's live set accurately, even though it features two special guest players, Byrd and Williams, who may have expected to perk his usual combo. In fact, Williams does drive behind Sonny—but Sonny hardly needs someone else to push him. And Byrd's contributions, starting late on side two, make little difference until *President Hayes* on side four.

The set starts well with the calypso *Carnival*, a simple chord structure that Sonny warms to after several repetitions of the catchy head he has recorded before. As elsewhere, Rollins hardly connects with his rhythm section, running over them various lengthened phrases until he launches himself into trading breaks with Williams. Upon his return from that gambit, his lines become more complex, convoluted twists, strands of passing tones that lead to one-note worrying. Nobody worries a note like Sonny.

*Silver City* offers the programs' first cadenza, which Williams rushes to back. Fragmented phrases, seeming justifications of misblown tones and deceptive breathing spots lead into the Rollins composition, as idiosyncratic and recognizable in its song as any

# AL JARREAU/ALL FLY HOME



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he's written. It opens up in between its measures to allow the hornman all sorts of freedoms. Side one is 19 minutes of almost uninterrupted blowing.

*Nocturne* kicks off with another cadenza, which contains scalar runs, deep honks, fast light notes, slips and slides and climbs, near quotes of *To A Skylark*, *East Broadway Run-down*, and *There's No Place Like Home*, and rushed passages—all delivered with muscular determination, before a boldly expressive statement of the sentimental tune. The exposition is briefer than his starting solo. *Camel* comes on, demanding a back-beat which Williams occasionally supplies; his fills, cymbal slices and hurried rolls pick up the going- nowhere head.

Byrd uses Sonny's mannerisms—repeated tones, bitten-off jags—but on *Nobody Else* they seem barely to have met. *Non-Cents* is out of the Blackbyrds' bag. Rollins can play r&b, working in unexpected releases, but Donald does nothing so surprising, and his trumpet carries neither weight nor smear, instead stabbing the blues for effect. The Byrd-penned ballad, *Prayer*, shows shades of mid-period Coltrane; Rollins trills, and until the exit of his first chorus uses a less burry sound than previously, though without Trane's vibrato. He leans into Soskin's solo with softly held long tones, and harmonizes more quietly with Byrd each time the head comes around.

Just the piano backs the trumpeter opening *President* as though it were *Prayer* reprised. But in a moment this turns into the jauntiest tune of the session, during which Rollins and Byrd lock horns and buckdance. Byrd's high flurries round off Rollins' rougher low riffing. Williams' sticks right behind, and the tune moves until Byrd takes it out with studied dramatics. *Sais* is an arch ending, two easy lines in juxtaposition which dribble into inconsequence when the horns lay out.

Ray, Soskin, and Harris are merely adequate throughout—but what would it take to shine in the presence of a master of Rollins' remote, invincible example? Even Byrd and Williams offer little companionship to the saxist; they just aren't allowed to get next to him.

Probably that's how he wants it—and that's why the Milestone Jazzstars' forthcoming collaboration on record is so enticing a prospect. Did Sonny come out to play with his compadres—and did their chemistry reach vinyl? Until proof of a real meeting, *Don't Stop The Carnival* reveals that on the road Rollins is the whole show. —mandel

## HOWARD MCGHEE

**COOKIN' TIME**—Zim Records ZMS 2004: *Blues Duendi*; *'Round Midnight*; *Cookin' Time*; *Willow Weep For Me*; *Green Dolphin Street*; *Summertime*; *Highest Mountain*; *Bless You*; *Satin Doll*; *Chronos*.

Personnel: McGhee, Bill Hardman, Steve Furtado, John Malcolm, Nat Woodward, trumpets; Kiane Zawadi, Don Cole, Ashley Fernell, Elmer Crumbley, trombones; Clifford Jordan, Russ Andrews, Norris Turney, Leon Comigy, Frank Capi, reeds; Andy Bey, piano and vocals; Gene Taylor, bass; Charles Simon, drums; Vicki Taylor, vocals.

\*\*\*

These studio recordings, made some 12 years ago (1966) by a Howard McGhee band that was half rehearsal group and half working unit, make up a fine lp that rises to its best level, however, fewer times than it should. Four of the ten tracks are spent on uninteresting vocals, which, however accomplished they may be, are not what one buys a big band jazz album to hear.

The opening cut, *Duendi*, has some fine solos

28 □ down beat

by McGhee and trombonist Elmer Crumbley, who sounds like Quentin Jackson (during his Ellington period, not his Jones-Lewis days). But the power the rhythm section tries to muster never quite pushes the vehicle over the hill.

The best cut is *Highest Mountain*, whose arranger, composer and principle soloist is Clifford Jordan. The gospeltinged orchestration includes deep, throaty reed passages and a rousing out chorus. But alas, the album really doesn't start cooking until the final track, *Chronos*, an arrangement by McGhee in which soloist-orchestra-soloist (McGhee and Jordan) become a well matched set. The writing swings hard, enhancing without crowding the blowing. A five star chart in a good but not great three star album. —mcdonough

## L.A. PHILHARMONIC/ BOBBY HUTCHERSON/ CARMEN McRAE/ EARL KLUGH

**BLUE NOTE MEETS THE L.A. PHILHARMONIC**—Blue Note BN-LA870-H: *National Anthem*; *Slow Change*; *Now*; *Hello to the Wind*; *Now (reprise)*; *Star Eyes*; *The Man I Love*; *Sunday*; *With One More Look At You*; *Cabo Frio*; *The Shadow Of Your Smile*; *Angelina*.

Personnel: Bobby Hutcherson, vibes; George Cables, piano; James Leary, bass; Eddie Marshall, drums; Bobbye Porter, percussion; Manny Boyd, tenor and soprano saxes (tracks 2-5); Carmen McRae, vocals; Marshall Otwell, piano; Joey Baron, drums; Andy Simpkins, bass (tracks 6-9); Earl Klugh, guitar; Gene Dunlap, drums; Hubie Crawford, bass; Onaje Allan Gumbs, keyboards; Bobbye Hall, percussion (tracks 10-12); Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Calvin Simmons, conductor (all tracks).

\*\*\* 1/2

This live recording is as much a L.A. Philharmonic date as it is a date by the three soloists for this symphony orchestra which, during its just concluded decade under Zubin Mehta, has done some quite unorthodox things, including playing with Frank Zappa. The orchestra comes across as a swinging aggregation, especially its brass section which Dale Oehler so well emphasizes in his arrangements for Hutcherson. Hutcherson, in fact, becomes mere window dressing, playing decorative albeit pleasant lines over the orchestra which punches its way through *Slow Change* and then, with the woodwinds underlined by the strings moving to the forefront, spins out a soft cushion of sound for *Now* before charging up for a pulsating background on *Wind*.

Oehler, however, excludes the orchestra from the middle portions of each number while Bill Holman uses it throughout his charts for Ms. McRae. Sometimes, in fact, the orchestra—through either the playing or recording balance—almost overpowers her voice. Still, Holman's arrangements are the best of the lot, making full use of not only brass and woodwinds but also strings, which swing as much as the brass on *Star Eyes*. Carmen sings in a warm, well controlled voice on this opener but then begins to force her voice on *The Man I Love*, reaching a point of harsh straining during her lengthy scatting on *Sunday* which ends up sounding like a parody of Ella. But her four tracks are worth hearing for the arrangements of Holman who shows that a symphony, even its strings, and jazz can successfully mix.

The arrangements of Dick Hazard for Klugh which follow are a display of what is wrong with most jazz writing for strings—only a partial use that emphasizes violins producing a high, thin sound without any depth or richness. Hazard also does not fully exploit

the winds which Oehler and Holman use effectively for impressionistic color.

As for Klugh, like Hutcherson he is merely pleasant, never really digging into the music. Even on his solo outing, *Shadow of Your Smile*, he merely states, with some embellishment, the melody.

But on an August evening at the outdoor Hollywood Bowl, where this was recorded in 1977, I'm sure it was all very nice and relaxing. And for those who want this type of an experience at home, *Blue Note Meets The L.A. Philharmonic* is a satisfying choice. —de muth

## LEON REDBONE

**CHAMPAGNE CHARLIE**—Warner Bros. BSK 3165: *Champagne Charlie*; *Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone*; *Sweet Sue (Just You)*; *The One Rose (That's Left In My Heart)*; *Alabama Jubilee*; *Big Bad Bill (Is Sweet William Now)*; *Yearning (Just For You)*; *If Someone Would Only Love Me*; *I Hate A Man Like You*; *T. B. Blues*.

Personnel: Redbone, vocal, acoustic guitar; Ken Whitely, banjo, washboard, acoustic guitar, mandolin, piano, percussion; Chris Whitely, trumpet, bass harmonica; Tom Evans, clarinet, ukelele, fiddle; Eddy Davis, drums; Vince Giordano, tuba, baritone sax; Leon McAuliffe, steel guitar; Sammy Price, piano; Eurreal "Little Brother" Montgomery, piano; Jonathan Dorn, tuba; Dennis Drury, trombone; George Marge, ocarina; Selwart Clarke, Kathryn Kienke, Regis Iandiorio, Julien Barber, Kermit Moore, strings.

\*\*\*

Martin Mull called it "the folk scare of the '60s"—crew-cut, crew-necked young men singing field hollers for all the guys down at the frat house.

Well, the "scare" may be gone but its spirit lives on in the work of people like Ry Cooder and Leon Redbone—good performers with polished chops who deal largely with archaic material. Redbone, in particular, addresses jazz and popular tunes from the '20s and '30s with an idiomatically believable style and nicely detailed arrangements. With a bit of imagination, the listener can picture Redbone's versions of *Sweet Sue* and *Yearning* making the hit parade of some bygone decade.

A question often arises with this type of record, though: what does it have to say to us in 1978, especially when original versions of many of these tunes are available on the ever-proliferating reissue series and specialty labels?

One answer is that Redbone is an original and interesting singer/guitarist in his own right, and his subterraneanly low, easygoing vocal style is personal enough to transcend the familiarity of the sources. Another is that he commendably gives some older musicians a chance to record for a large audience. Former Bob Wills' Texas Playboys steel player Leon McAuliffe, for instance, appears on *The One Rose*, providing an ethereal complement to Redbone's low-toned, rather gruff-sounding vocal. Little Brother Montgomery, in a very brief spot, adds a ghostly quality to the fadeout of the melancholic *T. B. Blues*. And Sammy Price does some fine ensemble work on *Champagne* and *Big Bad Bill*, although it would have been nice if he'd had a chance to stretch out a little.

Like Redbone's singing and guitar playing, the horn and string work is faithful to early jazz and pop traditions and does a good job of establishing the mood of a long past era. Standouts include Jonathan Dorn's raggy, rollicking tuba solo on *Sweet Sue* and Chris Whitely's creditable attempt to raise the shade of Bix on *If Someone Would Only Love Me*.

When everything is put together, however,

## Seven new points of departure.



**Steve Reich**  
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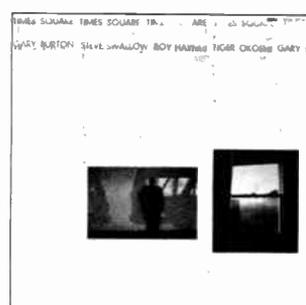
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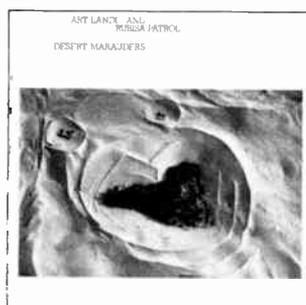
**Gary Burton**  
*Times Square*

Featured are Burton's longtime bassist and composer Steve Swallow, Tiger Okoshi (trumpet), and Roy Haynes (drums).



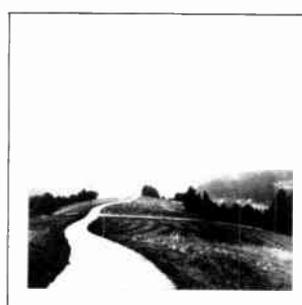
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30  down beat

there's a sense of reverence for the past that somehow prevents the album from being much fun (as, say, Jim Kweskin and the Jug Band were with their sloppy, joyous, irreverent versions of similar material). *Champagne Charlie* emerges as a slow-moving, well-crafted exercise which demands that the listener bring an appropriately nostalgic mood along. A person spinning the record while feeling good about his present circumstances can expect to become relaxed, maybe depressed, maybe asleep. It's certainly not much of a party record. —schneckloth

## STEVE KHAN

THE BLUE MAN—Columbia JC35539: *Daily Bulls; The Blue Man; Some Down Time; The Little Ones; Daily Valley; An Eye Over Autumn—For Folan.*

Personnel: Khan, electric guitar, acoustic guitar (tracks 2 and 5 only); Jeff Mironov, electric guitar; Don Grolnick, electric keyboards; Bob James, synthesizer (track 2 only); Will Lee, electric bass; Steve Gadd, drums; Ralph McDonald, percussion (tracks 2-5), congas (track 1); Randy Brecker, trumpet (tracks 3, 4 and 6); Michael Brecker, tenor sax (tracks 3, 4 and 6); David Sanborn, alto sax (tracks 3, 4 and 6); Michael Manieri, marimba (track 5 only); Rick Marotta, timbales, cowbell (track 6).

★ ★ ★ ½

This second album from Steve Khan proves that *Tight Rope* was no mere flash in the funk pan. And while *The Blue Man* certainly does continue in the solid funk vein that characterized most of *Tight Rope*, a more pensive and lyrical side emerges on some of Khan's compositions here, an inner quality that balances well against the hot riveting riff lines which Khan learned in the Brecker Brothers band (and which still shine on the three burning tracks uniting the old band). The title, for instance, introduced by a beautifully controlled Arp synthesizer solo from Don Grolnick, is a loping composition in slow to mid-tempo that through its subtle thematic windings serves both as a breather and a springboard for Khan to turn out his best solo on the date.

The guitar sound on the album is broad, slightly distorted and played with a horn-like fluidity, a stylistic criterion for Khan who masters the feedback technique to perfection. On *Daily Valley* he carries the weight of the full orchestra behind his dubbed-in acoustic solo; on *An Eye Over Autumn* his chase with Michael Brecker comes off at times like a sax duel, and throughout the horn tracks his sweeping yet pliant phrasing is always the immaculately proportioned foil for the peppery Brecker licks.

The musicianship, of course, is top notch on all accounts, being performed with the professional sideman's instrumental acumen and empathy (Steve Gadd strikes me as particularly enjoyable here), and *The Blue Man* is one strong effort from a group that is not ashamed to be entertaining. —gabel

## IDIL BIRET

NEW LINE PIANO—Finnidar SR-9021: *Session; Cangianti; Archipel IV; Sonata "Pian E Forte".*

Personnel: Biret, pianist; Arthur Levy, Steve Goldstein, John David Kalodner, and Biret, speakers.

★ ★ ★

Following the trail blazed by John Cage and Karlheinz Stockhausen in the '50s and '60s, an increasing number of composers are flirting with the possibilities of "chance" music and improvisation. Although "chance" methods of composition have not been widely adopted, many composers have tried, in different ways, to give performers more options

than they have when playing traditional works. The main idea behind this procedure, evidently, is to break out of the stuffy, academic mold of serialism, bringing spontaneity into the picture without seriously endangering the composer's prerogatives.

Two of the pieces on this album allow the performer some leeway for improvisation; and, not surprisingly, both of them offer fresh aural perspectives. In Andre Boucourechlier's *Archipel IV* (1970), for instance, the succession and duration of the specified elements are left to the pianist's discretion, but there is enough structure to give the work a consistent character each time it is played. The realization of this piece by Idil Biret achieves a fine balance between dreamlike meditations and sudden flurries of sound that create sharp mental images.

The other semi-improvised composition, Leo Brouwer's *Pian E Forte* (1970), also utilizes definite structural elements, including quotations from the classical repertoire. The quoted works range from Beethoven's *Appassionata* sonata and Scriabin's *Sonata No. 10* to Szymanowski's opera, *King Roger*, and Gabrieli's *Sonata Pian E Forte*. The result of combining these references to the past with contemporary atonal music is rather surreal, like listening to one radio station as another signal drifts in.

Unfortunately, the other side of the disc is much less interesting. Niccolo Castiglioni's *Cangianti* (1959) sounds like an early attempt to saddle the piano with techniques derived from the electronic music studio. And Ilhan Mimaroglu's *Session* (1975) is a bewildering melange of spoken texts, piano music, and electronic sounds.

Starting off with an attorney reading the terms of a recording contract, the latter piece quickly establishes its extramusical point: the materialistic values of the modern world act to stifle the artist. But this sentiment, even when coupled with quotations from Chopin's *Revolutionary Etude* and the *Internationale* is not sufficient to make *Session* a work of art.

—terry

## CECIL TAYLOR

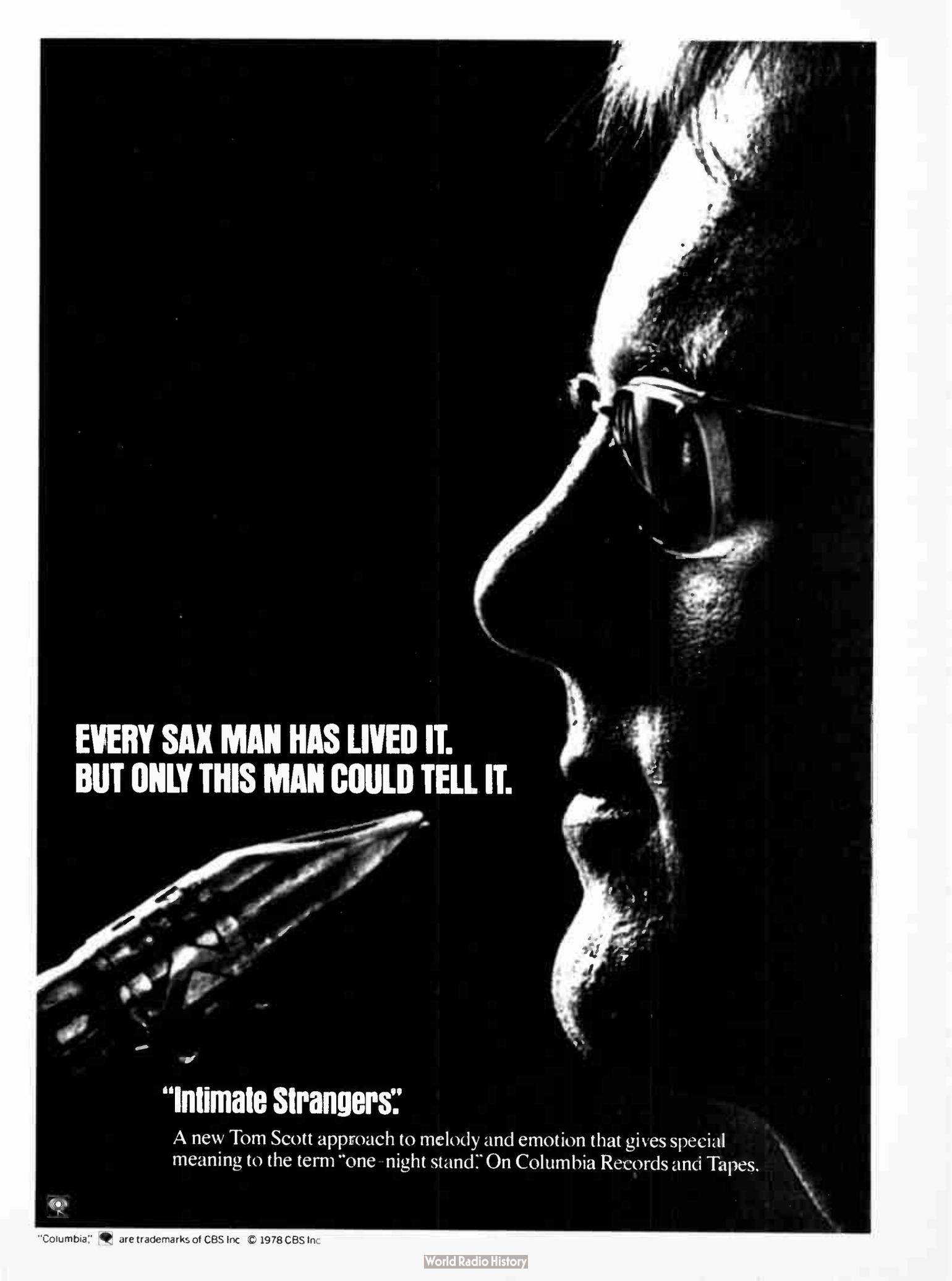
AIR ABOVE MOUNTAINS (BUILDINGS WITHIN)—Inner City 3021: *Air Above Mountains (Buildings Within) Part One; Part Two.*

Personnel: Taylor, piano.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

There are countless cliches about the genius who was ignored by his contemporaries. Of course, these stories usually indicate either total anonymity or widespread ridicule. The genius of Cecil Taylor is ignored in more subtle ways. Certainly, his music is as valid, even by classical standards, as that of Ives, Cage, Stockhausen and other significant 20th century composers. An artist of his stature should be widely exposed through academic channels. While his recorded output seems extensive, it is meager in light of his 20 odd years experience as a recording artist.

*Air Above Mountains* is his most recent piano solo recording. It is a continuum of his ideas about the use of the piano as an orchestra. Basically, this approach calls for a wider range of coloration, freer melodic lines, and harmonic variations usually not attempted on piano. Only a musician with Taylor's superior technique could successfully execute both the furious melodic inventions which are played at breakneck speeds, and the intricate dynamic rises and falls of this ex-



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tended solo.

Harmonically, the piano as orchestra idea continues with Taylor's contrast of dense sustained chords with his sparser accompaniment of the upper register flurries prevalent in quieter passages here. This may suggest the interplay between strings and brass or reeds often employed in large orchestral works. His ability to rapidly transpose thematic material while always selecting an appropriate harmonic setting indicates a thorough background in classical European theory.

Taylor's emotional involvement with his instrument is perhaps as important as his technique. His music carries an urgency that is not apparent in any other solo piano records. Obviously, Taylor's work is not appealing to everyone for his intensity demands an active involvement of those who choose to be his audience. This is not music to play while washing dishes or cleaning house.

While Taylor's ensemble playing is my preference, it would be misleading to rate *Air Above Mountains* as anything but a five star record. It is a brilliant example of the highest plateau of solo jazz piano by one of the handful of true geniuses still performing contemporary music. —less

## ROY ELDRIDGE/ DIZZY GILLESPIE

**JAZZ MATURITY ... WHERE IT'S COMING FROM**—Pablo 2310 816: *Quasi Boogaloo*; *Take The A Train*; *I Cried For You*; *Drebirks*; *Sleepy Time Down South*; *Indiana*.

Personnel: Eldridge, Gillespie, trumpets; Oscar Peterson, piano; Ray Brown, bass; Mickey Roker, drums.

\* \* \*

Pablo has, for the most part, avoided attempts to duplicate the successful teamings Norman Granz brought together in the Clef and Verve days of the '50s. While there has certainly been a continuity of spirit carrying through to the Pablos, Granz has developed new combinations for his stock company.

This album is a welcome and perfectly natural exception. One can hardly imagine a more appropriate horn duo than Eldridge and Gillespie. It was true in the early '50s when they made their first duets. And it's true today in this reunion.

If the results are perfectly satisfactory, however, they fall a bit short of measuring up to the earlier sessions, which are inevitably the benchmark in any discussion of Eldridge and Gillespie. The playing here lacks the clock-like precision of their prototypes, and although the rapport is congenial enough, nowhere does it gather the sustained momentum that marks the most exceptional playing. And the '50s LPs were exceptional (reissued on Verve VE 2-2524).

Both men play well, however. *Quasi* is a rock-style blues which Eldridge especially plows into with raw force. The interplay the two attempt toward the end never gells satisfactorily, but the urgency and tension generated in the solos bring it off.

*I Cried* is taken a bit faster than normal while *A Train* is considerably slower. The former is about two thirds Peterson in typical form, while the latter finds Roy and Dizzy pulling off some high-note soloing reasonably well. Dizzy is especially clean.

*Drebirks* is a moderate blues in which the two play cat and mouse with each other in a nifty exchange with only Ray Brown's bass looking on. The interplay on the out choruses is about the best on the album. The finale is

a very up and at 'em *Indiana* which climaxes in an exchange of eights. Here is where one might expect to find the kind of explosiveness of *Steeplechase* or *I Found A New Baby*. There seems no doubt that their chops are up for it here, but they seem to lose interest after a few choruses and bring it in for quick landing.

A fine album, but pick up the Verves first if you must make choices. —mcdonough

## EDDIE JEFFERSON

**THE MAIN MAN**—Inner City 1033: *Jeannine*; *Night Train*; *Moody's Mood For Love*; *Body And Soul*; *Confirmation*; *Benny's From Heaven*; *Summertime*; *Freedom Jazz Dance*; *Exactly Like You*.

Personnel: Jefferson, vocals; Charles Sullivan, trumpet; Richie Cole, alto sax; Junior Cook, tenor sax; Hamiet Bluiett, baritone sax; Slide Hampton, trombone, arrangements; Harold Mabern, piano; George Duvivier, bass; Billy Hart, drums; Azzedin Weston, Harold White, percussion; Janet Lawson, vocal (track 3).

\* \* \* \* \*

The recognition of Eddie Jefferson's contributions to jazz singing has been one of the most heartening developments of the last several years. Over two decades ago—prior to the success of Lambert, Hendricks and Ross—Jefferson initiated the practice of putting words to classic solos when he penned lyrics for King Pleasure's memorable version of James Moody's *I'm In The Mood For Love*.

Just as significant as that innovation is the phenomenon of Jefferson, the vocalist. His warm earthy sonorities, vocal dexterity and emotional range make his impassioned readings and scatting exemplary.

For *The Main Man*, Jefferson is well served by a challenging set of crisp arrangements from Slide Hampton. The rhythm section of pianist Mabern, bassist Duvivier and drummer Hart, plus the soloing of trumpeter Sullivan, altoist Cole, tenorist Cook and baritonist Bluiett are further assets.

Among my favorites are a revamped *Moody's Mood For Love* with playful banter between Jefferson and vocalist Janet Lawson, a Latinized *Body And Soul*, the still funny *Benny's From Heaven* and the taut and demanding *Freedom Jazz Dance*.

Throughout, the music flows with high spirits, energy and warm camaraderie. —berg

## HAMIET BLUIETT

**ORCHESTRA, DUO AND SEPTET**—Chiaroscuro CR 182: *Glory (Symphony For World Peace)*; *Nioka*; *Oasis—The Well*.

Personnel: Bluiett, baritone sax, clarinet, vocal (track 3); Chief Bey, bata, balafon; Ladji Camara, diembe, kora; Thabo Michael Carvin, drums; Ahmed Abdul-Malik, oud; Abdul Wadud, cello (track 1); Reggie Workman, bass; Olu Dara, trumpet (track 1); Charles Stephens, trombone (track 1); Bob Stewart, tuba (track 1); Don Pullen, piano.

\* \* \*

Hamiet Bluiett has been hailed lately as the new messiah of the baritone sax. Judging from this release, however, he is still a minor prophet, although a fiery one.

Bluiett assembled an unusual ensemble for this session, mixing Arabic and West African instruments with traditional jazz axes. Jazz oud? Jazz kora? Why not? The only problem is that they are quiet and hard to hear. They add to the texture but lack the power to solo effectively.

*Glory* is the only cut which utilizes the full 11-piece ensemble. The composition is subtitled *Symphony For World Peace*, but its soloists seem dedicated to anarchy. The bass and percussion set up a buoyant vamp, with almost a highlife feeling. A loose, hymn-like melody frames the solos which constitute a

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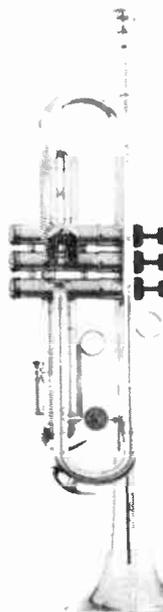
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# HOLTON

kind of controlled chaos. Perhaps this is supposed to reflect the current global situation.

*Nioka* is a startlingly different kind of music: a dreamy ballad played as a duet by Bluiett and Pullen. It has a standard form (AABA), conventional changes and a pretty melody reminiscent of Gerry Mulligan's early tune, *A Ballad*. What's more, it is performed in a straightforward, tender manner. It's nice to hear this side of Bluiett too.

Side two returns to the avant garde. *Oasis* is a 20-minute fracas that is hard to listen to. The piece is in a strict seven, expertly anchored by the bass and percussion. Melodically and harmonically, however, it is very free. At the beginning, Bluiett honks out an ugly one-note motif that reappears several times. This helps to unify the piece, but it is like tying a package together with barbed wire. A short, surly melody muscles its way into the fray, and then the action really begins. Most of the brawling goes on between Bluiett and Pullen. Pullen pushes, shoves and slaps the piano keys around while Bluiett's bari barks out instructions like a Marine drill instructor. Abdul-Malik tries to make himself heard, but the oud is too soft-spoken to cut through the din.

Bluiett is intent on expanding the expressive capabilities of his horn. He can produce octaves; he likes to blurt out short, pithy comments in the midst of things; and he has become so fluent in the altissimo register that his bari sometimes sounds as clear and high as a trumpet. On the other hand, his mouthpiece duck calls are for the birds, and he sings like a wounded *mu'adhdhin*. Clearly, Bluiett has a lot to put into his music. He needs to learn what to leave out. —clerk

## BILL HENDERSON

**LIVE AT THE TIMES**—Discovery DS-779: *Everybody's Talking*; *Joey*; *Watch What Happens*; *Love Is A Bug*; *A Song For You*; *Skylark*; *Sweet Pumpkin*; *Send In The Clowns*; *Blues In B-Flat*.

Personnel: Henderson, vocals; Joyce Collins, piano; Dave MacKay, Rhodes piano; Tom Azarello, bass; Jimmy Smith, drums.

\*\*\*

Henderson's credentials are impressive, including stints with Blakey, Silver, Basie, Thad Jones and Oscar Peterson. With his easy lilt and natural sense of swing he resembles a laid-back Joe Williams, almost too laid-back, in fact. Mellowness may be a virtue, but Henderson is virtually overripe, as though he'd spent too many years in the California sun. One wishes for the cutting edge that a driving band and some strong material might provide, for Henderson is too talented a vocalist to waste himself on tepid cocktail music. Nevertheless, he makes the most of it as he works his way through a set of lukewarm standards with professional aplomb.

With his rich, husky baritone, Henderson can almost transform the most hackneyed lounge anthem into a personal soliloquy; still, even a Betty Carter would be hard-pressed to make a silk purse out of so well worn a sow's ear as *Everybody's Talking*. Similarly, *Send In The Clowns* or Leon Russell's *A Song For You* may serve as adequate grist for John Davidson's mill, but tend to resist serious jazz improvisation. That Henderson is as successful as he is in reinterpreting such chestnuts is a tribute to his powers of originality. On less shopworn material like Carmichael and Mercer's *Skylark* or Specs Powell's *Love Is A Bug*, his effortlessly soulful delivery makes for a

warm and engaging set, certainly a healthy cut above the average cabaret troubador.

Henderson is a congenial entertainer with an ingratiating between-songs patter and a lively sense of humor. His band is unobtrusively sympathetic and supportive throughout, if not particularly inventive. Often they tread perilously close to standard nightclub fare, but the pervasively bluesy feeling on the part of both singer and band consistently keeps the set from going stale. Henderson has a natural way with a lyric, breaking even a tired melody with supple rhythmic inflections, and a personal warmth that infuses each selection with infectious charm. His scatting improvisations are heard most fulsomely on the loosely woven *Blues In B-Flat*, but he never sticks strictly to the score. He refashions all of his material with distinctive phrasing and a naturally jazzy intonation elevates him well above the ranks of mere lounge performers. —birnbaum

## DOUG JERNIGAN/ BUCKY PIZZARELLI

**DOUG & BUCKY**—Flying Fish 043: *Honeysuckle Rose*; *Talk Of The Town*; *Slow Burning*; *Days Of Wine And Roses*; *Limehouse Blues*; *All The Things You Are*; *End Of A Love Affair*; *Sweet Lorraine*; *Shenandoah*; *'Round Midnight*; *Moonlight In Vermont*.

Personnel: Jernigan, steel guitar; Pizzarelli, guitar.

\*\*\*

One of the top young Nashville session men and a long-time jazz fan, steel guitarist Jernigan first met and performed with veteran jazz guitarist Pizzarelli at a 1976 Texas concert where their unscheduled duets received enthusiastic audience response. Sharing similar tastes in jazz, the two were reunited for this appealing, low-keyed set of performances by Flying Fish Records, which has enjoyed some success with a number of recent recordings in the increasingly popular cross-pollination of jazz and country music.

While there is much to admire in Jernigan's playing, particularly in the areas of technique, control and overall musicianship, all of which are impeccable, there is less to be said of his abilities as an improviser of substance. He negotiates the harmonic challenges of this program surely enough—in this respect his playing is smooth as butter—but there's less matter than manner in his solos, and however attractive, embellishment and decoration are no substitute for real, thoughtful variations-playing.

The latter is something Pizzarelli can do to a fare-thee-well although, possibly in deference to his partner's lesser skills in this area, he indulges in little of it here, largely confining himself to straightforward readings of the pieces he has to himself (the aptly titled blues *Slow Burning*; a pretty, subtly reharmonized *End Of A Love Affair*, and a similarly treated *'Round Midnight*). Alone or alternating solos with Jernigan, Pizzarelli's playing is the epitome of restrained, intelligent taste and flawless musicianship. He's an elegant player, to be sure, but in this set generally keeps the more adventurous aspects of his art under wraps.

In sum, a program of pleasant, easy-listening performances that, since they've posed the players few challenges, pose none for the listener. The album's chief pleasure derives from the high levels of craft the two guitarists maintain throughout and, for this reason, will probably be of greatest interest to other players of the instruments. —welding

## CLARK TERRY

**BIG BAD BAND LIVE AT BUDDY'S PLACE**—Vanguard VSD 79373: *Modus Operandi; Come Sunday; Gap Sealer; Jeeps Blues; Swiss Air; Big Bad Blues; Sugar Cubes.*

Personnel: Terry, Greg Bobulinski, Dale Carley, Paul Cohen, Richard Williams, trumpets; Sonny Costanzo, Eddie Bert, Jimmy Wilkins, Jack Jeffers, trombones; Frank Wess, Chris Woods, Ernie Wilkins, Ronnie Oldrich, Charles Davie, reeds; Ed Soph, drums; Vic Sproles, bass; Ronnie Matthews, piano.

★ ★ ½

When great musicians get on in years but continue to do concerts, they often are inclined to turn more and more time over to their sidemen. The star whom everyone comes to see and hear does a few perfunctory choruses, but lets the younger soloists carry most of the show. When it's all over, everybody leaves a little disappointed.

I'm a little disappointed in this album for just that reason. Not that Terry doesn't play generously and well. He does. But this is supposed to be a big band record. Yet precious few big band sounds are evident. Is the big band idea getting too far on in years? What we really get for our money is an assortment of fine soloists working out with an alternately conventional and funky rhythm section with a few big band punctuations dropped in like cameos. There is hardly any integration of ensemble and individual, no orchestral ballast counterweighing the soloist. Matthews' piano serves the comping function that should be handled by the band. *Modus, Gap Sealer* and especially *Swiss Air* are typical. Ernie Wilkins puts no strain on his considerable arranging talents on the latter track. *Bud Blues* is his best work at hand.

Not surprisingly, the best sounds are rooted in a time when giants wrote big band music. Ellington's *Come Sunday* and especially *Jeeps Blues*, with Chris Woods' sumptuous alto, are the album's high points, followed very closely by Walt Levin's sax writing on *Sugar Cubes*. More of such quality and this would be a real big band session.

—mcdonough

## RED RODNEY

**RED, WHITE AND BLUES**—Muse MR 5111: *It's The Something Everywhere; Lollia's Theme; Red, White And Blues; Rodney Round Robin; Little Red Shoes; Smoke Gets In Your Eyes; No Jive Line; Ode To A Potato Plant.*

Personnel: Rodney, trumpet; Richie Cole, alto sax; Roland Hanna, piano; Buster Williams, bass; Eddie Gladden, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

The reemergence of trumpeter Red Rodney into the mainstream of contemporary jazz has been one of the happier events in comeback attempts. A veteran of tenures with Charlie Parker and Woody Herman's bebop band of the '40s, Red virtually disappeared from the scene for some two decades due to "personal problems" and commercial necessities.

In this, his fourth outing for Muse, Rodney's bright boppish exuberance glows. His sound has a brassy edge which cuts with assertive authority. His crackling lines fire out as if delivered by machine gun. At the same time, his energetic attack is tempered by a mature musicality. There is also a palpable feeling of joy for the whole improvisatory process. Rodney loves to play.

The same can be said for Red's cohorts. The fine young altoist, Richie Cole, is proving to be a consistent source of inspired playing. His outings on his own *It's The Something Everywhere* and the convoluted *No Jive Line* are outstanding. Then, there is Roland Hanna. A

master soloist and accompanist, Hanna adds his special touch of class. So, too, do bassist Buster Williams and drummer Eddie Gladden.

Operating within the context of an open-ended blowing session, the quintet stamps the proceedings with an admirable sense of discipline and structure. Whether a ballad, mid-tempo groove or bop burner, Rodney's crew crackles and pops.

—berg

## JOE SAMPLE

**RAINBOW SEEKER**—ABC Records AA-1050: *Rainbow Seeker; In All My Wildest Dreams; There Are Many Stops Along The Way; Melodies Of Love; Fly With The Wings Of Love; As Long As It Lasts; Islands In The Rain; Together We'll Find A Way.*

Personnel: Sample, keyboards and string orchestrations; Stix Hooper, drums and percussion; Robert Popwell, bass; Sid Sharp, strings; Paulinho da Costa, percussion; Garnett Brown, trombone; Ernie Watts, sax, flute, piccolo; William Green, sax, flute, piccolo; Fred Jackson, sax; Robert O. Bryant, trumpet; Jay Daversa, trumpet; Steven Madaio, trumpet; Ray Parker, rhythm guitar (tracks 3 and 6); Dean Parks, rhythm guitar (track 1); Barry Finnerty, rhythm guitar (track 5); Billy Rogers, guitar (tracks 3 and 6); David T. Walker, guitar (track 2).

★ ★ ★ ½

Joe Sample and the Crusaders were playing a funky jazz music long before it became the big movement of the 1970s. During the past few years they dropped the term jazz so as not to confuse a large potential market for their music. Nevertheless, spontaneity and improvisation is still the keynote of any music that fancies itself related to jazz.

Sample's solo effort *Rainbow Seeker* epitomizes some of the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary fusion. At the core of Sample's music is still a deep gospel resonance. In *All My Wildest Dreams* has a gentle churchy ambience, and Sample's transparent electric piano has a sing-song blues quality. Bassist Robert Popwell and drummer Stix Hooper provide the rhythmic punch, as on *There Are Many Stops Along The Way*. Hooper's reading of funk beats is more loose-limbed than that of some disco computers; the bass drum is insistent but not predominant, and he provides a shifting canvas of cymbal and snare accents over Popwell's solid bottom. On *As Long As It Lasts* Ray Parker lays down some choppy chords for Popwell and Hooper to groove on, as Sample creates a lilting melody on top. *Islands In The Rain* is a Latin cooker that showcases Sample's acoustic piano talents, while the unaccompanied *Together We'll Find A Way* finds him involved in more reflective musings that mix '50s style block chords with romantic melodies.

Sample's music is weakest when he emphasizes arranging rather than improvising. The title tune grooves along nicely enough, but the use of a Return To Forever ensemble cliché is an unwelcome intrusion. *Melodies Of Love* and *Fly With The Wings Of Love* use neo-Baroque string charts to emphasize the more sentimental, mawkish illusions of love; Sample's piano playing is pretty, but the strings dilute his emotional impact. Sample has said that "music is at a stagnation point and I think it's because guys have stopped composing." On the contrary, if music is stagnating it is because musicians have chosen to negate their improvisational tools in favor of easy gimmicks and production values. Sample's music is much better than most pseudo-funk kitsch, but with the exception of his horn charts on *There Are Many Stops Along The Way*, Sample would do best to just dig in and cook.

It would also have been more pleasurable to have a worthy instrumental foil for Sample to play off of (like Larry Carlton's flowing guitar). But for Ray Parker, the guitarists on this date seem like they have spent too much time in the California studios—they lack distinction. When you strip away the affectation, there is strong funk-jazz occurring on *Rainbow Seeker*. Sample's music feels best when it is at its simplest.

—stern

## WORLD'S GREATEST JAZZ BAND

**PLAYS GEORGE GERSHWIN**—World Jazz WJLP S-11: *Liza; I've Got A Crush On You; But Not For Me; How Long Has This Been Going On; Embraceable You; Strike Up The Band; Who Cares; Maybe; Fascinating Rhythm; Soon; 'S Wonderful.*

Personnel: Yank Lawson, Billy Butterfield, trumpet; Eddie Miller, tenor; Peanuts Hucko, clarinet; George Masso, Carl Fontana, trombone; Roger Kellaway, piano; Bob Haggart, bass; Nick Fatool, drums.

★ ★

**ON TOUR VOLUME II**—World Jazz WJLP S-10: *Stumbling; Poor Butterfly; Caravan; Running Wild; Big Butter And Egg Man; I've Got The World On A String; Too Marvelous; Squeeze Me; Hindustan.*

Personnel: Same as above except Sonny Russo for Fontana; Al Klink for Miller; Ralph Sutton for Kellaway; Bobby Rosengarden for Fatool; Maxine Sullivan, vocals.

★ ★ ★ ★

An album by the WGJB playing Gershwin, one of the greatest composers of non-trad jazz standards, should be a project packed with promise. Alas, the WGJB should be sued for breach of promise.

Perhaps it was not arranger Bob Haggart's intent to produce a jazz album. If so, he succeeded. What he did come up with is a neutral program of dance music that would be very much at home at a country club dance. If this is supposed to be a jazz band, however, it takes no special insight to point out its deficiencies. First, its very considerable lineup of talent is wasted. Heavyweights Butterfield, Lawson, Hucko, Fontana and Masso fritter away the album on split choruses. Not chase duos, mind you, just shared sequences in which one player takes the first 16 and another the second 16. Little wonder that solo after solo is limited to simple statements of melody. Moreover, Eddie Miller is miscast as a ballad player on *But Not For Me*. His tenor is conventional at best, simplistically sentimental at worst.

Even on bright tempos, momentum is never built up. The punch one expects almost never comes. The one exception is a fine *Strike Up The Band*. Fontana takes the best solo of the LP, quoting liberally and effectively from the Christian-Goodman classic *Seven Come Eleven*. And Hucko rides it out handsomely.

Hucko is one of the giants of a vanishing breed today—the swing clarinet—and his fire and energy almost singlehandedly marks *On Tour* among the better WGJB LPs of recent years, perhaps the best. He is liberally featured, and his showcase piece, *Runnin' Wild*, just about runs away with the whole album. He comes back to climax the record with two spinning choruses on *Hindustan*. Bobby Rosengarden explodes like a fistful of fire-crackers (although his bongo exercise on *Caravan* is out of keeping with the temper of the record).

Unlike the Gershwin set, *On Tour* provides all soloists the space they need. Ralph Sutton, Masso, Klink and especially Hucko all play well. Maxine Sullivan is also a welcome contributor on two short numbers.

## PAUL MOTIAN TRIO

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

Personnel: Motian, drums; Charles Brackeen, soprano sax (tracks 1-4, 6), tenor sax (track 5); David Izenzon, bass.

★ ★ ★ ½

Here is attractive music, thoughtfully conceived and delightfully executed by what we listeners should expect to be the finest new jazz group of 1978 (and advance notice has been that they live up to their promise in concert). The LP has an unexpectedly stark quality that derives from several factors. Motian's six themes have a determinedly diatonic cast, and however adeptly his writing works, he begins with weak melodic premises. Thematic improviser Brackeen chooses to expand on the outlines of the Motian songs, although his style is more complex and interesting than the songs' consonances. On four tracks, the percussion accompaniment is spaced and relatively simple; the calm, unforced surface that Motian and Izenzon present in even the most disturbed passages predicts a deceptive sense of understatement.

Most of all, the recording engineer is responsible for the unnatural starkness of this music. Most of the record, by far, is Brackeen soloing over accompaniment, and he is balanced way up front of the other two. Far worse, the saxophone echo is way up, emphasizing the indistinct character of the straight soprano's higher registers, and even making the tenor sound like an extension of the soprano.

In the past, sound development has been a vital element of Brackeen's sax style. Gelded of an element necessary to his linear flow, his phrasing often has the paradoxical effect of seeming more disjunct than it should. By smoothing and prettifying the sax sound, the engineer has wasted, for example, the coarse passages in the tenor solo. The result is a false musical elegance, as cloying as warehouse perfume.

The spare nature of Motian's drumming comes naturally. He avoids keeping time, preferring to let gesture indicate pulse and Brackeen indicate tempo. His only solo, in *Dance*, flows from his accompaniment through free currents that imply polyrhythms and even contrary rhythms while maintaining straight time. A distinctive mark of Motian's personality is how controlled this wide-ranging solo is—yet his active rhythmic counterpoint in *Dance* and *Prelude* is just as provocative, and I'm taken aback by his serious involvement and the depth of his perceptions. There is also his free, but not imprecise, sense of beat placements, and in general he serves Brackeen well. For years an appreciated accompanist, Motian flourishes as leader of his trio.

Brackeen's sax work is highly organized, and solos are intended as consistent pieces that depend on both thematic evolution and thematic recall. Repeated fragments of paraphrased theme are the pivots of *Asia*, for instance, while his *Dance* solo (too fast and unmetric for dancers) recurrently races up a scale. His forms manage to encompass, indeed, juxtapose, a wealth of life and event in *Prelude* and *Waltz*, which is not a waltz. Halfway through *Prelude* he abandons theme evolution for fast outside phrasing; later, vocalized tones enter, and though the solo is too teeming with ideas to be conclusive, it is

36 □ down beat

not overcrowded. If the bravery of his organizing ambitions and the scope of his thought are impressive, the beauty of his closing improvisation in *Lullaby* is another quite personal aspect. He exploits the straight horn's peculiarities as best as possible under the circumstances in the trills and warbles of *Waltz*; really, the only bummer is *Kalypso*, constrained by its slow march setting.

Once again Izenzon proves a major artist whose lines are classically conceived and contained, and whose mind is as interesting as the great Pettiford's. Individualistic and original, Izenzon is the quiet voice whose presence crystallizes the three into a trio. Unlike the others, he hears and depends on dissonances and arhythmic lines; the mobility he achieves thereby implies independence, but the continuity of his lines is in accord with the structures of his two partners. The one place where his great technique is self-consciously displayed is his *Lullaby* accompaniment. More impressive are the fertility of ideas in his bowed *Asia* solo, with its shifts of rhythm, and his two solo moments in *Dance*. Especially fine, in a way that projects the very heart of Izenzon's art, is the melody of his *Waltz* solo, a lovely song in a continuous, unbroken line.

The LP has too many songs; Izenzon and Motian should be heard more in solo, and for my taste, Brackeen, too—a four-title record would be better. It's too bad that Brackeen doesn't play more tenor here, and worse that he doesn't play his alto at all. I have no idea if the rating would be higher if Brackeen had been intelligently recorded, but I definitely resent having to guess what he's playing.

—litweiler

## DAVID PRITCHARD

LIGHT-YEAR—Inner City 1047: *Black Moon; Hotel Spirit; Dry Lake; Lightyear; Glider; Mirage; Inner Voice.*

Personnel: Pritchard, electric and steel stringed acoustic guitars; Charles Oreña, tenor and soprano saxophones, bass clarinet; Ted Saunders, acoustic and electric piano; Larry Klein, acoustic and electric bass; Paul Kreibach, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

A veteran of work with Gary Burton, Don Ellis and Oscar Brown, Jr., Los Angeles-based Pritchard offers a carefully constructed set of original tone pieces that balance acoustic and electric elements with commendable taste and agility. His debut as a leader, *Light-Year* blends the austere impressionism of an ECM date with the high-energy (though always in control), jump-out fire of groups like Return to Forever and the Mahavishnu Orchestra. And while not all the compositions hold up under repeated listenings—particularly, pretty but somewhat inconsequential ballads like *Glider*—the players show a maturity that will surely continue to flower in future efforts.

*Black Moon* opens the album with a light, sparkling sound, but is soon enlivened by Pritchard's McLaughlin-esque electric ax and Oreña's clear, Shorter-like melodicism on soprano. The rhythm section here is relatively solid, though in time Saunders' electric piano glissandos become rather faceless.

But for the electric piano, *Hotel Spirit* could be a Jan Garbarek or Eberhard Weber tune, with Oreña's full-bodied tenor vibrato, the ride cymbal-dominated drumming of Kreibach, and a sonorous, phase-shifted bass. Here Pritchard reveals his other major influence—John Abercrombie—using a volume pedal with subtle discretion. *Dry Lake* follows, Pritchard anchoring the rhythm with a thrice-

repeated note on steel-stringed acoustic, embellished with shimmering, finger-picked figures. Oreña's floating soprano sets up a second rhythm, supplying an urgency that makes this the album's most satisfying piece.

After opening with what sounds like electric guitar/bass clarinet unison playing, the title track soon evolves into a fiery swinger with short, tasty solos from Pritchard and Oreña, but Saunders' electric piano is just too light to sustain the energy for the duration. The medium tempo *Mirage* drags at the outset, but things pick up as Oreña, then Pritchard, takes over. Saunders gets off his most inspired solo, this time on acoustic. *Inner Voice* ends this album, featuring a bittersweet dialogue between a romantic, acoustic Saunders and a silken Pritchard.

It's altogether encouraging to find a young band from L.A. who has managed to escape the cloying bombast and hospital-clean formulae of the Southland's "jazz" scene. Look for good things to come.

—zipkin

## JORGE LOPEZ RUIZ

AMOR BUENOS AIRES—Catalyst CAT-7908: *La Ciudad Vacía; Relatos; Amor Buenos Aires; Bronca Buenos Aires.*

Personnel: Ruiz, bass; Horacio "Chivo" Borraro, tenor sax; Fernando Gelbard, piano, flute; Carlos "Pocho" Lapouble, drums; Santiago Giacobbe, organ; Alfredo Remus, electric bass; Enrique "Zurdo" Roizner, percussion; Americo Belloto, Tomas Lepere, Alfredo Mariconda, Domingo Mariconda, trumpets; Gustavo Bergalli, trumpet, flugelhorn; Horacio Cusato, Jorge Pataro, Gregorio Golinsky, trombones; Francisco "Paco" Freigido, alto sax, clarinet; Pompeyo "Cholo" Carlo, tenor sax, flute; Alberto Mizrahi, baritone sax, bass clarinet; Jose Tcherkaski, poet; Donna Carrol, Helen Jackson, Alicia Varady, Maria Eugenia Darre, Mario Orliac, Julio Darre, Roberto Aguirre, chorus.

★ ½

Quite a curious production, *Amor Buenos Aires* is allegedly "a cantata for choirs, soloists and jazz orchestras in four movements." In fact, this patchwork quilt of free jazz clumsily interspersed with Hollywood movie muzak is difficult to conceive of as a unified piece at all, although the liner assures us that it was so presented in Argentina in 1969. What emerges is an interesting glimpse into the Argentine jazz scene of the late '60s that has been so camouflaged in commercial gauze that no genuinely prospective listener could reasonably be expected to come across it.

Each of the four "movements" begins and ends with overarranged fanfares for orchestra and chorus that sound, at best, like Stan Kenton playing *Theme From Peter Gunn*. Kenton, however, would never be so gauche, particularly in the matter of the strident chorus. Abruptly, each track cuts to a quartet comprising Ruiz, pianist Fernando Gelbard, drummer Carlos Lapouble and tenorman Horacio "Chivo" Borraro in a performance that sounds uncannily like an early ESP disc. Borraro must be considered the star of the group, displaying the influences of Trane and Shepp as well as such earlier antecedents as Eddie Harris playing *Exodus*, while Gelbard was obviously digging Cecil Taylor. The orchestra intrudes occasionally and inexplicably, dubbed between and sometimes on top of the quartet sections, although the two ensembles have no apparent musical relationship.

Ruiz is given complete credit for this 1971 session, although I'd prefer to believe that it was concocted by some drunken a&r man. If Ruiz is indeed responsible, he has only succeeded in concealing a serious performance between layers of dross.

—birnbaum

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# BLINDFOLD TEST



JORGEN BO

## JACK DEJOHNETTE

BY CHIP STERN

Jack DeJohnette makes a lie of the old joke that a drummer is a person who hangs out with musicians.

One of contemporary music's most passionate, versatile percussionists, DeJohnette is also a very fine keyboard player, and has been known to dabble in the tenor saxophone. He began studying classical piano at age four, and continued through his teens while developing a love of jazz. DeJohnette was busy on the Chicago scene as a pianist, playing gigs and connecting with the AACM, when an Ahmad Jamal recording with drummer Vernell Fournier inspired him to check out the set of drums gathering dust in the basement of his house.

Soon he was splitting his eight hour practice time between the two instruments. Just to check it out, he came to New York one weekend and landed the drum chair in organist John Patton's group.

DeJohnette became one of the most popular freelancers in New York City, working with Jackie McLean and John Coltrane before joining Charles Lloyd's quartet with Keith Jarrett, and bassists Cecil McBee or Ron McClure. He replaced Tony Williams in Miles Davis' late '60s band.

Since leading his own combos, DeJohnette has recorded for Milestone Records, started the ill-fated crossover group Compost, and developed a fruitful relationship with ECM impresario Manfred Eicher. Besides waxing with Keith Jarrett, Kenny Wheeler, Steve Kuhn and Dave Holland he has paired with guitarist John Abercrombie, who along with trumpeter Lester Bowie, and bassist Eddie Gomez, comprise Jack DeJohnette's Directions.

DeJohnette chose not to rate the selections by stars, and was reticent to give instant musical judgements. He was given no information about the records.

**1. JO JONES.** *Old Man River* (from *The Main Man*, Pablo) Jones, drums; Sam Jones, bass; Freddie Green, guitar; Tommy Flanagan, piano; Eddie Davis, tenor sax; Vic Dickenson, trombone; Harry Edison, trumpet; Roy Eldridge, trumpet. Recorded 1977.

That could have been any number of people; I was a little confused because of the recording. It could have been an old recording or a '70s recording made to sound like an old recording, because some of the things that drummer was playing were sort of slick—the way he had his drums tuned, and the way he could shift his accents in different places.

He was also playing with a certain style that was very personal, very melodic. But he never got hung up in the style itself—he got past that so he was just playing himself, and he made *Old Man River* sound modern.

Whoever that was had a great sense of humor. It could have been Bellson. That was great.

I'm always amazed when I see some of the people who take these tests, and how they come up with some sort of snap judgements and instant analysis. That's not my nature. I don't get into analyzing things like that. Sometimes I may not be in the right mood to listen to a piece of music, but if I listened to it another time, in another frame of reference, I'd hear elements that I missed the first time around. So all I can say was that I liked the music you just played for me

**2. ROY HAYNES.** *Long Wharf* (from *Out Of The Afternoon*, Impulse). Haynes, drums; Roland Kirk, manzello; Henry Grimes, bass; Tommy Flanagan, piano.

Roy Haynes. Roy is one of my favorite drummers, so right away I liked that one. I don't know who the bass player was. I don't know who the horn player was. He reminded me of Jackie McLean, except he wasn't as clean—he was a little bit

rawer. But it sounded like a nice group put together for the session.

What can you say about Roy? He's incredible. Did you hear the way he started off on the hi-hats? You could see a lot of similarities between his approach and that of Jo Jones.

Now that I think about it, the pianist sounded like Tommy Flanagan. That was a good record. I liked it.

**3. CHARLES AUSTIN-JOE GALLIVAN.** *Production And Reproduction* (from *Expression To The Winds*, Spitball). Austin, tenor saxophone, alto flute; Gallivan, Moog drums, electric drums, cowbell.

The horn player sounded familiar, but I can't quite put my finger on him. I'm going to take a wild guess and say Julius Hemphill. The concept is interesting, but I think they could have used less echo and reverb in the drums.

I would have liked to have heard a little more of the natural percussion effect as opposed to the reverberation and repeats on the hand drums and cowbell.

**4. MAX ROACH.** *Three-Four Vs. Six-Eight Four Four Ways* (from *The Max Roach Trio Featuring The Legendary Hasaan*, Atlantic). Hasaan Ibn Ali, piano, composer; Art Davis, bass; Max Roach, drums. Recorded 1965.

That was really nice. That was more recent Max. Max sounds great on that. He's extending the style that he invented in formats like the Clifford Brown group, but this is more contemporary. He's finding new implications for his particular way of playing in a modern format.

I think that was Hasaan on piano, who is a very interesting pianist, like Monk and Bud. He's a legendary pianist from Philadelphia with a style all his own. I'm not sure who the bass player is. It might be Art Davis, because he did a lot of things with Max around this time. That's one bass player I

haven't had a chance to play with. I'd like to play with him.

I liked the whole mood and structure of the piece—the interplay. It sounded as if it might have been a first take. It had that sort of searching quality about it. I mean it was raw, probably not rehearsed too much, but there was a lot of fire happening between them.

Max's style of playing still sounds very fresh and original.

**5. BILL BRUFORD.** *Either End Of August* (from *Feels Good To Me*, Polydor) Bruford, drums, composer; Dave Stewart, keyboards; Jeff Berlin, bass; Allan Holdsworth, guitar; Kenny Wheeler, flugelhorn.

That was a nice composition. I couldn't guess who any of those people were. The trumpet player could have been any number of people. Maybe Mangione. I heard some Freddie Hubbard influence in there. I was going to say Kenny Wheeler, but he didn't really play long enough for me to be really sure.

The drummer was good, but I would have liked to have heard some more solo space—I think the piece was intended to be a statement rather than a solo vehicle.

**Stern:** Did you care for the use of the 5/4 time?

**Jack:** Yeah, the use of the time signature was okay, but I feel time structures so loosely that I just hear them in terms of the whole piece. So I'm not hearing in terms of fives and fours, but rather as parts of the whole musical suite.

In terms of holding together as a complete composition I liked that. But I can't get really detailed or picky with these pieces because I don't think that way. I don't want to ignore my obligation to be constructively critical in dealing with the things you're playing for me, but there's so much going on in the music today that I try and keep a very broad perspective.

For what they set out to do, that was good. I can't find too much to criticize other than lack of solo space, but that wasn't really the idea behind this piece.

**6. GINGER BAKER.** *Pampero* (from *Eleven Sides Of Baker*, Sire). Baker, drums, composer; Chris Spedding, guitar; Kuma Harada, bass; Mr. Snips, vocals; Kofi Osapanin, Kojo Osapanin, Olu George, percussion. Recorded 1976.

I have no idea who that was. It had an African 6/8 feel, and they got into some interesting things near the end of the solo—some of the counter-rhythms going on in the percussion dialog.

Playing a 6/8 rhythm, I think it could have been set up a little more for the solos. Just as a vehicle to get into the solos it could have been more interesting. Also, the sound of the drums could have been a little bit higher; a lot of things were lost because the sound of the drums was so low. Drums can be tuned low and still have some sort of projection. These drums sounded very flat. It could have been more uplifting if the drums were more resonant.

**Stern:** Did they sound like wood drums or fiberglass?

**Jack:** It has to do more with a guy's touch than with what kind of drums they are. So it could have been more interesting with more color in the tonal range of the percussion. I mean it was nice—very spacious and laid back. But there are so many cats that deal with 6/8 and really take it out. This is rather tame, actually.

**Stern:** Who are some of the people you think can really take 6/8 out? Elvin Jones?

**Jack:** Yeah, but I'm not thinking so much in terms of drummers who play drum sets as I am about conga players and people who play bongo. People like Mongo Santamaria... 6/8 really starts with the hand drummer. When you get into that... and the Latin cats on timbales... people like Patato and Tito Puente who doesn't get into it that much, but who can, or African cats that we've never heard of... that's where you really get into it. Art Blakey put together a group years ago with Latin and African drummers that was really happening.

indulges in atonality. It is often polymetric. It may swing. It may slip into a loose, arhythmic feeling. It may segue into a ballad. It may, like an unexpected tornado on a calm afternoon, explode easy-paced lyricism for screaming cacaphony. Rivers' resourcefulness and the protean quality of his compositional technique, as much as his strength as an improviser, make him a central figure in today's music.

So just 12 days after he introduced the quartet of Sonny Rollins, McCoy Tyner, Ron Carter and Max Roach at the White House Jazz Festival, "The World of Sam Rivers" was one of the programming highlights of the 25th Newport Jazz Festival [db, 9/7/78]. The program was in two parts, presenting Rivers in a quintet format as well as with his orchestra.

The evening opened with *The Hong Kong Suite*, a work commissioned, strangely enough, by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council... for a fashion show. The suite consists of eight pieces, each running about ten minutes. Half of the compositions are in the tradition while the other half are modernist in Rivers' definition of the term. For "The World of Sam Rivers" the four more traditional selections *Joy*, *Sophistication*, *Serenity*, and *Fun* were chosen. Accordingly, rather than employ the instrumentation of his current small ensemble, which is without piano and includes a tuba, Rivers used a more standard quartet with Mike Nock on piano and *synthesizer*, Ted Dunbar on guitar, Dave Holland on bass and Bobby Battle on drums. This set, which may have crossed into fusion territory, surprised most of the audience. But the crowd, generally followers of new music, stamped its approval with a standing O.

What most people had come to hear, however, was the premiere of his latest work for orchestra, *Evocation*. It took Rivers over six months to develop *Evocation*. He and a crack crew of musicians prepared the music by rehearsing twice weekly for six months. The musicians included Holland, Joe Daley on tuba, Hamiet Bluiett, Ricky Ford, Chico Freeman and J. D. Parran on woodwinds, Ray Anderson on trombone, Jack Walrath, Malachi Thompson, Oliver Beamer and Frank Gordon on trumpets, and Warren Smith on drums and percussion.

*Evocation* continues the experimentation Rivers has been doing with large ensemble writing over the last ten years, and synthesizes the melodic and harmonic liberties made possible by the innovations of Taylor and Coleman. Unfortunately, Rivers' effort in this area has been documented fully only on *Crystals* (Impulse ASD-9286), recorded in 1974, one of four albums he did for ABC. Another set of recordings, dating from 1967 but not released until last year as part of Blue Note's reissue program, *Involution* (BN-LA453-H2) hints at similar ideas, but only a sextet is employed.

What Rivers is after is a melodic approach to orchestration. As he explains it, "I am using the harmonies to approach the composition melodically. In other words, I am writing a lot of melodic lines rather than putting together a lot of chords for the orchestra. So if I have 10 instruments, these instruments are more or less playing melodies that fit. In other words you could take any guy out of the orchestra and have him stand there and play his part by himself and it would sound like he was doing a solo.

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continued on page 47

# PROFILE

## MICHAEL HOENIG

BY CHIP STERN

The city of Berlin, once a symbol of confrontation between the East and West, is currently giving birth to a large number of musicians intent on developing a fresh approach to electronic music. One of the most promising directions coming out of Berlin is the work of Michael Hoenig. His recent Warner Brothers release, *Departure From The Northern Wasteland*, is a dreamy, evocative work, eliciting warm washes of sound from a flotilla of synthesizers—an instrument that has often been thought of as being a cold, mechanical noise box.

In Hoenig's hands, the synthesizer is a *musical instrument*, capable of an infinite range of nuance and sensitivity. Hoenig's personal approach to the synthesizer should open up a broad range of applications to musicians who have up to now seen the instrument as little more than another keyboard. "I see myself as a synthesizer player who uses keyboards to control certain parameters," says Hoenig. "The keyboard is such a limited control device for a synthesizer. What you can do is say yes or no with it. I want to be able to say maybe. I mean, I am not a good keyboard player at all, but the synthesizer is a new, different instrument; it hasn't even reached its technical perfection yet. It requires different handling, and new compositional techniques. There aren't many people around who can do that yet.

"There are two main streams today in the use of synthesizers, both of which are pretty much to my dislike. There are keyboard players who treat the instrument as simply a new sound color; merely transposing their already known keyboard virtuosity. They add some fancy vibrato or filter effects, but they create the same structures they could play on any other keyboard. The other way is modern interpretations of classical works, which has a terrible poorness for me because it doesn't represent any of the parameters that meant anything in that music. It is of a similar poorness when you transcribe string quartets on to the piano."

Hoenig was born in Hamburg, Germany in 1952, and moved to Berlin at the age of three. "I did not have any classical training on any instrument, so I am not approaching the synthesizer from a keyboard standpoint. I was always opposed to traditional learning techniques, so I refused to study any instrument. I started pretty late in music. When I was around 16, I was very much interested in all sorts of 20th century art, media, photography, and music; experimenting in many fields. I used to attend many concerts of 20th century music, and somehow I met some people who were putting together what we would call the Scratch Orchestra, which was heavily influenced by composer Thomas Kessler. It was a free form improvisation, with both amateur and professional musicians, a ritual sort of thing, like go out in the garden and play what the tree is like. The overall concept in those days—the '60s—was to free yourself from all rules and to expand sensitivity. I was playing tape recorder, contact microphones and zither, and having a wonderful time experimenting with sounds. Suddenly, I was approached by this guy to play with a group called Agitation Free for the group's concert the next night. After I got involved with these people, the whole story of my music began.

"Agitation Free was an experimental electronic rock band that was trying to enlarge the concept of traditional rock rhythms. When I joined the band I was playing with sine wave generators and other crazy things that I'd built. When the first synthe-

sizers came out, I got one immediately—it combined several electronic possibilities in one small unit, and for me it was the perfect instrument because it didn't have any predetermined tradition. I didn't use a keyboard then. I was into more sounds than scales. Without a keyboard you have continuous movement; with a keyboard you can control steps.

"After a while Agitation Free became so successful and was touring so much—putting out so much energy—that we ceased to have any input into the music and we began to repeat ourselves. It was like what happened to Cream—very sad."



BERND KAPPELMAYER

After Agitation Free broke up, Hoenig worked as a duo (Timewind) with Klaus Schultze, then left him to join Tangerine Dream for an Australian tour. "After Agitation Free broke up, the concept somehow died for me. All of these Berlin bands were very much into free form improvising based on rock elements, and it was sort of a rule never to play the same thing twice. I saw that the only way out for me was to get into more precise compositions and arrangements.

"I find that more and more as I listen to music, the people that I like—those people that touch me—are getting more sophisticated in the sound colors themselves; in the minimal structures. I hear minimal music in me. Minimalism starts with Terry Riley's piece *In C*. You have to listen to that music; it is a must. There are certain developments in today's avant garde that seem to be interested in classic folk music structures: African rhythms, Indonesian gamelan music, Indian scales. There are several composers who became interested in these classic folk forms and developed new compositional techniques that combined those elements into complete new forms. Not by imitating certain virtuosities, which would be a deadly fault, but by becoming aware of the musical magic of these folk forms.

"To make this clearer, if you look at the general avant garde of the '50s and early '60s, rhythms are completely lost; scales are completely free form—a highly structured music, but it was only possible to follow that music if you were a real insider, so it lost its audience base. Suddenly Terry Riley came up with *In C*. He used a basic pulse, over which several rhythmic phrases are set up so the musicians could play a certain phrase for a certain period of time, then move to the next phrase. So what this piece did was to *reassert a basic pulse and get back to a clear tonal center*—

the whole piece was a C scale. From that point on, there are a whole group of composers, like myself, who are involved in minimal structures. From this there is one statement that can be clearly made, which Steve Reich formulated: that a basic pulse and a clear tonal center will re-emerge in a new music of the future.

"So what I'm personally interested in—as in African folk music—is several rhythmic patterns of the same or related length, each with their own separate downbeat (so you don't have the stupidity of the four-beat). As the length is sometimes different, the patterns always drift, and after a much longer cycle they all meet at the one. So if you have a pattern with four notes and one with five, it all comes together after 20 beats. *That element—different rhythmic patterns with separate downbeats—is a musical element that was always used in Africa to get people into an ecstasy.* There is a certain *magic* about it, and this element has never really been used in Western music.

"I try and have a continuous sort of movement in my music that has patterns drifting against each other, but also culminating and resolving into new patterns. So there is a continuous flow of rhythmic patterns without a defined downbeat that you have to sit on—it gives a certain image of infinity. So what minimalism in general proposes is that instead of the most possible movement in a short time, you have continuous development over a longer period of time. This is why I am growing away from pure improvisation in my music. I like carefully worked out transitions; polymorphic changes of the main and backing voices; rhythmic patterns being superimposed and resulting in new patterns—and those patterns might be rhythms or they might be melody lines. I write in a monophonic manner; I rarely use chords. The listener can pick out any monophonic lines, concentrate on that one, and the rest will fit perfectly into backing chords. So it's an immensely open music in which the listener can really have different experiences, depending on the mood they're in and which line they pick out. I want the music to get finally together in the mind of each listener."

Hoenig succeeds. *Departure From The Northern Wasteland* is a peaceful yet compelling work that creates a whole new spectrum of sound colors—colors in between the sound colors that are already known. His sounds have few predetermined association structures, and he creates one meticulous movement after another. I remarked that it must have been an endless process to get everything just right. "Making the rough recording took six weeks of consecutive 15 hour days to get it exactly the way I wanted it," said Hoenig. "The mixing, of course, took much longer. The process of making this album improved my technique tremendously, and I'm very happy about that. I was lucky to own most of the means of production, so I didn't have any studio costs. I survived by selling the musical trash to films and theater productions. So all the music I couldn't use I gave away. Most of the music on this album began as an idea or a mood. The combination of the elements gives it an intellectual momentum. The actual construction was a massive process of overdubbing. I am the composer, the arranger; I play all the instruments; I am my own engineer—I recorded it and mixed it; and I am my own manager. So you see, it is a real one man band. In every piece I have preset sequences that act as a sort of metronome, but I keep the sequences constantly changing."

Hoenig is a thoughtful, serene man, and I wondered how he saw himself in relation to the political turmoil of Europe and Germany. "Politics today: all over Europe you have more or less democratic government, and Germany has the most freedom. Where I live in Berlin, it is very quiet. Berlin is a peaceful city, an excellent place for artists to work; you can get away from all of the media and other pressures.

"Those things that come over to America in the press on those extreme left wing activists are a little blown out of proportion, because they are really a very small percentage. It seems that violence is the last step left to those people to make others aware that they are still there, but the political ideas behind them are not known to the public

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any more, which is a media problem. So the Baader-Meinhof activists are no longer able to express their political ideas, in no way. The reaction towards them on the government side is very reactionary, of course, but pretty helpless in the end. I would welcome a mixture of left wing or communist or socialist parties in the government, just to make things in a better balance, because right now things are in a *desperate middle*, which is pretty boring.

"You know, the '70s have been a total letdown. There has been such a loss of sensitivity from the '60s; I hope that we can somehow recapture that, but I am not sure. For instance, in rock and roll there is a huge audience that hasn't been exposed to anything new or really uplifting in years. I mean that whole 'new wave' story is nothing more than a new word for the same old story. I am sure that what I'm doing and what is coming out of Berlin today—which I would define as an electronic school of music—is a certain new energy which hasn't been exposed yet. I mean if you look at American entertainment music today, 90% of the music is related to one mood—call it the blues."

"Well, I love the blues," I said, "and I don't hear that. Why don't we just call it sex."

"You must be talking about the *old blues*," said Hoenig. "In today's music what is happening is just sweetening of blues riffs and harmonies. There are more emotional levels that can be expressed with music. The emotional range in music today is very, very narrow. I think American audiences are starving for new music. The record companies are aware of it, but they have a problem getting it out to the people because the public media here only exposes such a narrow level. Most radio stations sound very similar. There are a few jazz stations, and a few so-called progressive stations, but they all tend towards the middle-of-the-road; and they all claim that they play what the stupidity of the audience dictates. It is a self-perpetuating cycle. The whole marketing concept in radio and entertainment music today is that everyone wants the top of the market. No one is interested in special marketing to special groups. So everything ends up right down the middle in radio, which makes me sad. And I really cannot understand it." db

## BIFF HANNON

BY ARNOLD JAY SMITH

The Maynard Ferguson band has broken big band tradition in many ways. One of the most important facets has been the introduction of a completely electronic rhythm section. The band has added a guitar player, possibly a first for MF. The guitarist's specialty is supposedly rock. But the more things change, the more they stay the same, and Fergy has started, once again, to play the great charts of his past. So on any given program you'll find a *Stella By Starlight* or an *Airegin*. Such selections cry out for acoustic instruments and Biff Hannon, the keyboardist with the band, comes well-equipped to handle the chore.

He came to Ferguson by way of Eastman School of Music while working on his Master's degree. He replaced Pete Jackson, who briefly followed Alan Zavod. Zavod left to form New York Mary with bassist Rick Petrone and drummer Joe Corsello, along with baritone saxist and flutist Bruce Johnstone. It was Petrone who recommended Biff to Ferguson.

"When I was a senior at Eastman [1971]," Hannon began, "Marian McPartland came up with a trio [Petrone and Corsello]. I was asked to do a number with her on two grand pianos. We got to talking and Rick and Joe joined in the conversation."

But that did not result directly in the MF gig. After graduation Hannon went with Buddy Rich. When the piano spot opened with Fergy, Biff got the call.

"The [Ferguson] band is so powerful that it was hard to get over on grand piano. So I play electric

almost always," Biff stated. "I have played grand piano on occasion but it's difficult to hear. When it gets drowned out, the rest of the band loses the energy feeling from the rhythm section. No matter how we monitored it, it didn't work. The electric projects better. Another thing is that the pianos you have to deal with across the country are terrible. Even in the big halls where you would expect to find great pianos, you find them out of tune. One time we played opposite Stan Kenton's band and they had the worst upright piano for him to play on. They hadn't even brought in a grand. It needed tuning also. There are good uprights like Steinway and Baldwin, but this wasn't one of them.

"I have tried pickup systems on grand pianos, but they work better in small rooms. I have a Barcus-Berry, but going through big p.a.s. doesn't work. I am going to experiment a little more with it. On the recording where we did *Airegin* [New Vintage, on Columbia] I did use the pickup on the grand.

"Each keyboard is different. Each has its own musical uses. The grand piano is probably the most perfected keyboard instrument. After so many centuries of craftsmanship it's hard to beat it. Bach had the chance to use one of the first pianos, but he didn't like it. Most of the keyboardists of that time preferred the harpsichord and, like today, the new instrument was frowned upon. I guess Mozart popularized it to a great extent, although it had been used before. Even in the past 30 years they have improved things like accelerated action so that the keys have a quicker return.

"A Rhodes piano's return is sluggish, while on a Steinway you push the key down and it comes right back up. It gives you more finger control; you can be more precise about what you play. With the Rhodes you have to use a light touch, like the harpsichord. If you use a heavy touch, the notes break up. It's a greater transition from grand to electric than most people imagine. You can't put the same pressure on both. The sonorities don't blend the same way either. The grand can handle more simultaneous notes. Don't misunderstand, I like Rhodes pianos if they are adjusted right.

"I think it's important to play a regular piano to develop your fingers. I don't know about other musicians. A lot of people can sound good on Rhodes because the instrument itself already sounds good, whereas on a grand you create the sound yourself. You have to play for a lot of years to know how to drop all your body weight onto the keys, so that when the hammer comes up it rings the string.

"Herbie Hancock's electric piano always sounds good. He has the perfect touch on it, but he studied on the grand for so long. So did Chick Corea; Chick's got that clarity in his fingers, too.

"There is some skepticism on musicians' parts towards electronics. Keith Jarrett and McCoy Tyner have come out against them. That's their prerogative. It's all happened before with the first flutes and clarinets. Composers eventually wrote pieces for them. It's a matter of integration; your ears get used to certain sounds."

Biff's instruments include the Rhodes electric piano, which has been customized with Altec speakers ("bigger magnets for greater duty on the bottom"); the amplifier also has been replaced. He wires his machine through the sound system of the hall or club so the sound people can control it. He also owns a poly-Moog.

"There are endless possibilities with synthesizers. I'm only beginning to understand them. It means experimenting with them and even writing down what you like and memorizing it so that when you go for one you know what you're looking for. You have to know the sound *before* you use it."

The big band format vis-a-vis the synthesizer was a topic we kept coming back to—the non-traditional aspect of the instrument in traditional settings.

"Miles Davis first gave the electric piano jazz exposure. Maynard had one in his band before any of us realized. Woody Herman used one. I don't know the *first* big band, however. Electronics changes a big band a little bit. It's like another section to draw from. It changes the overall ensemble sound and adds new colors to a big band. You can



ARNOLD JAY SMITH

write for an additional area. If used creatively it can be an asset; if used poorly it can detract. Like all things.

"Take *Airegin*. It goes through a lot of changes really fast. There are two basic tonal sections at the beginning in four-bar phrases. Then it opens up. It goes through a series of fast moving changes. I play it on electric in person, but I still use a bebop style of playing. On a grand I might go down and grab a bass note to effect the chord on top of it. It's a hearing problem again. On grand, the band couldn't hear it on stage. I try to make it stylistically appropriate and use the Rhodes."

Is there a future for electronics in big bands? Hannon thought about it for a minute and drew upon his scholastic experience for his reply.

"Most of the schools are using electric pianos in conjunction with grands. At Eastman we used both. Naturally, the rock tunes lend themselves to electronics, although there, too, the grands are getting more popular.

"It's getting to be a hip thing to play in big bands in school. More colleges have jazz programs than ever before. The conservatories offer jazz degrees with intense emphasis on big band music. We play high schools and colleges during the year and many times there will be one of those bands playing before we do. I get a chance to hear many good ones. While they play well, I think small groups is where the development takes place. But you can encompass that much more involvement in a program with a big band as a vehicle. You have just so many rhythm sections to go around for small groups."

Which brought up another point. Why assemble-line the music operation of colleges? By placing students in a lecture hall setting rather than the small discussion groups, we are begging the question of wherefore education. Why not get the rhythm sections, develop the bassists, pianists and drummers and get the students into a stretch out situation? It's the old problem of more is less. Biff responded.

"I didn't mean it to sound like every student becomes a number. You get a hundred people in a class and everyone feels small; that's the way it is. At Eastman we had small classes and I always had individual instruction, so I am really opposed to the large group concept."

Biff was a student of his mother, a piano teacher in his native state of New Jersey. He began at the age of five, later going across the Hudson to study privately with a retired concert pianist, Ernesto Berumen. He went to academic high school and studied classical music on the side. At Eastman he studied with Jose Echaniz and Eugene List. He

played clubs around Rochester until Rich came along. That band broke up when Buddy opened the first Buddy's Place. He returned to Eastman and entered the Master's program with List. He also studied arranging with Rayburn Wright and Manny Albam in summer workshops. At 28, Hannon has some fine credentials under his belt. Chuck Mangione was the director of the jazz ensemble and Biff studied improvisation with him. "Chuck knows how to draw music out of people—and he makes you work hard.

"I'm glad to be back in the New York area again," Biff concluded. "I can hear so much more music here. It's performed here *all* the time, and the greatest education you can get is by listening to other artists live. Call Jazzline and it takes five minutes just to quickly read off the list of who is where. You can't say that about any other city. New York is a better place for growth."

*It was learned at presstime that Hannon has left the Ferguson band.*

db

## DAVID FRIESEN

THE QUIET KNIGHT  
CHICAGO

**Personnel:** Friesen, bass; John Stowell, guitar.

Since his show-stopping performance with Ted Curson's group at last year's Monterey Festival, Friesen has been garnering accolades like a new bride gathers flowers. Dubbed "a genius" by Curson, the 35-year-old bassist had already established a formidable reputation in musicians' circles, having gigged with such luminaries as Stan Getz, Joe Henderson, Woody Shaw, Sam Rivers, Marian McPartland, and Ralph Towner. After two critically acclaimed sessions for the Inner City label, Friesen has been playing a series of duet dates with his longtime friend and fellow Oregonian, guitarist John Sowell. The 27-year-old Stowell boasts his own Inner City album as well as appearances on the two Friesen LPs, and the two frequently perform together in their home town of Portland. A promotional snafu contributed to the light turnout at Chicago's Quiet Knight, but that only heightened the camaraderie between performers and audience.

Friesen charmed the crowd with his boyish good looks and friendly, soft-spoken demeanor. Perhaps it was the mellowed-out ambience of his Northwest-coast environs or the unforced humility of his outspokenly professed Christian faith, but in any case Friesen projected an aura as cool and refreshing as an Oregon breeze. The same buoyant airiness carried over into the music as he and Stowell spun latticework filigrees with inventiveness and virtuosity. Despite his firm hop roots and affiliations with members of the Mingus band, Friesen's approach is unabashedly European and his affinities with the ECM school are unmistakable.

Rhythmically even-tempered, Friesen employs few sharp accents and little syncopation; harmonically, his lush chromaticism is squarely founded on diatonic scalar concepts, displaying nary a hint of blues modality. His frequent use of Latin rhythmic vamps and his minorish colorings lent the music an almost Spanish cast, particularly in light of his guitaristic deployment of the bass, a technique that harks back to one of his acknowledged mentors, Scott LaFaro.

The set opened with a pair of neatly dove-tailed originals, *Castles And Flags* and *Festival Dance*; Friesen's bowed bass resonated warmly beneath the impressionistic shimmer of Stowell's deliberately paced vampings until, switching to pizzicato, Friesen took up the ostinato motif while Stowell carried the gossamer melody. In a pattern that was to be repeated throughout the evening, the two shifted alternately between melody and rhythm parts, playing now in parallel, now in cross-direc-

tions in a gently textured panoply of rising and falling wave forms. Stowell switched to the 12-string guitar for another Friesen tune, *Clouds*, which again featured an alternating vamp against rhapsodic solos. Friesen roamed all over the bass with rapid-fire runs and singing legato passages, his robust tone ringing with chord-like overtones as he sustained single-note phrases with rich vibrato. Stowell counterpointed with ethereal runs and bell-like harmonics, revealing a strong Spanish/classical influence in a context of dreamy reverie.

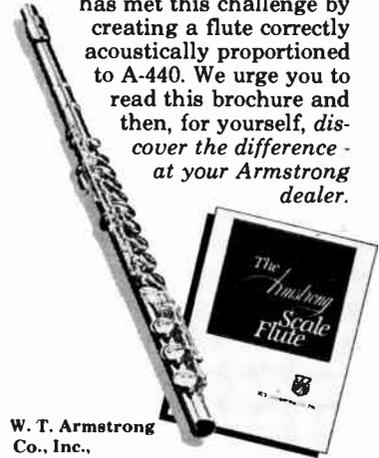
Stowell returned to the 6-string to present his own composition, *Loran Mirage*, a litting melody articulated in quicksilver staccato chord runs. Friesen maintained a relentless churning tempo in the bass as Stowell galloped through arpeggios and chord progressions in a neo-impressionistic evocation of flamenco music. Friesen's *Song Of Switzerland* followed, a brooding nocturne articulated in broad, expansive strokes. Inspired by a European vacation, the tune created a somber, world-weary mood of romantic longing for distant places, imparting a sense of baroque unreality not unlike that of a Valasquez painting.

At this point Friesen paused to introduce his "friend" the bass, a French model made by Nicholas Guinot in about 1725. He explained that he had found the instrument in three or four pieces in Seattle and had waited 12 years to have it reconstructed, adding 24 notes in the process of replacing the originally three-stringed fingerboard. After a flurry of applause for his fiddle, Friesen proceeded to the title track of his first album, *Star Dance*, an engaging romp which featured some percussive, equestrian-tempoed bass strumming in the guitaristic fashion of Jimmy Garrison. A richly woven interlude by Stowell was followed by a self-accompanied bass solo in which Friesen hammered out a rhythm on the bottom string while plucking a counterpoint melody in the upper register, a technique which record reviewers have mistaken for overdubbing.

For the following three tunes Stowell took up a six-note African log drum and a pair of cymbals while Friesen performed on a four-holed Japanese shakuhachi flute which he jokingly claimed had been seasoned with after-shave lotion. The tryptich of *Carousel Parade*, *Wisdom's Star*, and *Song Of The Stars* began with a sparkling bass/guitar duet that segued into a bass and log drum sequence and finally a percussion solo with Stowell beating out a polyrhythmic tattoo on log drum and cymbals. Friesen re-entered with a vigorous bass vamp, paused abruptly, and with the help of an echo device began to intone a haunting series of sustained flute tones that hung eerily in the hushed stillness of the room. Stowell added to the "jungle nights" atmosphere with a slowly rising crescendo of rolling cymbals and clattering percussion. Friesen capped the selection with an extended bass solo, plucking variations on the theme with rich melodic re-

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sourcefulness and superlative technique, strumming thickly resonant chordal fragments against a deep throbbing tonic bottom.

The concluding number, *Dolphin In The Sky*, belonged mostly to Stowell, who painted swirling patterns in pastoral colors over Friesen's firm but gentle underpinning. When the two joined in parallel figures, the remarkable affinity between their styles was underscored, as each echoed the linear and harmonic conceptions of the other. This warm sense of personal communion sustained the entire set of jazz-inflected chamber music—a string of compositions so similar might otherwise have become tiresome. The evanescent ebb and flow of musical imagery evoked ever-shifting tableaux of fantasy cloudscapes and engendered a mood of idyllic romanticism, as one might infer from the titles of the tunes. Only a slightly muddled sound system marred the otherwise exemplary performance, which held the audience suspended in its luminous, otherworldly thrall. With his formidable chops and refined congeniality, Friesen certainly has the potential to attract a wide following and it seems only a matter of time before word spreads of his appealing transcendental lyricism.

—Larry Birnbaum

## ROSCOE MITCHELL ANTHONY DAVIS

PUBLIC THEATER CABARET  
NEW YORK CITY

**Personnel:** Mitchell, alto, tenor, soprano, soprano, baritone and bass saxophones, clarinet, flute, piccolo; Leo Smith, trumpet, flugelhorn, pocket trumpet; George Lewis, trombones and sousaphone; Bakida Carroll, flugelhorn.

**Personnel:** Davis, solo piano.

For its first weekend of concerts after a summer hiatus, the Public Theater presented what on paper appeared a formidable combination—the youthful, fertile-minded Davis' solo piano, and the oft-acclaimed Mitchell in solo, duet and trio works with two fine trumpeters and one superb trombonist. But the Saturday midnight show proved that things don't always come out as anticipated, especially in Mitchell's case.

Davis emerged first for a set of solos, and indicated as he has previously that he is more accomplished as a composer than a pianist at

this early stage of his career. His compositions were intriguing, but he frequently lapsed into repetitive ostinatos and runs that did nothing to advance an improvisation, or he over-extended a particular mood to the point of exhaustion. Only the first of Davis' three originals, which he said was inspired by Balinese music, did not suffer from the overuse of ostinatos. Instead, the repeated figures here helped to bring out the simple beauty of the exotic melody.

The pianist began his *An Anthem For The Generation That Died* with an introductory section that featured full, majestic chords. He then started a loping triplet figure in his left hand that brought visions of military doom. However, the piece dispersed from that point, losing any central character, as Davis reverted to grinding, overdone runs, which went on much too long before a gradual diminution to a soft, melancholy, chordal ending. *On An Azure Plane* was simply too one-dimensional, a dull-edged, imponderable piece. Davis strummed patterns on the piano strings mixed with rumbling left-hand motifs and swift right-hand runs that weren't varied enough to sustain interest or advance the flow in any noticeable direction.

Ironically, Davis' best playing came on someone else's tune—Ellington's *The Clothed Woman*. Here he used trickling Duke-ish arpeggios, and unabashed, heartfelt, stride and blues interludes to good advantage.

After intermission, Mitchell (on tenor) and Carroll played an attractive duet that was trance-like at times in its sinuous, contrapuntal blend of voices. It lacked much depth, but it was certainly "pretty" music. Carroll, who might be best remembered for his recorded work with Julius Hemphill, possesses a stunning command of the flugelhorn, which was largely responsible for the effectiveness of an otherwise lightweight piece.

Mitchell next played an alto solo that sounded a great deal like one of Anthony Braxton's exercises. It was primarily a string of short, nervous, bursing phrases with little or no interrelation. Some of these outbursts sounded funny and brought an occasional smile, but that's about all the solo triggered from the listener. It didn't swing, and it tried too hard to be cute or clever.

The rest of the set—about 30 minutes—was dismal. Mitchell, Smith and Lewis engaged in a trio version of the kind of Braxton-like academic music that Mitchell had played in his solo previously. The only difference here was that with Mitchell switching constantly from one to another of his nine instruments (and Lewis and Smith alternating unceasingly amongst their horns as well), an endless variety of tonal coloration was produced. This didn't help enough, however. Mitchell might play four notes on alto, switch to flute for three, and then play two on baritone, while Lewis and Smith played similar sparse clusters on their different instruments. But almost everything gave the impression of being played at random, and when there was some correspondence between what two, or even rarer, all three were playing, it just sounded coincidental. This was lifeless, impersonal non-music that failed to satisfy any emotion. Its coldness elicited a very uninspired, lukewarm audience response at the conclusion, and even most of that came only out of politeness.

Hopefully more substantial music will be heard from Mitchell next time around.

—scott albin

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(For the convenience of guitarists, Roman numerals indicate position, small Arabic numbers indicate fingering, and circled Arabic numbers indicate string. For the information of non-guitarists, the actual pitch of guitar music sounds one octave below its written pitch.)

The first example shows the slow-moving descending chromatic line many musicians customarily associate with Legrand's opening phrase:

Musical notation for the first example of the opening phrase. It consists of two staves of music in C major, 7/4 time. The first staff shows a descending chromatic line starting on G4 (V) and moving down to C4. Roman numerals V, IV, III, II, I are placed above the notes. Fingerings 1, 2, 2, 1, 1 are shown. A circled '3' indicates the third string. The second staff continues the line with notes B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3. Roman numerals IV, III, II, I are shown. Fingerings 2, 1, 1, 2, 2, 4, 3 are shown. A circled '5' indicates the fifth string.

The next three examples show how Rick changes both speed and direction of the counterline in the same opening phrase:

Musical notation for three variations of the opening phrase. Each variation is on a separate set of two staves. The first variation is labeled 'OR' and shows a more rhythmic, ascending chromatic line. The second variation is labeled 'OR' and shows a more complex, chromatic line with many intervals. The third variation is labeled 'OR' and shows a more rhythmic, ascending chromatic line. Roman numerals and fingerings are provided for each variation.

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The next five examples show how Rick varies the starting note of his chromatic line in both directions at the beginning of the bridge:

Five musical examples showing chromatic lines with various starting notes and fingerings. The examples are numbered 1 through 5. Example 5 includes a note: "(Note: Experiment with various fingerings on this example)".

Another example shows how Rick intensifies the effect by adding parallel chromatic lines in stacked perfect fourths:

Musical example showing parallel chromatic lines in stacked perfect fourths. A note indicates: "(Note: First finger bars throughout)".

And the final example shows how Rick extends a pure chromatic line against a sequence of Legrand's bridge motive to end the arrangement:

Musical example showing a pure chromatic line against a sequence of Legrand's bridge motive to end the arrangement. The example is marked with Roman numeral V and includes fingerings and a final chord marked "Am".

### WHAT ARE YOU DOING THE REST OF YOUR LIFE?

Music/Michel Légrand Lyrics/Alan and Marilyn Bergman  
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### RIVERS

continued from page 39

They blend harmonically, but it is not a harmonic approach. It is a melodic approach. I am writing melodic lines for each instrument which itself creates another harmonic texture and a sound of its own, because it's moving. Even though I am writing melodically, I am acutely aware of the harmonic things. I am hooking up things melodically so they fit harmonically.

"I try to cover a spectrum. It's very difficult to say, 'Well I am doing this,' to say, 'Well, I like, you know, densities.' There are dense spots but there are also open straight lines. I like that too. There is free atonality and then there is tonality. Somebody says, 'He writes with densities and he likes to write in complex, dense harmonies.' Of course that is part of it. But to break it down and zero in and say that's it, when I am not even writing harmonically, is something else.

"You don't pin me down. I am as general as a musician can be, general and open. I have got the scope of the whole thing and I really try to do it that way with every composition."

*Evocation* is no exception. It is a symphonic poem of "praise and deep respect for creative musicians who spend their lives forging new musical paths, opening broad vistas by discovering different and interesting directions for further musical explorations." Rivers explains. The textural richness of Rivers' distinct contrapuntal approach, which generates provocative "horizontal clusters and harmonic combinations," can be heard in the thematic statement of the first movement. Three melodic lines, each assigned to a different section of the ensemble and of differing length, are continually cycled until they resolve mathematically on an extremely bright orchestral chord.

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cause of its density but because of the intensity of its inner activity. This segment also features a soprano solo by Rivers followed by a duet with muted trumpet. Joe Daley then takes a baritone horn solo, and the three close out the movement with collective interplay. Part two is essentially a fantasia for piano, played by Rivers. The third section is a funky ballad for flutes over muted trumpet. The final movement is dedicated to forceful blowing—which Rivers on tenor and Hamiet Bluiett on baritone saxophone can deliver in abundance. It is a stunning creation which confirms that Rivers has the potential to chart original directions beyond Ellington and Basie.

It is also inescapable that without Studio

Rivbea as a laboratory, *Evocation* would not have been possible. Rivbea has provided the continuity of contact with musicians that the lack of steady work and ample recording opportunities would have normally precluded. Rivbea's most important function, aside from that of laboratory, is that of a performance center, and Rivbea enjoys a substantial subsidy from the New York Council On The Arts. Rivers chooses the performers from a select circle of musicians which more or less corresponds with the personnel in his band.

In his Summer Concert Series, which ran for two weekends at the end of August, Rivers presented Bluiett, Chico Freeman, and pianist Don Pullen, all of whom have performed and toured with the orchestra. The only "outsider" regularly included in the Rivbea mini-fests is

alto saxophonist Jimmy Lyons. The association between Lyons (who it seems has been with Cecil Taylor forever) and Rivers goes back to the Taylor Unit of the late '60s from which issued the monumental three volume set, *Nuits De La Fondation Maeght* (SR 10.011, 83508, 83509) on Shandar, and now available on Prestige as *The Great Concert of Cecil Taylor*.

Quality control rather than patronage is the driving force behind his choices, according to Rivers. When I queried him about his programming he responded: "The musicians that are actually in the forefront of the modern of the '70s are musicians that were around in the '60s too. We are not talking about musicians that just jumped on the scene, except for a few like maybe Chico and Jay Hoggard [vibraphonist], Anthony Davis, Murray [David, tenor saxophone] . . . that's it. All the rest are musicians that were here in the '60s like Bluiett and Don were with Mingus.

"Chico would be the only one that would be considered part of the '70s. But he would be considered a modernist because he has a personal concept as well as the fundamentals. He has a knowledge of the history of the music and is able to perform it. These are the only musicians I think that have a future. The other kind, the ones that narrow themselves off and don't have any knowledge of tradition, are in trouble.

Rivers' assessment of Lyons is unequivocal. "I consider Jimmy Lyons the top alto player on the scene today. You don't even see him listed in the polls. I am a saxophonist, and Jimmy Lyons is that. The next cat probably would be way further down as far as playing the instrument." Bluiett he considers, ". . . an established musician. He is ranked around third as far as established baritones in the world by the critics—but he is the best."

The respect and rapport that Rivers has going with the musicians that now work Rivbea combine with the relatively uncluttered scheduling to make the present atmosphere at Studio Rivbea a relaxed one. Such was not always the case. In the early days of the "loft scene," before the clubs would look at the new faces and reputations bearing instrument cases, Rivers entertained an open door policy. "I was nondiscriminant," he reflected. "I knew that the cats were into it. They'd say, 'I have a band,' and they'd come in. You can't name a group that didn't come in here, even cats that I thought were atrocious."

Eventually, however, the camaraderie of the lofts began to deteriorate. Around Rivbea there were rumblings about the red tape of the government check-writing process, and about Rivers' role in the controversial *Windflowers: New York Loft Sessions* (Douglas NBLP 7045-49) recorded at Rivbea in the spring of '76 by producers Alan Douglas and Michael Cuscuna in association with Rivers, and released through Casablanca. From Rivbea there were accusations about wine-head musicians and second-rate beboppers masquerading as avant garde, who played in parks because they couldn't cut clubs, as well as ill-informed, unprofessional behavior on the part of some who could. There was even a somewhat public exchange between Rivers and writer/musician/promoter Stanley Crouch that was perceived by many as a power play over who would be "king of the stroll."

By the time the antagonisms became news via the *Village Voice* and the *Soho Weekly News*, the scene was, in Rivers' words, "already crumbling." In Rivers' hindsight, how-

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ever, the real and positive dynamic was not personality conflict but economics. "The musicians that were playing here," he boils it down, "got some notice, got some records out, and New York City became available to them. So they were not exclusively dealing with the lofts anymore, which is why I say it was over. They could play anywhere now. There must be ten or 12 clubs now where the musicians can work."

Both the passage of time and a measure of relief seem to be behind Rivers' words. "I saw that it was coming," he continued. "So when all the diverse places came where they could play, it was a good thing. There was no bitterness about it. I was glad to see it happen. It lightened the burden on me, because I had it *all* the time. We are talking about five years straight of music starting maybe at one o'clock in the afternoon and going until five in the morning. That was most of the time. So I mean the whole family was pretty much out. So I was glad to see something else happening."

It was during this undeniably unsettling period that Rivers made statements which were used in the August 8, 1977 *Newsweek* cover story, "Jazz Is Back!" The article described Rivers as "seething with anger." One statement—"There are no white men who have made any contribution to jazz"—was interpreted in some quarters as racist. As Rivers recalls, "All this was happening at the same time. This guy was coming over here to talk about this particular music and this particular kind of situation [studio/loft] when it was—you know—over. It's okay, though, I am going to get some publicity. So I meet the cat at the door.

"He wants to talk about the music. So I tell

him everything. He's asking dumb questions. But I was cool. Sometimes you have to find out why is he asking certain questions. Finally I said, 'This music of course originated, has its deep roots, in Africa. It really comes from the South.' You know, the usual things: this is blues-oriented music, the rural to the city. So I was mentioning Fletcher Henderson's band, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, the innovators—Charlie Parker, Dizzy, Eric Dolphy. And I said, 'Of course all the major innovators of the music have been black musicians.'

"I was about to go on, but he cut me off there. That was enough for him. That's something that everybody knows, that all the innovators have been black."

Then according to Rivers' play-by-play, the discussion moved to the '40s versus the '50s and whether one was more or less cerebral or primitive than the other. And from there they went on to the relative merits of Jack Teagarden, Lennie Tristano and Lee Konitz. Rivers apparently struck a raw nerve with his guest when he accused "symphony orchestras of rank prejudice."

His interviewer led with, "Black musicians just can't play violins. There is no such thing as a good black violinist." Rivers' counterpunch, provoked though it might have been, still haunts him in certain circles.

\* \* \* \*

Sam Rivers—proud, sensitive, independent, embattled—must have felt vindicated last spring listening to President Carter testify: "At first this jazz form was not well accepted in respectable circles." And after a pause, "I think that there was an element of racism. . . ." Rivers closes his case, a mixture of the incredulous and slightly impish.

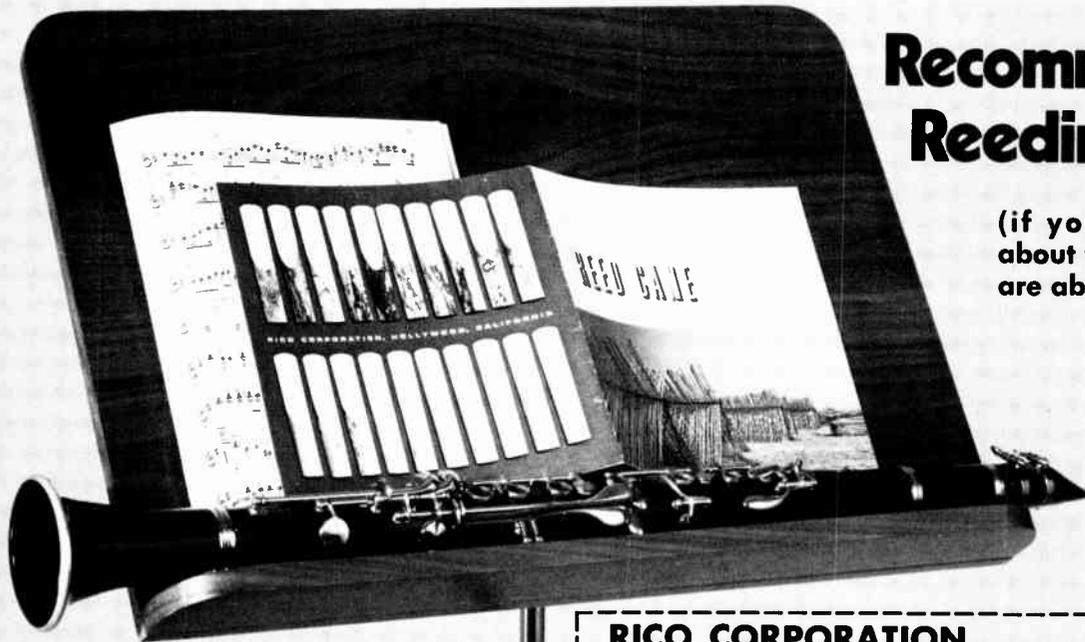
"That writer provoked an answer by trying

to rewrite history," Rivers began. "Now, you can rewrite the history, but you can't rewrite the history with someone that has lived the history. That's even worse. I mean . . . I didn't even read about it. I was there."

Sam Rivers plans to keep living in history. He came to New York with vision. Fifteen years in the Apple haven't muted his inner voices. He looks to the '80s and forsee an important role for the Rivbea because, ". . . the musicians coming in are younger than the ones that came in the '70s." It will be up to Rivbea to help sustain their enthusiasm with interesting, challenging things to do."

On August 8, 1978 Sam Rivers went into Big Apple Studios for a quartet session. Not only was it the first time that he was recording with his new drummer Thurman Barker, an AACM member and most recently with Anthony Braxton, not only was the usually prolix Rivers limiting his impromptu excursions to five and ten minutes with an eye toward air-play. He was laying tracks for his own record company.

A name? Undoubtedly it was only half in jest that he wondered out loud, "I don't know, maybe Quality Records, if that name isn't out there by the time I hook it up. I have to check and see but I don't think there is any quality . . ." He laughs, but could not be more serious, "So I will try to feature the most promising young musicians, in addition to my own work, in addition to other established musicians who would like to be a part of it. I will be the final judge of this because it's my record label." In his commitment to himself, in his stamina, he reminds one of the man in the commercial who asks, rhetorically, "How do you think a man like me got to be . . . a man like me?" **db**



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wasn't decorated. It was cold down there, where we slept. Ornette gave us a mattress but he didn't realize how cold it was. One night something happened and he came downstairs to wake us up. He said, 'Wow, you cats better come upstairs.' We stayed there and that's when I went to the University of Ornette. He put the finishing touches on me. I spent three months up there, staying at his house, doing everything. Answering the door, helping him copy music, arguing about his harmolodic theory.

"We had some great arguments. He used to kid me about having a Bachelor's—that's the kind of attitude I had with him all the time. It was the only thing I could do to keep my sanity in a way, to hold on to what I knew and also, to try and understand what he was saying. His harmolodic theory is something else! But after three months, I was so overwhelmed by Ornette, I figured I'd better leave. Even though I didn't have a place to stay, I had to bolt, had to get out of there. He didn't want me to go. He's such a great guy. He found me a place to stay, a hotel he used to stay in. I stayed there about a month before my money ran out. After that, I was in New York, you know what I mean?"

Shortly thereafter, with the help of a man named Kunle, Jenkins and friends organized their own concert, held at Washington Square Church. It was among the first New York concerts for the new Chicago based sound, with Muhal flying in, just to play. "Richard Davis

went and told Sunny about it. At the time, Sunny was known for knocking a cat out. I didn't know it. Sirone saw me doing this and was hovering over me, protecting me, 'cause he didn't think I knew what was going on. I was telling Sunny Murray he had to cool down, I wanted to hear Sirone. I had a lot of nerve to do that! Sunny just looked at me."

Jenkins and Sirone got together with drummer Frank Clayton and formed a group. Eventually, Clayton was replaced by Jerome Cooper and the band became known as the Revolutionary Ensemble. "We did a lot of things, played a lot of places. When you add up seven years, we really did a lot. But we didn't get the kind of acceptance we should have."

Highlights?

"I remember the time we played the Ann Arbor Jazz Festival before 15,000 people. We were used to playing for maybe 150 or 200. Here we were before 15,000. It was a great feeling to know that the three of us could hold down an audience like that. We were a competent group, very musical, very together as far as what we were doing. I don't think we ever played a bad concert, ever."

The music of the Revolutionary Ensemble?

"We were an improvising band but we had heads just like everybody else. A lot of our stuff was written and it had a purpose, a direction. We tried to play a variety. I really don't think we played so-called avant garde music. For the most part, we were all playing the stuff we were capable of doing. I don't think we ever put names to it. They just put us in that category. We were doing blues, a lot of our records have blues. I really don't think any of

They're the ones I make records for. The music I play is for people who love music and love to listen to music, the discriminate listener who doesn't get bogged down by classifications and categories. They go by how good the music is. Those are the people I appeal to. My music is from the neck up, and hopefully from the neck down. I know it's cerebral, that's where the satisfaction is supposed to come from.

"Listen, I like to boogaloo myself. I like dance music and stuff like that. Now some of the music they're playing called rock or punk rock, I don't go for that but I think disco music is very good. It swings. It's got that thing to it. I can also listen to the great beboppers like Bird, all the way up to Freddie Hubbard. I dig those guys when they're playing good. I like good music and I play for people who like good music.

"Right now, I would like for my music to be heard in the black community more. Unfortunately, there hasn't been a vehicle for that."

Would Jenkins' music appeal to a larger audience if they got the chance to hear it?

"Yeah, but I'm not going to change for that. That's the job of the media, to get me out there to those people. I can't be responsible for putting the music in places. I can only be responsible for putting it out.

"As you know, I'm not really a popular guy, but it seems that if you're known to play good music, people come out. Of course, you need some help. I'm not saying the big record companies are knocking down doors to get to me. I would say the ones that are, are not offering enough as far as getting behind someone. The biggest way a record company can help is, when I go, for example, to Buffalo, the company goes in there with me so people know I'm going to be there. Most of the record companies I know really aren't doing that. They just make records and put them out.

"I've made plenty of records. I haven't been suffering from lack of recordings. I don't need to rush into something unless I think it can do me some good for the future. Right now, my future is for more people to know that I exist. In order for that to happen, I have to have a record company that's going to let me record what I want and then have enough confidence to go with me wherever I have to go. A lot of guys in my position have recorded a lot more than me, but I've always been very discriminating about that. I haven't made any money off of most of the records I've put out, so it's not about that. Most of the money I make is from grants or gigs. The royalties I get, even from our most successful record, are very minute. I went to Europe and I made money this past tour and the time before that. So right now, I'm in a little better position than I have been in before.

"This music has a great future. Most of the guys that are doing it—Muhal, the Art Ensemble, Air, Oliver Lake, Hamiet Bluiett, David Murray, Leo Smith, Sam Rivers—these guys are not really hurting. We may not be on the level of Freddie Hubbard or Chick Corea, but there's a lot of activity going on among all those names I mentioned. It's not like we're not busy. It's just that America doesn't know about it. We're not making astronomical amounts of money but I don't think anybody out here is messed up financially. I don't know too many people who are really crying like they used to..."

What about fusion music?

"It's something that businessmen made. Those people are used to leading a certain

## **"Businessmen have to invent a scheme that can sell to kids who are 13 or 14—or those who have minds like 13-year-olds. They put fusion together for that."**

was also looming in my environment at the time so we called him up and asked if he would play. He said yes. We really had a top-notch thing."

On his own in the Big Apple, Jenkins started working with Archie Shepp. They'd met in Paris in '69, and recorded the album *Black Gypsy*. In New York, Jenkins played on Shepp's *Attica Blues* and *Things Got To Change*. On the latter, the title cut, "... was written for me by [the late] Cal Massey. Archie gave me a lot of room, the whole first side of the album in fact. It was very unselfish of him. He put me on the map, in a way." Other Shepp gigs included a musical that almost made it to Broadway, based on the life of Billie Holiday. Shepp co-wrote the score with Massey, whose Brooklyn-based big band Jenkins played in and wrote for.

During those early New York days, Jenkins "... had a lot of help from people who were into something. It really helped me get going when I got here." He spent some time working with Alice Coltrane, who was in her string period. With Ms. Coltrane, Jenkins worked club dates, concerts and also made a few records. And through playing with percussionist Mtume's Umoja Ensemble, Jenkins got to meet some of the more commercial players in town.

One meeting, however, really left its mark. "I met Sirone through Kunle. We sat up all night and talked about musical philosophy. Then I went to hear him play with Sunny Murray at the Vanguard, but you couldn't hear him because Sunny was playing so loud. I 50 □ down beat

our records were that abstract."

Jenkins recommends as representative work the group's album *People's Republic* (Horizon A&M) and their newly released final effort on Inner City, recorded just before they broke up. Also, "... to get an idea of where we came from, our first record on ESP, although it's hard to get a hold of.

"I think we made a name for ourselves among musicians, and critically we were a success. Unfortunately, our philosophies became different. I guess it was the frustration of not really getting the recognition we wanted. We all had different ideas about the group and when that happened, it couldn't be a co-op no more."

After the breakup, Jenkins formed a trio with Muhal on piano and Andrew Cyrille on drums. Although the group found work Muhal had other commitments, so Anthony Davis took his place. Since, they've toured the Midwest, been to Europe twice, recorded twice and now are about to embark upon an extensive American tour. "I've got all kinds of ambitious ideas and, given the opportunity to implement them, I think they'll be a gas. They would be a lot of fun for the audience, record listeners and for us, the players."

Jenkins' latest album is soon to be released. It is one of his more ambitious projects, "something I cooked up called *Space Minds, New Worlds, Survival In America*. I don't think in terms of hits but it will reach people who dig this kind of music. I don't feel that my music will ever be heard by the masses. There's a certain type of person who's going to listen.

lifestyle, and in order to live that way, they have to make a certain amount of money. In order to do that, they have to invent a scheme that can sell to kids who are 13 or 14—or those who have minds like 13-year-olds. They put fusion together for that. As a result of this process, America's musical education is like garbage. Most Americans' musical education is at a very low level because of these fat cats putting it out here like they do. Americans don't get a chance to listen to the kind of stuff we're doing. They don't even know about Bird! It's a shame."

What about clubs?

"A lot of people put them down, I used to put them down myself, but the clubs are getting hipper. They're beginning to understand that with this music, you can't be ringing cash registers. But after all, this is America and money is what it's all about. They got to make money to run. I think we play our music at a level where we don't hear the cash register that much anyway, unless we're playing something real soft."

"We're playing more colleges than ever before, which is good. I've noticed that a lot of young guys are coming up around the country trying to be entrepreneurs or promoters. There's a whole new regime coming out. I think they're going to be more receptive to the musicians. The Eclipse organization in Ann Arbor is a good example. In Europe, they're way ahead of things. Most of the festivals I played in Europe this summer were sponsored by young guys."

Leroy Jenkins plays a Schweitzer violin with a Hill bow, and he uses a Barcus-Berry pick and a Polytone amp. He dreams about owning a Stradavarius, believing that with a Strad he'd be able to play all acoustic.

"I would imagine that since most classical violinists play with a symphony orchestra behind them, that I would be able to play acoustic behind a bass and drum." But the price, usually starting at \$36,000, and the availability—usually they are only sold to classical players—make owning a Strad just a dream, for now.

Speaking of the ax itself, Jenkins was asked about influences. "No violinists, except for Bruce Hayden. But I like the tones of Heifetz, Eddie South, too. He's closer to the kind of violinistic ability I have. He's very proficient, more so than Stuff Smith or any of the other guys that got famous. They always said he lacked soul. They said that because of his technique, but it wasn't true. Eddie South was super-soulful."

When asked to name violinistic contemporaries he admired, Jenkins thought of Billy Bang, but added, "I haven't heard about a lot of violin players. I guess it might be a hard instrument to get to. Let's face it, trumpets, pianos, basses and saxophones are still popular in America. But if I could make a break through with the instrument that would help."

"You know, young people who are coming up should try to do something different in music. I'd like to say for them not to be afraid. Music is very rewarding, for the most part. But it takes a long time to become successful."

"They say the old guys learned how to pay their dues, to be great. You have to be great and in order to be great, you have to stick in there and hang along with it. I'm 43 and I've put in some lean years. I think I really got a lot out of music from my long struggle that is still going on. Frederick Douglass once said that where there is no struggle, there is no progress."

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**Creative Music Studio** (Woodstock): Regular program of classes (now thru June 3); Fall session (thru 12/22 only); call (914) 338-7640.  
**The Office** (Nyack, NY): Call (914) 358-8938.  
**Public Theatre:** *Arthur Blythe* (11/3); *Abdullah* (11/4).  
**New School:** "Jazz Insights" w/Arnold Jay Smith, host—*Tito Puente*, *Ray Barretto & Joe Conzo* on Latin jazz (10/31); *Max Roach* (11/7); *Jackie & Roy* (11/14).  
**Tin Palace:** *Abdul Zahir Batin & the Notorious Ensemble* (11/10 & 11).  
**Livingston College** (Lucy Stone Hall, New Brunswick, NJ): *Barry Harris* w/the *Rutgers/Livingston Jazz Professors*; lecture and concert (11/9, 3-10 pm).  
**Village Vanguard:** *Woody Shaw* (11/7-12); *Slide Hampton Quintet* (11/14-19).

**The Other End:** Look for *Stephane Grappelli*, *Tom Paxton*, *Bob Gibson*, *John Renbourne*, *Stefan Grossman* and *Dave Van Ronk* in November; call (212) 673-7030.

**Manny's** (Moonachie, NJ): *Morris Nanton Trio* (Wed.).

**The Continental** (Fairfield, Conn.): Call (203) 335-9193.

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**Century City Playhouse** (10508 W. Pico Blvd.): *George Lewis* (11/5); *Tim Berne* (11/12); *Joan La Barbara* (11/19); *Lee Kaplan* and *Margaret Schuette* (11/26); 475-8388 for info.

**Claremont College** (Claremont): *Ella Fitzgerald and Trio* (11/10).

**Concerts By The Sea** (Redondo Beach): *Stanley Turrentine* (10/31-11/5); *Cal Tjader* (11/7-12); *Esther Phillips* (11/14-19); *Spyro Gyra* (11/21-26); *Seawind* (11/28-12/3); for info call 379-4998.

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

**Pasquale's** (Malibu): *Pat Senatore Trio*, guest artists weekends, occasional big bands; Sun. aft. jams, 4 pm; call 456-2007 for details.

**Baked Potato:** *Greg Mathieson & Larry Carlton* (Mon.); *Bill Mays & Ernie Watts* (Tue.); *Don Randi* (Wed.-Sat.); others upcoming at presstime; call 980-1615.

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

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

**Sound Room:** Jazz regulars include *Joe Diorio*, *Lew Tabackin*, *Milcho Leviev*, *Dave Frishberg*, others; call 761-3555.

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

**Cellar Theatre:** *Les DeMerle Transfusion* w/*Eddie Harris* (Mon.); guest regulars include *Richie Cole*, *Dave Liebman*, *Milcho Leviev*; call 487-0419.

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

**Cafe Concert** (Tarzana): Jazz; call 996-6620.

**Donte's:** Name jazz; call 769-1566 (closed Sundays).

**Blind Pig** (Hollywood): *Mike Dosco* (Mon. & Tue.); *Jet Age Time Lag* (Wed.); *Helio* (Fri.); for details call 462-9869.

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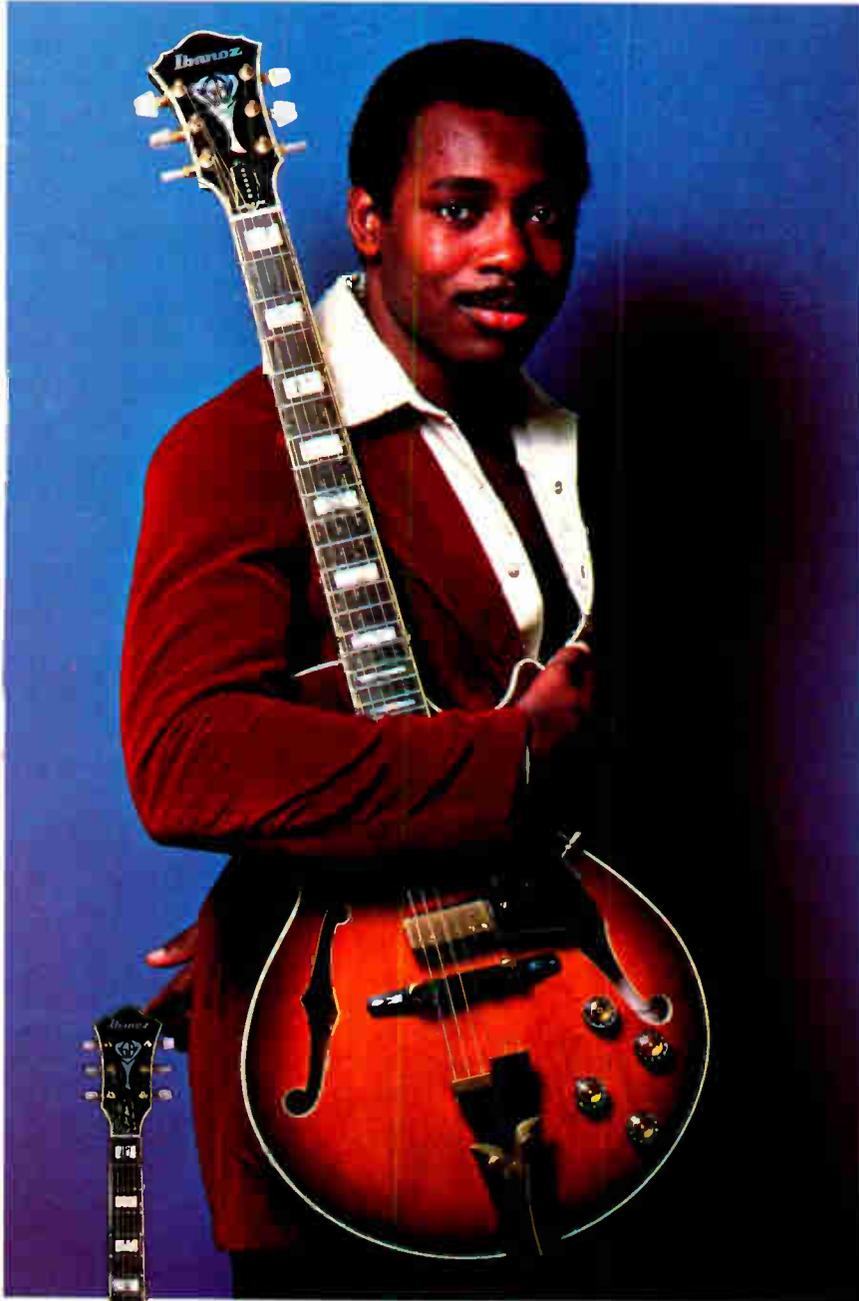
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