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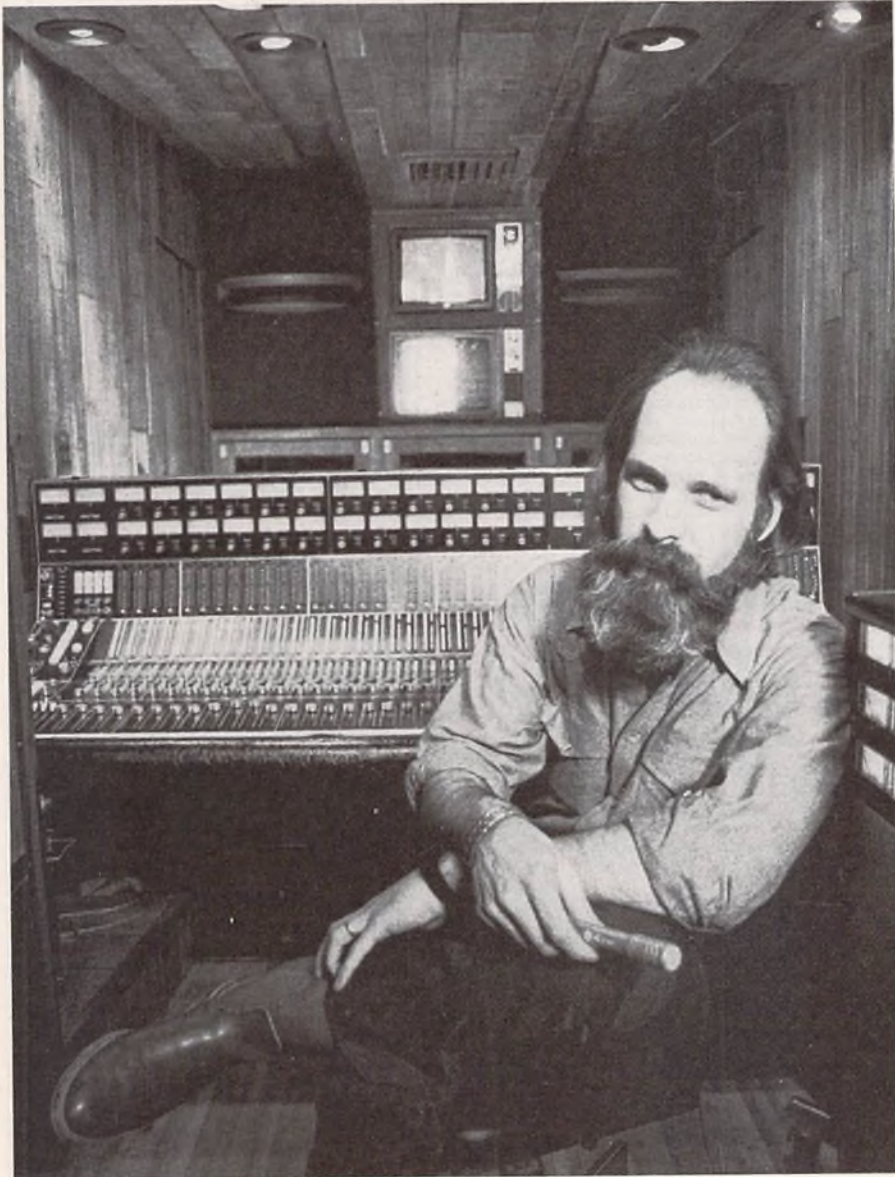
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Cover Design/Art: Kelly/Robertson
Cover Photo: Bruce Kessler

May, 1980
VOLUME 47, NO. 5
(on sale April 17, 1980)

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Controlled circulation postage paid at Lincoln, Nebraska and additional mailing offices. Subscription rates: \$13.00 for one year, \$22.00 for two years. Foreign subscription add \$2.00 per year.

Publisher assumes no responsibility for return of unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, or artwork. Nothing may be reprinted in whole or in part without written permission from Maher Publications.

down beat articles are indexed in down beat's annual, Music Handbook. Microfilms of all issues of down beat are available from University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

MAHER PUBLICATIONS: down beat, MUSIC HANDBOOK 79, Up Beat, Up Beat Daily, American Music-For-Export Buyers Guide

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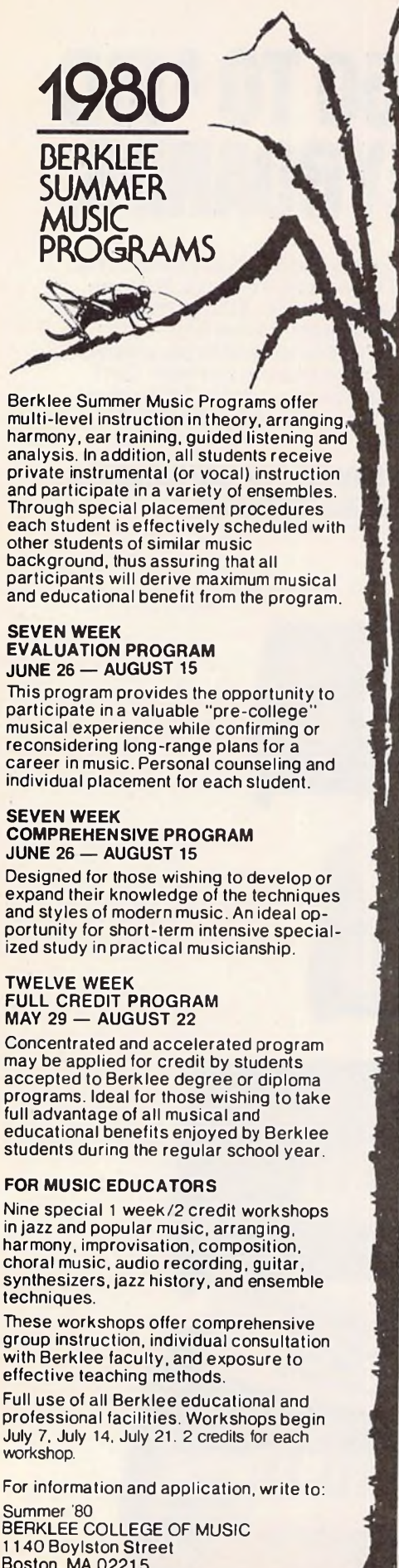
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6 down beat

the first chorus

BY CHARLES SUBER

This issue is a good example of what contemporary music and **down beat** are all about. We feature three prominent professional jazz musicians, none of whom call their music "jazz," but who are committed to the elements of jazz considered essential by **down beat's** musician readers: improvisation, a sense of vitality and moving time, and individuality of expression are elements of the jazz continuum, regardless of label.

Merle Haggard considers himself a *country jazz* musician deep in the heart of the Bob Wills Texas Playboys tradition. He describes his band's jazz style as one of "tight looseness" with an open format, impromptu solos, and offbeat voicings—with everything ad-libbed. (Billy May, one of the very best big band jazz stylists, used to call his own sort of thing, "organized slop.") The country jazz—and western swing—genre has been ignored by big city hipsters unaware of the music's roots in the American past. Also ignored is the country and western blues tradition of Jimmie Rodgers, another strong influence on Haggard, whose 12-bar work songs of the '20s reflected white and black interaction not mentioned in jazz history books.

Steve Lacy, the veteran jazz musician and master soprano sax player, doesn't use the word *jazz* to describe his current music which evolved from the New Orleans jazz styles of Sidney Bechet and Max Kaminsky almost directly to, and beyond, the free jazz styles of Cecil Taylor and Thelonious Monk. Lacy uses the term *poly-free*, "music beyond free," to describe what he and his group do so successfully. *Free jazz* is to him a redundant term because "jazz was always a music that went toward freedom."

Billy Taylor, the swinging scholar of contemporary music forms, states that he plays "a form of music that has been called jazz but I like to call it, *American classical music*." Taylor believes that tomorrow's contemporary musicians will be even less fettered by labels than today's musicians. "The musicians of the '80s will concentrate more on melody and rhythm. They will master forms, not words, that label and restrict them. They will be more versatile and well equipped to communicate their emotions and dreams."

Billy Taylor's predictions seem to be validated by what we have listened to of the 1980 **down beat** Student Recording Awards. These high school and college players, singers, writers, and recording engineers are already making music less bound to labels and limits than their predecessors. They are already beginning to achieve that musical "freedom beyond free."

Next issue features Old & New Dreams, an Ornette Coleman alumni group—Ed Blackwell, drums; Don Cherry, trumpet; Charlie Haden, bass; and Dewey Redman, sax and musette. Also featured are mature jazz guitarist Larry Coryell; Kenny Barron, "the portmanteau pianist"; and, we hope, Von and Chico Freeman, father and son tenor players; 1980 **deebee** Awards, Part II, and several other items of importance to musicians.



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CHORDS AND DISCORDS

Madison madness

I was stunned when I read Chuck France's news article (Feb. '80) concerning the University of Wisconsin Orchestra refusing to play Don Sebesky's music. Who do these young, inexperienced musicians think they are to refuse to play the works of a talented and established master?! (And for any college to have a "student-staffed directing board" to decide such matters is absolutely ridiculous!) Just because they did not "feel comfortable" with his style, they were not willing to even try his arrangement and possibly learn something new.

Why, how many of the great classical musicians are there who deviated from the "established" traditions of their times—such as Beethoven, Debussy, Schoenberg—or who arranged or transcribed music of others—such as Reger, Britten, Wagner? Would these pompous students refuse to play the music of Franz Liszt, who arranged anything he could get his hands on? I doubt it!

I did not think there existed a narrow-minded musician, but obviously I was mistaken.

Millie Eben Chicago, Illinois

Regarding the Don Sebesky Controversy: Thou Shalt Not Steal.

Don Sebesky stole the music of Bartok and Stravinsky. If he had one drop of inspiration, he would compose his own themes, harmonies and rhythms. But Don never accepted what he really is, an arranger, not a composer. The higher they climb, the harder they fall. I'm not surprised; it's the sign of the times.

Your reviewer should consult the dictionary and look up fusion, stealing, arranging, and composing.

Jack Reilly New York City

Powerful rhythm too

Regarding Michael Goldberg's article on Tower of Power (Feb. '80), I would like to compliment you on choice of subject even though they're not considered a true jazz group. At the same time, I was disappointed in the fact that you just covered the horn section of the band and neglected the excellent rhythm section of the group which includes one of the best keyboard soloists around in Chester Thompson.

I feel that since the horn section was written up so well in your article perhaps another piece covering the other artists in this group would be forthcoming.

Please continue this type item covering other non-jazz acts or musicians who are just as talented.

Pete Delaney Elmsford, New York

Black strikes back

Re: Seeing Redd over Mitchell madness (*Chords*, March '80).

If Joni Mitchell is such a "non-singer," then why did the giant that was Charles Mingus seek her out? It was Mingus who initiated the

collaboration. I believe that both Mingus and Mitchell were more intent on making music than "validating" anyone's genius.

I suppose [letter writer] Vi Redd feels that if Mingus wanted to validate his artistry, he would have chosen someone with a better voice and a closed mind. I'd have nominated Ms. Redd.

Andy Black Houston, Texas

Lake dampens Berendt

Although I'm reluctant to fan the flames of Joachim-Ernst Berendt's long-standing vendetta against ECM, some inaccuracies (willful distortions?) in his Berlin Jazz Festival report (Feb. '80) must be pointed out.

Firstly, his insulting hypothesis that "with ECM . . . the label seems to be more important than the players" and his implication that the Charlie Haden/Jan Garbarek/Egberto Gismonti trio is some kind of ad hoc, thrown-together, "all star" group. In reply, I'd like to refer your readers and Mr. Berendt to a letter that Jan Garbarek wrote to *down beat* (July 13, 1978), for it seems timely in the face of the current controversy:

"I resent your trying to make us sound like irresponsible amoebas, completely without personal direction, just timidly acting out the musical wishes of the unwanted, powerful producer . . . Whether the music succeeds or not is an open question, but please leave us the right to take on the responsibility for what we play."

The story of the trio's formation has been told in an interview with Egberto Gismonti in France's *Liberation* paper (October 31, 1979), and, needless to say, ECM's involvement was minimal: the concept was set in motion by Charlie Haden.

Secondly, in attacking this group, Berendt misappropriates a quote from the French *Jazz Magazine*—"jazz for people who don't like jazz"—which, interestingly, did not appear in his otherwise identical Berlin report in that publication. The reason is clear: this quote originates from a review of the Lyon Festival in June 1979—a review written a few weeks before Charlie Haden, Egberto Gismonti and Jan Garbarek had ever played together.

I don't think that any further comment is necessary.

Steve Lake ECM Records
Munich, Germany

Further fest flak

down beat showed great insensitivity in assigning the coverage of the 1979 "Berliner Jazztage" (Feb. '80) to Mr. Joachim-Ernst Berendt. This event is too important to be covered by a man who obviously has an ax to grind with the festival, and lacked even the slightest amount of objectivity.

We enjoyed playing in Berlin and appreciated the efficient, professional way the event was handled. The band played very well (even better than in Warsaw, contrary to Mr. Berendt's observation) and received an incredibly warm reception from the notoriously cool Berlin audience. Was Mr. Berendt in attendance that evening?

Toshiko [Akiyoshi] and I are grateful for Mr. Berendt's strong interest in, and support of, our project, but I feel this review should not go unchallenged.

Lew Tabackin North Hollywood, California

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NEWS

Szabo Sues Scientology

LOS ANGELES—Guitarist Gabor Szabo filed suit against the Church of Scientology and Vanguard Artists International for over \$21 million Feb. 5, claiming they misappropriated his money and mismanaged his career.

According to the suit, Szabo signed a management contract with Vanguard on Nov. 17, 1978, in which Vanguard was to serve as his manager for a percentage of his income.

Szabo claimed the managers failed to give him accountings of his earnings, improperly calculated their fees, and misappropri-

ated \$15,000 for his own Scientology training. He said Vanguard also coerced him into turning over \$20,000 to them, and failed to prepare his income tax returns, exposing him to criminal liability.

The suit stated that Vanguard, directed by musician/Scientologist Chick Corea, is a subsidiary of the Church of Scientology. However, Rev. Herber Jentzsch's Scientology office denied any official connection between the church and Vanguard Artists. They said they were unaware of the lawsuit and that the church had nothing to do with Szabo's management contract.

Nonesuch At Symphony Space

NEW YORK—Nonesuch Records is one of the few labels with mass distribution (through Warner-Elektra-Atlantic) that has consistently featured the work of avant garde composers, even to the commissioning of their compositions. In addition, the label has carved a niche for itself in the fields of Americana, pre-Baroque and world folk music. It was rather disheartening, therefore, to hear that Teresa ("Tracy") Sterne, artistic director of Nonesuch for 15 years, left the label in January. According to Sterne, she departed after being instructed to cancel several important recording sessions because the label was losing money. Executives of Elektra/Asylum, Nonesuch's parent company, deny that the label will stop making original recordings. They add that Nonesuch will be moving in more commercial directions.

Meanwhile, Ms. Sterne has not been forgotten. In a special concert at Manhattan's Symphony Space on Feb. 20, many of the artists whom she encouraged and championed gathered to honor her by performing pieces from their Nonesuch recordings. Among the artists who donated their services for this event were Jan de Gaetani, Paul Jacobs, Gilbert Kalish, Sergiu Luca, Joshua Rifkin, William Bolcom, Joan Morris, Raymond des Roches and the New Jersey Percussion Ensemble, and Pomerium Musics.

This tribute concert was the first in the new Symphony Space En-

core series. Alan Miller, co-artistic director of the non-profit performing arts center, conceived of the series about a year ago. He wanted to give artists the opportunity to repeat a live performance that had been well received but would not, under normal circumstances, be heard again in New York for many years. Later on, he thought it would be a good idea to include New York premieres of works that had already been recorded. Interested in the material on Nonesuch, he decided to contact some of the label's recording artists. After Sterne lost her position with the label, Miller resolved to kick off the series with the Nonesuch concert.

Miller expects the Encore programs to continue on regularly scheduled Tuesday evenings. Symphony Space, which seats 950, will make all facilities available free of charge and will assist in promotion and publicity. Encore concerts may be devoted to a single work or artist, or the programming may be mixed. Miller stressed the fact that he is interested in a broad range of music: on a single program, he said, there might be a violin sonata and some folk music or jazz.

"I really want the artists to tell us what to do," he said.

Performers who would like to participate in the encore series should write to Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, New York 10025 or call (212) 865-2557.

—Kenneth Terry

POTPOURRI

Correction: in our **Manhattan Transfer** feature (db March '80), the paragraphs on page 18 beginning "Twilight Tone was a concept I always had..." are attributed to Tim Hauser, but the quotation was in fact by Alan Paul.

● Boston based composer **George Russell** went to Sweden in March with a portfolio of new compositions to perform with the Swedish Radio band; he plans another trip, to Venice and Rome, in May, and will reorganize his NYC big band over the summer... Trumpeter **Stanton Davis** recently concertized with his Ghetto Mysticism band at Walpole Prison, in conjunction with the Massachusetts Prison Arts Foundation... **Jimmy Gluffre** has formed a new quartet with drummer Randy Jones and students of the New England Conservatory; he's also started chart writing for Mel Lewis' Orchestra...

Eighty U.S. jazz players—among them Jamey Aebersold, David Liebman, John McNeil, the Art Ensemble, Dave Brubeck, Herbie Mann, Les McCann, Akiyoshi Tabackin band, Abdullah Ibrahim, John Scofield, Steve Erquiaga, Ed Soph, Adam Nussbaum, Jim Pugh, David Baker, Hal Galper, Jim McNeely, Ron McClure and Todd Coolman—visited Sydney, Australia in January, for two music festivals, and clinics and concerts. Wellington and Auckland, New Zealand welcomed the musicians, too.

● *Orchestra Inventions*, composed by AACM multi-reedist **Douglas Ewart** through an NEA grant, featured George Lewis, Don Moye, Frank Walton (trumpet), Ed Wilkerson, Mwata Bowden (bassoon), Art "Turk" Burton, Adegoke Steve Colson, Kahil El' Zabar, Vandy Harris, Light Henry Huff, Wallace McMillan and Rita Warford, at Columbia College, Chicago, in mid April.

FINAL BAR

Trumpeter **Mike Delay**, a New Orleans native, died of a heart attack at 70 in Los Angeles in January. He had played with Pa Pa Celestin, Paul Barbarin and well known dixieland groups in his home town, and in L.A. worked the pit band of the Follies Theater, later being featured with the Imperial Jazz Eagles and Joe Darensbourg's Dixie Flyers. His widow survives him.

Edward "Montudie" Garland, among the earliest New Orleans style bassists, died of natural causes in Hollywood Jan. 22. He celebrated his 95th birthday January 9, and was hospitalized for three weeks. Born in New Orleans in 1885, he began playing snare drum in street bands and funeral parades, later switching to string bass to play in Storyville and Funky Butt Hall. Over the years, "Montudie" played with legendary musicians including Buddy Bolden, King Oliver, Kid Ory, Jelly Roll Morton and Bunk Johnson.

Garland was one of those seminal artists who carried jazz "up the river" and helped spread it nationwide. He settled in Los Angeles in 1921 and lived there until his death. His last formal association was from '72 to '78 with Barry Martyn's Legends Of Jazz group. At funeral services presided over by the Reverend Johnny Otis, former r&b star, some 100 mourners said their farewells to music provided by trumpeter Teddy Buckner, Turk Murphy's upbeat, red coated seven piece San Francisco dixieland band, and the 20 piece Resurrection Brass Band led by Gordon Mitchell.

Jerry Fielding, composer, conductor and arranger, died of a heart attack in Toronto February 17, at age 57. After studying clarinet in his native Pittsburgh, he went to New York at age 17 and became arranger for Alvino Rey's orchestra; later he arranged big band charts for Claude Thornhill, Jimmy Lunceford, Tommy Dorsey, Kay Kyser, Les Brown, Charlie Barnett, directed music for the radio and television shows of Groucho Marx, and Jack Paar, led his own orchestra and the Hollywood Wind Jazztet playing dance music and recorded for Decca, Kapp and Hanover labels. He was nominated three times for Oscars for motion picture soundtracks. Surviving are his mother, his wife, two daughters and a sister.

John Park, former lead alto saxist with Stan Kenton's Orchestra, died Dec. 6 ('79) at age 45, of a heart condition. Born in Springfield, Mo., Park had worked with Les Elgart, Tex Beneke, Tommy Dorsey and Warren Covington, besides frequently guesting with the North Texas State University's One O'Clock Lab Band and teaching privately and in clinics. He is survived by his wife, sons and daughters, mother, brothers and a grandson. Jazz keyboardists Wayne Johnson and Charles Beach performed "solemn but modern music, the kind John would have approved of" at a memorial service, and Passy Helwig sang.

The late **Corky Corcoran**, whose Final Bar appeared in db Jan. '80, was a tenor saxist, not an altoist as reported.

Synare Show Stoppers: Joe Mosello, Percussionist

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Ensemble, and has performed on numerous Mike Douglas, Merv Griffin, and Dinah Shore TV shows. A super percussionist as well as a trumpet player Joe has freelanced with some of the top names in the music world. Joe is definitely hot in concert and on record. Now he is hot on SYNARE too. Why should you wait any longer?

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POTPOURRI

Notes from New York: The Universal Jazz Coalition, a not-for-profit group for the advancement of local jazz, recently announced plans for a Louis Armstrong Jazz Center, which, when funded will open as a jazz community center, library and home for the Coalition. Headed by Cobi Narita, last year the UJC presented over 60 concerts, including a week-long Salute To Women In Jazz at the Village Gate. Besides helping young or unknown artists find a showcase, the UJC is frequently holding seminars and panel discussions on the business end of music. A recent symposium on the record industry included as panelists CBS vice president Vernon Slaughter, RCA press representative Elliot Horne, ECM's Bob Hurwitz, Arista's Andre Perry, Inner City's Irv Kratka, former Chiaroscuro president Hank O'Neal, saxist Byard Lancaster, and Rosetta Reitz, blues archivist. Among the advice offered the audience: send good quality cassettes for audition, with only a few of your best tracks; send a sheet describing background and biographical information and indicate whether the tape is a concert or studio presentation. Other UJC conference topics have been "The Future Of Jazz", "Business Aspects of Jazz" and "Grants and

Funding." More are planned. For further information write 156 5th Ave, New York, NY 10010 or call (212) 924-5026 . . . The not-for-profit Consortium Of Jazz Organizations and Artists announced plans for an expanded seminar and concert program from its new office at 2090 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd, New York, NY 10027. More information comes from executive director Mari-Jo Johnson at (212) 866-9000 . . . The Songwriters Hall of Fame in Times Square hosted a 97th birthday party for ragtime pianist/composer **Eubie Blake**. The Hall, which houses artifacts of many of the great songwriters of the U.S., including Fats Waller's upright piano and George Gershwin's desk, is presided over by lyricist Sammy Cahn. Eubie, typically ebullient, chatted with guests and banged out a couple of his more famous numbers on Fats' piano as local TV personalities and guests, including Buck Clayton, Benny Morton and Walter Bishop Sr., sipped champagne and nibbled on chopped liver and gefilte fish . . . Pianist **Harold Danko** took part in an "I Love New York" concert at London's Royal Albert Hall, along with the Radio City Rockettes . . . Bruce Rickert's fine film of the Kansas City jazz era, *Last Of The Blue Devils*, has won the Walter Jacobs Award at the Florida Film Festival, the Hugo Award at the Chicago Film Festival

and is now being prepared for screenings at the Hong Kong, Goteborg and Sidney film festivals; it's been released to theaters in London and Boston, and features performances by **Count Basie**, **Jay (Hootie) McShann**, **Joe Turner** and rare historical footage. Don't miss it—ask for it.

● **Club notes, L.A.:** Bassist **Charlie Haden** and cornetist **Bobby Bradford**, both Ornette Coleman alumni, packed the intimate Century City Playhouse for a one night duo concert during the disastrous February rain storms here—the gig celebrated Haden's recent move to L.A. from the Bay Area . . . Carmelo's, a newer jazz club, presented the **Bob Florence** orchestra, an 18 piece big band playing its pianist-leader's original music, for one night. Among the major studio musicians involved: Pete Christlieb, Kim Richmond, Lanny Morgan (all woodwinds); Buddy Childers and Steve Huffstetter (brass); Charlie Loper ('bone), Joel Di Bartolo, bass . . . Gazzarri's, known as a Sunset Strip rock joint, altered its format to host **Ray Anthony's** new 20 piece band for one night; featured players were Dave Pike (vibes), Nat Pierce (piano), Med Flory (alto sax), Roger Neumann (tenor sax), Childers (again) and Dave Wolpe ('bone) . . . **Joe Pass** filled Pasquale's in Malibu, playing solo guitar—and before he was joined

by drummer Frank Severino and bassist Pat Senatore (who owns the seaside club) **db's** West Coast editor Lee Underwood awarded Pass his 1979 readers poll plaque . . . Tenor saxist **Dexter Gordon** videotaped all his sets live at Howard Rumsey's Concerts By The Sea club in Redondo Beach during two days in late February.

"Jazz Vespers are programs of early evening Christian worship, in which jazz is enjoyed for its own sake and employed as a primary means of religious expression as well," says the **Rev. David James Berkedal**, pastor of the Christ Lutheran Church in Compton (Ca.); a drummer, he's been leading the sextet Ascension on Sundays at L.A.'s Second Baptist Church. **Roberto Miguel Miranda** plays bass, **Virgil Figueroa's** on conga, **Tommy Tedesco** is the guitarist, **Wynell Montgomery** blows reeds and **Adelle Sebastian** sings. "When the Holy Spirit uses it to reveal meaning to us, any music is Christian music," says Berkedal. "Jazz is no exception."

● Detroit's Creative Arts Collective, with the NEA, the Michigan Council for the Arts, the Detroit Institute of Arts and WDET radio, sponsored a Creative Music Cornucopia, with composer **A. Spencer Barefield** (guitar, piano) and a quartet (in March), a trio (in April) and May 3 a sextet.

RELEASES

Listen to these! available, now: Drummer-melodist-composer **Jack DeJohnette's** *Special Edition*, formed with Peter Warren, cello, Arthur Blythe, alto sax and David Murray, tenor and bass clarinet is a feature in ECM's spring release. Also *Saudades*, by percussionist **Nana Vasconcelos** with help from the Radio Symphony Orchestra Stuttgart and Egberto Gismonti; *Magico* with **Charlie Haden**, **Jan Garbarek** and **Gismonti**; **Terje Rypdal's** *Descendre*, and **Miroslav Vitous' First Meeting**.

Inner City's justly proud of trumpeter **Bobby Shew's** first LP as a leader, *Outstanding In His Field*, and just as proud of *Tributaries*, keyboard duets by **Andy Laverne** and **Richard Sussman** (with Bob Moses drumming), pianist **Bill O'Connell's** *Searching*, **Arn Evans & Tradewinds' Lighter Than Air**, and **Dry Jack's** second, *Whale City*.

Gil Scott-Heron and **Brian Jackson** take on 1980; so does a saxist absent lately, who returns with a disc simply called *Bartz*. And Savoy reissues of **Charlie Byrd** (*First Flight*); **Milt Jackson** and **Kenny Clarke** (*Bluesology*); *The Shouters* (Nappy Brown, Carl Davis, H-Bomb Ferguson, Gate-

mouth Moore and Eddie Mack); *Black California* Vol. 2 (Helen Humes, Slim Gaillard and Wardell Gray, among others) and **Charlie Ventura** (*Euphoria*) come from the same label—Arista.

From the CBS family of labels: **Cedar Walton** plays keyboards on *Soundscapes*, in sound company of Leon Thomas, Al Foster, Bob Berg, Steve Turre, Ray Mantilla and others; blues rocker **Johnny Winter** is *Raisin' Cain*; young keyboardist **Rodney Franklin** fears *You'll Never Know*; **Al Johnson**, claiming kinship with Sam Cooke, Marvin Gaye and Al Green, is *Back For More*; guitarist **Wilbert Longmire** plays *With All My Love*; **Norman Harris** on guitar starts *The Harris Machine*.

Sarah Vaughan: Duke Ellington, Song Book One with arrangements by Billy Byers and a small group of Granz favorites; **Basie and Ella** are *A Perfect Match*; **John Haley** ("Zoot") **Sims** and **Harry "Sweets" Edison** are *Just Friends*—Pablo, natch.

Grover Washington Jr. goes *Skylarkin'*, **Dr. Strut** goes *Struttin'*, **Smokey Robinson** has *Warm Thoughts*, **Rick James** presents *The Stone City Band In 'n' Out*, **Teena Marie** is *Lady T* and **Flight** takes off for an *Excursion Beyond*—all from Motown.

Piccolo bassist **Ron Carter** offers *Pick 'Em* (Milestone.) Pianist **Monty Alexander** reveals *Facets*

in trio, reedman **Ted Nash** has a *Conception*, and **Cal Tjader**, with *La Onda Va Bien*, joins Concord Jazz.

Nomad—that's **Chico Hamilton**, now on Elektra, the label with which **Richie Havens** has *Connections*, **Warren Zevon** suffers a *Bad Luck Streak In Dancing School*, and **Linda Ronstadt** experiences *Mad Love*. Saxman-keyboardist **David Sanborn** builds a *Hideaway* on Warner Bros., Synthesist **Roger Powell** finds an *Air Pocket* (on Bearsville), *Mamatapee* is produced by (Norman) Whitfield records, **John Lewis** and **Hank Jones** offer *An Evening With Two Grand Pianos* (on Little David), and pianist **Doris Hays' Adoration Of The Clash** features first recordings of Henry Cowell and Morton Feldman compositions (on WEA's Finnadar).

Independent Women's Blues: Vol. 1 is *Mean Mothers*, Vol. 2 *Sorry But I Can't Take You*, both from Rosetta Records (NYC). Elizabeth Cotton's original traditional songs continue on *When I'm Gone*, from Folkways. *Alive!* is a women's jazz sextet; flutist composer Kay Gardner is *Emerging*—both on Urana Records (of Wise Women Enterprises, NYC).

Alive ('78-'79) is also the University of Northern Colorado (Greely)'s jazz lab band's disc. *Superchicken* is by the **Dallas Jazz Orchestra**. **Sidney Bechet**

receives the Time-Life Records *Giants Of Jazz* treatment. Pianist/composer **Don Randi** and **Quest** have *New Baby* on the direct-to-disc Sheffield Lab (Santa Barbara, CA) label. Pianist **Art Matthews** produced his own *It's Easy To Remember* on Matra Records, (North Amherst, MA) with sidemen Archie Shepp, Dizzy Reece and Alan Dawson. Drummer **Steve Reid's** trio (Brandon Ross, guitar; David Wertman, bass) are *New Life*, waxing *Visions Of The Third Eye* on Mustevic Sound Inc. (NYC). Mingus collaborator **Jack Walrath** cut *Demons In Pursuit* for Gatemouth Recording Co. (Island Park, NY) with John Scofield, Jim McNeely and Dannie Richmond on board. **John Coates Jr.'s** solo piano takes the *Rainbow Road*, for Omni Sound (Delaware Water Gap, PA). Pianist **Jack Scialese** goes *Beyond Blue* for Polarix Records (Monterey Park, CA). Drummer **Mat Marucci** asks *Who Do Voo Doo* on Marco Records (Universal City, CA). *The Nova Convention* documents writers and others (Patti Smith, Philip Glass, Frank Zappa) honoring William S. Burroughs; the Fugs, Ishmael Reed and Burroughs show up on the Dial-A-Poem Poets LP *Big Ego*—both two-fers, available from JCOA/NMDS (NYC, NY). **Chris Turner** does weird things with *Harmonicas* on Bent Reeds (Allston, MA).

Boppers' Resort: A West African Festival; Audience Digs Beat

DAKAR, SENEGAL—This sunny, friendly West African nation and Gambia, the smaller country it surrounds, have ears turned to the musics of the U.S., Caribbean islands and Western Europe as well as native traditions. The foreign input is evident when the state broadcast network, Radio Senegal, precedes its news bulletins with an attention grabbing electronic Weather Report cadence, when silk-screened tee shirts celebrating Bob Marley are sold at roadside storefronts in thatched hut villages, and when French, German, Italian and Casablanca disco sides predominate the sound systems at night spots patronized by local people.

But jazz musicians visit to perform here rarely, so the festival of mainstream boppers sponsored by Club Med, Almadies, from early December through May 10 was a major cultural event. When the first guest artists, tenor saxman Frank Foster with his sextet and traveling companions, set down at Yoff airport they were met by the national ballet company, a complement of traditional musicians (mostly playing the multi-stringed kora), and a representative of the government—Francis Senghor, son of the nation's president. Senghor's presence was symbolic of more than official hospitality; the young man spent four years studying composition at Boston's Berklee School of Music, and is eager to open the first 24 track recording studio in Dakar, Senegal's capital, under the auspices of his Golden Baobab production company.

Senghor was also the vital liaison between the self-isolated, French financed resort community and the bustling African city; with Club Med's jazz-fan-in-residence, Bernie Pollack, he arranged for the jazz players' gig in the open



Frank Foster's Non Electric Company playing outside Dakar's town hall; choir, enthusiasts listening.

yard of Dakar's city hall, free to a couple thousand listeners, as well as a concert hall program at affordable ticket prices. For the bulk of their stay, Foster and his band (comprised of trombonist Janice Robinson, trumpeter Chris Albert, pianist Dannie Mixon, bassist Brian Smith, drummer Keith Copeland, percussionist Babafumi Akunyun, Mrs. Foster, the irrepressible Dorthaan Kirk and assorted wives, children and companions) enjoyed a relaxed vacation pace, playing self-satisfying sets in an elegantly appointed cocktail lounge and aside the swimming pool. A combo of French dixieland players, Michel Zagradsky's All Stars, and the Club's young staff band performed sporadically, too. For the most part, few paying customers (in Club Med parlance, "gentle members") cared much about the music. Their activity centered around the beach, the bar, backgammon and the resplendent mealtime buffet tables.

But how did the Africans enjoy the jazz? At the outdoor concert, a 100-voice African choir (overwhelmingly female) opened the show, singing in French from a stand of bleachers. Spontaneously, a third of the audience chimed in disruptively with *Frere Jacques*. It must be noted that Senegal was a French colony until the mid '50s; French is spoken in Dakar's central, European influenced business district, the Plateau, but Wolof remains the country's prevalent language. Wolof is the tongue of the Mandinko empire, which spread several hundred years ago from central west Africa, and resides in its descendants in Senegal, Mali and Gambia, along with other tribes and peoples from the north (a

desert nation, Mauritania) and the south (what is now Guinea Bissau, Guinea and the Ivory Coast). After several songs, including a rendition of *Golden Slippers*, the choir was followed by four kora players. Unfortunately, the sound system wasn't adjusted to amplify the nimble, spirited pluckings from the gourd bottomed, harp-like instruments.

When Frank Foster and his Non-Electric Company appeared they began with a fanfare theme just to check the sound, and immediately called for more monitors. Then they launched *Impressions*, their ensemble head exciting applause. More than mere expectation infused the audience; the mostly male listeners desired a revelation. The blues nearly satisfied them. Despite a lack of previous experience with lengthy horn solos, the audience followed Albert's dramatic trumpet lines to their conclusion, regarded Robinson's 'bone foray with wonder (awed, at least in part, by the inclusion of a woman amid male musicians, as strict Moslem tradition excludes women from places where music is played, and, though somewhat Westernized, West Africa maintains its Moslem culture), cheered Mixon's fast pianistics, and respected Foster's discursive, chord running choruses, especially for his vocalizing intonation.

Yet the most impressive feature seemed to the Africans to be the drummers' duet, with inspired interplay between Copeland's traps and Babafumi's conga and trick bag toys. Unfamiliarity with the general characteristics of bop may obscure for these listeners complexities of melodic and harmonic structure, but the expert percussion work was knowledgeably ap-

preciated. The audience was vocally enthusiastic when Foster announced his most recent composition, an arrangement of a melody he said he "stole from a musician who met us at the airport, playing it on a native instrument. I play this as a tribute to the people of Senegal." It was an uptempo riff that could as well have been played on kora or balafon, riding the New Yorkers' version of Wolof stride. The voicings were rich, and the crowd response fed Babafumi's energy during his solo spot.

Bilingual Africans and musicians as far away as Zigunchois, the major city of Senegal's southern Casamance region, knew of the jazz musicians' Club Med residences; members of a professional Gambian band, Ifangbondi, hoped they too could hear the American players, and perhaps share musical information or discuss mutual concerns, though travel from Banjul, Gambia's capital, to Dakar is time consuming and, for eight musicians, costly. Backstage at a resort hotel catering to Scandinavians, the members of Ifangbondi, all in their 20s to early 30s, discussed their musical educations and employments.

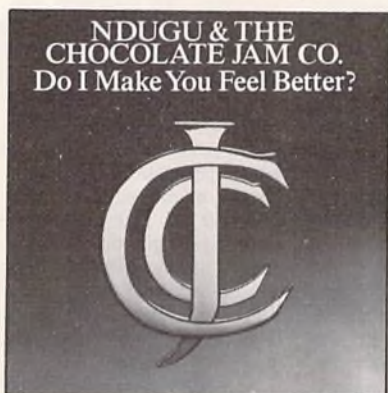
All had heard popular Motown sounds during their teens in the '60s and were familiar as well with the best known Cuban charangas and conjuntos, the folk music of Trinidad and calypso. From magazines such as *down beat*, which they can occasionally come by, they learned about advances in equipment, especially guitars, keyboards and electronics, which stimulated their curiosities but which can, frustratingly, be obtained only in small selection at considerable cost: these players function without such basics as

Frank Foster



JEROME SCHWAB

No two are alike.



The former drummer, writer and co-producer for George Duke brings all his talents as well as his name to the group that is now known to one and all as Ndugu & The Chocolate Jam Co. "Do I Make You Feel Better?" includes Ndugu's all-star version of the Bee Gee's "Shadow Dancing" featuring The O'Jays and The Jones Girls.

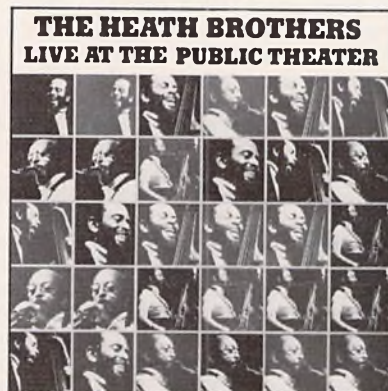
Among the supporting artists on the LP are George Duke, Hubert Laws and Ronnie Laws*.

*Appears courtesy of Liberty/United Records.



Robert Palmer of *The New York Times* describes Lonnie as "a colorist, weaving his pianos and synthesizers in waves of sound, and a group catalyst, drawing committed performances from his soloists and rhythm section."

On his new album, "Love Is the Answer," Lonnie for the first time brings these qualities to the role of producer as well as performer.



The Heath Brothers' first live album reflects their concern with the jazz repertoire.

In this collection, they offer a Duke Ellington classic, a theme by contemporary Billy Taylor, as well as original compositions. "For the Public," the single, was written especially for the event by Jimmy Heath. It was produced by his son, recording artist Mtume, who has produced Stephanie Mills and Phyllis Hyman.

Joining The Brothers are pianist Stanley Cowell, guitarist Tony Purrone and the group's new percussionist, Akira Tana.

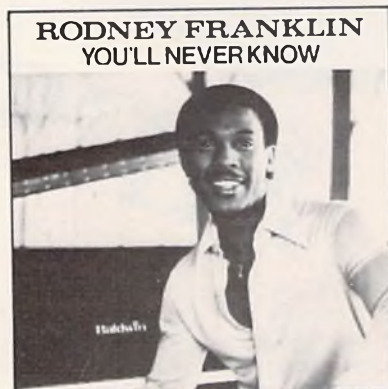
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down beat has described Woody Shaw as "one of today's leading contenders for the world's heavyweight trumpet crown."

You'll be just as definite in your praise of Woody's new album, "For Sure!"

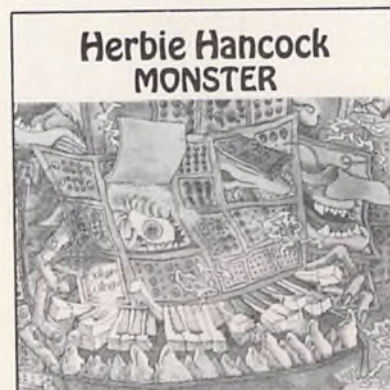
Joining him for the first time is vocalist Judi Singh. Listen for her on "Time Is Right" and "Why."



Keyboardist Rodney Franklin has toured and recorded with Freddie Hubbard, Bill Summers, George Duke and Marlena Shaw.

But "You'll Never Know" about the plaintive, rollicking, surprising and witty qualities of his own music unless you purchase his second Columbia album.

Among those joining Rodney as sidemen are bass guitarist Paul Jackson and percussionist Kenneth Nash.



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MERLE HAGGARD

COUNTRY JAZZ

MESSIAH

by TIM SCHNECKLOTH

It's showtime at Harrah's/Reno, ladies and gentlemen, with Merle Haggard and the Strangers. As the curtain goes up, 13 musicians are revealed on the stage. Ten of them are seated. It looks more like a big jazz band than the standard country music combo some in the audience have expected, but they swing easily into one of Haggard's '60s country hits, *Swinging Doors*.

Some of those in the audience who are familiar with the original recording look a little surprised—the tune has changed. The beat is punchier; it swings harder yet more freely. After nearly every verse, Merle calls for a solo from someone in the band. It might be a hot series of Charlie Christianish jazz licks from the five-string electric mandolin of Tiny Moore, way off to the right of the stage. Or perhaps Moore or Gordon Terry will pick up a fiddle to play a line that sounds for all the world like something from Joe Venuti or Stephane Grappelli. Guitarist Roy Nichols might get the tap from Haggard, prompting him to pull some fluid runs from his bottomless bag of jazz-inflected string bending licks.

The band segues into *All My Friends Are Going To Be Strangers*, one of Haggard's first big national hits. He sings the lyrics like a jazz bandleader might state the melody for, say, *All The Things You Are*—it's a springboard for inventive instrumental work. More solos follow—Mark Yeary on honky tonk piano, an r&b oriented, Lee Allen-style tenor sax break from Don Markham. Anything might happen; the effect is one of total spontaneity.

The workout ends, and Norman Hamlet abandons his pedal steel for a dobro, picking the band into *No Hard Times*, a Depression-era blues by Jimmie Rodgers, whose early jazz roots are illustrated by Markham's dixieland trumpet spot.

The tunes roll on. There's the Cajun effect of multiple fiddles on *My Own Kind Of Hat*. *It's Been A Great Afternoon* sports a harmony guitar passage from Nichols, Haggard and Eldon Shamblin, a lively sexagenarian who seems to be having the time of his life.

Driven along by two drummers, Biff Adam and Don Gallardo, the band breaks into sections for *San Antonio Rose*. Fiddles, guitars, trumpet, mandolin and piano come together in crazy quilt voicings, held together by musicianship and love for the material.

Two girls are sitting at a table in the audience. The one from San Francisco seems somewhat confused as Merle strikes into a Bing

Crosby-reminiscent *Pennies From Heaven*.

"What do they call this kind of music?" she asks her friend.

"They call it western swing," she answers. She's from Texas.

When Merle Haggard performs live at a place like Harrah's/Reno, he attracts a wide variety of people, ranging from purist country music freaks to vacationers who just need a break from gambling. Some of the listeners know Haggard (or *think* they know Haggard) only on the basis of *Okie From Muskogee*, the controversial 1969 hit that reflected the unsettled nature of its time.

But in every audience there are at least a few who *do* know and appreciate what Haggard is doing. He is playing a very personal brand of music that is strongly rooted in the American past, music that synthesizes the work of long-departed artists from virtually every field of American popular music. As Haggard sings and his band plays, Crosby, Venuti, Christian and Eddie Lang come to mind, not to mention the clear-cut country influences of Lefty Frizzell and Hank Williams.

Like much art Haggard's work is complex, operating on a number of different levels. A listener can come into the show totally cold, never having heard of Haggard or his many sources, and still be impressed by the band's remarkably skilled soloists, Haggard's expressive singing and concisely powerful songwriting. But there are other things going on. Beyond the level of pure entertainment, strands of American music are being woven together in a totally organic manner. There are no forced "tributes" to legendary figures; playing and assimilating their music seems completely natural to the players and singers on the stage.

The music is simply in their blood. They have grown up with it, extended it, nurtured and popularized it. In fact, some of the Strangers—like Tiny Moore, Eldon Shamblin and Roy Nichols—can claim to have helped originate it.

Of course, what Haggard and the Strangers are doing is not unusual. The very nature of American music depends on interacting cultures and musical tastes. What is unusual about Haggard is the fact that he never stops synthesizing. He is building on foundations created by other great eclectics—notably his idols, Bob Wills (the

founder of western swing) and Jimmie Rodgers, whose '20s and '30s fusion of jazz, blues and Southern white music set a creative model that is emulated up to the present.

Although these sources are certainly *there* in Haggard's music, there is no slavish imitation going on. Like Wills and Rodgers, Haggard is something of a historian who scouts all the way back to the early jazz and blues roots that Wills and Rodgers drew on themselves and shapes them to fit his own approach. And, as many critics have pointed out, he is his idols' logical heir—a country jazz messiah, if you will.

For the last ten years or so, the most obvious strand in Haggard's tapestry has been the influence of Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys, the seminal western swing band that gained wide popularity in the '30s and '40s with such recordings as *San Antonio Rose*, *Take Me Back To Tulsa* and *Stay All Night, Stay A Little Longer*.

Wills had been musically inactive for some time (he was hospitalized in the aftermath of a stroke) when Haggard, in 1970, decided to record a tribute album of Wills' tunes (*A Tribute To The Best Damn Fiddle Player In The World*, Capitol ST 638). In making the record, Haggard assembled some of the former members of Wills' band, many of whom had been musically inactive themselves. Two of the most famous still perform frequently with the Strangers: Tiny Moore, whose playing often evokes that of Charlie Christian and Django Reinhardt, and Eldon Shamblin, whose playing, in fact, was favorably compared with Christian's in the '30s (both Christian and Shamblin came out of Oklahoma at roughly the same time).

Haggard's fascination with jazz forms, however, goes beyond his emulation of Wills' eclecticism. His admiration for Jimmie Rodgers' music—the first real country-jazz fusion—led him to research Rodgers' own roots, particularly an obscure yet influential '20s jazz-pop singer named Emmett Miller. The result of the investigation was a 1974 album, *I Love Dixie Blues* (Capitol ST 11200), recorded in New Orleans with a dixieland horn section. The album sparked a bit of an Emmett Miller revival; one Miller tune from the album (*Big Bad Bill Is Sweet William Now*) has since been recorded by such youth-oriented historical singers as Ry Cooder and Leon Redbone.

Still, the temptation is to pigeonhole Haggard and the Strangers as a "western swing band." In his book *Blacks, Whites And Blues*, British critic Tony Russell defines the western swing musicians of past decades as ones who "rejoiced in an eclecticism more extreme than any other school's and in doing so captured a wider audience than native folk music had ever had. The western swingers offered pops, new and venerable; jazz standards and boogies; classic blues and rural blues hits; instrumental rags and waltzes; music hall and novelty songs; Mexican dance tunes and cowboys' songs of the range."

Even though Haggard dislikes the term "western swing" ("It's a bad handle," he says), his band certainly fits the definition above. But what sets the Strangers apart from most other bands in his genre is an essential paradox—a kind of "tight looseness." Haggard directs the band on the run: the format is open; solos are taken in an impromptu manner, at the leader's direction; songs can stretch out, lead into others, speed up, slow down, break into big band jazz

oriented ensemble passages with strange voicings. It's loose and exciting, yet it stays coherent and, well, *tight*. And what do you call a band like that?

"I call it 'country jazz,'" says Haggard. "I think that describes it better than anything else. It's freewheeling, and it's certainly jazz, since everything we do is ad lib.

"Let's call it 'country jazz.' I'd like to be responsible for changing that phrase."

Most people meeting Haggard for the first time don't know quite what to expect. His personal background has been well-publicized. He's the son of a country fiddler from Oklahoma who drifted west to California's San Joaquin Valley in the *Grapes Of Wrath* days; his wild youth culminated in a couple of years in San Quentin, some of it spent in solitary down the hall from Caryl Chessman.

Other images that come to mind when approaching Haggard include ones prompted by his late '60s hits *Okie From Muskogee* and *The Fightin' Side Of Me*. The surface knowledge of the man that many have leads them to visualize some sort of right wing badass.

When they *do* meet Haggard, however, they find immediately that this image is far from the truth. They find a modest, politely articulate man of considerable intelligence. Politically, he can't be wrapped up in any neat right or left wing package; he is not one for knee-jerk reactions. His songs that deal with "issues" don't follow a set political pattern—there are anti-racism songs (*Uncle Lem* and *Irma Jackson*), workers' anthems (*Workin' Man Blues*, *A Working Man Can't Get Nowhere Today*), even tunes that decry the mistreatment of Mexican migrant workers (*The Immigrant*).

He *is*, however, strongly patriotic, and sees no reason to be ashamed of it. A midwestern grain elevator manager once said of Haggard, "You know, he's a man without a country." How's that? "He's a felon; he can't vote." That's not strictly true, because Haggard received a full pardon in 1972, but it helps explain why Haggard, who has spent some time behind bars, is so sensitive to the whole notion of freedom and what he perceives as basic American values.

Another reason for this sensitivity is simply the music he plays. His music is so strongly rooted in the American past that it would be difficult to play it with conviction if he were ashamed of his heritage.

The complexity of his stance becomes clear when he talks about *Okie*. "Somebody was reviewing our last album," he says, "and he was trying to compliment me. He said the album was good; he said it 'went a lot deeper than the beer belly mentality of *Okie From Muskogee*.'"

"I thought to myself: Of all the songs that I've written, that one had about 18 different messages, and I'm sorry that he only read one of them.

"Anything that becomes as big as that song did has got to have something more than a beer belly mentality to it. I didn't even know what it had myself. I got to analyzing it later and realized that it could be taken any number of ways, one of which is from a pride standpoint. Of course, a lot of people think that you have to have a

PERFORMANCE PHOTOS BY CHARLES BEHNKE





beer gut mentality to be proud of a particular thing. In other words, you should be ashamed to be proud."

Haggard talks about his music with the same kind of easygoing candor. And the subject can be just as complex, wide-ranging and puzzling as politics. As Peter Guralnick says of Haggard in his book *Lost Highway*, "There is no one in contemporary popular music who has created a more impressive legacy, or one that spans a wider variety of styles. In a genre that has always relied on filler to round out the album coming off a country hit, Merle has written the preponderance of his material . . . and has used each album as a vehicle for personal expression, sometimes not even leaving room to include the hit." Haggard simply follows his own road, paying little attention to the commercial considerations of what he may be doing.

"You know," he says, relaxing between shows at Harrah's/Reno, "you go into a studio with a producer nowadays, and everybody's trying to do what everybody else is doing. They say, 'We don't want a guitar taking away from the vocal,' things like that. They want to ignore the musicians. That's the way I think some producers feel, even some wise producers who've had a lot of hits, people you should listen to when they say something.

"But that's still not what I'm trying to do. My music is coming from me, and for my taste, I require a lot of instrumentation. And I feel there must be at least a small cult of people out there who feel the same way. If I can't feature the instrumentalist, I just don't want to be in the business.

"It irritates me to see TV specials, especially in country music, where the musician is completely ignored, as if he were a machine or

SELECTED MERLE HAGGARD DISCOGRAPHY

SWINGING DOORS—Capitol SM-2585
 I'M A LONESOME FUGITIVE—Capitol SBB-2702
 THE BEST OF MERLE HAGGARD—Capitol ST-2951
 PRIDE IN WHAT I AM—Capitol SM-168
 SAME TRAIN, A DIFFERENT TIME—Capitol SWBB-223
 OKIE FROM MUSKOGEE—Capitol ST-384
 THE FIGHTIN' SIDE OF ME—Capitol ST-451
 A TRIBUTE TO THE BEST DAMN FIDDLE PLAYER IN THE WORLD—Capitol ST-638
 SING A SAD SONG—Capitol STBB-707
 THE BEST OF THE BEST OF MERLE HAGGARD—ST-11082
 SONGS I'LL ALWAYS SING—Capitol SABB-11531
 THE ROOTS OF MY RAISING—Capitol ST-11586
 A WORKING MAN CAN'T GET NOWHERE TODAY—Capitol ST-11693
 ELEVEN WINNERS—Capitol ST-11745
 THE WAY IT WAS IN '51—Capitol SW-11839
 MY LOVE AFFAIR WITH TRAINS—Capitol SM-11823
 HAG—Capitol SM-11825
 RAMBLIN' FEVER—MCA 2267
 MY FAREWELL TO ELVIS—MCA 2314
 I'M ALWAYS ON A MOUNTAIN WHEN I FALL—MCA 2375
 SERVING 190 PROOF—MCA 3089
 30TH ALBUM—Capitol ST-11331
 LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT A SONG—Capitol ST-882
 I LOVE DIXIE BLUES—Capitol ST-11200
 SOMEDAY WE'LL LOOK BACK—Capitol ST-835
 with Bob Wills
 FOR THE LAST TIME—United Artists LA 216-J2

18 □ down beat

a computer, and the only one responsible for the sound you're hearing is the vocalist. I don't understand how people can ignore the whole foundation of the situation."

Haggard, a self-confessed "'30s and '40s jazz freak," has good reason to hold his instrumentalists in such high regard. Over the years, they've helped him define his sound and have contributed their own knowledge of American music to his concepts.

High on the list are guitarists Roy Nichols (Merle's regular lead guitarist) and James Burton (who has done extensive studio work with Merle), two of the founders of the "Southwest Telecaster" style of playing that dominates in the current genres of country, country-rock and neo-rockabilly.

Merle can claim to have been there when the style evolved. "Roy and I did a session which joined us up with James, back in the '60s when he was working with Ricky Nelson. He was doing a thing called 'chicken pickin'.'" Merle sings a few notes to illustrate a sharp yet guttural staccato guitar style. "But he wasn't really bending the strings. Roy, on the other hand, was doing the string bending but wasn't doing the 'chicken pickin'." Anyway, they got together on this session, and our guitar style came out of a marriage between the two styles.

"James is no doubt one of the finest guitar players. And Roy had a knowledge, love and understanding for the same things that I did. But his ability reached a little deeper than mine. What I was unable to get together for a particular album or whatever, he could handle. On the Wills thing, for example, his knowledge of Wills was quite extensive; it helped me a lot in getting that together. And since the Wills thing, we've both learned a lot about what we were paying tribute to."

Haggard has equally high praise for the other jazz-oriented fret players in his band—the hot steel player Norman Hamlet (with Merle since '67) and the two former Texas Playboys who hook up with the Strangers frequently.

"Tiny and Eldon don't work with us all of the time," Merle explains. "Tiny's got a business in Sacramento and Eldon has a business in Tulsa. But every time some sort of special gig comes up—if it's going to be an extremely big crowd like in L.A. or Dallas—we use one or both in addition to the regular members of the band.

"Eldon has and is probably the most renowned *rhythm* guitar player in the world—not only in country music, but in jazz. He's the greatest man in the world for coming in low key, so to speak, and getting all the recognition. He's been doing that for 40 years. It's because he's such a great complements. Whether he's playing jazz, country, with Wills, whatever, people want to know 'Who is that guy that's setting everybody up?'"

The presence of long respected pickers like Moore, Shamblyn and Nichols (the dreaded word "legendary" comes to mind) gives Haggard's music its historical depth without a sense of straining for authenticity. Apparently, this has been a long-standing goal of Haggard's.

Tracing his roots, Merle tries to remember the first records he ever heard. "The first thing that was a hit must have been a Crosby record. There's two that come to mind—*Don't Fence Me In* and *Swing On A Star*.

"As far as Jimmie Rodgers is concerned, I never heard a Jimmie Rodgers record until I was about 13 or 14 years old. There was a country artist named Lefty Frizzell who was big when I was a kid. Lefty had done a tribute album to Rodgers, and I didn't know who Rodgers was until that album came along. I finally got hold of all Rodgers' records, and in the late '60s, I recorded a tribute album of my own [*Same Train, A Different Time*, Capitol SWBB 223]. There's a direct descent from the blues in that music; there's a jazz influence, too. In fact, Rodgers did a session in New York with Louis Armstrong and Fatha Hines.

"Rodgers was friends with Emmett Miller, too. There's kind of a strange history on him. We tried to trace him down, and nobody ever knew what happened to him; there's no record of his death. But he was pretty well into the circle of people who became famous. He had a little group together that included Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey, Jack Teagarden, Gene Krupa and Eddie Lang. They were all in Miller's group, but nobody knows what happened to him."

When dealing with a musician as roots conscious as Haggard, it's natural to wonder just how aware he is of his sources when performing. Is it a process of natural assimilation or does he feel sometimes like he's aping someone?

"It's more natural," Merle says. "In fact, it never was something that came hard. I just tried to pick up on some of the things they passed along—keep alive a good thing that they had come up with and blend it in with my own. But everybody wants to know where you came from, and it's not hard to tell where I came from.

"With Wills, for example, I spent a lot of time with him from '68 until '75 when he died. We were together off and on quite a bit; I was getting his opinion on what to do with the tribute album.

"At the time, there was nothing stirring about western swing; the current revival hadn't started yet. I told Bob what I intended to do, and he said, 'Well, you can do it.' He had confidence in me. I remember what he told me: 'Have a good drummer. Don't try to do it without a good drummer.'"

Haggard's unwillingness to compromise, his insistence on dealing with the *music* alone, may have its price. Watching his live show, one senses that he's not always giving the audience exactly what they want, but what they *should* want. This is invariably illustrated by the ever-present member of the audience (often drunk and obnoxious) who remains unmoved by, say, the band's stretched-out, solo-laden big band reading of Wills' *Brain Cloudy Blues*, but continually yells out for *Okie*.

Many other artists, particularly in the country music field, opt for the easy way out: perfunctory, two minute renditions of their "greatest hits," just like on the record—a preset, unwavering, automatic stage show. That sort of thing is an anathema to Haggard.

"Well," he muses, "when you're really trying to analyze what is different about our music in comparison with what is termed 'current, up-to-date' music, I think it's the fact that we don't have any gimmicks. I'm not there to turn flips or be a comedian. I don't think that's what the people came for.

"A couple of times in my career, I've laid out a format for a show, for TV purposes or something, just laid it out on the floor and rehearsed it with the band. And I'll tell you, it's the hardest thing I've ever had to do. I can't work that way."

One reason Haggard can get away with performing as he does—in a loose, spontaneous manner—is his band. The musicians are so professional, and have worked together so long, that they seem to simply feel the changes in their bones. The material—western swing numbers, Crosby tunes, Haggard compositions—is an essential part of their makeup, and they respond to each other's improvisatory ideas naturally, just like a good jazz band. This togetherness precludes the need for a lot of rehearsal.

"As far as rehearsals are concerned," Merle says, "on the road we try to get to the concert building somewhere around three in the afternoon and work for a couple of hours on any new tunes we may have, just getting the framework down and getting used to it. It doesn't take that long for them; it's mostly a matter of what we want to do with the song—do we want to play it this way or that way? That's the only reason for the rehearsal, except for the rhythm men. They more or less have to have some rehearsal to know what to do.

"For arrangements, what we do is learn the chords to the song, and if there happens to be a section ride, we'll work that out. Maybe we'll have some kind of little unique intro to work out. With that many musicians, I like to start out with a couple of guitars and build all the way up to the big band."

Kind of a studio concept?

"Yeah, but do it with a live feeling. And I like to use a lot of dynamics. It's hard to keep that in the minds of the musicians, and that's the thing you have to rehearse—communication. You have to sit and talk about it, like in a football game. You know, 'If I look around and gesture, don't make me have to make a big deal out of it, come down.' If everybody watches me, it ends up being a tight situation. And if there's a mistake, it's my fault.

"It's really a lot of fun to work that way—when you're really communicating with each other on stage. You don't have time to get uptight or have stage fright. If you're busy doing your job, you've got your hands full."

One of the interesting things about Haggard's current live sound is the use of guitars. The classic western swing bands epitomized by Wills' Texas Playboys had always played arranged ensemble passages in an attempt to approximate the sound of the leading big bands of the era—Basie, Goodman, Ellington, etc. Yet, the western swing band has always been basically a string band, with only a few horns. (Haggard himself has only one horn player, Don Markham, who doubles on saxes and trumpet.) As a result, the western swing bands have traditionally used unorthodox voicings in ensembles. For example, it might be a section consisting of two fiddles, one sax and a steel guitar playing a line in harmony.

Haggard's band is one of the few that is carrying on this tradition (for another, see *Asleep At The Wheel*, **db**, June 17, 1976). And to provide maximum flexibility in this area, Merle can call on a total of six electric fretted instruments (when the band is at full strength).



At Haggard's Bakersfield home in 1971:
A reunion of Bob Wills (seated) and his Texas Playboys

several fiddles, sax or trumpet and piano—or any combination thereof—to play a particular section ride as he pleases.

Merle has other reasons for having so much instrumentation, however. "We're doing so many different types of music, really. You take a Jimmie Rodgers situation versus a Bob Wills situation. They're similar in the sense that they're both out of the blues bag, the jazz bag, but the instrumentation is different. You have an acoustic guitar versus an electric guitar, a dobro versus a jazz steel. And it's always been my desire to be able to perform what I've recorded. Really, a lot of the instrumentation isn't necessary. But because I've had all these musicians on stage for those two different reasons, we've married together some bigger sounds that probably wouldn't have happened otherwise."

Can working with that many guitars be a problem?

"It's a problem if you don't stay on top of it. Like I say, if everybody gets to trying to play, it gets out of hand, but the guys on stage are pretty conscientious. It's our theory that you shouldn't just listen to yourself; listen to the whole thing. Ask yourself if what you're doing fits what's happening. It's human nature to turn your amp up and listen to yourself. Avoiding that is kind of like keeping your head down when playing golf."

Since there are so many musicians in the band, it's interesting to note that there's hardly any turnover in personnel. Players are added, but no one seems to leave. It's doubly unusual when one considers the stature of these musicians in the country music field. Roy Nichols, for one, is universally venerated by his peers and is idolized by country, rockabilly and western swing fans the world over.

"I think good musicians attract other good musicians," Merle explains the phenomenon. "If a good band comes together, other good pickers hear about it, and an opening is not hard to fill. There's some good players around now that I know would like to be in this band, and it's because of the guys. They want to be around the players they've heard about all their lives.

"For instance, Grady Martin, who was a staff guitar player in Nashville for years, has been coming around, sitting in from time to time. He's a great guitar player who just got tired of studio work, and now he wants to play."

Being able to draw on the talents of so many skilled musicians has given Haggard the artistic ammunition to put together a long string of recordings that cover a lot of musical territory. It should be pointed out, however, that there's a substantial difference between Haggard's recordings and his live shows. The albums (with the exception of the Wills and Rodgers tributes and the early jazz derived *I Love Dixie Blues*) tend to focus on hard country tunes, mostly Merle's compositions, and Haggard's singing. (This article, by necessity, deals almost strictly with Haggard's role as a bandleader. To discuss him as a singer-songwriter would take another article, probably better suited for another publication.) The records, despite their considerable degree of eclecticism, really don't evoke the free-wheeling, jazzy, devil-may-care feeling of the performance.

"I know exactly where you're coming from," Haggard replies. "In fact, I've even considered doing all the recording this coming year live, because there's an ingredient there that's just not found in the studio.

"I think it's more of an attitude, a mood. You can't just sit people down and tell them to play a certain way and expect it to come off sounding free and easy—which is the whole fundamental basis

“His words were, ‘You’re a young man. Why are you playing this old music?’ And that started me thinking, really. First of all, I never realized that I was young and second of all, I never thought of that music as old. So that started me thinking about a lot of things.”

Cecil Taylor asked the question. The 20-year-old Steve Lacy was the player of “old music” who, until that day in 1953, spent most of his time playing with Red Allen, Dickie Wells, Vic Dickenson, Zutty Singleton, Joe Sullivan and Pops Foster on a dated relic called the soprano saxophone. It was, naturally, a record of Sidney Bechet’s, the jazz giant of the soprano saxophone, that first persuaded the young New Yorker to take up the instrument.

“I really dug the sound,” says Lacy, sitting on his bed at the Royalton Hotel on New York’s West 44th St. He is clad in a brown corduroy suit and a purple sweater—his uniform for his week-long return to his native Manhattan from his home in Paris. “I bought an instrument without really knowing what it was, because it was on the Bechet record and it really appealed to me.”

It was Ellington and Tatum who first appealed to Steven Norman (nee Lackritz) Lacy of 81st St. After taking piano lessons, Lacy found the clarinet and, shortly thereafter, the soprano sax. Lacy found a teacher in veteran clarinetist and tenor saxophonist Cecil Scott, went to the Schillinger School of Music (which also had a name change—to Berklee) and the Manhattan School of Music; without finishing at either, he hit the streets with his strange, straight horn and his love for the elder traditions of jazz.

“New Orleans was what I liked to listen to. New Orleans style and Chicago style and Kansas City style and New York style. All those various older things. The older thing appealed to me at first—the classics. First I had my own amateur band and played with friends. Then I started sitting in with a lot of people like Pee Wee Russell and Bobby Hackett. And they were great, man, they were beautiful. They encouraged me a lot, and I was really a young upstart. All those older guys were beautiful without a single exception. Fantastic, everybody.

“When I stopped playing the clarinet, a couple of the guys said, ‘Look, you’re crazy, you’ll never work just playing soprano.’ But I was crazy, so . . . And they were right, I didn’t work for awhile.

“When I was up in Boston, in ’52 or ’53, I heard Miles Davis and that was the first modern stuff I had heard. It was pretty interesting. It was a little bewildering at first. Then I started listening to Charlie Parker. Well, I had already been listening to a lot of contemporary music, a lot of Bartok, Schoenberg, all that stuff.”

While Lacy was playing New Orleans style at Jimmy Ryan’s in New York, the young Cecil Taylor introduced himself and posed the “highly provocative” question.

“Cecil and I started talking and got to be friends. Then he gave me a job playing at a dance uptown. It was cello and piano and soprano. Calo Scott and Cecil and myself, it was the first job we had.

“Ellington was the thing that we were both interested in. Basically, it was standards that we were playing. Cecil was playing beautifully as always. He was playing a little bit, sort of, like Erroll Garner and there was some Bud in there, but there was a lot of his own stuff. It was a very original and a very fresh approach and very blues oriented and very . . . for dancers. That was the only time we played with the cello; other times we played with drums, piano and saxophone or trumpet, piano and saxophone, and he played the bass part on the piano. He played a walking bass part on the piano for the dancers. It had to



COLLIS DAVIS/SHAIKA

Dennis Charles, Lacy, Ronnie Boykins

work. You can’t mess around—if the dancers can’t dance you’re out of business. So what he did was a very spare thing, but it was very . . . uh, it was great. I thought it was great. At times it had a lot of humor in it. It was simple, but deep and complex, too.”

Lacy spent most of the 1950s working with Cecil Taylor.

“We were rehearsing all the time through the ’50s. We rehearsed much more than we performed. And some of the pieces were extremely interesting. Some of it was never done in public. Very complex pieces with a certain amount of improvisation and rhythm parts, too.”

So Steve Lacy, who had cut his teeth on dixieland and played an outmoded horn, had no troubles fitting into the tough requirements of Cecil Taylor’s music. Right?

“No, it was way beyond me. Way beyond me—I was really struggling to keep up—with both the written parts and the improvisation. When we’d improvise, he would take off and he’d be gone, light years beyond me, and I would try to run and catch up, but there was no way in the world I could catch up—but it seemed like it

PROLIFIC STEVE LACY and his POLY-FREE BAG

by LEE JESKE

was okay, anyway. It was fun to try."

Throughout the '50s Lacy was playing with Cecil Taylor while appearing on such albums as Bobby Hackett's *Hello, Louis* and Dick Sutton's *Dixieland Goes Modern* and at the same time keeping a close ear on the music of such people as Charlie Parker and Thelonious Monk—especially Thelonious Monk. Sometime in the mid '50s Lacy began a love affair with the music of Thelonious Monk that would last, on and off, until today.

"I was interested in his music since the mid '50s. I mean, for about 12 years I really worked on his music a lot. Then I dropped it for about ten years, and then started up again about two years ago, so I'm still into the music."

After leaving Cecil Taylor, Lacy worked with Gil Evans, Mal Waldron and Jimmy Giuffre and worked on Thelonious Monk.

"I bugged him. I just went around bugging him. I said, 'Hey, remember me. Steven.' After a while he said, 'Hey, I remember you now; how many people like you do you think I know?' So I made a record of his tunes and I gave it to him and he seemed to like it. Well, after a while I bugged him so much he gave me a job. That was 1960—I worked with the quintet for 16 weeks: Charlie Rouse, Roy Haynes, John Ore and myself. At the Jazz Gallery and the Apollo Theatre and the Philadelphia Festival and the Riker's Island Festival."

So Steve Lacy, who had made the transition from Pops Foster to Cecil Taylor within a matter of months, had no trouble playing the complex, winding-road compositions of Thelonious Monk. Right?

"I had terrible trouble. It was very difficult. It was also beyond me at the time. I was worrying about it too much and I found it very hard to stick to the point and I'd get hung up in useless complexity. But he helped me out a lot—he told me to simplify my stuff and keep to the point and make the drummer sound good. He told me a lot of simple things that were very hard for me at the time, but now I've got the message, I think.

"Finally, he dropped me and went back to the quartet, because I was a trip, really. He was really going out on a limb to use me in the first place and, uh, it wasn't helping his case in a way. So he dropped me and went back to the quartet. It was more economical and it was less problematic. And it was very good for me—I got the message and I got what I needed and I went along my own way."

On his recent trip to New York, Lacy went to New Jersey to visit the ill Thelonious Monk. "I think he's getting better. I found his spirit intact, but he's not in good shape. Physically he's got some kind of a chemical imbalance. It's a difficult physical situation and it takes a while to cure him. I think he's on the mend, though. He hasn't played in a while. He didn't have to mention anything about it, it's clear. When he feels like it, he'll play again. I think that he was badly treated. The last few times he played it was really bad treatment: people wanted to skin him alive in a way. The promoters and all that

just want to exploit him and abuse him and make money off of him. They don't even care how they treat him at all—it's just very bad business."

After leaving Monk, Lacy formed a quartet with trombonist Roswell Rudd, drummer Dennis Charles and a number of different bassists, which primarily performed Monk's music. German jazz critic Joachim Berendt wrote that Lacy "is one of the few horn players—and probably the only white among them—who fully understood and assimilated Monk."

The soprano saxophone was, at this time, becoming more and more popular, thanks to a man named John Coltrane.

"The first time I saw Coltrane was when he was working with Johnny Hodges' band. He was playing tenor with Hodges and I don't know what year that was, but it was before he was with Miles. I didn't meet him. I met him later and we used to talk.

"I remember the night he first saw me. He came into the Five Spot. I was working with Jimmy Giuffre, and Coltrane came in there a couple of times to hear us play, and one time he asked me, 'What key is the soprano sax in?' And I told him it was B flat. He said, 'Oh yeah?!' And then a couple of weeks later, Don Cherry called me up from Chicago and said, 'Listen to this,' and he held up the telephone. And there was Coltrane playing the soprano. So, I mean, that's pretty clear, right? I think later he found out about Bechet."

Lacy's quartet worked when it could in the early '60s, mostly in out of the way Greenwich Village coffee houses. In 1965 he was offered a month's work at the Montmartre in Copenhagen with Kenny Drew and Don Cherry.

"It was my gig. After Copenhagen, we went to France and Italy and hung around there. Then I formed a quartet with Enrico Rava, made a couple of records in Italy, went down to South America for about eight months, then came back to New York, stayed here for about a year, made it into a quintet with Karl Berger, Enrico Rava, Kent Carter and Paul Motian, went to Europe with that quintet and then couldn't find any work for it. That blew up, so I stayed in Europe with my old lady Irene Acbi [Swedish vocalist, violinist and cellist]."

He has been in Europe ever since.

"First I was in Rome. I did a couple of different things there—I worked with Musica Electronica Viva, it's like improvised contemporary music and electronics. We'd do a lot of experimentation with sound and language and improvisation. And I also was playing with some amateurs there, doing free improvisation. And writing. I really started getting my writing together around '67, '68 and '69. And then we moved to Paris and the stuff started getting pretty clear.

"When I got there in '69-'70, that was the moment of the boom and there were a lot of musicians there—Braxton was there and the Art Ensemble and a lot of others. But in the early '70s that waned and a

Seated below: Ornette Coleman and David Izenzon

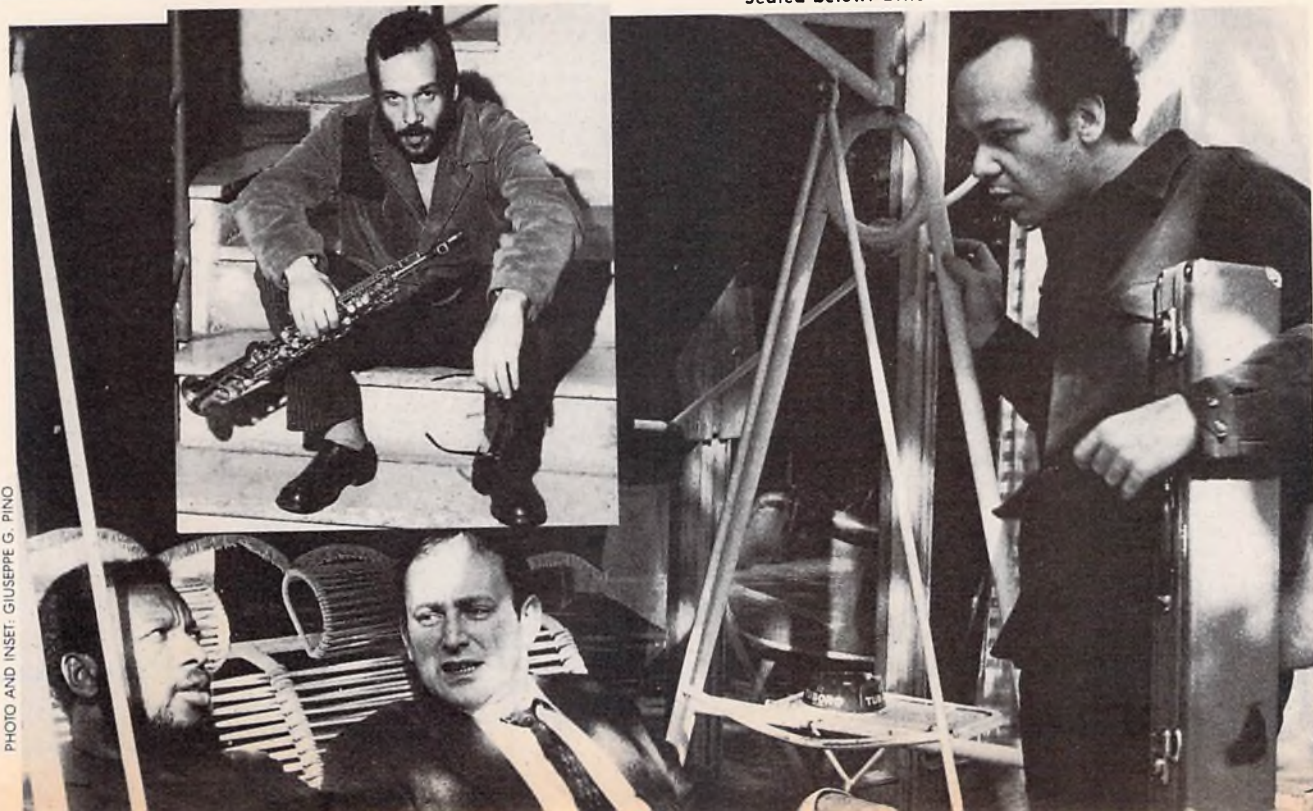


PHOTO AND INSET: GIUSEPPE G. PINO

lot of them moved away. There was much more work for me there than there was over here. Now the audiences over there are great, but it hasn't always been that way. For example, when I lived in Italy ten years ago, there was nothing happening—no public, no musicians, no nothing. And now it's fantastic, there's audiences all over, there's young musicians, schools, clubs, critics, journals, records, everything."

Records especially. Steve Lacy's discography lists over 50 albums as a leader on 39 different labels—labels such as ESP, IAL, QED, ICP, FMP, Morgue, Ictus, Adelphi, Futura, Alm and Cramps. This is not to mention over 45 albums as a sideman. Steve Lacy is prolific, but try to walk into your neighborhood record shop and buy an armful of Lacy discs. Most of the ones recorded for American labels are no longer in print and most of the others are harder to track down than original Okeh's. Fortunately, some larger European companies such as Hat Hut and Black Saint are beginning to record Steve Lacy, but the discs still show up in dribs and drabs.

One of the reasons Lacy is so easily recorded is his penchant for solo playing. One doesn't need too much equipment to do a live recording of a solo saxophonist, an art which Lacy has perfected in a relatively short period of time.

"In 1965 I had heard a Swedish saxophone player walk into a club and just start playing at intermission all by himself—walking to tables and playing. And he was rotten. But still, the idea was interesting. I thought, 'Wow, all by himself.' And then a few years later, quite a few years later, I heard Braxton do it in Paris. I asked Braxton to share the bill with me and I said, 'Who you gonna use on rhythm section?'"

STEVE LACY DISCOGRAPHY

- SOPRANO SAX—Prestige 7125
 THE STRAIGHT HORN—Candid S-9007-M-007
 SCHOOL DAYS—QED 997
 EPISTROPHY—BYG 529 126
 MOON—BYG 529.352, Affinity 23
 WORDLESS—Futura 22
 ESTILHACOS (CHIPS) LIVE IN LISBON—Guilda da Musica 11403001
 THE GAP—America 6125
 FLAKES—RCA Vista TPL 1-1097
 LUMPS—ICP 016
 STABS—FMP SAJ 05
 STALKS—Denon YQ 7507
 AT MANDARA—Alm 5
 TORMENTS—Morgue 01
 THE WIRE—Denon YX 7553
 DISTANT VOICES—Nippon Columbia YX 7085
 AXIAME, VOL. 1—Red VPA120
 AXIAME, VOL. 2—Red VPA121
 TRICKLES—Black Saint 008
 STRAWS—Cramps 6206
 SIDELINES—IAL 37.38.47 (with Michael Smith)
 CLANGS—Ictus 001 (with Andrea Centazzo)
 LIVE—Ictus 005
 FOLLIES—FMP SAJ 18
 CLINKERS—Hat Hut F
 THREADS—Horo H205
 CATCH—Horo H208 (with Kent Carter)
 RAPS—Adelphi 5004
 THE WOE—Quark 9998
 STAMPS—Hat Hut K/L
 HIGH LAW AND ORDER—Claxon 79.3 (duo with Maarten Van Regteren)
 ALTER EGO—World Artists 1004 (duo with Walter Szuber Armstrong)
 TROUBLES—Black Saint 0035
 SHOTS—Musica 3024
 POINTS—La Chant du Monde LDX 74680
 FOR EXAMPLE—FMP NR1 (3LP Box Set)
- out of print:**
 SOPRANO—Status 8308
 REFLECTIONS—New Jazz 8206 (plays Monk)
 EVIDENCE—New Jazz 8271 (with Don Cherry)
 DISPOSABILITY—RCA (VIK) KVLP 200
 SORTIE—GTA 002, Polydor Int. 423.223
 FOREST AND THE ZOO—ESP 1060
 ROBA—Saravah 10026
 LAPIS—Saravah 10031
 STEVE LACY SOLO—Emanem 301
 THE CRUST—Emanem 304
 SCRAPS—Saravah 10049
 SAXOPHONE SPECIAL—Emanem 3310
 DREAMS—Saravah 10058
- with Gil Evans:**
 BIG STUFF—Prestige 7756
 THE ARRANGER'S TOUCH—Prestige 24049
 PACIFIC STANDARD TIME—Blue Note BNLA 461H2 (2 LPs)
 THE INDIVIDUALISM—English Verve 8555 (2 LPs)
 PARABOLA—Horo 31/32
 ORCHESTRA WITH KENNY BURRELL & PHIL WOODS—Verve V6-8838 (out of print)
- with Cecil Taylor:**
 CECIL TAYLOR JAZZ ADVANCE—Blue Note BNLA 458 H2
 MASTERS OF MODERN PIANO—Verve VE2-2514 (2 LPs)
 CECIL TAYLOR/BUELL NEIDLINGER NEW YORK CITY R&B—Barnaby-Candid KZ31035 (out of print)
- with Mal Waldron:**
 JOURNEY WITHOUT END—Japanese Victor SMJX 10134
 MAL WALDRON WITH THE STEVE LACY QUINTET—America 6124
 HARD TALK—Enja 2050
 ONE-UPMANSHIP—Inner City 3010
 MOODS—Enja 3021/23
- with Thelonious Monk:**
 BIG BAND AND QUARTET IN CONCERT—Columbia CS8964
 WHO'S AFRAID OF THE BIG BAND MONK—Columbia KG 32892
 WHO KNOWS—Columbia JG 35720
- with the Jazz Composers Orchestra:**
 JCOA COMMUNICATION—Fontana 881011
 JAZZ REALITIES—Fontana 881010 (with Michael Mantler and Carla Bley)
 JCOA—JCOA 1001/2 (orchestra conducted by Michael Mantler)
- with Globe Unity Orchestra:**
 EVIDENCE VOL. 1—FMP 0220
 INTO THE VALLEY VOL. 2—FMP 0270
 COMPOSITIONS—JAPO 60027
- with Giorgio Gaslini:**
 GRIDO BIG BAND LIVE—Durium 77199
 NEW FEELINGS SUITE—HMV 8154
 FABRICA OCCUPATA—Produttoriassociati SRL PA/LP51 (with Jean Luc Ponty, Paul Rutherford, etc.)—PA USA PR 7014
- with Franz Koglmann:**
 FLAPS—Pipe 151
 OPIUM FOR FRANZ—Pipe 152
- with Alan Silva:**
 SEASONS—BYG 529342-4
- with Gary Burton:**
 A GENUINE TONG FUNERAL—RCA LSP 3988
- with Max Roach:**
 SOUNDS AS A ROACH—Joker 2056 (Japanese)
- with Maria Monti:**
 IL BESTIARIO—Hi-Fi 14245
- with Kenny Davern:**
 UNPREDICTABLE—Kharma 7
- with Roswell Rudd and Sheila Jordan:**
 BLOWN BONE—Japanese Phillips RJ 7490
- with MEV (Musica Electronica Viva):**
 UNITED PATCHWORK—Horo 15/16
- with Laboratorio della Guercia:**
 ORCHESTRA—Horo 39/40 (2 LPs)
- with Dick Sutton Sextet:**
 DIXIELAND GOES MODERN—Jaguar 802
 DIXIELAND PROGRESSIVE—Jaguar 804
- with Tom Stewart:**
 QUINTET/SEXTET—ABC Paramount 117
- with Joe Puma Sextet:**
 MODERN JAZZ SAMPLER—Jazztone J1245
- with Whitey Mitchell:**
 SEXTET—ABC Paramount 126
- with Bobby Hackett:**
 HELLO LOUIS—Epic 24099
- with Company:**
 COMPANY #4—Incus 26 (with Derek Bailey)
 COMPANY #5—Incus 28 (with Bailey, Braxton, Smith, Coxhill, Honsinger, Parker, Bennink, Altena and Beresford)
 COMPANY #6—Incus 29 (personnel as above)
 COMPANY #7—Incus 30 (personnel as above)

lovely—one is particularly reminiscent of *Pop Goes The Weasel*. He seems at times to play repeating phrases, but actually he is borrowing from his own ideas and altering them ever so slightly. Sometimes his playing takes on a vaudevillian tone; elsewhere he uses slithery legato phrases. Then there are some two-tone train whistle effects, and occasionally he uses his corduroyed leg as a mute to produce a cow-like mooring. He ends his recital with a Sonny Rollinsish theme, but not before marching, varying a four-note pattern with four steps, around the loft, out into the hall and back. It is a joyous performance.

Lacy's heart, however, lies with his quintet back in Paris. "To me the main thing is my quintet, really, and the only reason a solo is possible is as a contrast to that. Basically, the material that I use comes out of the stuff I've written for the quintet. But all the stuff I write can be done solo, duo, quintet, orchestra—it's basically open material—melodic lines with various parts to it."

Lacy's group has been working steadily, with similar personnel, for the past five years. The group, oddly, is four-fifths American, with Kent Carter on bass, Oliver Johnson on drums and Steve Potts on alto and soprano sax. The fifth member is Lacy's wife Irene Aebi.

"She plays violin, cello and, mostly, she's a singer, a very good singer. And all the stuff I write is for her. Lyrics in French, Italian, English, German, Latin, Japanese, all kinds of languages, but mainly in English. When we play in Europe, it's a knockout, people are wiped out by it. We have a unique combination of words and music. It's like a mixture of European-American, black and white, male and female, classic and modern. It's a mixture, a pure original mixture that can't be described; it just has to be experienced."

"I used to consider returning to the States. I always like to think that I could come back any minute, but I don't do it. And I'd be crazy to leave now, because it's going very well for me over there. And the main thing that keeps me over there is this quintet. I don't think there are very many groups in the world that play new music and stay together. I can think of the Art Ensemble, Aii, maybe Sun Ra. Cecil keeps a group together and us. I can't think of anybody else, really. And I think if we were back in America, the pressure would really be disintegrating. I think we're better off over there and it's important that we come back here and play."

But what about Dexter Gordon and Johnny Griffin and Slide Hampton and others who have successfully returned from Europe?

"Dexter is one age and Griffin is another age and I'm another generation. Each one has to find his own time. Music takes a certain time to penetrate. Like pop music might only take five minutes, while another music might take 20 years, and another music might take 200 years. Each music takes its time to find its public, really. In Europe we play museums, schools, radio stations, clubs, theaters and cultural centers. Different . . . a whole variety of things."

If all goes according to Lacy's plans, he will have his group in the U.S. for either a late spring or early autumn tour.

It was a different sort of group he was playing with at Soundscape. His set with Charles and Boykins opened with repeating passages of five notes, Charles and Boykins seemingly playing the melody. It was a blues-based piece, with Charles getting the most out of a small trap set. The second piece was trance-like, Charles drumming a steady *one-two-three* and Lacy playing a very Monk-ish, jagged theme. Soon Lacy was squeaking, squawking, grunting, farting and kissing through his horn—sounding at times like a trumpeting elephant and at times like a braying donkey. At one point Lacy put the bell of the horn into his mouth and strenuously sucked the air through the horn. Again he played a nursery-rhyme theme (*La-la-la-la La-la-la-la*). Boykins and Charles were wonderful accompanists to all the playing, from the lean, straightforward working to the animal noises. The audience was grinning and swaying. Lacy is a true and original talent.

What does one call the music of Steve Lacy?

"I don't know. There's a certain progressive appetite that makes the music perennially new, and it's in constant state of renewal. It's beyond terms, really. I don't use any term myself. I just . . . I mean we call it stuff, like 'That was some nice stuff you played' or 'That was some nice shit you played.' It's just abstract. Like a baker, he doesn't call it dough all the time, because he's too familiar with it, he's too intimate with it. It's just *stuff*—give me some of that stuff or shit or whatever. There's no use to deal with it in terms because we live in it. You could call it poly-free, structuralist, etc. I would call it poly-free, because it's beyond free. We went to what they used to call free in the '60s, and in the '70s past it, and now we're in the '80s—it's been post-free a long time and by now it's sort of like a poly-free approach, because the freedom is put in different parameters.

"Sometimes this part will be free and this part won't be free.

STEVE LACY'S EQUIPMENT

Steve Lacy plays a Selmer soprano saxophone with a custom made Otto Link #12 mouthpiece and Vandoren #1 reeds.

Another piece will be a different situation and then we go from freedom to non-freedom within five seconds, so it's a mixed approach. It's in and out and up and down. It's a completely mixed up thing now, there's no name for it, really. Was Louis Armstrong free in 1929? To me that's freedom, the way he played with Earl Hines and all of that. You can't get any more free than that. Art Tatum was free, too—so was Charlie Parker, so was Fats Navarro—these people were *free*, so the term 'free jazz' is meaningless to me because jazz was always a music that went toward freedom."

Steve Lacy's next hope is to present the music of his quintet to the country where he and the music were born.

"We have to get here and play and see what happens, that's the next step. But we don't *have* to do that, because we've got lots of work in Europe and we could deduct America, we're doing great without America. But the stuff comes from America and, basically, it's built for America and it's only fair that we have a chance to try it out on the American public, because I find everything over here, except what we do, I don't find that at all. I haven't found anything *remotely* like what we do, so it will be very interesting to see what happens."

Judging by the album *Troubles on Hat Hut*, one is inclined to agree with Lacy. The vocal work and instrumental combinations are unique, as is the playing of the leader.

Steve Lacy is nothing if not eclectic. He is present on albums by a wide ranging coterie of musicians. Most recently he is featured on an unusual album with another soprano saxophonist with New Orleans/Chicago style roots, Kenny Davern. The idea was Davern's and the music is what Steve Lacy calls "poly-free." If Kenny Davern is interested in recording on the stylistic turf of such as Steve Lacy, might Steve Lacy every once in a while yearn to get back to his dixieland beginnings?

"Well, you know, you never know. I'm trying to get back into some older stuff. I've been playing Monk for about a couple of years now which I haven't touched for a while, and Charlie Parker and Tadd Dameron stuff just for fun. I might get back to *Didn't He Ramble*. Hahaha!"



COLLIS DAVIS/SHADA

BILLY TAYLOR PRESENTS AMERICA'S CLASSICAL MUSIC

by BRADLEY PARKER-SPARROW

"I would like to thank you all for coming out," says pianist/composer Billy Taylor, seated at the Bosendorfer in the Chicago Cultural Center's Preston Bradley Hall, at his solo recital. "Perhaps you are on your lunch break; I hope you will enjoy the concert. I play a form of music that has been called jazz, but I like to call it *American classical music*, for I feel that it is one of the strongest forms of new music that we have created in this country. The strange thing about this music is that it came from people who weren't allowed to bring anything with them, and from this a world of feelings and emotions has evolved, and in a short time.

"The roots of this music lie not only in Africa but also in Europe. Its traditions cover men like Joplin, Blake, Tatum, Nat Cole, Bud Powell—almost a century of invention, despite the social odds that are and were against these men and women."

It is difficult to list the talents and accomplishments of Billy Taylor; there are so many. Taylor is director and founder of National Public Radio's most popular program, *Jazz Alive!* Taylor has been a record producer and radio announcer with his own show coming out of New York for many years. Taylor is an educator and lecturer with a Doctor of Education degree from the University of Massachusetts. There is Taylor the leader of television big bands, formerly musical director of the David Frost show and heard on various specials. There is Taylor the voice behind numerous television commercials, and Taylor the writer of over a dozen books on and about jazz.

Soft spoken, polite and cool, Taylor eased into Chicago for a two week run at Rick's Cafe Americain at the Holiday Inn, a set at the Chicago Jazz Festival on Duke Ellington night and this solo recital. It was not unlike his visits to other cities, together with his trio, solo or for special projects like leading New York's jazzmobile band at the Winter Olympics.

The music and mind of Taylor projects a maturity and wealth of ideas that finds its roots in both pre-bop and the classical idiom. To communicate with Billy Taylor is to go beyond the limits that confine jazz and enter a world of history, mystery and sound.

24 □ down beat



VERVY OAKLAND

"For example if I take a theme like this, *Three Blind Mice*: listen and I will play the melody. If I add a chord in the left hand, in essence I will add the harmony, and now I can choose a rhythm. The first one that I will play we can call classical; the second, tenths in the left hand and stride; the third, a walking bass line—swing. If the tempo increases, we can play the same melody within the idiom called bop. By changing the melody, I am, in one way, improvising, but you can see that we have not only melody but rhythm and harmony—these are the three keys to modern jazz improvisation. By pulling apart the music we can see the systems, and it should make more sense.

"But enough with words—if I could say everything with words there would be no reason to play."

Taylor proceeds to play several pieces in almost every major form. Perhaps one of the most fascinating is an excerpt from his newly commissioned symphonic work, *Suite For Jazz Piano And Orchestra*, (from his latest Monmouth/Evergreen L.P., *Billy Taylor—Jazz Alive!*), the last movement *Cote d'Ivoire*. The composition traces the foundations of classical music by introducing a theme in the right hand and, in turn, repeating the theme in the left hand; then by retaining the first statement, a polyphonic fugue composition is created.

These two voices build rhythmically and harmonically together with a third theme falling between the pianist's two hands. The disciplined spinning of these voices goes on and on, transcending the classical idiom, entering an advanced stage of improvisation with classical systems of control, creating a hurricane of sound!

Just before opening night at the jazzroom Rick's, Taylor sat in a room overlooking Lake Michigan and began talking of his early days.

"I was born in Greenville, North Carolina on July 21, 1921. My father was a dentist and I began playing the piano out of a desire to move my fingers and make sounds like the older folks. I started at the age of seven. I

think. Uncle Robert and several other members of the immediate family were really into church and music. I would listen to my father lead the choir, and they would play everything, Mozart, Bach and whatever. My environment was very musical, and this had a lot to do with my decision to make music my profession and passion.

"I feel that it is very important that an individual get the proper motivation by his or her family, especially at so young an age. This type of moral support is helpful when things get hard.

"My father always gave me support even at an early time. He told me that life as a musician was one that did not reap the immediate financial rewards like other professions, but he never made it seem so negative as to make me change my mind. Anyway, I entered Virginia State College (it was also my father's school) as a sociology major and about that time I ran into Dr. Undine S. Moore. Not many people know of her continued work as both composer and teacher, perhaps because she has spent so much time teaching, and I think being a black woman at that time made it extremely hard to get her works played.

"She called me into her office one day and said: 'Taylor, what is your major?'

"And I said . . . quietly . . . 'Sociology.' She waited several seconds and looked real hard at me and finally said: 'No!'

"After that little meeting I switched my major to music and eventually got my degree, a B.A. Dr. Moore was really something—you could just tell by the way she would look at you."

The phone rang—it was Taylor's agent, and Billy wrote down several dates. He returned to talk about his days in New York.

"I arrived in New York on a fall Thursday in 1943. I figured that I wanted to be and play with the musicians and eventually work my way up to some of the clubs on 52nd St. On Friday I went into a club and listened to Ben Webster, I think it was at the Three Deuces. There wasn't a piano player with him on that date, and he asked me to sit in. He hired me! Some start: two days in New York and I was working with Webster.

"I feel that music at that time was in a state I like to call *pre-bop*. As music made its change from swing to bop there were several years of transition, and a lot of critics that write of that period tend to forget that stage. Along with Webster, Nat Cole played on the edge, adding a lot to the swing idiom and leading into the bop era. Bop just didn't come to be on one given day in history, and many individuals laid the groundwork. After all, we have men like Eubie Blake that are still living and span all of the eras.

"I remember that Dizzy was playing at the Onyx Club, just across the street from Webster. Between sets I would run across the street and play some sets with Diz. After two weeks of that Webster finally fired me because I was continually late, and the funny thing was, another piano player, George Wallington, got the job with Diz. Bud Powell was supposed to open, but something happened to him a couple of days before."

Taylor looked off across Lake Michigan and reminisced about Powell.



VERYL OAKLAND

"Bud was a close friend of mine, and I think one of the greatest bop pianists. He had a lot of problems. You know, he was quite young when he entered a scene with cats that could drink ten men under the table. And after a while alcohol was not the only thing that could destroy you; in a way each decade has its own popular drug evil. When a man is young he tries to keep up with the older men, so that he can fit in. Early on in New York I would enter a joint and walk right up to the bar and try to order something strong, and for some reason the other players protected me from myself, and I would end up with a Coke instead. It was that hard living that took its toll on Bud—but what a player! Some days no one could touch him on the piano; you've heard the stories about his battles with Tatum as to who had the strongest left hand. Other days he would just stare out into space or not show up for days.

"After leaving Webster, times got hard for me, too. I went around looking for work and I would play for dancers, singers and theater groups—just about anything I could get my hands on. I did a lot of solo club work, and they would say, 'Play something with a lot of melody.' Man, did I learn a great number of tunes then. They paid me to woodshed, and I could even play some of my own compositions.

"I worked with Stuff Smith and several Latin bands. I was not so much into just playing bop; I wanted my own sound. When bop was very 'in' the musicians would walk, dress, act and talk like Bird and Diz, and many would try to sound just like them, note for note. I felt a need to establish my own identity as a pianist and composer. Again, I want to express the need to remember the pre-bop era with men like Coleman Hawkins and Clyde Hart; they were doing things that led the way for Charlie Parker.

"I first played with Bird in 1949, and that is when I became house pianist for Birdland. [Billy Taylor has the record for the longest gig at Birdland, and worked with stars including Bird, Diz, Kai Winding, Jo Jones, Lester Young, Oscar Pettiford, Lee Konitz, Stan Getz, Milt Jackson, Art Blakey, Slim Gaillard, Roy Eldridge, Charlie Shavers, J. J. Johnson, Terry Gibbs and others.] You know, the thing that people fail to realize about Bird is that he was a great teacher. In rehearsals he would show us what he wanted in a way that made sense. Both Diz and Bird were very intellectual about their music. The fact that they played in bars and nightclubs, rather than concert type settings, is due to the society in which they lived. The same brilliant sounds could have come from a concert stage, but at the time it was not possible. When publications like *Life* would interview Dizzy, he would put on his cap and sunglasses and just put on a show because he knew that they did not listen and understand the contributions that he and Bird were making to *American classical music*—what we called jazz then, and still today. Dizzy was the one; Bird did it!"

SELECTED BILLY TAYLOR DISCOGRAPHY

BILLY TAYLOR TRIO—Savoy MG 12008
 A TOUCH OF BILLY TAYLOR—Prestige 7664
 MY FAIR LADY LOVES JAZZ—Impulse A-72
 (Billy Taylor Trio with Quincy Jones)
 BILLY TAYLOR TRIO/JAZZ ALIVE!—Monmouth
 Evergreen MES/7089

BILLY TAYLOR BIBLIOGRAPHY

A TOUCH OF TAYLOR (*Classics To Jazz*, with originals)—Hanson Music, N.Y.C.
 JAZZ GIANTS—BILLY TAYLOR (*How To Play Bebop Piano*)—Hanson Music
 COMBO ARRANGING—Hanson Music
 BILLY TAYLOR SKETCHES—Duane Music Inc., Sunnyvale, Ca.
 PROGRESSIVE CHORD STUDIES—BOOK I—Gray/Belwin, N.Y.C.
 out of print:
 DIXIELAND PIANO SOLOS AND HOW TO PLAY THEM—Hanson Music
 MAMBO PIANO SOLOS. . .—Hanson Music
 BOOGIE WOOGIE PIANO SOLOS. . .—Hanson Music
 RAGTIME PIANO SOLOS. . .—Hanson Music
 MODERN JAZZ PIANO SOLOS. . .—Hanson Music

DAVID DANIEL BELLANTONIO



Spreading the jazz gospel—top left: at New York City's Public School 271; top right: in 1968 at the Jackie Robinson Concert; middle: with Captain Kangaroo; bottom: with David Bailey and Jo Jones.

One of my favorite Billy Taylor records is a *Touch Of Billy Taylor*, on Prestige. It came out in 1956, when bebop was on the decline, and in it one hears traces of styles as diverse as Tatum, Shearing, Ellington and Cecil Taylor. The amazing thing about the record is how fresh and alive the trio sounds, so I asked Taylor to tell me more about the session.

"Yes, that was '56, and at a time when my own sounds began to take form. The block chord style I learned mostly from Milt Buckner, the true innovator of that style. My concept of swing has its roots not only in Tatum but also in Cole. When Nat Cole had his trio going in the late '30s, there must have been over a hundred bands across the country that tried to sound like it. Once Cole played opposite Basie, who had his big band, and you know how even today the Count has his rhythm section swinging so hard. Anyway, Cole followed after the first set with just his trio, and they kept the swing thing going, cause people were dancing, and they did not let up. Nat Cole could swing you into bad health."

26 □ down beat

I asked Billy why it is so hard to get his records; in searching all over town I had only found two in print. He paused a few seconds, flexed his fingers, took a big breath and said:

"The main reason that I have not recorded that much in the last 15 years is the record industry itself. In many ways it is ignorant about the nature of the art and the music. It does a terrible job. When I began working as a radio announcer in New York I met with many of the so-called producers. They would give me a record and say 'It's good—play it.' I would ask, 'What cut is good?' and they would say, 'Number two, side one.' I would play it, and it would be some movie score overarranged and of little value.

"They do not understand the jazz artist. They do not market the product in a logical way. If a group is good and has a healthy sound, the record will sell, but if the producers don't market it and put it in the public eye, it doesn't have a chance. Many jazz artists signed away their rights for a meager weekly salary so that they could keep going; meanwhile the record companies collected the

major portion of the gross profit. "Remember Lee Morgan's record, *The Cooker*? It had a tune that's famous called *The Sidewinder*, that Morgan wrote. Anyway, it turns out that someone made a car called the Sidewinder and they heard about Morgan's tune and wanted to buy the rights for a series of commercials. The problem was that Blue Note owned the rights to the track and was paying Morgan some weekly amount—so you know who made the money on that deal.

"Many record companies have no concept of what the jazz audience is. Just look at Chess records from Chicago: they recorded both Ramsey and Ahmad Jamal with a sense of business and style and both artists became popular across the country. There must be an effort by the record producer to sell the product. I wonder why Dave Brubeck has sold so many more records than Miles Davis? I have turned down contracts that many musicians would have signed, but I must work within my own personal conscience."

I told Taylor about the frustrations of being a local Chicago musician, and how times seem leaner, there being fewer clubs to play in, lack of recognition for our own local greats—in a way a musical depression—and he told me that I was young and should continue to fight, that I should write letters to the critics and tell them about the state of things. He showed me the cover to *Billy Taylor—Jazz Alive!* and placed it neatly in his briefcase; turning, he looked at me and said:

"There are other people from this town that have not gotten the respect that they deserve. There are certain black heroes that are in a way the basics of jazz: Coltrane, Bird, Ellington . . . and they are our black heroes. White people have their heroes, so why can't we?"

I was playing at a North Side spot that Friday, so I had to wait until Saturday to hear Billy Taylor's trio. On the traditional Holiday Inn white fluorescent marquee, the group's name lay over the line "The Beautiful Melody." Past a long hall with pictures of jazz greats, the maitre d' in a white tux told me to take my hat off. Taylor was sitting in a large, exotic wicker chair talking to his bass player, Victor Gaskin. Within minutes he moved between the tables; several women waved at him and he smiled. He sat down next to me.

"You know, Sparrow, things have changed so much over the years. I can remember certain spots in New York where single women would come down and see the band. They were really into the music. If the cats bothered them the management would take care of it. Sometimes they would come with their dates the first night, but you know the guy would be bending their ear, and they couldn't hear the music; so they would return with their friends the next night and sit back and listen. There are many reasons why people don't go out to see music as much as they used to." Taylor excused himself to begin the second set.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to introduce the trio—Victor Gaskin on string bass and the incredible Freddie Waits on multiple percussion. Several years ago I was at a party and some of the people asked if I could write a song using the first initials of their names. I came up with C.A.G., and this is what it sounds like."

The piece was a medium tempo, major

continued on page 62

There are many ways to put together a sound system. You can spend a lot of money on mixers, equalizers, power amps, and accessories. Or, you can buy one of the new XR Series compacts from Peavey. The working musician who makes his money playing clubs, lounges, and small auditoriums will be hard pressed to find a more functional system.

The XR compacts have been designed for maximum versatility in a highly portable package offering features and specifications formerly available only with separate components. Take for example our built-in graphic equalizer that allows you to tailor the tonal response of the system to any playing environment while maintaining effective control of annoying feedback. Or, the independent monitor send controls on each channel that can be mixed and adjusted separately for each performer. Convenient

patching facilities are provided for direct hookup with external power amps, effects devices, and monitor systems.

Two high impedance inputs are featured on each of the XR's channels. This means you can run as many as twelve microphones into the six channel XR-600. Using Peavey PBH microphones and cables that same setup is automatically converted to a low impedance balanced line, totally eliminating any hum or interference...a feature usually found in much more expensive mixers.

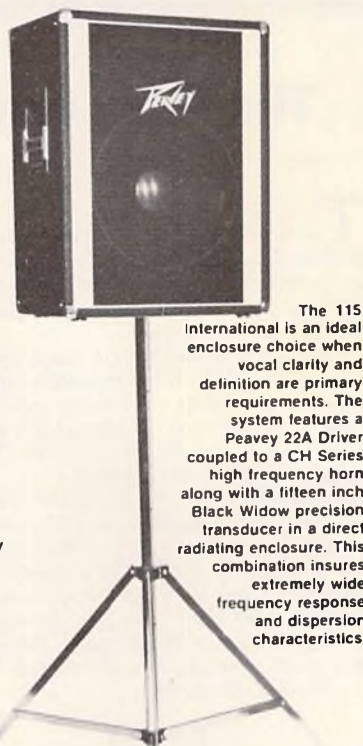


Peavey PBH high impedance microphones are specially designed with a converting transformer built into the cable plug at the input of the amplifier. This advanced design retains all the interference cancelling advantages of the low impedance, balanced line setups of larger, more expensive systems.

Peavey microphones feature wide response with tight cardioid patterns for clean, realistic vocal reproduction. Each mike comes equipped with a rugged case, deluxe holder, and a twenty foot cable.

The XR compacts are compatible with any four ohm speaker setup but, if you're after maximum performance in a portable package, our International Series enclosures are without equal. These extended range, high efficiency enclosures out perform many of the "professional" permanent installation systems that are much larger and more expensive.

Before you invest a lot of money in a sound system, stop by your Peavey Dealer and see what a great sound system a lot less money will buy.



The 115 International is an ideal enclosure choice when vocal clarity and definition are primary requirements. The system features a Peavey 22A Driver coupled to a CH Series high frequency horn along with a fifteen inch Black Widow precision transducer in a direct radiating enclosure. This combination insures extremely wide frequency response and dispersion characteristics.

The Peavey S-1 heavy-duty speaker stand represents a vast improvement over previous speaker stands. The S-1's height

adjustment utilizes a high-strength aircraft "locking pin" and does NOT depend on a "thumb screw" which can easily slip and cause the stand to collapse.

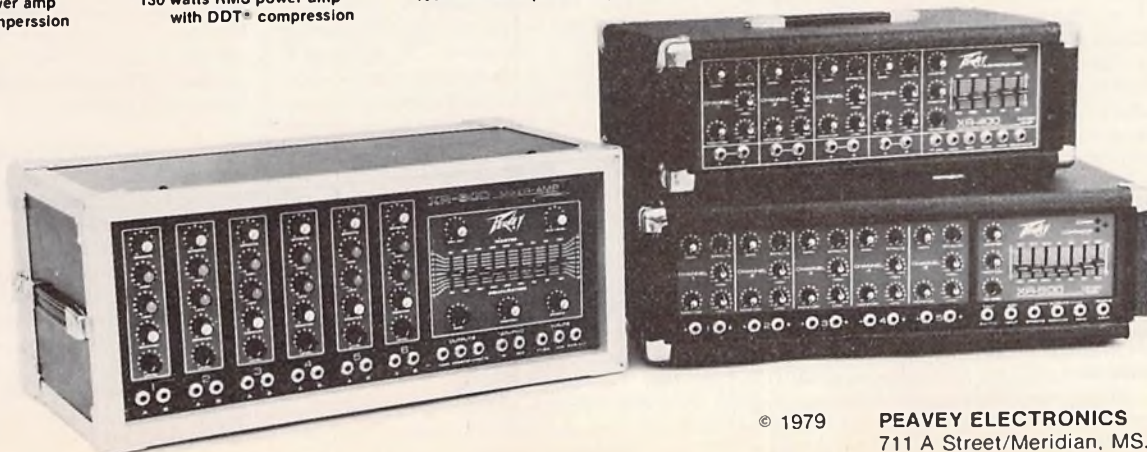


THE XR SERIES COMPACTS

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210 watts RMS power amp
with DDT® compression

XR-500
Five channels
Auxiliary input channel
Complete patch panel
Seven-band graphic equalizer
130 watts RMS power amp
with DDT® compression

XR-400
Four channels
Auxiliary input channel
Complete patch panel
Five-band graphic equalizer
100 watts RMS power amp



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711 A Street/Meridian, MS.

May 27

Presenting the Winners, Part I: The Third Annual Downbeat Student Recording Awards

The winners of the 1980 down beat Student Recording Awards have been chosen by a staff of ten judges from among hundreds of entries from U.S. and Canadian high schools and colleges.

This year's deebec awards have been expanded to include three other-than-jazz categories—solo, small and large ensembles. Also, "Outstanding Performance" awards have been made, at the discretion of the judges, in almost every category.

Part II of the 1980 deebec awards will be in the next issue of **down beat**. The remaining categories include the High School and College Divisions of: *Best Jazz Performance by a Big Band*, *Best Vocal Solo or Group Performance*, *Best Original Composition*, *Best Jazz Arrangement*; College Division of *Best Symphonic Performance by a Band or Orchestra*, and *Best Jazz Instrumental Solo Performance*.

Jazz Solos

Best Jazz Instrumental Solo Performance, High School Division. Winner: Steve Watts (17, sr.) tenor sax solo of *I'm Sorry* (M. Mainieri) with the Denver Citywide High School Jazz Combo, Career Education Center, Denver, CO; Neil W. Bridge, teacher. Judges' comment: "A mature player with a good, hard sound, a very promising jazz musician."

Outstanding Performance Awards (alphabetically): **Mike Friedman** (16, jr.), bass solo on *Donna Lee* (C. Parker) with Denver Citywide HS Jazz Combo, Career Education Center; Neil W. Bridge, teacher. **Everette Harp** (17, sr.), tenor sax solo on *Simone* (Frank Foster) and **Mike Rojas** (17, jr.), piano solo on *Ja-Da* (Carleton) with HSPVA Jazz Ensemble; High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Houston, TX; Dr. Robert Morgan, Director, Jazz Program. **Tamara Schultz** (17, sr.), alto sax solo on *Stairway To The Stars* (Malneck/Parish/Signorelli) with KMHS Jazz Ensemble; Kent Meridian High School, Kent, WA; Hal Sherman, band director.

Jazz Groups

Best Jazz Performance By A Group, High School Division. Winner: Eric Wenocur Trio—Wenocur (17, sr.), piano; **Alan Eek** (16, soph.), fretless electric bass; **Fred Maxcin** (17, sr.), drums—performing *Take The A Train* (Ellington), *Laura* (Mercer/Raksin), *Sea Journey* (Corea); Wilde Lake High School, Columbia, MD; Frederick A. Brisco, Music Director. Judges' comment: "Very well balanced, cohesive group with excellent tone, pianist can really stretch out, inside subtleties unusual for high school players." *Outstanding Performance Awards*: (alphabetically): **Denver Citywide High School Jazz Combo**—**Bentley Taylor** (17, sr.), alto sax, flute; **Steve Watts** (17, sr.), tenor sax; **Greg Carroll** (17, sr.), vibes; **Mike Sullivan** (16, sr.), piano; **George Pegues** (17, sr.) and **Mike Friedman** (16, jr.), basses; **Mike Swaw** (16, jr.), congas; **J. D. Maniscalco** (17, sr.) and **Mike Sumrall** (17, sr.), drums—performing *Billie's Bounce* and *Moose The Mooche* (Charlie Parker), and *Blue Bossa* (Kenny Dorham); Career Education

Center [High School], Denver, CO; Neil W. Bridge, teacher. **The Little Rock Central Jazz Trio**—**Kevin James** (18, sr.), alto sax; **Anthony Carruthers** (18, sr.), piano, Rhodes; **Cletis Jones** (17, sr.), drums—performing *Smooth Groove* and *Fast Motion* (Kevin James); *Feelings* (Morris Albert); Central High School, Little Rock, AR; Lee A. Anthony, art teacher, faculty advisor.

Best Jazz Performance By A Group, College Division. Winner: Fusion Ensemble—**John Lovell** (26, fr.), trumpet; **Bill Ross** (29, grad.), alto sax; **Randy Russell** (23, jr.), tenor sax; **Dave Grygier** (24, grad.), trombone; **Jeff Campbell** (22, jr.), guitar; **Reed Arvin** (24, grad.), piano; **John DiModica** (24, jr.), bass; **Rob Echelman** (23, jr.)—performing *Wood Dance* and *Kepler's Dream* (Ron Miller), *Rosewood* (Woody Shaw); University of Miami, Coral Gables; Ron Miller, conductor and faculty advisor. Judges' comment: "Out-of-sight group, soloists excellent but alto player is superb, similar sound, but not copy, of Brecker brothers, top arrangements, I'd pay to hear them live." *Outstanding Performance Awards* (alphabetically): **Mike Moore Quintet**—Moore (soph.), piano; **Pete Moutis** (soph.), drums; **Larry Kornfield** (jr.), acoustic and electric basses; **Bob Curtis** (sr.), soprano sax, flute; **Paul Bollenback** (jr.), guitar—performing *Country Waltz*, *Caribe*, *Ballad For Gayle*, *If Duke Were Around Today He Would Say ...* (Mark Moore); University of Miami, Coral Gables; Bob Gower, theory dept., faculty advisor. **The Wakefield Valley Consort**—**Mark Piszczek** (23, jr.), oboe, eng. horn, alto & sop. saxes, recorders, Irish tin whistle, percussion; and **Guy Babylon** (23, sr.), Rhodes piano, mini-Moog, ARP Odyssey, Crumar Orchestra, piano—performing *Fire Castles*, *Majel*, and *Dark Wood* (M. Piszczek), *Forever's* and *Gypsy Farewells* (G. Babylon); University of South Florida, Tampa; Mark P. Hendricks, Director of Jazz Studies.

Other-Than-Jazz Solos and Ensembles

Best Other-Than-Jazz Instrumental Solo Performance, High School Division. "Classical Repertory" Winner: Peggy Self (17, sr.), flute, performing *Suite In A Minor For Flute (Lento)* (Telemann) with the HSPVA Symphony Orchestra; High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Houston, TX; Richard F. Piagentini, director. Judges' comment: "Excellent overall sound, mature presence, accurate interpretation, very good musician." *Outstanding Performance Awards* (alphabetically): **René Jorgeson** (17, jr.), trombone, performing *Andante And Allegro* (Barat) with piano accompaniment; Parkersburg HS, WV; Kent Jorgeson, band director. **Stephanie Swearingen** (17, sr.), flute, performing *Concerto In D Major For Flute* (Mozart) with HSPVA Symphony Orchestra; HS for the Performing and Visual Arts, Houston, TX; Richard F. Piagentini, director.

Best Other-Than-Jazz Instrumental Solo Performance, College Division. "Classical Repertory" Winner: Andrew Glowaty (22, sr.), trumpet,

performing *Design For Bb Trumpet* (Glowaty), no accompaniment; Northern Illinois University, DeKalb; Ron Modell, faculty advisor. Judges' comment: "Superior tone and technique, original and musical concept, a mature player." *Outstanding Performance Award: Lovie Smith* (25, grad.), marimba, performing *Concerto For Violin (3rd movement—marimba solo)* (Khachatourian) with piano accompaniment; Shepherd School of Music, Rice University, Houston, TX; Richard Brown, percussion instructor. *"Pop-Rock" Winner: Paul Ventimiglia* (22, sr.), piano and lead vocal, performing *Act II* (Ventimiglia) with own group; North Texas State University, Denton; Bill Beldon, faculty advisor. Judges' comment: "Excellent, professional quality across the board."

Best Other-Than-Jazz Performance by a Small Ensemble, High School Division: (no winner).

Best Other-Than-Jazz Performance by a Small Ensemble, College Division. "Classical Repertory" Winner: Aeterna Brass Quintet performing *Quintet* (Hartley); Northern Illinois University, DeKalb; Terry Sawchuk, faculty advisor. Student personnel: **Andy Glowaty** and **Dale Kerner**, trumpets; **Cathe Byers**, horn; **Karl Androes**, trombone; **Mark Johansen**, bass trombone. Judges' comment: "Exceptional blend and balance, dynamic contrast, excellent control." *"Pop-Rock" Winner: Paul Ventimiglia Ensemble* performing *Act II* and *Geneva* (Ventimiglia); North Texas State University, Denton; Bill Beldon, faculty advisor. Student personnel: Ventimiglia, composer-lyricist-arranger-piano-vocal; **Wylene Ivy**, backup vocals; **Rick Flores**, guitars; **Greg Bissonette**, drums & perc.; **Dominic Lombardi**, saxes; **Paul Finazzo**, bass; **Jim Ryan**, concert master of 4-piece string section ("doubled" and digital delay added to simulate 16-piece section). Judges' comment: "Musically exciting, good original material produced and performed on a professional level."

Best Symphonic Performance by a Band or Orchestra, High School Division. Winner: HSPVA Wind Ensemble performing *Procession Of Nobles* (Rimsky-Korsakov), *Liebestod* (Wagner), *Colas Breugnon* (Kabalevsky); High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Houston, TX; Richard F. Piagentini, director. Judges' comment: "Very good performance, exceptional ensemble playing with good dynamics and balance."

Recording Engineering

Best Engineered Live Recording, High School Division. Winner: David Millrod (age 16, 11th grade) recording engineer—*Woodwind Quintet* (Elliot Carter) performed by Lieurance Woodwind Quintet; Interlochen Arts Academy, MI. David Gail, faculty advisor. Judges' comment: "Excellent recording job, good balance, clean sound." Equipment used: recording—Ampex Ag-440B, Scotch 177 tape, two Shure SM-58 mics, Sony Mx-20 mixing board; for second-generation tape—Ampex Ag-440B, Scotch 207 tape.

Best Engineered Live Recording, College Divi-



son. Winner: **Les Brockman** (sr.) and **Larry Revit** (sr.), co-engineers—*Mixdwata* (Wayne Shorter) performed by a student sextet, University of Miami, Coral Gables; Bill R. Porter, Director of Recording Services. Judges' comment: "Everything at pro level, exceptionally good recording of relatively difficult material." Equipment used: 2-track mix—MCI JH110A 2-trk. recorder, Revox A-700 1/4 trk. recorder, MCI 416 mixing console, dbx noise reduction, JBL monitors, mics by AKG, E-V, Neumann, Sennheiser, Shure; AGFA PEM 368 tape. *Outstanding Performance Award*: **Mike Sak** (21, sr.) and **Christopher Jacks** (22, sr.), co-engineers—*Wood Dance, Kepler's Dream, American Hope* (Ron Miller) performed by a student octet; School of Music, University of Miami, Coral Gables; Bill Porter and Ron Miller, faculty advisors. Equipment used: MCI JH 16 and MCI JH 110A tape machines, MCI 416 console, JBL 4320 monitors, Crown amps; mics—Beyer 160 and 201; E-V RE20, DS 35, CS 15; Neumann U47 and U87; Sennheiser 421; Sony 33P and C500. Outboard: Symetrix CL-100 compressor/limiter; Orban 622B Parametric EQ; Pandora LM-402 Dual Audio Limiter; Urei 1176LN limiting amp; dbx 160 compressor/limiter; Countryman 968 Phase Shifter; Delta Lab DL-1 Digital Delay.

Best Engineered Studio Recording, High School Division. Winner: **Phil Hegel** (16, jr.), recording engineer—*CEC Jazz Quintet*, Career Education Center [High School], Denver, CO; Gerald Sutton and Thomas D. Likes, faculty advisors. Judges' comment: "Superior job, very good stereo perspective, 'natural' sound quality." Equipment used: TASCAM and Quantum consoles, Otari 8-trk. and 2-trk. mastering recorders, JBL monitors, Ampex tape.

Best Engineered Studio Recording, College Division. Winner: **Christopher Jacks** (22, sr.), head engineer; **Paul Hugo** (23, sr.), **Pierre Porter** (23, sr.), and **Mike Sak** (21, sr.)—*Free Fall: I. Lead Balloon, II. Sunbeam 16-B, III. Feather Weight, IV. The High Sky Sings (or Do you Hear the Stratosphere?)*—arranged and composed by Jacks, performed by seven student musicians (3 guitars, drums, vibes, Prophet 5, bass, chimes, ARP String Ensemble, piano, Rhodes) and five sound effect players (shoe string, dominoes, Sears radial-arm saw, crystal glasses and the base of an Old Dentist Chair). University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL.; Bill Porter, faculty advisor. Judges' comment: "Completely professional, a winner at any level." Equipment used: MCI 416 console; MCI JH 16, MCI JH 110A, and Sony 1/4-trk. consumer deck tape machines; JBL 4320 monitors; Crown amps; mics—AKG 451, 501, 414; Audio Technica 813; E-V 635A, CS 15, RE20; Neumann U87 and U47; Sennheiser 421; Sony 33P and C500.

Outboard: dbx 310-D noise reduction, Urei 1176LN Limiting amp; dbx 160 compressor/limiter; Pandora LM-402 dual audio limiter; Orban 622B Parametric EQ; Marshall Time Modulator 622B "A" System; Time Line Digital Delay.

The Judging

The *deebee* categories and general judging criteria are patterned after the Grammy awards. High school entrants are judged as aspiring professionals; college division entrants as working professionals.

Specific criteria for the performance categories include: Overall Sound, Presence & Authority, Interpretation-True to Idiom, Improvisation or Creativity, Technique & Intonation, Rhythm & Time, and Dynamics. Each of the seven criteria has a point value of one to ten, 70 points maximum. Total scores are used as reference for the judges when voting.

The engineering categories are judged on the basis of: Difficulty of Material, Technical Creativity, Recording Technique, and Stereo Perspective.

Each recording (and score) is judged "blind"; entries are known to the judges only by a number.

All decisions of the judges are final.

The Judges

David Baker—composer, arranger, author, cellist, jazz group leader, orchestra conductor; Head of Jazz Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington.

Dick Buckley—jazz radio commentator (WBEZ, Chicago), author, critic, lecturer.

Dale Clevenger—principal horn player with Chicago Symphony Orchestra; featured with Ears, Chicago-based jazz group.

Bunky Green—jazz alto saxist, recording artist (latest release, *Places We've Never Been*, Vanguard); Head of Jazz Studies, Chicago State University.

Gary Loizzo—Chairman, Engineering Craft Nominating Committee (Chicago) for Grammy awards; president of Pumpkin Studios.

Kenny Soderblom—plays all the woodwinds, studio musician and contractor, jazz group leader; past president, NARAS-Chicago.

Chuck Suber—Chairman, Jazz Craft Nominating Committee (Chicago) for Grammy awards; *down beat* publisher.

Cy Touff—bass trumpet player, studio musician, former big band soloist (Woody Herman, Boyd Raeburn, et. al.); featured with Ears, Chicago-based jazz group.

Tom Washington—composer, arranger, jazz pianist; president of Tom Tom 84, independent record production company.

Paul Wilson—composer, arranger, jazz pianist, Chairman, Arranging Craft Nominating Committee (Chicago) for Grammy Awards; president of Herschel Commercial Inc., jingle and record production company.

Awards & Prizes

The *deebee* trophy is awarded to the music department of each winner's school.

The *deebee* pin is awarded to each winner and "outstanding performer" in all categories. This includes members of small ensembles and engineering teams, and faculty advisors.

The *deebee* "Outstanding Performance" certificate is awarded to each soloist, composer, arranger, and engineer; and to the

A special *deebee* Award goes to **Bill Doerrfeld** (15, soph.); Harry D. Jacobs High School, Algonquin, IL.; James M. Iddings, head of music department. Doerrfeld's entry is a tape, a self-sync overdub, of his original jazz composition-arrangement, *In The Groove*, on which he plays: Steinway grand piano, Yamaha E-70 organ, Roland SH-2000 and CDX-Moog synthesizers, MXR digital delay, Rogers drum set, and a Bach Stradivarius trumpet. Recording equipment: TEAC A-3440 4-trk. and Sony 658 2-trk. recorders, 2 Shure mics, and a Switchcraft channel selector. All of the above equipment and instruments are on standby in the Doerrfeld's living room just in case anyone in the family wants to cut a track after dinner. You know what they say: "The family that tapes together. . . ." Bill D. plays trumpet and keyboards in his high school jazz band and maintains an A average. He has eyes to go on to college if he "can find the right one," and make it in the recording business. Could be.

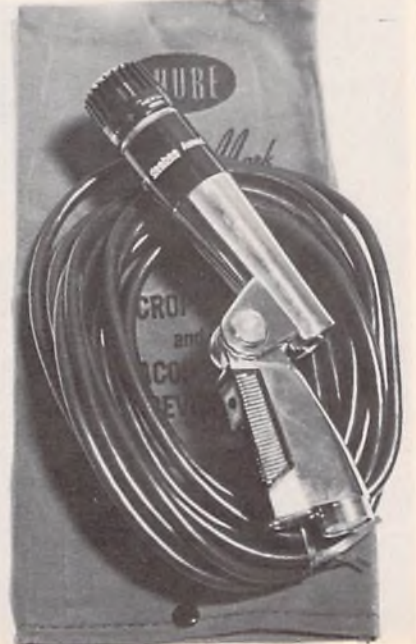
student or faculty leaders of each ensemble so designated by the judges.

The *Shure Gold Microphone Award* goes to each winning soloist, composer, arranger, and engineer; and to the student or faculty leaders of each winning ensemble.

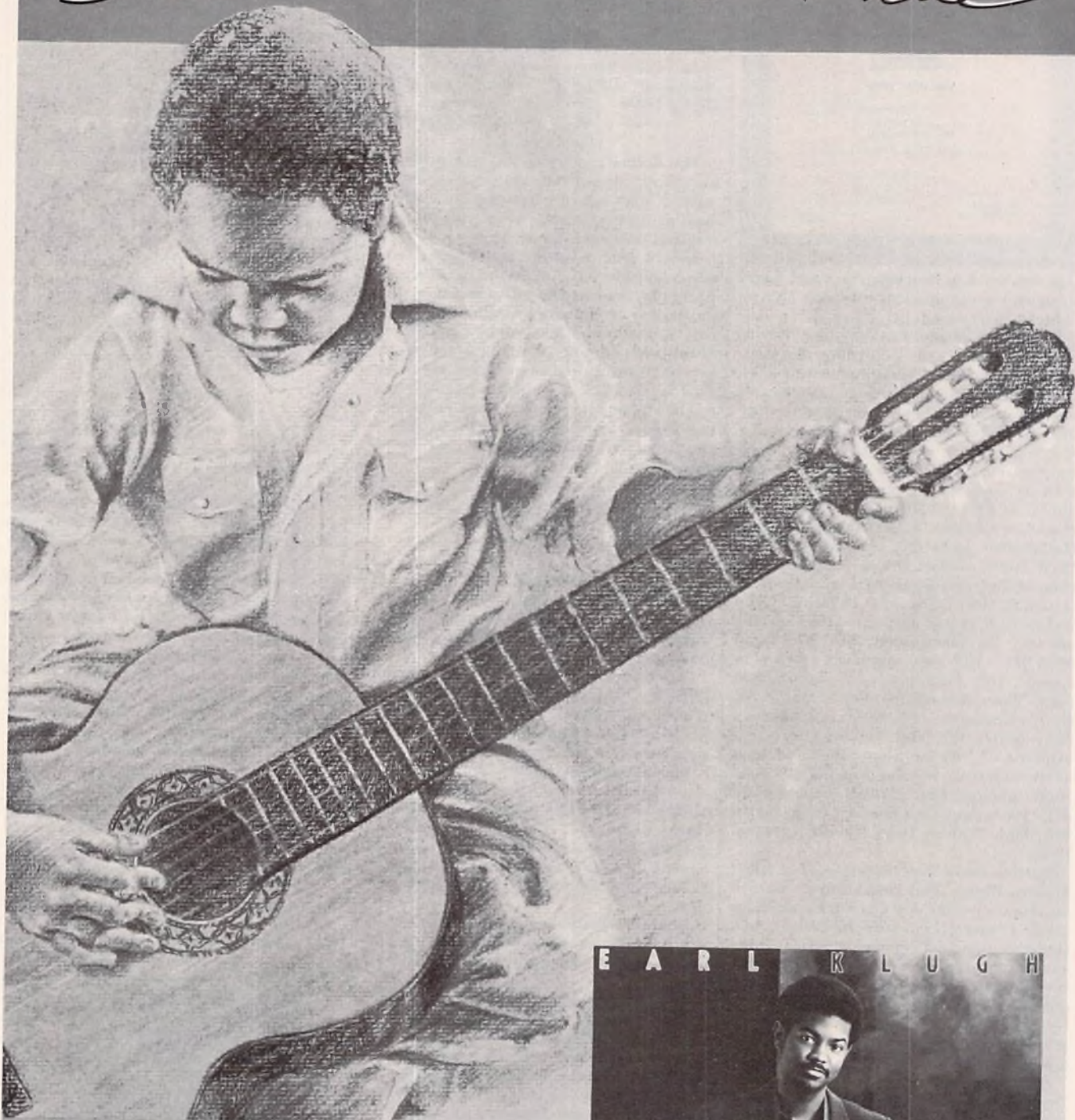
Berklee College of Music scholarships in the amount of \$1,000, applicable to tuition for the 1980-81 school year, is awarded to high school division winners in the soloist, composer, arranger, and engineer categories. A similar scholarship in the amount of \$500 is awarded to high school division "outstanding performers" in the soloist, composer, arranger, and engineer categories.

1981 deebee Awards

Recordings are eligible for the 1981 *down beat* Student Recording Awards if they were made after January 1, 1980 by any student enrolled in a U.S. or Canadian high school or college when the recording was made. Complete rules and procedure are printed on the 1981 *deebee* Official Application now available by writing: *deebee '81, down beat*, 222 West Adams St., Chicago, IL 60606. The final deadline is February 10, 1981 for all recordings to be received in Chicago.



Dream Come True



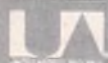
**The Album Earl Klugh's
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A Long, Long, Time**

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Produced by Earl Klugh

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RECORD REVIEWS

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

CHARLES TYLER

SAGA OF THE OUTLAWS—Nessa n-16: *Saga Of The Outlaws*.
Personnel: Tyler, alto sax; Earl Cross, trumpet; John Ore, Ronnie Boykins, bass; Steve Reid, drums.

"A polyphonic sonic drama"; "Ride of the Marauders"; "A tale of the Old and new West"; Charles Tyler's startling, clear-thinking minor epic packs almost as much in the way of explanatory sub-titles as it does music. As it turns out, these verbal variations offer the most convenient way to examine several musical aspects of this sparkling and imaginative work.

Saga is indeed a drama—not only because Tyler has so sure a sense of tension and release, but also because of its structure. Thirty-five minutes long—recorded in 1976 at Studio Rivbea during the new music festival that yielded the *Wildflowers* series on Douglas—it uses a haunting theme for the horns as both prologue and epilogue to the main action, which is held together by a contrasting theme for the basses. And both themes are polyphonic: in the first, Tyler's sweeping romance is circumspectly echoed by the trumpet countermelody; in the second, Boykins states a powerful line that underpins the loping, clippety-clop phrases played by Ore.

More revealing, though, is that line about the old and new west. Tyler explains, "I love Westerns . . . I used to dig the background music in those films," and the simple, rustic nature of his themes certainly bears that influence. The mournful quiet of the first makes it the obvious choice for a remake of *High Noon*, the second smacks of tumbleweeds shuffling along a dirt road. Most important, though, is Tyler's absorption of the new west—the California-raised jazz of Ornette Coleman and, more recently, David Murray, Arthur Blythe and the others conducting avant garde experiments in 1960s-70s Los Angeles.

Neither these musicians—nor Albert Ayler, with whom Tyler worked extensively, and to whose music he is sometimes considered a link—is stylistically obvious in Tyler's committed yet controllable playing. (His tone is fat and edged, though less exaggerated than Blythe's, and he makes only limited use of Ayler's more corymbant flights.) Tyler is marked on this record by an almost eerie grasp of his idiom and his materials: during his two long solos, which make up much of the piece, he rarely strays very far from his themes' distinctive intervals, giving his far-reaching improvisations the sort of cohesion that most others only guess at.

Ornette, though, is prominent in the format Tyler chose for this piece. *Saga* is structured after Ornette's *Free Jazz*; where Coleman used a double quartet, Tyler has

crafted a sort of double trio, with both units sharing the drummer. Steve Reid, a prodigious and often overlooked rhythmmagician, is up to the task (although he is sometimes called on to do nothing but keep time); his solo varies texture, volume, and intensity without a trace of indulgence, no easy matter when there is more than enough freedom to hang on.

What's more, as the format of *Saga* is arched (with Reid serving as the apogee), so is the form of the piece. Earl Cross' brief trumpet break comes midway between the opening and closing themes; on either side there is an alto solo followed by soliloquies from the rhythm section, basses in the first case and drums toward the end. It's a device that further solidifies this ambitious undertaking. Cross' work here is admirable for its ensemble commentary—his solo is disappointing as well as short—and Ore and Boykins are frequently breathtaking. All of them can thank Tyler for providing so novel a stimulus as this piece—as well as for sailing through two solos which, as you'd by now expect, link together in a moment of near-epiphanal wonder.

As for "Ride of the Marauders"? These guys drive through town with an irresistible swagger, plundering their material for its last trace of riches. Give Tyler an extra star—for the most aptly named album in years. —*tesser*

OLD AND NEW DREAMS

OLD AND NEW DREAMS—Black Saint BSR 0013: *Handoven; Dewey's Tune; Chairman Mao; Next To The Quiet Stream; Augmented; Old And New Dreams*.
Personnel: Don Cherry, pocket trumpet; Dewey Redman, tenor sax and musette; Charlie Haden, bass; Ed Blackwell, drums and gong.

OLD AND NEW DREAMS—ECM-1-1154: *Lovely Woman; Tingo; Guinea; Open Or Close; Orbit Of La-Ba; Song For The Whales*.

Personnel: Don Cherry, trumpet and piano; Dewey Redman, tenor sax and musette; Charlie Haden, bass; Ed Blackwell, drums.

***** 1/2

For some, Old and New Dreams may represent a nostalgic recreation of the legendary quartet, sans leader; a VSOP tribute to Ornette, of sorts. But others will find something besides the vitality of Coleman's prior achievements in each of these LPs—especially the Black Saint. These four men, Cherry, Redman, Haden and Blackwell, are not content to rest on the laurels of critically acclaimed internships with the foremost innovator of the avant garde. Indeed, this group plays as a unit, and is itself capable of creating many different colors, textures—orchestrations. There are new stories to be told, new experiences to relate—new music to present.

Of the quartet's two LPs, the Black Saint is the most convincing. Recorded in 1976, the brevity of approach sets this session apart from so much of the new music of today.

Within the context of "free jazz," it's refreshing to hear three tunes on a side, as opposed to lengthy discourses on one mode or pedal point. *Handoven* is right to the point—an appropriate starting place for the album, notable mostly for Cherry's angular, searching horn and the frenzied, swinging fire-works of Blackwell. There is a charming sense of urgency, of rushing excitement, in the group's sound.

The opening strains of Dewey Redman's *Augmented* solo find the saxophonist very much in the Coleman vein, but the powerful influence of Coltrane soon becomes apparent. Redman's is, perhaps, the most uncomfortable role in the group; his "pretty" sound doesn't always blend well with the rougher edges of the ensemble, but it does work effectively with Haden's melodic accompaniment. Blackwell contributes an arresting solo, full of dynamics, subtle as they may be. So logical, so musically sound. *Old And New Dreams* brings to light one of the most profound elements of Cherry's playing: like Monk, he has an astonishing sense of recovery. His mistakes usually make sense. He turns faltered phrasing into something very musical and relevant to the overall structure of his solos.

The intentions of this group are most successfully realized in Haden's *Chairman Mao*, a haunting Asian-flavored composition. Redman and Cherry weave in and around Haden's hypnotic bass accompaniment, and the superimposed sound of a Chinese woman singing over his solo passage is very effective, if not downright eerie. The recording quality of the bass itself is thin and does not do justice to Haden's sound as does the ECM disc.

The more recently recorded ECM album succeeds, like many other Eicher productions, more on the basis of its sound than its substance. Cherry and Redman are afforded the glowing, translucent presence that has become a trademark of the label's sound. Haden's bass is superbly recorded; Jan Erik Kongshaug has captured the richness of his sound accurately. But overall, the music contained on this record lacks some of the warmth and spontaneity the Black Saint captured over two years earlier.

Lovely Woman will certainly invite comparison to the original, and in this sense, it can't succeed. The composition is taken at a slower tempo than Ornette's classic Atlantic version, and Blackwell doesn't inject the ferocity that we might expect from him. Some will miss Coleman's cries of anguish that were such an integral part of the original theme. But Redman, Cherry and especially Haden contribute memorable solos.

Guinea and *Open Or Close* are attractive tunes, chord supported melodies, (can you catch Cherry's Gillespie quote in the latter?) and are particularly effective vehicles for Redman's cascading tenor. Generally, he sounds more comfortable on this LP than on the Black Saint release. Haden's *Song For The Whales* certainly isn't destined for AM radio airplay, but his creation is, again, the most evocative performance of the set. He opens with a series of bowed effects that really sound like whales, not a string of random ill-thought noises (granted, it is a more meaningful experience if you know the song is, as Haden puts it, "written with respect for all species of whales, in the hope that they will soon be protected by international law").

To many ears, an ECM disc that bears repeated listening is a treasure, joining such other achievements in the label's catalogue as *Facing You*, *Matchbook*, *Crystal Silence*, *New Directions* and *Nice Guys*. Happily, Old and New Dreams remains a touring and recording unit. Group improvisation on this level is what really good jazz is all about. —*moorhead*

ZOOT SIMS/RUNE GUSTAFSSON

THE SWEETEST SOUNDS—Pablo Today 2312-106: *The Sweetest Sounds*; *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*; *Stompin' At The Savoy*; *My Favorite Things*; *Waters Of March*; *Indentation*; *I'm Gettin' Sentimental Over You*; *A Song For You*.

Personnel: Sims, tenor saxophone; Gustafsson, Bucky Pizzarelli, guitars; George Mraz, bass; Peter Donald, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The set is perfectly titled, for one is not likely to hear any sweeter sounds. Easy-listening modern mainstream jazz at its beguiling best is what is served up in this program of flawlessly played, perfectly relaxed and always swinging performances by the well-matched group producer Rune Ofwerman has assembled under the joint leadership of Sims and crack Swedish guitarist Gustafsson.

The saxophonist is past master of this post-Lestorian brand of melodic embroidery, weaving a spell of lustrous sensuality on Jobim's fetching *Waters Of March* and turning Elton John's *Yellow Brick Road* into a shimmering delight simply by playing the melody. He digs in with relaxed abandon on the medium-up swingers, energizing anew the Swing Era staples *Stompin' At The Savoy* and *Gettin' Sentimental*, breathing swinging loveliness into *My Favorite Things* and really catching fire on Erik Norstrom's attractive *Indentation*, to the challenge of which he rises spectacularly with some of this most gripping work on the date, rivaled only by the guitarist's unrelentingly inventive, long lined statement which follows.

Having heard a fair amount of Gustafsson over the years, I still find myself marveling at his quietly breathtaking command of his instrument. He has combined all the best elements of modern jazz guitar into an approach that is totally and satisfyingly integrated in all of its aspects. In his playing can be heard traces of several models, all of them excellent: Jim Hall, Wes Montgomery (especially on *Favorite Things*), Jimmy Raney, Barney Kessel and even the earlier Swedish guitar wizard Rolf Berg, a wonderful, woefully overlooked master of the instrument. But not a seam shows in Gustafsson's fluent, thoughtful, harmonically knowledgeable and utterly assured playing, as melodically fertile as it is rhythmically effortless.

He and Sims play off, respond to and stimulate one another as though they've been performing together for years: theirs is the kind of instinctual rapport that comes of shared musical ideas, decades of playing experience and total mastery of their respective instruments. Ofwerman's pairing of them was an inspired bit of musical casting, for between them the sparks really fly. No less delicious was the choice of accompanists, Mraz (who has several beautifully conceived solo spots of his own) and Donald comprising an all but perfect rhythm team. Then too, Pizzarelli's harmonic-rhythmic underpinning, while mixed a bit too far down for my

tastes (most of the time he is felt rather than heard), could not possibly have been more sympathetically realized. He helps the forward movement of the music no little bit.

Over the years one of my favorite Sims albums has been the lovely set of bossa novas he recorded with another two-guitar team, that of Jim Hall and Jimmy Raney (it has been reissued as *Otra Vez*, Mainstream 358). In its slightly differing way, this set of performances is equally satisfying in its sheer melodic beauty and effortless rhythmic command. The ageless, transcendent music making of this group will, like the earlier one, continue to enchant for years to come.

A brief note to Norman Granz and/or Ofwerman: Please, a return engagement by this marvelous group just as quickly as you can manage it. How about a program of the beautiful but, in the U.S. at least, little known music of the late Lars Gullin? —*welding*

JAMES BLOOD (ULMER)

TALES OF CAPTAIN BLACK—Artists House AH-7: *Theme From Captain Black*; *Moons Shines*; *Morning Bride*; *Revelation March*; *Woman Coming*; *Nothing To Say*; *Arena*; *Revealing*.

Personnel: Blood, electric guitar; Ornette Coleman, alto saxophone; Denardo Coleman, drums; Jaamaladeen Tacuma, electric bass.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

Tales Of Captain Black is the first release by James Blood (Ulmer) and represents a greenhouse for his artistic intuition. Blood vibrates to a new decade's esthetic being hammered out by a hyper pool of artists now gathered in New York City who are combining certain forms of experimental rock with the improvisational aspects of jazz. This album documents those multivalents as played by an artist whose oeuvre is fascinating and timely. Blood has moved his music through earlier encounters with funk-jazz and r&b groups, and interfaced those experiences with study and application of Ornette's harmolodic theories. His live appearances featuring David Murray and the disco-funk-avant drummer Ronald Shannon Jackson are jammed with people who see James as a very strong influence on the direction this new music will take.

Here, Blood is joined by Ornette and Denardo Coleman and the highly gifted bassist Jaamaladeen Tacuma. Each player comfortably coexists with the others, though a generation separates the soloists from the rhythm section. The band operates within three improvisational systems—ensemble, reed soloist/trio accompaniment, and guitar soloist/rhythm accompaniment—with a freedom that beguiles each song's formal construction. There is dissonance, as you might expect, explored in each musician's individual sound and in the harmonic overtones of the guitar/saxophone pairings that are delightful in their fragile opulence.

Ornette continues to develop his musical persona, darting in and out of every cut with a master's array of emotional and intuitional moods. Of the four, he operates with the widest spectrum of stylistic gesture and character presence. His playing is measured to each song's needs—for instance, on the title tune he uses a single evocative riff that whinnies and honks its way through the length of the song and serves to spotlight the interaction going on between the others. *Tales* is his most satisfying effort to date to fuse his style to the framework of rock.

Moons Shines has a really gorgeous, languid

melody stated by Blood and Ornette that is contrasted by the rhythm section operating at a breakneck doubletime. Denardo playfully marches around the precise rhythms employed by New York's premier no wave/new wave rockers such as Talking Heads and DNA. He rides over his own back beat with a rococo flourish of embellishments. In this instance the prancing rhythms balance the tune's minimal construction.

Jaamaladeen's popping double whacks are a confluence of fusion technique and disco dread. His boldness leads the band through the cut. Once out of the gate, he plays ahead to the next change while discoursing on what is going down at the moment. However, the fleeting romps of Denardo and Jaamaladeen don't always give the stability and weight that would seemingly best illuminate Blood's music. As a result, songs such as *Arena* and *Morning Bride* are rhythmically too busy to offer any contrast to the music's intensity.

James responds with a non-naive expressiveness that links the dissimilar musical egosystems and makes them right. During Ornette's solos Blood chords stark chainsaw patterns much in the same manner guitarists Jimmie Nolan and Alton Ellis increase the counter rhythmic tension of James Brown's music. Blood, like no wave guitarists Pat Place (Contortions) and Arto Lindsay (Lounge Lizards) reach back to the ghostly, bone shivering sounds of the early electric bluesmen who manipulated their instruments rather than using extreme amplified treatments to gain added textural effects. Into his own solos James comes out like T-Bone Walker falling backwards into the East River. His oblique and eccentric stylings are so new and so right for these times that one listens at the edge of one's chair in admiration.

As we look back on historical antecedents, we notice that when the music has stagnated someone has always come along to rejuvenate the scene. This artist and this record have that aura. All in all the record does live up to the hype and tout that has preceded it's release. Time will tell if *Tales Of Captain Black* will stand as an archetype of what we can expect from the music of the '80s. —*brinsfield*

THE CLASH

LONDON CALLING—Epic E2 36328: *London Calling*; *Brand New Cadillac*; *Jimmy Jazz*; *Hateful*; *Rudie Can't Fail*; *Spanish Bombs*; *The Right Profile*; *Lost In The Supermarket*; *Clampdown*; *The Guns Of Brixton*; *Wrong 'Em Boys*; *Death Of Glory*; *Koka Kola*; *The Card Cheat*; *Lover's Rock*; *Four Horsemen*; *I'm Not Down*; *Revolution Rock*.

Personnel: Mick Jones, guitars, vocals; Joe Strummer, vocals, rhythm guitar; Paul Simonon, bass, vocals; Topper Headon, drums, percussion; Mick Gallagher, organ; The Irish Horns, brass and reeds.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Based on the two albums and half dozen singles the English band the Clash recorded between 1977 and 1980, one would have figured them for just a loud, raw punk band—certainly a good one—but nothing more. So *London Calling*, a two record set (priced for little over the usual cost of a single album—that's punk politics) comes as quite a surprise.

The Clash have created a classic rock album which, literally, defines the state of rock and roll and against which the very best rock of this decade will have to be judged.

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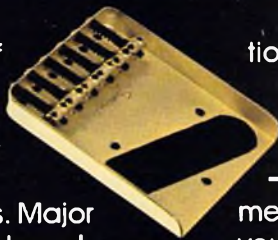
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greased back like '50s rockabilly singers. Their dress was a metaphor for their music, which stripped away all the high tech gloss of state-of-the-art studio rock for a sound that had more in common with the crude recordings of early bluesmen and rock 'n' rollers.

And as they toured America, the Clash sought out indigenous American music: zydeco, blues, rockabilly, soul, country-western and even some jazz. But to some extent, they were looking for signs of an America that no longer existed.

On this new album, the Clash explore the terrain of American music, even as they reshape it to fit their own purposes. *Brand New Cadillac* may be an out and out rockabilly song that Carl Perkins could appreciate, but the lyrics are as contemporary as, well, women's lib. "Baby, baby, won't you hear my plea," blusters Joe Strummer, his voice bathed in classic Sun Records-style echo. "C'mon sugar, come on back to me/ She said, 'Balls to you, Big Daddy/ She ain't never coming back!'"

Sometimes it's the American Dream itself that the Clash tamper with, as when Mick Jones sings with forced innocence, "I'm all lost in the supermarket/ I can no longer shop happily/ I came in here for that special offer/ Guaranteed personality."

Wrong 'Em Boyo updates the folk song *Stagger Lee* with a ska beat and the punch of Stax Records style horns. *Jimmy Jazz* finds the group working in a near blues idiom, while *Revolution Rock* comments wryly on the "punk rock revolution," as the Clash dive into a rock-steady reggae groove.

Lyricaly, the Clash remain the outstanding social conscience of rock and roll, railing against materialism, sexism, stardom, capitalism, nuclear power and more. Not only do they make their smorgasbord of subjects and styles fit in a loosely conceptual way, but they stamp all the songs indelibly with their own identity. Probably, it is Joe Strummer's unforgettable voice that gives the Clash their unique sound. On previous tracks, Strummer's singing style was memorable as a raging howl. Now, though he still carries the authenticity of London street fights in his voice, he shows a mellow, more controlled side when he offers a Tom Waits-like approach on *The Right Profile*, a loving, slightly silly tribute to Montgomery Clift that sounds as though it was recorded in a London pub.

The killer, however, is the title track, *London Calling*. Set to a military beat, Strummer sings of impending world crisis. "The ice age is coming/ The sun is zooming in/ Engines stop running and the wheat is growing thin/ A nuclear error/ But I have no fear/ London is drowning/ And I live by the river." Guitars come crashing down with relentless fury. This is rock and roll to start a revolution: powerful stuff that exhales the intense fire that has been the mark of classic rock and roll: songs like *My Generation* by the Who, *Money* by the Beatles and *Gimme Shelter* by the Rolling Stones.

Certainly the socially conscious lyrics, breadth of musical styles, sense of humor and strong group identity are reasons why I value this disc so highly, as well as the way the Clash weave fact and fiction, seriousness and fun into an immensely playable album that you can think about or just dance to.

This is, simply, the best rock and roll album since the Rolling Stones early '70s masterpiece, *Exile On Main St.* —goldberg

MINGUS DYNASTY

CHAIR IN THE SKY—Elektra GE-248: *Boogie Stomp Shuffle; A Chair In The Sky; My Jelly Roll Soul; Sweet Sucker Dance; The Dry Cleaner From Des Moines; Goodbye Pork Pie Hat.*

Personnel: John Handy, alto saxophone; Joe Farrell, tenor saxophone; Jimmy Owens, trumpet, flugelhorn; Jimmy Knepper, trombone; Don Pullen, piano; Charlie Haden, bass; Dannie Richmond, drums.

The notion of the music of the late Charlie Mingus being performed by a repertory company composed of Mingus alumni seems not only a fitting tribute to this virtuoso bassist but also in a way necessary. Such was the scope and volatility of Mingus' music that not preserving and nurturing it would do an unthinkable disservice to an important segment of our musical heritage. Hence, Mingus Dynasty.

Happily, the Dynasty isn't just another ghost band. While Sy Johnson's arrangements evoke the spirit of Mingus' own groups, such classic pieces as *Boogie Stomp Shuffle* and *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat* are hardly treated verbatim. Why repaint Picasso?

Most effective, though, are the slow pieces. *Chair In The Sky* captures the lushness of Mingus' finely nuanced ballad writing as John Handy glides off rich alto soloing, backed by densely colored, well mitered horn scoring. *Sweet Sucker Dance* (which, like *Chair In The Sky* and *Dry Cleaner From Des Moines*, showed up on Joni Mitchell's recent tribute to Mingus) similarly uses intertwining horn lines and extended shifts of color to reach poignant heights.

Of the up pieces, *Dry Cleaner* is most convincing. Jimmy Knepper's musty, gut-bucket trombone recalls Mingus' stylistic breadth as it leads to a climactic section of frenetic collective improvisation rivaling the hottest passages on *Tajana Moods* or *Black Saint And The Sinner Lady*. *My Jelly Roll Soul*, a pastiche of New Orleans jazz, is raunchy, ricky-ticky fun: delightful comic relief.

But what of Mingus' chair on this earth? While Charlie Haden's commitment, sensitivity and depth of experience are unquestionable, and while comparisons are indeed odious, Haden lacks the drive and bravado to make a band like this fly. The problem becomes even more apparent when one compares Haden's work with Jaco Pastorius' prodding, aggressive lines on Joni Mitchell's *Mingus*. Susan Graham Mingus has spoken of Mingus' "fierceness," of his "goading everybody to play more." But Haden rarely leads. The difference, alas, shows throughout. Mingus, our loss was great. —ballerav

—sparrone

SAL MOSCA

FOR YOU—Choice CRS 1022: *There Will Never Be Another You; The Jewel; For Myself; Tumbles; Stardust; For L.T. The Gift; The Flame; For Joy Jump.*

Personnel: Mosca, piano, recorded by the pianist in memory of the late Lennie Tristano.

MUSIC—Interplay Records IP-7712: *Tata-Ga; Vittamin Blues; S.A.M.; M.F.M.; A Family Song; K.L.M.*

Personnel: Mosca, piano.

It is time that we make room for Sal Mosca, an incredible pianist, composer and teacher, for many years hidden from the musical world. Lost in the shadow of jazz great Lennie Tristano, Mosca emerges with his own sound, based on technique, control and raw power.

With the dexterity of Glenn Gould and the blues essence of Earl Hines or Sunnyland Slim, Mosca is a pianist who composes and develops themes with both hands at the same time. There is a perfect edge to the music and perhaps the man. The weathered face and stark eyes of Mosca peering from these record jackets belong to a sailor.

The album *For You* contains nine solo tunes, seven of which are originals. Arrangements of *There Will Never Be Another You* and *Stardust* stress the importance of chords over melody. In both compositions the melody as written is hidden beneath chords in relative keys with odd phrasing, rather than arranged as the song we know from the beginning and waiting until the turnaround for variations. Note the vague introduction to *Stardust*, with its Bud Powell-like figures that descend chromatically into the left end, leading to a brief walking bassline and a rather abrupt dissonant conclusion. The song melts into a thin musical mist and disappears.

L.T. captures the oppressive tension found in the music of Tristano. The unpedaled lines played with the right thumb maintain a Bach like clarity and precision. The funky, twisting tension of clean left hand lines produces a pianistic mesh that makes the piece move with powerfully controlled intensity.

Music was released about two years earlier, just before the death of Tristano. The overall mood of Mosca's compositions is lighter and more boppish. *A Family Song* is interesting, with its numerous quotes from obscure bop standards, and a very frisky bassline that shoots above middle C several times.

A good example of the compositional system used by Mosca can be found in his song *K.L.M.* The melody is stated rhythmically, with broken chords flashing through the middle four octaves of the keyboard. Melodic fragments evolve from the bass and are restated with the right hand, creating a series of miniature fugues. This constant interplay between hands gives the music its rich, nearly baroque texture. With the addition of two handed block chords, Mosca gathers melodic and rhythmic ideas together, confirming the tonality and energy of the composition.

Both these releases were recorded by the pianist in his own studio. The piano sound is full and bright and there is no trace of that "spring" effect caused by the use of too much studio reverb. Like many others, I have heard rumors of Sal Mosca. On this, my first chance to hear him, I was blown away.

ARCHIE SHEPP and HORACE PARLAN

GOIN' HOME—SteppleChase SCS-1079: *Deep River; My Lord What A Morning; Antzizing Grace; Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child; Sing Low, Sweet Chariot; Goin' Home; Nobody Knows The Troubles I've Seen; Go Down Moses; Steal Away To Jesus.*

Personnel: Shepp, tenor and soprano sax; Parlan, piano.

In a recent db interview Archie Shepp stated that "jazz comes out of Afro-Christian music." As if to underscore the point, he and pianist Horace Parlan have recorded this selection of traditional spirituals in a reverential yet contemporary context. The repertoire is a familiar one, as familiar as *Swung Low, Sweet Chariot* and *Go Down Moses*, but Archie

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does his best to kindle the spark of spontaneity even in the hoariest classics. Therein lies a dilemma, for in jazzing up the gospels, he runs the risk of crossing over into that unsanctified territory of "devil's music" that is equally seminal to the jazz heritage. Still, Shepp succeeds admirably in walking a fine line between lugubrious piety and romantic sensuality, and if *Deep River* occasionally sounds more like *Moon River*, there is no doubting either his sincerity or his expert musicianship.

Shepp has come a long way since the days when some critics claimed he couldn't play; the fire breathing iconoclast of the '60s is today a tenured academic whose tastes run to Lester Young and Don Byas, and who is at pains to demonstrate a technique worthy of an old master himself. Thus he invests such simple hymns as *Amazing Grace* and *Goin' Home* (widely known through Dvorak's *New World Symphony*) with a tone so lush and fulsome it could soothe Godzilla, while embellishing the melodies with a panoply of dynamic, harmonic, timbral and scalar effects that run the full gamut of modern saxophone stylings from Hawkins to Ayler.

Archie's burred and husky intonation here frequently suggests Ben Webster, but as always he returns to the sound of his principal mentor, John Coltrane, particularly in his soprano work on such pieces as *My Lord What A Morning* and *Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child*, where his singing radiance reflects Trane's own debt to the spiritual. Parlan's wonderfully spare and dignified accompaniment serves to lighten Shepp's more fanciful excursions with a genuinely churchy sensibility, but on the whole this is less a devotional album than a jazzman's homage to the gospel tradition. It is ironic that these downhome genuflections were recorded in Copenhagen, Denmark, and it is hoped that U.S. labels will be moved to afford Archie a domestic outlet commensurate with his long underappreciated musical stature.

—birnbaum

CECIL McBEE

ALTERNATE SPACES—India Navigation IN 1043: *Alternate Spaces; Consequence; Come Sunrise; Sorta, Kinda Blue; Expression.*

Personnel: McBee, bass; Don Pullen, piano; Chico Freeman, tenor and soprano saxes, flute; Allen Nelson, drums; Fomoudou Don Moye, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2

MUSIC FROM THE SOURCE—Inner City IC 3023: *Agnez; God Spirit; First Song In The Day.*

Personnel: McBee, bass; Chico Freeman, tenor sax, flute; Joe Gardner, trumpet; Dennis Moorman, piano; Steve McCall, drums; Don Moye, conga.

★ ★ ★ 1/2

CHICO FREEMAN

SPIRIT SENSITIVE—India Navigation IN 1045: *Autumn In New York; Peace; A Child Is Born; It Never Entered My Mind; Close To You Alone; Don't Get Around Much Anymore.*

Personnel: Freeman, tenor sax; Cecil McBee, bass; John Hicks, piano; Billy Hart, drums; Don Moye, drums.

★ ★ ★

McBee has technique to burn. But more than dexterity, he has a seasoned sensitivity, a depth of timbre which imparts a profundity to even his most casual musings. McBee and Freeman teamed up for Chico's first American recordings on India Navigation (*Chico and Kings Of Mali*) and McBee anchored a most effective rhythm force which cut the way for Freeman's high energy swinging. The

three records here feature two sextets led by McBee and a quartet led by Freeman, and like the earlier collaborations, they include a solid rhythm base with Billy Hart, Steve McCall and Don Moye on drums and Dennis Moorman, John Hicks and Don Pullen on piano.

The Source was originally recorded for India Navigation "under difficult conditions," as the album jacket says, and the overall sound is somewhat uneven, but here as always McBee exercises his strength to effectively cool the masses. All of side one is *Agnez* and the horn solos are solid; Freeman gets the lion's share of space and he uses it to glide over the torrid percussion of McCall and Moye in strong fashion. Joe Gardner is the surprise; on the last bits of *Agnez* and all through the second side cuts *God Spirit* and *First Song In The Day* he emerges with a wry tone and lyrical expression somewhat reminiscent of Dizzy Reece; even when the rhythm section switches into high gear Gardner stays on top. On piano Moorman is effective at points, but never manages to entirely manage the riddles of the crowded sextet.

Back in the studio things are much more under control. McBee composed all the tunes for *Alternate Spaces* and clearly there has been more rehearsal for this date. This time Freeman and Gardner are backed by a bubbling cauldron of Moye on congas, Nelson on traps, and Pullen on piano with McBee standing out front. Here Pullen is the articulate instigator—his arpeggiated sound spills out of the meter of the tunes and invites the horns to follow into a freer space. Freeman responds with some fiery solos on alto and tenor, but again it is Gardner who rises to mount the rhythm section with lyrical expression.

Sorta, Kinda Blue paraphrases Miles and provides some delicious snippets of Pullen quickly molding the chart to his twinkling ends. As Cecil goes pizzicato, Pullen moves inside to play the piano strings and stays close behind. The last tune, *Expression*, has McBee relaxed and unhurriedly working through an introduction which could have been called *Bass-Scape*; the horns play a spare refrain which braces his musings as he moves through the tune, warmly, melodically, flawlessly.

On *Spirit Sensitive* Freeman makes a valiant attempt at taking on the standards, something the younger players other than Arthur Blythe, Air and Braxton have shied away from. (The challenge is *playing the tune* itself without excess additives and passing chords that would arouse the composers' disdain.) *Autumn In New York* is beautifully handled as a McBee-Freeman duet, but on Horace Silver's *Peace*—which is a pace or two slower—the open space and the absence of the up beat percussion leaves Freeman a bit too out in the open. The changes are not resolved gracefully and it is clear that this tempo is troublesome for Freeman as it is for many of the younger players.

An especially telling fact is that portions of this album mark the first occasion I've noticed of a deliberate attempt to "produce" an India Navigation album; on side one Freeman is occasionally over-miked, perhaps in an attempt to accomplish that ravishing vibrato characteristic of Webster and the old-style tenor players. (To the guilty parties: all that comes with experience.) The B side does

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the job of partial vindication: *Don't Get Around Much Anymore* is particularly bouncy and achieves the old style. This album is not as crisp as *Chico* or *Kings Of Mali*, but Freeman will be much better for efforts such as this.

—staples

JOHN SCOFIELD

ROUGH HOUSE—Inner City 3030; *Rough House*; *Aster Fields*; *Aileron*; *Slow Elvin*; *Triple Play*; *Air Pakistan*.

Personnel: Scofield, electric guitar; Hal Galper, piano; Stafford James, bass; Adam Nussbaum, drums.

★ ★ ★ ½

WHO'S WHO?—Arista AN 3018; *Looks Like Merengue*; *Cassida*; *The Beatles*; *Spoons*; *Who's Who?*; *How The West Was Won*.

Personnel: Scofield, electric and acoustic guitars; cuts 1,2,4,5: Kenny Kirkland, keyboards; Anthony Jackson, electric bass; Steve Jordan, drums; Sammy Figueroa, percussion; 3,6: Billy Hart, drums; Eddie Gomez, bass; David Liebman, soprano and tenor saxes.

★ ★ ★ ½

For a 28 year old musician, Scofield's playing experience has been remarkably wide—encompassing stints with Jay McShann, Gerry Mulligan and Chet Baker, Charles Mingus, Gary Burton and the George Duke-Billy Cobham band. *Rough House* and *Who's Who?* are among the guitarist's first recordings as a leader (the only other is *Live on Inner City*), but they are both more than tentative forays. *Rough House* in particular is a strong statement of an eclectic but integrated musical conception.

Recorded at the end of a 1978 European tour, *House* finds the Scofield quartet exploring five of the leader's compositions and one by Galper. Both writers like modal harmonies but manage to avoid the tedium which often lurks where one or two chord vamps are found. *Aileron*, Galper's *Triple Play* and the title tune do use vamps, but move from them to different rhythmic or harmonic schemes. *Play*, the most memorable composition on the record, ingeniously segues from an opening 3/4 in one to a swing 3/4 and a rockish 6/4, finally arriving at a shuffle 4/4 during Scofield's guitar solo. *Aileron* combines a Latin two-beat modal A section and an up swing bridge with Coltrane changes. The demands of these tunes with transitions provoke the most inspired performances of the session. The Orientally-flavored waltz *Aster Fields*, the ballad *Slow Elvin*, and *Air Pakistan*, an uptempo cooker rhythmically reminiscent of Dizzy's *Night In Tunisia*, round out the set.

The group's sensitive interplay is notable on *Aster* and *Elvin*, but its real forte is cooking. There's plenty of that here. While most of the tunes are built to burn, the sometimes overwhelming energy emanating from these performances owes more to the camaraderie of the musicians. They obviously love playing together.

Much credit should go to Adam Nussbaum, whose ability to stay in the center of the musical action is amazing for such a young drummer. He's full of ideas expressed in Elvinesque fashion and plays with manic intensity; keep your eye on him in the '80s. Stafford James anchors the proceedings with a big sound and sure time. His only solo (on *Aster*) is a tantalizing melodic vignette.

Galper's playing here may help liberate me from my (well-founded?) feeling that solos on tunes with little harmonic movement are usually too long and too short on ideas. The solos on *House* (shared equally by Scofield

and the pianist) are long; but, in Galper's case, too short. He's incredibly inventive, deftly mixing textures and linear phrases and moving with abandon from one musical thought to the next. He does probe each idea, but incorporates so many into each solo that one can't help being impressed with his imagination.

His work owes a stylistic debt to McCoy Tyner; the multi-noted melodic patterns juxtaposed against suspended chords that are trademarks of McCoy's musings are much in evidence. Galper, though, brings something of his own to this music and, even in his Tynesque moments, is his own main man.

Scofield's guitar work comfortably accommodates diverse influences from the jazz, blues, and rock worlds. The jazz influences predominate in his sound (which sometimes takes on a rock-tinged edge) and ideas. He does toss off occasional blues licks and quotes from standards, but generally his phrases fuse a boppish linear approach with a more contemporary, motivically-oriented style—John Abercrombie is another guitarist who occupies something of the same ground. Scofield's playing is more down-to-earth than Abercrombie's and more incisively articulated, but his note choices aren't as interesting and he's not yet the distinctive voice that Abercrombie is. That's not to say that his work on *House* isn't stimulating; it is. But it's not yet as singular as I think it will become.

It's seldom that an album combines fine tunes, inspired blowing, and creative and dynamic interaction to the extent these sides do. They satisfy my emotional cravings and at the same time keep me intellectually involved. One can hardly ask for more, and Scofield should be applauded for putting it together.

Who's Who? is a more up and down affair which features two groups: a quintet with Liebman, Gomez, Hart and unidentified pianist, and a New York studio aggregation. The studio group cuts are more jazz-rock oriented than *House*, but have more life than the overarranged, underimprovised pablum that passes for a jazz hybrid these days. The set begins with *Merengue*, a mellow rocker with a catchy head. Here, as on all the studio group sides, Scofield is virtually the only soloist, though Kirkland plays briefly on a few tunes. Behind Scofield the group lays down a pliant cushion of sound but rarely prods. The resultant texture is less cluttered than *House* and of less interest. Everybody seems at home but no one wants to visit. The dynamic interaction so notable on *House* is obviously missing. Even *Cassida*, the kind of energetic Latin tune the *Rough House* quartet would boil on, barely simmers because the musicians are content to stay in the groove without taking it somewhere. The soporific rocker *Spoons* and the funky title tune, which scatters accents all over the measure and succeeds ingeniously in obscuring the down-beat, round out the studio two-thirds of the record.

Fortunately Liebman, Gomez and Hart pull this set above the norm with their work on *The Beatles* and *How The West Was Won*. The former is a lovely ballad with unforgivably short solos by Scofield, Gomez and Liebman. Just as one begins to relax in the saxophonist's soprano filigrees, the tune ends. The concluding *West* is a *Maiden Voyage*-like composition with a 5/4 A section and 4/4 bridge. It's the only real chance these musicians have



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42 down beat

to stretch out and provides a provocative look at what *Who's Who?* could have been.

If mellow is your bag, *Who's Who* might happily fill it. Its rock leanings should bring Scofield's considerable talents to the wide audience he deserves. Let's hope those listeners find their way to *Rough House*—a more inspired, tightly knit, and creative listening experience than *Who's Who?*, which shouldn't be overlooked. —salomon

ELVIN JONES

REMEMBRANCE—PA/USA 7052: *Giraffe; Section 8; Little Lady; Familiar Ground; Kalima; Beatrice; Remembrance.*

Personnel: Jones, drums; Pat LaBarbera, tenor and soprano saxes; Michael Stuart, tenor and soprano saxes; Roland Prince, guitar; Andy McCloud III, bass.

★ ★ ★ ★

BISHOP NORMAN WILLIAMS

ONE FOR BIRD—Theresa TR 105: *Beth; About Time; Tahia's Outlook; Allegro; The Doc Speaks; Koko.*

Personnel: Williams, alto sax and flute; Pepper Adams, baritone sax; Paul Arslanian, piano; Babatundé, drums and congas; Warren Gale, trumpet; Larry Hancock, drums; Mark Isham, synthesizer; Curtis Olsen, bass; Allen Pittman, trumpet; Marvin Williams, tenor sax.

★ ★ ★ ½

The "tribute" to a pioneering musician is handled in two very different ways on these releases; in Elvin Jones' case, it is an attempt to nearly recreate the sound of the great John Coltrane Quartet; with Norman Williams, it means straying just a little from his usual recording approach as a nod to Charlie Parker. Williams earns kudos for forging a contemporary style within the bop background, though his at times slap-happy arrangements lead one to wondering whether the new direction is really an advancement at all. Jones, having less to prove, has released an album with a now-dispersed band that is less an attempt to wallow in the past than a continuous fling at recreating an era.

Remembrance opens with a medium tempo tune that spans two styles of Coltrane's career. While Pat LaBarbera's opening tenor solo recalls Coltrane's late '50s hard, driving sound, Michael Stuart's chorus brings the piece more up to a *Meditations* feel. LaBarbera solos again, then the two tenors combine on a bridge that, before the last, short chorus, reaches out toward the heights of *Ascension*. This is almost like Coltrane's greatest hits in less than eight minutes.

Section 8, probably the most contemporary sounding arrangement on the album, swings into a soprano-tenor duet, then breaks for solos by LaBarbera (soprano) and Stuart (tenor). Here's the chance to learn the most about the two saxophonists, for on the rest of this album they have assimilated their styles so closely to Coltrane that it is often difficult to distinguish who is playing which instrument.

Little Lady sounds uncannily Trane-like, with LaBarbera taking a soprano adventure in a medium tempo.

The suggestions get stronger as the album continues. *Kalima* (it's Arabic for "prayer") with a heavy bass line below a soaring soprano recalls *A Love Supreme*. *Beatrice*, a medium tempo ballad, nearly cries for Johnny Hartman to sing a verse.

As for Elvin, he is mixed down on much of the album, so as to drive, but not dominate the hornmen. As if to remind the listener

who is the leader, each composition ends with a brief drum roll. All it means is that more careful listening is needed to pick out the rich polyrhythms and embellishments of the man who led last year's **down beat** critics poll. Elvin's chance to stretch comes on the title piece, which, except for an introduction and closing theme by LaBarbera, is virtually all Elvin. Here, emphasizing the bass and tom tom, nearly ignoring the cymbals for much of his break, Elvin weaves a moody magic.

Norman Williams can't claim to have been part of one of the most important ensembles in modern jazz, but his resume is in order. He studied with Leo Davis, Charlie Parker's former teacher, before settling in San Francisco and setting himself up as Bishop of the One Mind Temple, dedicated to John Coltrane.

Williams may well be a child of the bop era, but he is intent on making his name with a more stylized mainstream ensemble sound, much like the late Sonny Criss' last efforts. *One For Bird* opens in a most un-Birdlike fashion, with a synthesizer creating a vapory, almost soporific mood as Williams and baritonist Adams state the theme of *Beth*. Williams solos leisurely as the synthesizer disappears and Larry Hancock moves the piece into a slightly Latin rhythm.

But that is not the signature of the album. *About Time*, *Tahia's Outlook* and *The Doc Speaks* all move closer to the bluesy Parker feeling and Williams emerges as a dexterous and creative altoist in a bop mode. One other piece, the bouncy, Latin flavored *Allegro*, moves significantly outside bop. Unfortunately, it comes off as better suited for a situation comedy soundtrack. Williams quotes *Camptown Races* in his first solo—it is appropriate.

Still, there is *Koko*, the last tune, the one for Bird.

Koko is the announcement that Norman Williams could be a more prominent force in jazz. The altoist comes right in swinging on the first chorus, then ups the heat considerably for a second. Except for a brief moment on *Tahia's Outlook*, this is the only time he seems to really stretch. Understandably, it pushes Pepper Adams to his most exciting blowing on the date.

Koko's quality is way above the rest of this release; regrettably it is the only cut where the leader and his guest are really given room to move within the arrangement. *One For Bird* has some fine moments, but with the talent on hand, it would seem much more was possible. —dold

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Personnel: Williams, vocals; Dave Pell, Bob Cooper, Bob Hardaway, tenor saxes; Bob Efford, baritone sax; Frank Capp, drums; Monty Budwig, bass; Nat Pierce, piano; Al Hendrickson, guitar.

★ ★ ★ ½

Four of these ten tunes which had featured Lester Young were associated with Billie Holiday and just the idea of Joe Williams singing Billie is ridiculous, for Williams is more a warm, sophisticated interpreter of good popular songs than a jazz singer. This is

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especially apparent on *Fun Out Of Life*, a song Ms. Holiday could make memorable with her sharp edged approach. Without this the tune's hackneyed quality stands naked. Similarly, *Fooling Myself* falls flat without Billie's bitter edge with its touches of self-deprecation. *Smiling* suffers less being sung as a pleasant swinger, while Williams' *Easy Living* can stand on its own. It's a fine song to begin with and it's this type of intimate, relaxed ballad Williams does so well.

The remaining selection that is identified with a specific vocalist, *Boogie Woogie*, is nicely shouted although it suffers from the absence of Jimmy Rushing's sly edge.

Williams' versions of *Lady* and *Moon* are unneeded and undistinguished uptempo recordings of these two frequently performed

standards, which further suffer from Williams' unimaginative, interchangeable scat choruses, lacking in ideas, style and range.

The remaining cuts, *If I Could Be With You* and *Dreams*, are real nice ballads, with the former distinguished by a warmly recited verse, accompanied only by Pierce's piano, in the middle. *Dreams* is lightly swung with a fine sense of joy, and is the only cut with a round of sax solos which helps to end the sameness of sound found elsewhere.

I generally love Bill Holman's arrangements but here I think the use of brass to play against the saxes would have added excitement to these sides by contrasting with and underlining the saxes. Also I think the addition of clarinet would have added depth and color to the reed sound. Further: on

some cuts, especially *Moon* and *Dreams*, the ensemble playing is ragged at times.

The section playing is transcribed Lester Young solos and although the solos could stand well on their own with only rhythm section accompaniment, the fuller, larger sound of the four saxes often needs more accompaniment.

Pell himself produced this album and perhaps he was too close to perceive the weaknesses—the often poor choice of tunes for Williams' vocal style and the lack of variety in the group sound. Still, when Joe smoothly sings a warm ballad or does a swinger with ease, or when the saxes eloquently state a gentle introduction, as on *Fooling*, or tear through a fast chorus, as on *Moon*, this is a highly enjoyable release.

—de muth



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Personnel: Helfer, piano; Jeanne Carroll, vocals (cuts 4,6,8); Clark Dean, soprano sax (3,7,10); Odie Payne Jr., drums (1,3-6, 8); S. P. Leary, drums (7,9,10); Truck Parham, bass (3,6,8); Betty Dupree, bass (7,10); Eddie Calhoun, bass (4).

*** 1/2

Had Erwin Helfer appeared on the scene 20 or 30 years ago, he would have been hailed as a pianist unique among his kind. For, surprisingly, there were never very many jazz pianists, even in the then flourishing revivalist school, who knew anything about playing the blues. Harmonically and structurally—yes, of course—but as to content, their primary sources were the ideas of other jazzmen—Morton, Johnson, Waller, Hines, Sullivan, Stacy. Only very rarely did a traditional jazz pianist reach out beyond ragtime and classic jazz to explore the world of "blues" blues.

Erwin Helfer did. He discovered for himself the raw power and depth of meaning that forever coursed through the blues; and he listened to all of the great blues pianists, men like Cow Cow Davenport, Montana Taylor, Jimmy Yancey, Memphis Slim, Blind John Davis, Black Bob, Big Maceo, Otis Spann and Joshua Athheimer. He also studied the raggy blues players Jimmy Blythe and Frank Melrose, and the giants of boogie woogie, Pinetop Smith, Meade Lux Lewis, Albert Ammons and Pete Johnson. For the most part, few jazz musicians of the '50s and '60s were even aware of the existence of such masters as these, much less in their sway.

These men, with the exception of Blythe and Johnson, were unsure of themselves away from the blues; and as a result of their concentrated efforts within this single form of expression, they developed a remarkably profuse and varied vocabulary, a fund of expressive devices still largely unknown in the work of most jazzmen. Understandably, Helfer's jazz playing is suffused with blues patterns, a consequence not only of his years of study and application, but of his way of thinking also. He is not a technical player in any conventional sense of the term, but he does exhibit an admirable control of his materials and, within his chosen frame, a certain eloquence. His range of interests, here at any rate, seems to be centered in the blues styles of the '30s and '40s rather than those of the '20s. But there are moments

when he also suggests the tempestuous post-War blues of the Chicago renaissance. Virtuosity, it should be pointed out, need not be restricted to a ten year span of musical accomplishment in order to be effective. It can span the entire history of audible sound if it so chooses.

In this, his second leader date for an American label, Helfer is heard in the company of some sporadically active friends, but ends up taking the cake for himself. All of the numbers are good choices, with several deserving special mention. *Chicken Shack* is a boogie blues, impressive from the start for its clean articulation and fresh ideas. The most famous blues piano solo of all—Avery Parrih's *After Hours*—is next, and while Helfer's interpretation is faithful to the mood of the original, it still shows sufficient individuality to stand on its own. Especially noteworthy is the well-reproduced counterpoint between the insistent left hand bass motif and the right hand blues figures.

The sonorous soprano of Clark Dean is heard to advantage on *I've Got It Bad* and *Ain't Misbehavin'*, where, like the pianist, he plays simply and thoughtfully. Unfortunately, though, on *Sunny Side* his sax sounds muffled and flat, in addition to which he chooses to growl in a manner at once unbecoming, unconvincing and unnecessary. His sound, when controlled, is full, warm and round, and perhaps only out of some subconscious frustration over his temporary intonation problem did he feel compelled to growl. History has proven over and over again that soprano saxes do not lend themselves easily to growling. Everyone knows that they are hard enough to play as it is without cluttering up their already capricious pitch with guttural noise. And that is why Pee Wee Russell, a born growler if there ever was one, never wanted to play soprano. (But he did play tenor, and on that he growled superbly!)

Vacillating pitch also seems to be a problem for Jeanne Carroll, who devotes the better part of her energies to the manipulation of embellishments. *Pallet On The Floor* is the best of her three shots, and nicely, too, for it finds Helfer in a presumably comfortable Art Hodes bag. The pianist's own *Stella* is a tribute to Mama Yancey, and of all the tracks it appears to hold up the best, suggesting that it, and not the cloud-covered *Sunny Side*, should have been selected as the album's closer.

—sahmer

album, supervised by Charles himself as producer) must have charted *Blues In The Night*, which is swamped by tacky, excessive orchestration. Ray croons on undaunted though, and some bluesy guitar fills add a touch of needed credibility. *Just Because* is a medium tempo ballad with good guitar and sax solos, sadly unidentified.

Irving Berlin's *What'll I Do* starts as a lush ballad, then quickly turns to disco, and Charles shows just how hip this format can be. The usually insistent bass drum is mixed down to a reasonable level, with horns, strings, sax, piano and guitar all swirling around on top. It's busy, but it works, and Ray's bluesy vocal is a killer, backed by a chorus reminiscent of the old Raellets. Next comes *One Of These Days*, a Barry Manilow ballad that Charles manages to pull off minus

the saccharin. *Love Me Or Set Me Free* is toe tapping Southern soul with gospel piano and wicked Stax horns. Dobie Gray's '60s hit *Drift Away* is dull here, and the same goes for *(Turn Out The Light) Love Me Tonight*, a recent country smash for Don Williams; Ray tries it with a faster and louder pace than the original, and this jars with the simple lyrics.

Charles covers lots of ground here, 40 years of American popular music, and he does almost all of it well. *Ain't It So* demonstrates his staying power as one of pop and soul music's premier singers and stylists. Further, there are his production talents—the mixes here are good, the sequencing effective, and the energy consistent. Best of all, Ray really sounds like he's enjoying himself, which you'll probably do too, if you give this one a spin.

—sandmel

RAY CHARLES

AIN'T IT SO—Atlantic SD 19251: *Some Enchanted Evening*; *Blues In The Night*; *Just Because*; *What'll I Do*; *One Of These Days*; *Love Me Or Set Me Free*; *Drift Away*; *(Turn Out The Light And) Love Me Tonight*.

Personnel: Charles, piano, vocals; strings, horns, a small band with keyboard, guitar and sax, etc.; no personnel listed.

★ ★ ★ ½

The Genius' latest offering is a quality pop/soul set that's highly suitable for dancing. Ray's vocals are warm and genuine throughout, and at times he wails. A few tunes and arrangements fall flat, but *Ain't It So* succeeds as a lively, varied album. Production is slick, but never at the groove's expense.

The set kicks off with an uptempo version of *Some Enchanted Evening*. Charles turns some mean phrases while Memphis style horns provide the perfect funky drive for a soulfully preaching treatment of this classic. A different arranger (four worked on the

JOHN SERRY 'JAZZIZ'

His debut solo album, "Exhibition," won a Grammy nomination. And he composed, orchestrated, arranged and played keyboards on all seven cuts of "Jazziz" as well as playing all the instruments on the title cut. This phenomenal young man is named John Serry and his very personal, very provocative music is enormously appealing. "These days people are talking about traditional jazz versus more commercial cross over jazz. My music is neither. Can you imagine that?" Don't imagine it...hear it.

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WAXING ON

The Jazz Legacy Series

Django Reinhardt: *The Versatile Giant* (Inner City 7004) ★ ★ ★ ½
Johnny Hodges: *The Rabbit In Paris* (Inner City 7003) ★ ★ ★ ★
Roy Eldridge: *Little Jazz* (Inner City 7002) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½
Zoot Sims: *Brother In Swing* (Inner City 7005) ★ ★ ★ ★
Dizzy Gillespie: *Having A Good Time In Paris* (Inner City 7010) ★ ★ ½
Mary Lou Williams: *First Lady Of The Piano* (Inner City 7006) ★ ★ ★
Clifford Brown: *The Paris Collection* (Inner City 7001) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½
Milt Jackson & J.J. Johnson: *A Date In New York* (Inner City 7007) ★ ★ ★ ★
Sidney Bechet and Martial Solal: *When A Soprano Meets A Piano* (Inner City 7008) ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Buck Clayton: *Passport To Paradise* (Inner City 7009) ★ ★

According to Webster's *New Twentieth Century Dictionary*, a legacy is "anything handed down from, or as from, a predecessor or ancestor." Certainly any recorded works of Django Reinhardt, Clifford Brown or Dizzy Gillespie constitute a legacy as rich as any we have in jazz. It is with this in mind that French Vogue has decided to name its latest series Jazz Legacy.

French Vogue has been one of the leaders in recording American jazz musicians on visits to Europe. Throughout the 1950s they were waxing dozens of sessions covering many aspects of jazz—from New Orleans-style to swing to bop and beyond. The Jazz Legacy series was initiated to try and get all the valuable material from Vogue's vaults, alternate takes and the like, on to 12" discs. Fortunately, Inner City Records has once again come to the aid of the American record buyer and has begun distributing the series. The initial issue, with more to follow, includes ten records—available either individually or in a boxed set. Before we discuss the LPs, let's consider the packaging.

In order for ten LPs to be sold as a set, there should be something connecting the albums other than a label. If the set makes pretenses to being either a survey or history of jazz, covers one particular artist or period in the music's history, or one particular style of music, then one can more easily understand why someone would want to plunk down \$75 in one swoop.

Unfortunately, this series answers to none of those specifications. The booklet which accompanies the boxed set is nothing more than the front and back covers of the included albums, bound with an extra portrait of Buck Clayton.

Still, some of the individual albums are nothing short of brilliant and none of them are less than interesting. One more caveat, however—some of this material has been issued here before, notably on GNP's Vintage Series. I have reviewed Vogue's LPs in chronological order. They were issued with seemingly haphazard numbers, but the albums are here considered in the order in which they were made.

Django Reinhardt is the only European leader in the series and the only European

jazz musician of the time who deserves the title *The Versatile Giant*. The recordings here include live sessions in Paris—two in 1934, two in 1951 and one in 1947—and one in Chicago during a 1946 stateside tour. It can be said, correctly, that any solo of Django's is important. But for the most part what is exhibited here is far below the par of the Belgian genius.

The most interesting inclusion is the four numbers recorded in Chicago. Here Django is playing an electric guitar instead of his customary acoustic model and is backed up by the Duke Ellington Orchestra. Unfortunately, these sides could have been made with Shep Fields and His Rippling Rhythm. The sound quality is abominable and, except for one or two distinctly Ducal arpeggios and Sonny Greer's purring brushes, the Ellington band is strictly used for inaudible riffing—occasionally swelling to a large final chord. Django handles the electric guitar with ease and sounds extremely modern. It is even easier to see his influence on latter day electric guitarists like Joe Pass in these recordings. His solo *Improvisation* is a magnificent instruction in extemporaneous guitar.

As for the Paris sides, some of the work is breathtaking—particularly Django's solo on the 1947 *Melodie Au Coepuscule*. His guitar rises over the accompaniment like a thin line of smoke. Django's influences were so divergent from those of American jazz musicians that there is no mistaking the distinctly European origins of his playing or the rich beauty of his very tone and sound.

This is an interesting sampler, but certainly not a definitive collection. Even Django played a couple of undistinguished solos and the last two cuts here prove it, even if one is on his classic *Nuages*.

The Rabbit In Paris puts **Johnny Hodges** at the helm of a familiar octet—all Ellingtonians except for pianist Raymond Fol and tenorist Don Byas (Butch Ballard replaces Sonny Greer at the traps about a third of the way through). This is a happy, upbeat blowing session, the tunes mainly Ellington standards or blues riffs. Everybody gets a fair share of blowing space and not even the leader gets too many extra licks. Shorty Baker rips and snorts through his trumpet spots. Butter Jackson earns his monicker well with smooth, greasy solos throughout and Jimmy Hamilton tosses in some sweet, relaxed clarinet.

Hodges' tone is exquisite. His million dollar glissandi are paraded to fine advantage and his rich vibrato in the belly of the alto on *Mood Indigo* is priceless. And on the uptempo blues numbers Hodges romps and stomps. The solos, however, are 78 rpm length. Hodges is a generous leader (except to Byas, who seems to get short shrift every time he shows up on these Vogues) and sometimes cuts himself short—like on his superb reading of the melody of *Sweet Lorraine*, when he suddenly lets Baker take the bridge. This toe tapping session would have better served as more of a showcase for its leader.

Roy Eldridge was at the top of his form in Paris in June, 1950; these sessions show him in magnificent mettle. The rhythm sections are both first rate (Dick Hyman and Ed Shaughnessy take the piano/drum honors on side one; Gerry Wiggins and Kenny Clarke are on side two and the ubiquitous Michelot, who appears on six Jazz Legacy LPs, is the

contrabassist on all cuts). The idea of adding Sims to the first session was useful—Zoot's warm, bubbling tenor is a perfect foil for Roy's bristling, room-shaking trumpet. Even Roy's vocal talents are put to good use here—his singing is as expressive and individualistic as his trumpet playing. On the ballad tempo *Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams*, Roy takes a second chorus that sizzles, and on the uptempo *Undecided* he buzzes and flies. Zoot swings as mightily as he does now and Clarke brushes like a demon. There is not a single solo out of Eldridge's horn that doesn't absolutely jump off the turntable here. At one point Wiggins aptly quotes *An American In Paris*—although this album is titled with Roy's nickname *Little Jazz*, the trumpeter stands so tall in these sessions he could have been eating off the top of the Eiffel Tower. The only sore spot is Anita Love's cornball singing on two seemingly long selections.

A week later, **Zoot Sims** picked up where the Eldridge session left off. With the Wiggins/Clarke/Michelot rhythm team behind him, the 24 year old Sims jaunts through Lester Young land. Zoot swings from somewhere deep inside himself—it comes out so naturally that his playing can be used to *define* the word "swing." He seems to absorb the melody, and his solos are fluent and jet-propelled. Most of these tracks are uptempo originals and standards, which Zoot seems to be most comfortable with at this rather early stage in his career. His ballad work on *I Understand* is wispy and not yet developed into the beautiful style which it later became. Wiggins is a spry accompanist and a light soloist and Clarke's trap work would inspire even a kindergarten tissue and comb band. Michelot is a strong, round bassist and all told this is a good, solid, happy swing date.

Dizzy Gillespie recorded many times in the early '50s. Besides his studio work for his own Dec Gee label, there are innumerable recordings of his small groups in various concerts, including a number recorded in performance in Paris. The 1952 studio cuts here are, for the most part, bland and inconsequential Gillespie (that is, if there is such a thing as inconsequential Diz). Dizzy's tone is scratchy and on one or two cuts, like the first take of *Hurry Home*, he sounds as if he's having embouchure problems. The two different rhythm sections are, mostly, bland and unexciting and Byas is used only as window dressing. The record is called *Having A Good Time In Paris* and there seems to be no doubt that a good time was had by all, judging from the extra-musical ambience. But the truly exciting, typically enchanting Gillespie solos round to about ten of the LP's minutes. Those few minutes are pure Gillespie, and ten more minutes than most trumpeters play brilliantly in a whole year of sessions.

Mary Lou Williams was recorded in London with a British rhythm section augmented by clarinetist Tony Scott's flavorful but slightly eccentric bongos. Mary Lou earns the album's *First Lady Of The Jazz Piano* title, as she bounces through standard trio material with what liner note writer Chuck Berg calls "perpetually zestful youthfulness" (ugh!). Mary Lou Williams is like a jazz sponge—she absorbs any sounds that come her way and, thusly, remains always contemporary. She zips through Tadd Dameron's *Lady Bird* with aplomb and gives *Round Midnight* an appropriately dark, smoky reading. On *Kool Bongo*

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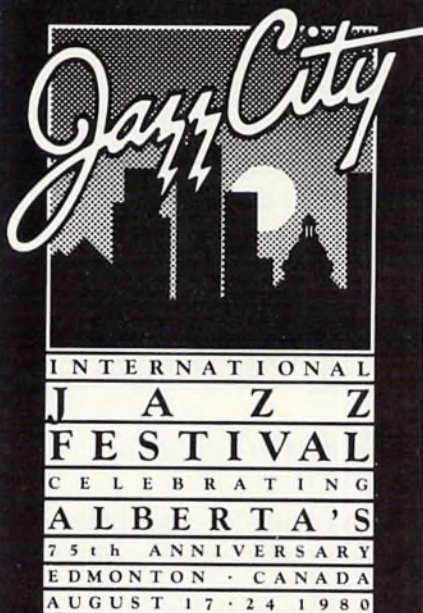
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she shows a funky mode that would later be prominent in the work of Horace Silver. Most of the tunes here, however, are early '50s cocktail material, handled with an appealing use of triplets and grace notes. The piano is not in the best tune and the rhythm unit is a bit stodgy on this pleasant, low keyed date.

If **Clifford Brown** ever played an uninteresting solo on record in his 25 years and eight months of life I have yet to hear it. His beautiful, clean, singing tone is displayed to full advantage in *The Paris Collection*, which is only the first volume of more to follow in the Jazz Legacy series. The first side of the album is Gigi Gryce and his Orchestra, a specially formed big band, and the second side is the Gryce-Brown Sextet. The showpiece is the first two tracks—two takes of *Brown Skins*, a six minute Gryce composition showcasing the fertile imagination of young Brownie in an introductory slow tempo and a snap doubletime. Brownie's phrases are long, legato creations which show an overwhelming amount of confidence and authority from the 22 year old trumpeter. The solos on the two takes are completely different and they come floating over the 16 piece orchestra and out of the poor mix like the song of the sirens.

The second side has Brown blowing away a lumpy rhythm section and Gryce's spirited, boppy alto. Brown throws in some teasing triple-tonguing on an *All The Things You Are*, minus Dizzy's famous introduction. *I Cover The Waterfront* is the best vehicle for Brownie's large, absorbent tone—his solo is simple and joyous.

Milt Jackson and **J.J. Johnson** would seem a perfect pair; both are consummate bop technicians with deep, sprawling roots in the nuances of the blues. Add the chili pepper swing of Al Cohn's tenor, the round, cozy pop of Percy Heath's bass and the cool sizzle of Charlie Smith's drums and you have an ideal session. Right? Well, *A Date In New York* falls just short of the mark on several counts. Most noticeably, J.J. and Bags could have been in separate studios. There is no trombone/vibes interplay whatsoever—very unusual for two players who spent a good part of their careers in ensembles where interplay was the keynote. Cohn is atypically dark and dour here. Henri Renaud's piano (organizer Renaud was ostensibly the date's leader) is choppy and uninspired and Jackson favors us with two piano efforts and a vocal. In view of Renaud's pianistics, I found Bags' tickling enlivening, but he sings as well as Sinatra plays vibes. Bags is the standard on vibes; J.J. is pure and warm; Heath and Smith are wonderful and all the above complaints are melted by the glow of Jackson and Johnson.

Dan Morgenstern informs us in his liner notes for *When A Soprano Meets A Piano* that when this album was issued originally in 1958, Martin Williams, writing in *down beat*, gave it four and a half stars. Martin Williams was being stingy.

Sidney Bechet's sound is as distinctive as any in jazz. His swaggering, strutting, fist-in-the-eye soprano sax playing is as fresh and magnificent as any tone that this music has yet produced. **Martial Solal** is one of the finest pianists to ever develop outside of America. His piano work is often stunning, whether in the rare solo disc that pops up or in his work with Lee Konitz. At the time of this recording the Algerian pianist was 29 and firmly entrenched in the modern styles of 1957, the year of the disc.

Bechet's playing comes from deep within his belly; Solal's comes from his brain. This is the difference in the stylists and this is what makes this album such a gem. Bechet's vibrato could swallow the Louvre. He yelps and rolls and bounces along as if each solo was his final breath. Solal, on the other hand, is introspective—pulling out luscious chords and jagged phrases. He doesn't kow-tow to the elder player, but pushes and teases him by shifting the rhythm and unraveling the chords underneath him.

The choice of tunes is excellent, pop standards of the '20s and '30s. Again, there are two different bass/drum combinations. Side one offers Lloyd Thompson and Al Levitt, while side two has the exemplary pairing of Michelot and Clarke. Kenny Clarke is absolutely phenomenal—he bridges the styles of Bechet and Solal with flesh crawling cymbal work. On *All The Things* (again without Dizzy's intro) the brush work is alive, while Solal skips higgledy-piggledy down the piano hitting everything correctly as if by accident, while Bechet just rolls right along. Un disque magnifique!

The last album recorded and now reissued is **Buck Clayton's** *Passport To Paradise*, a sparkless swing session recorded in 1961. Buck was at this time a good trumpet stylist with a fluent command of the horn and a fine, useful range. His solos are mini-melodies and his taste is always correct. The problem with the album is not Buck's playing, but Buck's choice of playing the first chorus of each tune with a mute and ending the song with open horn—with a solo by either the pianist (Charles Thompson) or the guitarist (Jean Bonal) in between. It makes for a boring album, frankly. Buck's isolated solos are pert and attractive, but this similarity between each number and the generally ratty rhythm (caused by the usually resourceful Gene Ramey and Oliver Jackson) produce a simple, unadorned LP of background music. Buck Clayton's playing is simple, direct and melodic. So is this album, but too much so.

—jeske

STANLEY TURRENTINE

BETCHA—Elektra 6E-277: *Take Me Home; Love Is The Answer; Betcha; Concentrate On You; You; Hamlet (So Peaceful); Long Time Gone; Together Again.*

Personnel: Turrentine, tenor saxophone; Sonny Burke, keyboards; Eddie Watkins Jr., electric bass; Jeff Porcaro, drums (cuts 1, 3, 6, 7); James Gadson, drums; David T. Walker, "Wah Wah"; Watson, Lee Ritenour (except 3, 6); Charles Fearing (3, 6 only); Thom Rotella (3, 6 only); guitars; Eddie "Bongo" Brown, percussion, synthesizer; Gary Coleman, vibraphone, bells; Todd Cochran, synthesizer.

★ ★ ★

HANK CRAWFORD

CAJUN SUNRISE—Kudu Records KU-39: *What A Difference You've Made In My Life; I Don't Want No Happy Songs; New York's One Soulful City; Take This Job And Show It; Just The Way You Are; Daytime Friends; Evergreen; Cajun Sunrise.*

Personnel: Crawford, alto saxophone, vocals; Cliff Carter, Steve Robbins, keyboards; Will Lee, bass; Steve Gadd, drums; Sue Evans, percussion; Hiram Bullock, Joe Caro, guitar; Cliff Morris, banjo; Randy Brecker, trumpet; Fred Wesley, trombone; Ronnie Cuber, baritone sax; Vivian Cherry, Lani Groves, Yolanda McCullough, vocals.

★ ½

Betcha and *Cajun Sunrise* are the kind of albums that prompt some people—and they are not the worst among us—to declare that all they hear is the sound of cash registers. Maybe they are right. Maybe albums like

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these two are purely speculative, and thus purely commercial efforts, and perhaps any review, no matter how lightweight, is too ponderous an honor to bestow upon "products" such as these. Yet, to me at least, an old point is raised by them, namely that classification does not equal but merely precedes evaluation: beyond settling their category (pop jazz), there remains a need for identification of them within the genre's inherent qualities. Pop jazz has its coryphaei and followers, too.

While not exactly a leader in his field, Stanley Turrentine is clearly doing something right with his opportunism: giving us the unadulterated stuff. Packed in lush Gene Page arrangements and backed in disco rhythm grooves by Los Angeles' finest, *Betcha* comes across as an honest and fully realized product, equally suitable for dancing floors, elevators and TV movies. It is more than a conveyor belt pop package, though, for Turrentine, too good and personal a player for standard muzak sessions, makes the album come alive with his seminally right tenor sax sound. This husky, updated blues sax of his shines with vigor, for example, on the swinging *Take Me Home* or emerges with sensual warmth on *You and Hamlet*. A let-down, however, is the frantic title cut.

Hank Crawford, on the other hand, continues on his release to be what he has always been: a poor man's David Newman. No doubt Crawford's shortcomings stand a better chance of being glossed over in a pop jazz setting, but *Cajun Sunrise* does not manage to steer clear of the pitfalls avoided by Turrentine: Crawford's album is perfectly anonymous, a studio session without a center,

without a star.

In a misguided attempt to break the anonymity of this empty date, Crawford also performs as a vocalist on a few numbers, but his singing is amateurish, and his version of *Take This Job And Shove It* is downright painful.

To illustrate the spread of quality levels within the pop jazz idiom, one needs to examine, of course, only these two albums. But to really drive the point home I recommend comparing Crawford's literal version here of *Just The Way You Are* with Grover Washington's imaginative, inspired and, yes, artistic treatment of the song on his recent *Reed Seed*. These differences constitute the range of pop jazz and make it a valid music.

—gabel

JIMMY SMITH

CONFIRMATION—Blue Note LT-992: *What Is This Thing Called Love?*, *Confirmation*, *Cheerokee*.

Personnel: Smith, organ; Lee Morgan, trumpet; Art Blakey, drums; Eddie McFadden (cut 1), Kenny Burrell (2,3), guitars; George Coleman, alto sax (1,3); Curtis Fuller, trombone (1,3); Lou Donaldson, alto sax (2); Tina Brooks, tenor sax (2).

★ ★ ★

Ah, memories of jukeboxes at five a.m.—here are leftovers from 1957-'58 jam sessions, cheerful and incongruous groups of players. Here is a 19 year old Lee Morgan captivated by the Clifford Brown style, poised and multi-noted. His *Cheerokee* is certainly in a Brown vein, but the long solo eventually bursts its seams. Characteristic Morgan phrasing peeps through his *Confirmation*, the best of his works here, and the conclusion is in short, nagging phrases, anticipating a

feature of his soon to mature work. *What Is* proves ideally suited to Morgan's temperament, its minor key and excellent changes setting up a personal edge to the Brown style that evolves to downturned phases and barely suppressed anger in his final chorus. Clearly, Morgan was no mere prodigy—these solos express an assured daring and a strong sense of the necessity of what he had to say.

Confirmation also offers the rare opportunity to hear a solo by the neglected Tina Brooks, muscular and melodic, along with Donaldson doing a rather sentimental version of Charlie Parker. By contrast, Coleman on alto is florid and unsure: in *What Is*, the notes don't appear in the right places, and one wonders if his technique doesn't adapt to an unfamiliar horn, or whether his problem is a more serious matter of basic conception. Perhaps Fuller's solos are easy stuff, but they have the virtue of drawing Smith and Blakey into engaging interplay; the guitarists, too, are light and agreeable. The tempos are medium to fast, of course, so those nostalgic for the popular old Smith-Donaldson-etc. blues are hereby forewarned—yet these organ bands doing bop provide a pleasant ride.

Smith himself plays organ in a pianistic way, so that although his extremely busy solos make musical sense (however lightly intended), the electric organ sound emits all the dotted eighth and 16th notes in long series of hiccups. Smith is particularly into double-timing in *Confirmation*, with phrasing so wild that even he sometimes seems surprised. For some reason, recording engineers had trouble mixing Smith and Blakey together—the drummer plays very well throughout these pieces, providing an excit-

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ing counterpoint to Morgan in *Cherokee* in particular, but the drums are underrecorded from beginning to end, partly justifying the liners' describing Blakey as "subdued."

—*litewriter*

SAFE ENERGY ARTISTS

NO NUKES—Asylum ML-801: *Dependin' On You*; *Runaway*; *Angel From Montgomery*; *Plutonium Is Forever*; *Power*; *The Times They Are A-Changin'*; *Cathedral*; *The Crow On The Cradle*; *Before The Deluge*; *Lotta Love*; *Little Sister*; *A Woman*; *We Almost Lost Detroit*; *Get Together*; *You Can't Change That*; *Once You Get Started*; *Captain Jim's Drunken Dream*; *Honey Don't Leave L.A.*; *Mockingbird*; *Heart Of The Night*; *Cry To Me*; *Star*; *Devil With The Blue Dress Medley*; *You Don't Have To Cry*; *Long Time Gone*; *Teach Your Children*; *Takin' It To The Streets*.

Personnel: the Doobie Brothers; Jackson Browne; Crosby, Stills and Nash; James Taylor; Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band; Carly Simon; Graham Nash; Bonnie Raitt; Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers; Raydio; Nicolette Larson; Poco; Chaka Khan; Jesse Colin Young; Ry Cooder; John Hall; Gil Scott-Heron; Sweet Honey In The Rock.

★ ★ ★ ½

Music and politics, like music and religion, make strange bedfellows. Too often one is subordinated, or even subsumed, under the other in heavy handed cliché or cloying, one dimensional rhetoric. Heartfelt political convictions, in and of themselves, do not necessarily make great art when translated into and through music. Blunderbuss directness—lyrically and compositionally—may well be effective in catching ears and mobilizing minds (Lennon's *Power To The People*, the Stones' *Street Fighting Man*, the Airplane's *Volunteers*, et al), but isn't always enduringly intriguing.

These potential problems are magnified with an event, or series of events, such as the five No Nukes benefit concerts put on by Musicians United for Safe Energy (MUSE) last September at Madison Square Garden. No matter how lofty the ideals, the music—some of which is captured on three discs—must hold up on its own to an evaluation such as this one. With a few exceptions—the overabundance of material by James Taylor and the hastily reformed Crosby, Stills and Nash—*No Nukes* offers some fairly solid and inspired statements by some of the more popular rock personalities like the Doobie Brothers, Jackson Browne and Bonnie Raitt, plus some nice additions from Gil Scott-Heron, the a cappella gospel quartet Sweet Honey In The Rock, and Ray Parker's black pop group Raydio.

Bonnie Raitt, who along with Jackson Browne, John Hall and Graham Nash is the primary organizational force behind MUSE (the four also produced the package) shines strongly in her two pieces, *Runaway* and *Angel From Montgomery*. Combining her soaring, slightly hurred voice with her own blend of Delta blues and L.A. rock and roll, Raitt is one of rock's most personable and expressive performers. On *Dependin' On You* and *Takin' It To The Streets*, with Hall and Taylor on Hall's paean to clean energy, *Power*, and behind Nicolette Larson on *Lotta Love*, the Doobie Brothers stretch their chunky white soul music to heights that may even make fans of non-believers.

Jackson Browne and Graham Nash are two of our most endearing songwriters, if you can get beyond the former's almost morbid melancholy and the latter's provincial carefulness. Three women "back-up" singers catapult Nash's *Cathedral* about half-way through. Browne and Nash's delivery of *The*

Crow On The Cradle—a haunting ballad/dirge about children and war—could well become a rallying song behind the re-formed anti-draft movement. David Lindley's violin here, as on Browne's *Deluge*, is chillingly effective.

There are other gems: Ry Cooder's *Little Sister* is chunky gospel; *A Woman* by Sweet Honey is a neck-hair raising harmonic dream; Gil Scott-Heron's *We Almost Lost Detroit* is a powerful, understated anti-nuke tale. Rock and roll wise, Tom Petty's macho reading of the old Solomon Burke ballad *Cry To Me* recalls the Stones' circa-*Out Of Our Heads* version, and Springsteen's Mitch Ryder medley (*Devil, Good Golly, Miss Molly, See See Rider* and *Jenny Take A Ride*) is raucous and

wildly propulsive. Jackson Browne and Rosemary Butler join Bruce and the E Street Band on the thoroughly warming *Stay*, and Raydio and Chaka Khan inject quite a bit of soul into the proceedings with *You Can't Change That* and *Once You Get Started*, respectively. *Lotta Love*, Poco's *Heart Of The Night* and Jesse Colin Young's antique *Get Together* are merely pedestrian.

The contributions of Taylor, Carly Simon and C, S and N, though two sides apart, all seem to run together, perhaps because of some shared L.A. studio backup. Taylor balladizes sensitively (*Captain Jim's Drunken Dream*) and rocks sufficiently (*Honey Don't Leave L.A.* and, with Simon, *Mockingbird*) but

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is perhaps too charming for his own good. And then there's Crosby, Stills and Nash, reunited (again) just for these concerts. As songs, *You Don't Have To Cry*, *Long Time Gone* and *Teach Your Children* hold up with only moderate success over the years, but after a slow beginning, the made-in-mellow-heaven harmonies really begin to gel and soar. Many listeners may be too cynical by now to hear them, however, as they may be to appreciate the superb vocals by Nash, Taylor and Simon on—believe it—*The Times They Are A-Changin'*.

High praise must be given Nash and Browne for their selfless marathon of programming and co-ordinating the album set for pre-Christmas release. The cross-fades from song to applause to song are nearly seamless. And the 16 page booklet enclosed is attractive and informative, with statements on nuclear dangers and consequences from most of the musicians involved, plus activists including Ralph Nader and Sam Lovejoy. A bit preachy and repetitive, but highly educational.

For all the seeming variety of musics represented on *No Nukes*, I would have liked to hear, say, something from Peter Tosh (who played one of the shows) instead of one of the Taylor or C. S. and N tunes. Are there anti-nuke jazz or new wave people? What do Raitt's blues acquaintances think? Still, this is a project well worth your support, and with esthetic victories to boot.

—zipkin

FRANK WRIGHT

KEVIN, MY DEAR SON—Chiaroscuro CR 2014: *Odeon; No End To The Sun; November The First; Cowboys and Indians; Long Way From Home; Kevin, My Dear Son.*

Personnel: Wright, tenor saxophone and bass clarinet; Kamal Abdul Alim, trumpet; Georges Arvanitas, piano; Reggie Workman, bass; Philly Joe Jones, drums; Khalil Abdullah, percussion; Eddie Jefferson, vocal (cut 5).

★ ★ ½

In 1970 tenorist Frank Wright, after being a somewhat minor figure in the musical revolution of the '60s, left the States for Paris where he continued playing his emotional, energy-charged tenor saxophone in the company of expatriate comrades, among them altoist Noah Howard, pianist Bobby Few, bassist Alan Silva, drummers Art Taylor and Mohammad Ali. Tenorist Wright finally settled on a quartet (consisting of Few, Silva and Ali) which worked throughout Europe in concerts and festivals. This band has recorded over a dozen sides on the European Sun label and was, for a time anyway, a pretty successful unit.

Wright never possessed the control or finesse of an Albert Ayler or Pharoah Sanders, nor did he have the sardonic black-comedy hilarity of a young Archie Shepp. Tenorist Wright was sort of off-to-the-side with his wild leaps in register and accident prone harmonic explorations; yet he did find camaraderie in Europe, and even helped to stimulate and give direction to controversial German reedist Peter Brötzmann and English saxophonist Evan Parker.

One would probably never think that this wild, reed-splitting horn player would turn consciously to the doors of tradition, that he would, in fact, attempt to capture the Americanism of the blues impulse in a deliberate fashion. But, alas, within recent years Wright has done just that—both here and abroad. This recording was done in October '78 and includes the erstwhile blues meanderings of

late vocalist Eddie Jefferson and French pianist Georges Arvanitas.

Wright has a good band here but the music fails to capture the essence that this particular musician authentically represents. From the opening dirge-like prayer *Odeon* to the terribly misrepresenting, uneventful title tune *Kevin, My Dear Son*, Wright seems lost within a musically stylized frontier from which he can't escape, nor adequately enlarge or creatively improve. There's mediocre Jefferson to be found on *Long Way From Home* and fine trumpet playing by Kamal Abdul Alim throughout. Alim's muted trumpet, along with Jefferson's de-escalating vocal attempts saves some of the day on the aforementioned selection.

For some reason it's always been difficult for me to put Wright down. But one doubts that reference to the blues continuum is enough of a truly adventurous approach to the '80s.

—riggins

BAIRD HERSEY & YEAR OF THE EAR

HAVE YOU HEARD?—Arista AN 3016: *Have You Heard?; Showdown; Your Voices Like Wind On A Mountain Top; Ngoma; Ogunde; The Prince; Des Montanas.*

Personnel: Hersey, guitar, synthesizers; Mark Harvey, Stanton Davis, Daniel Mott, trumpet, electric trumpet, flugelhorn; John Hagen, Stan Strickland, Len Detlor, saxophones, flutes; Tim Sessions, trombones; Ernie Provencher, electric and acoustic bass; David Moss, Doane Perry, Arnie Chapman, Roger Squitero, drums, percussion.

★ ★

A look at Year of the Ear's instrumentation will tell you where they're coming from—heavy on trumpets, reeds and percussion, glued together by leader Hersey's guitar and electronics—in other words, all top and bottom with nothing in the middle. And that's what their music sounds like, all flash and filigree without depth or durability.

Most of the cuts are constructed the same way: starting with a single melodic line, either atmospheric or funky, Hersey eventually adds layer after layer of activity—horn riffs, percussion fills, synthesizer hazings—which creates density but not necessarily excitement. At some point the dynamic level drops to reveal a horn or brass soloist backed only by busy drums, and then, layer by layer, the texture is again thickened. What is disconcerting about this process is that, alongside of the paucity of real ideas in the solos, the music never gets a chance to develop, the episodes never get a chance to mesh. Hersey is overly concerned with a parade of effects, rather than a cohesive musical statement.

Hersey seems to have arrived at this arranging approach partly through the occasional extravagances of Don Ellis, without bothering to include any of Ellis' wit, subtlety, or swing (in fact, even the trumpet duet—one electric, one acoustic—on *Have You Heard?*—seems Ellis derived). Elsewhere his sources are assimilated without concern for their new context: the Maynard Ferguson-like unison trumpet interludes in *Showdown*, for example, or the covly programmatic prelude to *Your Voices Like Wind On A Mountain Top* are the worst offenders in this regard. And the use of occasional new music percussion and horn techniques welded to a rock beat only serves to dilute the strengths of both musics when offered in such a pretentious, insubstantial fashion. Save your money on this one.

—lange

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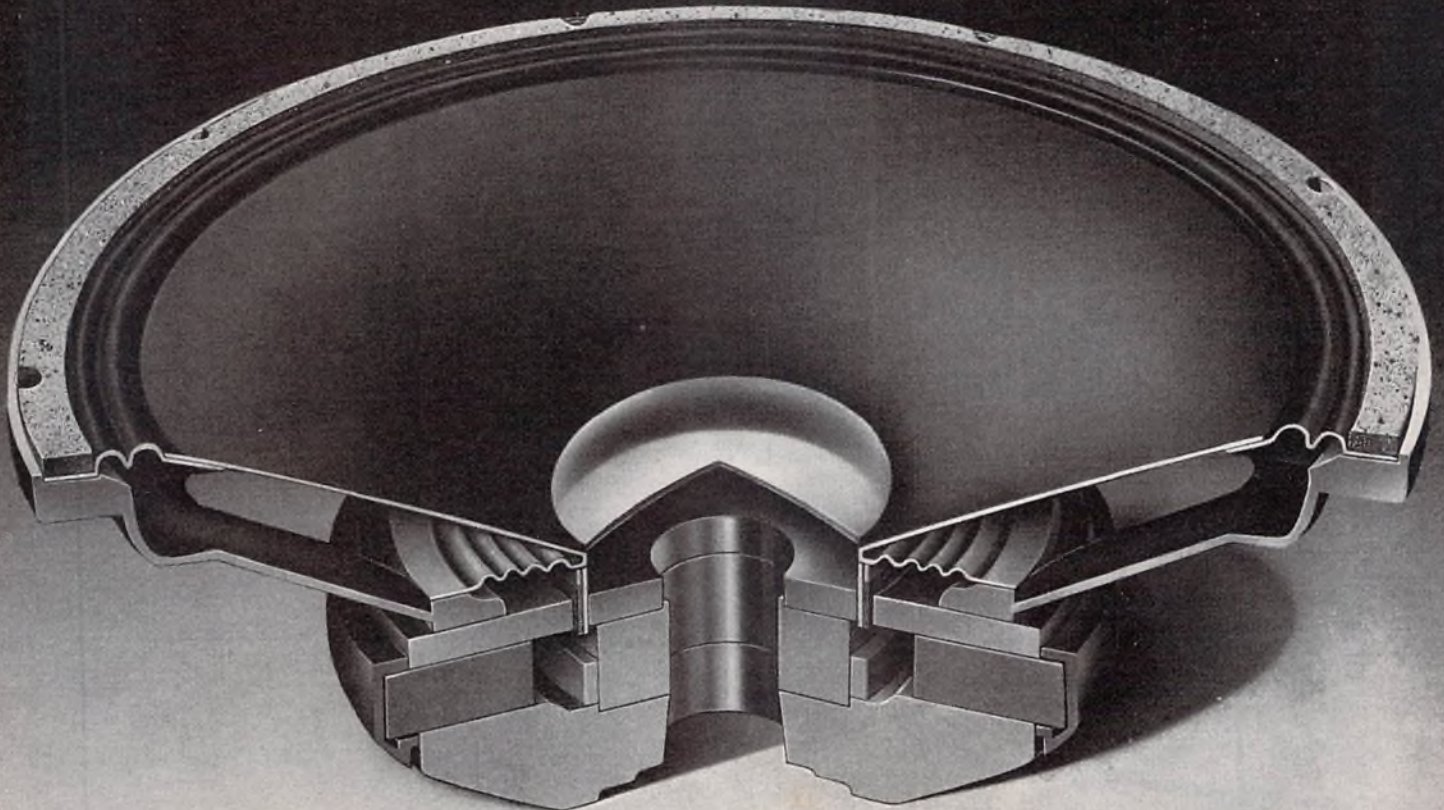
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BLINDFOLD TEST



JACKIE McLEAN

BY LARRY BIRNBAUM

Jackie McLean has been a fixture on the music scene since he debuted as a teenager with the likes of Bud Powell and Miles Davis in the late '40s. Labeled a Bird imitator in his youth, he emerged as a significant exponent of the alto in his own right through subsequent stints with the bands of Art Blakey and Charles Mingus. In the early '60s he embraced the avant garde on such Blue Note albums as *Destination Out* and *Evolution* (with Grachan Moncur) before retrenching to a freshly revitalized post-Parker synthesis. In 1970, at the behest of Archie Shepp, he began his association with Hartt College in Connecticut, where today he is tenured chairman of the Afro-American Music department.

Academic commitments kept his performing schedule to a minimum in the ensuing years, but a spate of re-issues and previously unreleased sessions has served to affirm McLean's preeminence as an improvising artist, as well as his historical position as a founding father of the hard bop movement. Integrity has its pecuniary drawbacks, however, and in 1979 Jackie recorded *Monuments* (RCA), his most commercially oriented effort to date. But Jackie Mac is hardly likely to go the way of a fusion musician, as anyone who has heard him recently can testify: if anything, his blowing is more masterfully assured and adventurously recondite than ever before. This is his first *Blindfold Test*; he was given no information about the records played.

1. PAUL DESMOND. *Out Of Nowhere* (from Dave Brubeck, *Jazz Goes To College*, Columbia). Desmond, alto sax; Brubeck, piano; Bob Bates, bass; Joe Dodge, drums.

That's Paul Desmond. He was a fine saxophone player and stylist—not one of my favorites, but certainly someone who bears mention because of his technique and facility on the instrument. I must say that it wasn't my style of saxophone playing. I'm hard on alto, and I've listened extensively even to those people that I didn't particularly like, like Johnny Hodges or Willie Smith—of course, in time I learned to love and appreciate them. But Desmond came at a hard time—in the era of Charlie Parker it was really difficult to say anything stronger than that.

2. LEE KONITZ. *Intuition* (from Lennie Tristano; Buddy DeFranco, *Crosscurrents*, Capitol). Konitz, alto sax; Warne Marsh, tenor sax; Tristano, piano; Billy Bauer, guitar; Arnold Fishkin, bass; Denzil Best, drums.

Lee—I always liked Lee. The piano is probably Lennie Tristano and the tenor is Warne Marsh. I don't know the cut, but it was an important statement in music during the time of Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, whose message was so overpowering that it revolutionized the music. But this was another facet of that time, and Lee had a sound and a style that was his own—I relate more to him than to Paul Desmond. It's a very cerebral kind of music, it's not as physical as the music I play, but I single out Lee Konitz, Lennie and all those guys as strong musicians in Charlie Parker's time.

Strangely enough, Lee's style has reverted more towards Charlie Parker since that period. In the mid '50s he became influenced by Charlie Parker, which couldn't really hamper anybody. Lee, in his later years, would paraphrase Charlie Parker in his approach to progressions, where in his early years

he never did. Give that four stars.

3. GRACHAN MONCUR III. *When* (from *New Africa*, BYG). Moncur, trombone; Roscoe Mitchell, alto sax; Archie Shepp, tenor sax; Dave Burrell, piano; Alan Silva, bass; Andrew Cyrille, drums.

It's Grachan on trombone—it's Grachan's composition, too. I like it very much. I think that Grachan is one of the most talented composers and trombonists. His approach to music is very original—I'd say that if there was any strong influence on Grachan, it was Monk. The shape of his music is very original and the kinds of modes or progressions he uses are very original, also. As a trombone player, he is in the world of J. J. Johnson, where he came up.

I don't know who that is on the alto. I thought it was Marion Brown but I don't think it is. I would suggest that he play some long tones. What I do like about him is that at least he's dealing with that beat. I like the way he deals with the meter—he's a percussive alto player, but I don't know who it is. I know it's not Bartz—Bartz never sounded like that. Roscoe Mitchell? Oh God, please don't say anything about long tones.

That's Archie on tenor, and to me Archie Shepp is one of the fine saxophone players. I first heard Archie around 1960, and I've watched him go from one extreme to the other, combining the two extremes to become a very strong and mature saxophone player on tenor and soprano, too. Both he and Pharoah Sanders were experimenting in the area of overtones and the upper register in the '60s, and they were into a very free kind of playing—I don't know how free that kind of playing is when you really examine it. Then they both seemed to come around to more conventional playing. Archie had worked with Don Byas and I'm sure he's been influenced by many of the older masters. So now what we have is a

well rounded individual playing saxophone. In fact, I have been influenced by Archie and Pharoah in my playing. I started looking at the other part of the instrument in the early '60s, trying to combine the two things, and I'm still working very hard at it. Archie is doing very well at combining those two musical worlds.

I give that four stars—I liked it.

4. ORNETTE COLEMAN. *Body Meta* (from *Body Meta*, Artists House). Coleman, alto sax; Bern Nix, guitar; Charlie Ellerbee, guitar; Rudy MacDaniel, bass; Shannon Jackson, drums.

Ornette. It's hard to find something else interesting to say about Ornette that hasn't been said before. This is great, because the only chance I've had to hear his recent playing was on the *Saturday Night Live* performance. It's alright—I'm not putting it down. I liked Ornette's music better when he had Dewey Redman and Don Cherry in the band. But I like anything Ornette does—it's all interesting, especially his approach to improvisation. That particular record is not the best I've heard by him. I've heard many other things of his I liked better. I didn't like the rhythm on that. Give it two stars.

Ornette plays within the normal range of the saxophone—he doesn't play out there, yet he gets a strongly atonal effect. His improvisation deals more with the sound of voices speaking than of instruments singing. It's more verbal.

5. JOHNNY GRIFFIN, JOHN JENKINS. *Latin Quarters* (from Wilbur Ware, *The Chicago Sound*, Riverside). Griffin, tenor sax; Jenkins, alto sax; Junior Mance, piano; Wilbur Campbell, drums; Ware, bass.

That's my man Johnny Griffin and that's John Jenkins, on alto. I don't know the rest of the personnel but I know John and I love him—he's a tasty alto player. I brought John out of Chicago to New York—I think I was one of the first to pull him out of here—to make a record with me. I did *Alto Madness* with him—for Prestige—just me and John—and that was the first record he ever made. It's so good to hear him play again—I sure want to go on the record saying that. Five stars.

6. ARTHUR BLYTHE. *Lenox Avenue Breakdown* (from *Lenox Avenue Breakdown*, Columbia). Blythe, alto sax; James Newton, flute; James "Blood" Ulmer, guitar; Cecil McBee, bass; Jack DeJohnette, drums; Bob Stewart, tuba; Guilherme Franco, percussion.

Gary Bartz? I don't know who that is. Is that "Blood" on guitar? It's Arthur Blythe? That's bad—I like him. Five stars. Yeah, that's nice, man. I haven't heard that. Yeah, Arthur Blythe is bad! I enjoyed that.

7. MACEO PARKER. *Gittin' A Little Hipper* (from James Brown, *Nothing But Soul*, King). Parker, alto sax; Brown, organ; Fred Wesley, trombone.

It's not Stanley Turrentine. That's an alto? It's not Rahsaan. Okay, that's alto—Grover? Hank Crawford? I don't know who that is.

LB: Maceo Parker.
JM: Two and a half stars. That's good, though. I had never really heard Maceo play. Make that three and a half stars.

8. JAMES WHITE. *Off Black* (from *Off White*, ZE Records). White, alto sax; Don Christensen, drums; Pat Place, guitar; Jody Harris, guitar; George Scott, bass; Bob Quine, guitar.

I don't like it, man. I like the rhythm, but I don't like the horn, whoever it is. It's not Ornette again? I give it no stars. He ain't saying nothin' on the saxophone to me. So far today you played me good saxophone players, but that was a zero. In fact, I don't think there's a big enough zero I can give it unless it's the ring around the planet Saturn—that zero. Take the ring from around Saturn and stand it up straight, and that's the zero I give him. Even for a rock record, there's nothing to relate to—it's not even percussive for dancing.

PROFILE



FRASER MacPHERSON

BY MARK MILLER

Fraser MacPherson was making his first appearance in Toronto a while ago, playing a week at Bourbon Street. After one of the Vancouver tenor saxophonists' characteristically eloquent solos, one member of the house, a young musician, commented, "Nice lecture, professor!" It is, considering MacPherson's distinguished bearing and the studied nature of his playing, an appropriate metaphor.

The professor is doing a lot more lecturing these days, the result of the more or less coincidental decline of the nightclub and studio work that sustained his career for some 20 years, and the rise of his profile as a mainstream tenor player culminating in the 1978 tour of Russia and the international release on Concord of *Live At The Planetarium* in 1979.

MacPherson has been playing in Vancouver since 1948 and, through his own bands and his work with others, has been the city's premier saxophonist for most of that time. Born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1928, he was raised there and in Victoria, British Columbia. Jazz came to his attention in Victoria via the radio—from Vancouver to

the north, Balboa Beach (then the home of Stan Kenton) to the south, and occasionally the Three Deuces in Chicago to the east.

"At that time I was a bookish kind of kid. When I was about 15 I had a job at the public library, and I read all of the jazz books there—all three of them by then—and learned the history of the music that way." MacPherson had already started to play clarinet, having also had the usual childhood piano lessons. "When I was 14 I went to a school run by the Christian Brothers of Ireland. This was during the war, and an army chaplain who went overseas left a clarinet for the brothers to give to one of the kids—so I grabbed it right away. At 15 my father got me an alto saxophone; at 16 I joined the union.

"Since clarinet was my first instrument, I used to listen to all those great New Orleans players: Omer Simeon, Albert Nicholas, Bechet of course, and my favorite, Edmond Hall. Later, there was Benny Goodman and all those popular guys. When I got the alto, I listened mostly to Johnny Hodges—I still do: it gets better and better—and since I was starting to play in dance bands myself, I listened to lead players like Earle Warren and Tab Smith, guys who were also Hodges offshoots. Then when I was 17 there was Charlie Parker. I still have all those 78s on Dial and Musicalraft."

Tenor sax followed, and although MacPherson has come to play all the higher reeds

in the line of duty, the lower instrument has emerged as his main voice, a voice which is inflected with the accent of Ben Webster and Lester Young and which is spoken in the easygoing manner of a west-coaster.

With Victoria's leading players absent because of the war, MacPherson rose quickly in the ranks of the city's danceband musicians. However, he did not consider making music his career. Instead he studied commerce and, after two years, went to the University of British Columbia in Vancouver to complete his courses. Before he finished the degree, however, he had turned exclusively to music.

Around 1949 he was asked to join the reconstituted quintet of guitarist Ray Norris for a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio series, and he was noticed. "The guys who did the commercial work found that I could read . . . show up on time . . . play the melody if I had to . . . so I started doing commercial work on radio and, later, TV." Concurrently—in the '50s and '60s—MacPherson worked in Vancouver nightclubs, leading the band at Ivy's and, on three different occasions totalling about eight years, at the Cave, the city's most important spot.

Opportunities to play jazz and incentives to make a career of doing so exclusively were rare items for MacPherson and his Canadian contemporaries. "This was Vancouver—not only Canada, but the west coast of Canada, separated by the border and the mountains. I don't think any of us considered jazz in terms of making a living; you played what you could on a dance job or a club job and had a bit of fun with it."

The CBC provided the sole outlet for jazz with a succession of radio programs featuring Canadian groups. The network recently celebrated 25 years of such programs, and MacPherson was asked to prepare an hour-long retrospective of the Vancouver scene. MacPherson has done radio announcing before, including a jazz history series for the CBC in 1977, and for this occasion he drew on his own library of broadcast tapes. It was a case of accuracy rather than immodesty that he was prominently featured—as the leader of a quintet and nonet in the "west coast" style and as a soloist (alto and tenor) in the big bands of Dave Robbins and Doug Parker.

MacPherson left the Cave for the last time in 1970; studio work became scarcer as the Canadian music industry evolved; his freelance work with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, "playing saloon saxophone for the Gershwin programs," stopped. Through the 1970s he did theater work, played in and/or led dance groups, and eventually established two jazz bands of his own.

One is a dixieland band in which he plays soprano sax and clarinet on the usual tunes (*Muskrat Ramble*, *Royal Garden Blues* . . .) and seldom heard items from Ellington and Bechet.

The other, formed in 1975, is a trio with Oliver Gannon (guitar) and Wyatt Ruther (bass), which took as its precedent two drummer-less combinations in New York: the George Barnes/Ruby Braff quartet, and a duo of Zoot Sims and Bucky Pizzarelli. Noting that he "lost interest in going to sessions when the drummers started playing the melody," MacPherson adds, with respect to the trio, "I wanted to try it without the drums to see what it would be like. It's kind of fragile, but it's very open and spacious. We

haven't got it completely where we want it, but when it works it's a lot of fun."

The trio did several CBC radio shows, one of which became a record, and toured locally and then nationally under the auspices of Overture Concerts. The record, *Live At The Planetarium*, was released by MacPherson on his own label, West End. After some impressive reviews, it was subsequently picked up by RCA in Canada. When that leasing arrangement lapsed, Concord took over with international distribution.

In November, 1978 the trio, through Overture Concerts, went to Russia. MacPherson says the tour was "an incredible experience. I had no idea what to expect. I only knew the cities we were playing and how many concerts—13 in nine days. We'd just finished five weeks of playing across Canada in high school gymnasiums to 200 people." The musicians' treatment was VIP all the way, as MacPherson's recollection of Ryga (where the trio gave live concerts) would indicate: "I had a three-room suite with two phones and a piano—just for me. Every concert was sold out; it was a 900-seat hall. The audiences were fantastic, really knowledgeable and sensitive. As an illustration of that, what got the rhythmic applause was Oliver playing *Django* and when I did *Body And Soul* or *Sophisticated Lady*. The lesson there is that there are all sorts of people who can run over their horns better than any of us, but the audiences were responding to some sort of emotional content. They'd be waiting outside after the concerts with presents and flowers."

MacPherson's trio crossed the Atlantic once again to perform at the 1979 Montreux Jazz Festival as part of a CBC-sponsored troupe of musicians. An LP of the trio's set there has been prepared by the CBC; a second Concord LP is in the offing; a tour of Japan may follow. It adds up to what MacPherson acknowledges as a "Cinderella story." It also means there's a new name on the scene. In a sense, the professor is on his way from a small town college to a big city university. db

BOB MAGNUSSON

BY LEE UNDERWOOD

When jazz bassist Bob Magnusson was a little boy studying classical music and french horn, he used to doze off at night listening to the San Diego Woodwind Quartet rehearsing live upstairs.

To say that he came from a musical family would be an understatement: Bob's father, Daniel Magnusson, was the principal clarinetist for the San Diego Symphony Orchestra for 20 years; his mother is an accomplished classical pianist; his older brother was a saxophonist; his older sister is a violinist who married San Francisco jazz bassist Bobby Maize. From day one, music has been an integral part of Bob Magnusson's life.

But it wasn't all roses. "I studied french horn for 12 years, and as a boy played all of the standard symphonies for six years as a member of the San Diego Youth Orchestra. Just for fun, I also picked up classical guitar as a teenager.

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SCOTT WINDUS

"But later, when I had begun studying the bass and wanted to improvise, I had the traumatic realization that after reading music all of those years, I *still* didn't have a developed ear.

"I grew up with what I think of as the traditional American approach to music: everything was reading. Music was literally dots on a page. I never learned how to hear an interval in my mind, to identify it, and then play it. If I didn't have the music on paper, I panicked."

To learn how to improvise, Bob started singing, "which helped me to *identify* what I was hearing, and after a while the process of hearing, identifying, and playing intervals became fast, almost immediate, sort of subconscious."

Born February 24, 1947 in New York City while his father attended Juilliard, Bob didn't receive his first exposure to jazz until he was 19. His brother-in-law, bassist Bobby Maize, turned him on to Miles' *Kind Of Blue*.

"That album sounded like Ravel, Debussy and Brahms," said 32 year old Magnusson in the liner notes to his own debut solo LP, *Revelation* (Discovery, DS-804). "I couldn't believe that guys could improvise music as beautiful as that, getting that same sound as some of the greatest composers of the past." Having played electric bass in his brother's rock band, young Bob took Miles to heart and began studying acoustic bass seriously. Eighteen months later, he was playing in the San Diego Symphony Orchestra.

His first professional jazz gig was with Buddy Rich's big band. At 21, Bob was the youngest member, and, needless to say, the going was difficult at first.

"I didn't know a lot about playing time, and soon Buddy started screaming at me. 'What's that! Don't do that! Just play four!' That made me very uptight. The more he yelled, the worse I played.

"In Copenhagen, I told Buddy I was going to have to quit, that I wasn't making it, the pressure was too much for me. He said I could quit if I wanted to, maybe work some more then try it again, and he'd love to have me back. It was a real warm and sincere talk, which is maybe all I really needed. He didn't give me notice, and I didn't leave. We went on from there, and things got better.

"Buddy made me aware of playing *time*. That was very important to me. He made me

aware of it in perhaps a harsh way, but he did it, and I'm grateful for that. The bass has *got* to feel good, it's *got* to swing. I started to really play, to really be myself, and stayed another ten months, leaving in September of 1969."

His next big gig came with Sarah Vaughan, with then-unknown Jan Hammer on piano and veteran Jimmy Cobb on drums.

"Sarah likes to play ballads that are the slowest ballads I've ever heard. It's hard to play that slow, and I wasn't getting it. I'd try to put the beat up, put it back, make fills—but I couldn't find the right *place*. I wasn't locking into it with the rest of the band. There'd be big holes. I'd try to play something. It wouldn't work.

"One night after the gig, I told Jimmy how I was struggling to get into those slow ballads. He said, 'Bob, try playing just a half-note or just a whole note. See what happens.' Those few words unlocked the door to the whole thing for me. It opened up a liquid kind of approach, and my bass has a big sound anyway. It would ring through, and that *space* became the beauty of the music. I got to learn and love that feeling."

Since that time (1971-72), Magnusson has recorded with John Klemmer (*Nexus, Brazilia, Mosaic*), Sarah Vaughan (*Time In My Life*), Buddy Rich (*Buddy And Soul*), Joe Farrell (*Skateboard Park, Live At Pasquale's*), Terry Gibbs (*Smoke 'Em Up*), Art Pepper (*Among Friends*), and a host of others that includes Pepper Adams, Bill Watrous, Sam Most, Ron Eschete, and Laurindo Almeida.

He recently recorded *Outstanding In His Field* with Bobby Shew (Profiled 10/9/75). Reviewing Magnusson's live performance at Donte's with Shew's quintet, Leonard Feather said, "Bob Magnusson is more than a great rhythm player: he virtually defines the state of the art on the upright bass. Whether bowing or plucking a solo, he has something fresh and melodic to say, and states it with a sound that is firm and clear."

As well as giving full credit to Sarah Vaughan's pianist Carl Schroeder, and to formal teachers Frederick Hughart, Bertram Turetzky, Ami Parat, and Barry Lieberman for being invaluable aids to his education, Magnusson also cites fellow bassists Steve Swallow and the late Albert Stinson as major influences.

"Steve captured me with his melodic ability,

especially on those early albums with Art Farmer, particularly one called *To Sweden With Love*. Steve wasn't just a background rhythm player. Even when he was playing ensemble parts, he contributed counterpoint melodies very much like bass parts I had heard in classical music. He also had shed a lot of extraneous notes. Instead of playing fast for the sake of speed, he played fast only when the music called for it. He picked only the *choicest* notes. Over the years, I've tried to learn how to do that.

"Like Steve, Albert Stinson got a big fat lovely sound from his bass. I could appreciate a big sound, if only because of my years of french horn playing, in which so much time is spent trying to get that golden, rich, regal sound. This same concept—a big sound—fit my approach to playing bass, and I loved the way his melodic ideas spun off his rhythmic ideas."

Magnusson includes Eddie Gomez, Niels Pedersen and George Mraz among his favorites, all of whom are classically trained jazz artists.

In 1975, Bob found himself at a musical crossroads. After playing with Rich, Vaughan and others, he returned to the San Diego Symphony Orchestra. But the money wasn't good, and rehearsal and performance times precluded working with other groups. He quit the orchestra, joined a dance band, brought a bigger check home to his wife and children, but found himself immensely dissatisfied.

"I felt frustrated musically, and began to feel like a prostitute, not because it was this or that kind of music, but because it happened to be a kind of music I wasn't *enjoying*.

"Finally, I just stopped. I took four months off. I got some lawn mowers and started mowing people's lawns. While doing that, I re-evaluated my life in music: Should I be in music? What kind? What did I want? Where was I going?"

At the end of the four months, Bob decided to move to Los Angeles: to challenge himself, to find out what he could and could not do, and to play with quality musicians such as Bud Shank, Jean-Pierre Rampal, Lenny Breau, Joe Diorio, Irene Kral, as well as those already mentioned above.

In describing the learning process (he also teaches regularly at the Guitar and Bass Institute of Technology), Bob crystalized his own successful musical journey: "When you start out playing, you're totally uninhibited, which is the perfect way to play jazz. Then somebody comes along and says, 'That sounds weird.'

"So you start to learn. You see that the line you just played didn't make sense, it lacked cohesion. You start getting into the hangups and problems about playing. You learn how much you *don't* know, and you study to learn it.

"Then you gradually approach the same point you started out from—you begin to become uninhibited again, only now you have all this knowledge and developed ability. You're back in tune with the first person you were, totally uninhibited, playing just for the joy and love of the music.

"That's the process you go through in becoming a creative artist. You are now creating your own lines, composing as you perform, applying all of the knowledge you acquired through study, and having a wonderful time doing it." **db**

CAUGHT!

GIL EVANS ORCHESTRA

PUBLIC THEATRE
NEW YORK CITY

Personnel: Evans, Masabumi Kikuchi, Peter Levin, electric keyboards; Arthur Blythe, alto sax; Hamiet Bluiett, baritone sax; Jon Faddis, Hannibal Marvin Peterson, Lew Soloff, trumpets; Dave Barger, trombone and tuba; George Lewis, trombone; John Clark, french horn; Tim Landers, bass; Alyrio Lima, percussion; Billy Cobham, drums.

GIL EVANS LEE KONITZ DUO

GREENE ST.
NEW YORK CITY

Personnel: Evans, acoustic piano; Lee Konitz, alto and soprano saxes.

Gil Evans, who for the most has kept his big band quiet for the past five years, reformed his orchestra for a two-night gig at the Public Theatre, which has for several

years been the home of new music in the city. Evans assembled a largely diverse group of musicians for this gig—from the bebopping Jon Faddis to the fusion-based Billy Cobham to the newer sounds of Arthur Blythe. When everything worked, the results were nothing short of spectacular, but when they didn't there was a rootlessness that caused the music to go wandering off into a lethargic never-never land.

The aggregation squeezed on the Public's stage was a motley one—three hats, two kimonos, one Arabian-style pajama; one bright orange velour stood out as did Billy Cobham's sunburst drum kit. Evans, tall and wiry and unhealthy looking, sat himself at his electric grand and started a lively comping pattern which turned into a big brassy ensemble. Cobham was in rhythmic control and Blythe, the first soloist, was lightfooted and gentle. The band was flying, but there was trouble in the corners: Peter Levin, sitting behind some keyboards stage left, and Alyrio Lima, standing amid a flea market of percussion stage right, began to undermine the whole band—Levin with a series of swoops and space-age noises and Lima with an array of antics including crashing, rattling and blowing into all sorts of distractions. At times, both men fit the music perfectly, adding textures and sounds that just clicked with Evans' arranging and space comping, but for the most part, the two men distracted from the fine soloists assembled between them. It was a problem that recurred throughout the more than three hour program.

Cobham was clearly stoking the band's

engine. Hannibal soloed in his typical fashion, quickly heating up to a burning peak of intensity and then being stuck without any place to take it. The evening's second piece was the highlight—Charles Mingus' *Orange Was The Color Of Her Dress*... Lewis snorted through the melody and Bluiett hiked the ensemble on the shoulders of his baritone sound. George Lewis' solo was soulful, innocent and bluesy. He mixed his enormous chops with a little elfin dance and built his solo to an easy and foamy head. Cobham, exemplary throughout, was restrained, but there.

Jimi Hendrix's *Up From The Skies* was given a short, tweaky reading—a bluesy call and response. The piece which followed was the evening's flag-waver: Blythe was laid-back and Dolphy-inspired, Clark played fluid and legato lines over the rifling of the unnamed chart, Bargeron was sweet and humorous with lots of triple-tonguing, Soloff was muted and feathery (his tone was like Miles—delicate and thoughtful), Gil was greasy and funky and Bluiett was full of guts and panache, rising over everything with sheer majesty. It was, unfortunately, Hamiet's only solo of the night. The band was on high, and Gil's charts were fresh and crackling. The first set closed with a *Sketches Of Spain*-like chart which featured moaning from the trombones—turning into some all-out, rollicking Thelonious Monk—Bargeron fluid and bouncy on the tuba, Kikuchi and Levin engaging in some electronic chit-chat and Hannibal igniting the horn section with shouts and blasts. Lewis, with a shrug of "if nobody's going to solo then I am," pirouetted

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out of the melee, and the hour and a half first set crashed to a conclusion.

The second set was a problem. A long, dirge-like piece created an ennui which floated off of the bandstand and anaesthetized the audience. Evans, curled over his piano, was oblivious, and things began to dissipate into thin air. Blythe rose out of the din for a moment or two and Hannibal tried to enliven things, but the extended work died long before the piece ended. It was an ambitious effort, but the band was not completely together. This is the problem when a band-leader like Evans tries to assemble an all-star group without spending too much time rehearsing his difficult charts. The first set was tremendous, but the momentum wouldn't hold. But there is a paucity of quality big band work, and it would be nice if Evans

could afford to put his band together for something other than a two-night gig or a quick tour of England (the last time he had an orchestra, two years ago).

Several weeks earlier a different Gil Evans was on display: Gil Evans the pianist. Evans waited until he was 40 years old before he learned the piano in 1952. This is the first time anybody has persuaded him to come forward from behind his arrangements (actually it was John Snyder of Artists House who put the idea in Gil's ear). The occasion was two nights of duets with Lee Konitz at Greene St., a newly reconverted warehouse restaurant in Soho.

First of all, Gil Evans is not much of a soloist. His work on the piano was lean and spare, giving Lee skeletal chords behind his improvisations. Basically the evening was

rather cold—astringent, chilly music devoid of much of the blues chords which serve as a common ground between the piano and the alto saxophone. The music was sweet and sinewy—Evans nudging slightly as Lee soared into the 30 foot ceilings. Charles Mingus' *Orange Dress* . . . was given a gentle, calm reading here, and Robbie Robertson's *The Moon Struck One* was a comfortable, haunting vehicle, lacking in depth, but melodic and striking. The treat of the evening was *Summertime*—Gil playing his arrangement for Miles Davis (the one that Lambert, Hendricks and Ross did, where they intoned "summertime, summertime" throughout). Lee played beautifully, as always, and listeners familiar with the famous chart could fill in the pieces which Gil was leaving out.

Apparently Evans and Konitz were pleased with their duets and will keep at them during the year, but, to these ears, they didn't fuse—Evans played underneath Konitz' alto, not necessarily with it, and, since Lee can very ably handle solo playing, he didn't miss what was lacking.

—lee jeske

PAUL JACOBS AARON COPLAND

THE BOTTOM LINE
NEW YORK CITY

Personnel: Jacobs, Copland, pianos.

Rare indeed is the opportunity to hear perhaps the greatest American composer of the 20th Century play one of his own tunes in an intimate cabaret setting, but that's exactly what happened when Aaron Copland teamed with Paul Jacobs to perform a two-piano version of Copland's famous *Danzon Cubano* (1942). The collaboration of the two pianists was a trifle ragged—the hands of the 79 year old Copland weren't quite as steady as of yore—but what the hell, this guy wrote *Appalachian Spring*, *Billy The Kid*, and *El Salon Mexico*. Besides, this composer, more than any other, had broken down the barrier between "serious" and popular music; just to watch him play was a moving experience.

The duet rendition of *Danzon Cubano* capped a brilliant solo concert by Jacobs. Interspersing his performances with a stream of witty, informative remarks (including a brief interview with Copland), the New York Philharmonic's house pianist gave a guided tour of the jazz influence on European and American composers from Debussy to Frederic Rzewski.

Debussy was inspired to write *Minstrels* and *General Levine* by a black minstrel show which he saw at a Parisian music hall. Jacobs played *Minstrels* with a deliberate tread neatly contrasted with the tune's swaying syncopations. Stressing the whimsical humor of the piece, he laid it on thick with a heavy bass line, which worked better than the flighty cuteness often heard in performances of *Minstrels* by others. Jacobs gave *General Levine*, a portrait of a black-face clown, an inner core of introspection that heightened its charm.

Three ragtime-influenced pieces, composed by Stravinsky at various points in his career, were next. *Piano Rag Music*, which was written for Rubinstein but rejected by the famous pianist, sounded closer to *Palestrina*

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than the blues. But Jacobs' version of *Ragtime* really swung. This was strangely morbid, sarcastic music reminiscent of Kurt Weill's *The Three-Penny Opera*.

Jacobs closed the European section of his program with a pair of 12-tone works: Arnold Schoenberg's *Piano Pieces, Op. 33a* and *33b*. Although it was difficult to hear any echoes of jazz in these abstract, intellectualized pieces, Jacobs' readings were deeply committed and highly lucid.

While the European composers were using jazz for exotic effects, their American counterparts were beginning to develop a distinctive national style that drew extensively from this indigenous form of music. For example, the vital, earthy pulse of the blues could be felt beneath the polished classical veneer in the first of three Gershwin preludes that Jacobs performed. In the second prelude, one of Gershwin's best-loved pieces, there was a smoky, somnolent, African quality that European composers never could capture. Jacobs imbued these pieces with an extraordinary degree of emotion. His sensitive performances underlined the fact that, despite its vulgarization by cocktail pianists, Gershwin gave the world some music that will never die.

Next up were four "blues pieces" by Copland. As the composer himself pointed out, they were intended to be evocations rather than imitations of the blues. Combining reminiscences of rural America with flashes of big city sophistication, these "blues" were melancholy, tenuous, and above all, nostalgic.

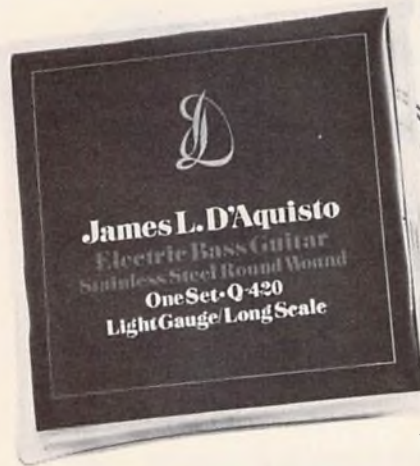
A fitting segue to the Copland pieces was provided by the New York premiere of William Bolcom's *Ghost Rags*. The best number in the set (and perhaps the best thing that Bolcom has done) was *Heliotrope Bouquet*. Starting off like a Joplin rag, but with a special, heart-wrenching quality, this work ultimately produced a ghostly sensation that was profoundly disquieting. *Poltergeist* retained the ragtime rhythm, but was neurotic, skittish and modern, with a humorous twist at the end. In contrast, *Dream Shadows* was in deadly earnest. While the basic rag structure was suggested, the chords didn't go anywhere; they seemed stuck in a psychotic rut.

The tour de force of the concert was the world premiere of Frederic Rzewski's *Down By The Riverside*. Introduced as the first of four ballads based on American work songs, the composition began with several rounds of the original melody, which quickly gave way to complex counterpoint in the first variation. As bursts of manic energy alternated with sudden stretches of reflection, Copland and Ives came to mind. Ives was particularly recalled by snatches of hymn tunes which were swiftly transformed into a soaring chorale, underpinned by savage bass chords. Jacobs handled the piece's huge chordal leaps and other awesome difficulties with admirable aplomb, considering that he had received the manuscript only a few days before the concert.

All in all, it was a very successful concert which engendered two realizations: first, 20th Century classical music has been immeasurably enriched by jazz; and second, despite the onslaught of serialism and atonalism, the folk-based idiom of Copland, Gershwin and others has been perpetuated in the music of younger American composers.

—Kenneth Terry

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swing composition. After the statement of the basic theme, the rhythm section led into the turnaround and Taylor's first solo. His right hand lines began with clean, sharp textures going in and around the piece's tonality, with a sound of almost perfect melody. The bright lightness of a Basic developed along with the speed and intensity of a Cecil Taylor; Billy Taylor's control was intact.

The trio treatment of Ellington's *Caravan* proved a perfect vehicle for drummer Waits. The breakneck tempo that Taylor chose, his perfect unisons intermixed with rhythmic

dissonances, cut into the meat of the tune until the trio broke time, and Freddie took over, producing a study of complex poly-rhythms and dynamics, covering the drum set the way a fan covers a room—completely. At the high point, Waits played his drums with the palms of his hands and brushed his cymbals gently with his fingers, lightly leading back to the head of the tune. Gaskin's bass work not only kept the trio swinging but moved out of the bottom, at times running unison and thirds with Billy's right and left hands. His sense of pitch, tone and skill with the bow gave the trio its intensely cooking sound.

After the set I asked Billy if he had seen

the review of his opening night in the *Chicago Tribune* which called his trio merely another cocktail group. Billy said he had read the piece, and told me, "You know, I can never understand how a critic, be it one man or woman, can come here and listen to one set, and make a musical judgment of the evening. I always play what I feel, and sometimes I love just doing those old ballads, mine and the ones that people know. This doesn't mean that all I play is in that form, but on one evening in Chicago I might play a whole set of love songs—guess I'm a romantic at heart."

He thought about the breadth of his repertoire, and mused, "In the taping of the interview for Public Television of Eubie Blake, I mentioned to him an old song of his that I played. I had heard the piece years back on an old 78. When I mentioned the name, he didn't remember, so I played it on the piano for him and he turned toward me and said: 'No, it goes like this.' And after so many years, he played it exactly the way I had heard it; and man, he has so many songs to remember!"

Most recently the Billy Taylor trio has changed drummers, enlisting the services of Keith Copeland, formerly with the Heath Brothers. It continues its ambitious, diverse activities. The unit is in the middle of a national tour, recently performing Taylor's *Suite For Jazz Piano And Orchestra* with the North Carolina Symphony. The recorded premiere of the work exists, without orchestra in trio form, on *Jazz Alive!* In May and June the trio will perform and offer workshops in South Dakota, Denver, Salem, Mass., and Indiana. The focus is to present both the jazz and classical forms together within the framework of the university. Along with concerts, the band conducts workshops with individual students and college level performing ensembles.

The chaplain at Tufts University has commissioned Taylor to write a religious piece for jazz ensemble; the work will have its world premiere in May. At Lake Placid the trio, as part of the Jazzmobile, performed a work composed by saxophonist Frank Foster, enlisting the services of a special 40-piece Winter Olympic Orchestra.

As we move into the '80s, jazz continues to expand and grow. Billy Taylor in the past has expressed his musical opinions in various forms. He has transcended the concept of merely performing his music by experimenting with classical systems, writing books, giving lectures and operating on many production levels in the music industry. In glancing ahead into the '80s, Billy Taylor sees a stronger musical future and a rebirth of new music:

"With this new decade I see a settling in of forms, a new concentration. In the past many have been lost on one side, perhaps experimenting with new concepts only because they are different. Some have said 'I must be far out,' others, 'I must be far in.' The problem is that I am not a one dimensional person; there are many levels and forms.

"The musicians of the '80s will concentrate more on melody and rhythm. They will master forms, not words that label and restrict them. They will be more versatile and well equipped to communicate their emotions and dreams. Perhaps we will go beyond gimmicks like fusion, punk jazz and whatever and return to the music, for in the long run all we have is . . . the music."

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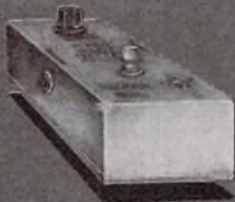
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Haggard recognizes that putting his current live format on record could open up a new audience for him, especially considering the current revival of interest in country music forms, including western swing, which is to some degree reflected in the crossover appeal of Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings and Charlie Daniels' recent work. Another example is the wide-open PBS *Austin City Limits* TV show Haggard did recently, which was ecstatically received by a youthful audience.

"We do have a lot of young people who are interested in what we're doing," says Haggard. "If you don't, of course, you're out of business. You were talking about how you'd like to hear a live album from us with a lot of solos on it. Well, there's a lot of people who dig that, and those are the people we're recording for. It may not sell as much as if I did it another way, but I think in the long run, it's going to do more for the longevity of the career than the quick-hit system."

The current interest in improvisatory country jazz forms really sank in for Haggard during a recent series of European gigs that met with a lot of enthusiasm. Sharing the bill with Haggard was a hand-picked band of Nashville's finest musicians. According to Merle's associate Tex Whitson, the Nashville pickers were extremely leery of following Haggard's act.

"We in no way were trying to undermine or outshine anybody else on the show," Haggard remembers. "But we were doing a show for the first time in a foreign country, and I remember telling the guys, 'Turn it on, boys, let's do it.' And, boy, they did."

"It's a different thing over there. In Europe, country music doesn't have the air of 'hickiness' about it like it does here. It's by no means considered hick music. It's an art, and is recognized as such. It's a different feeling to play your music over there. I mean, they're so proper in their way of speaking and everything that it's hard to figure out why they like country music. But I guess it's a dialect that has spread all over the world—not only in music but in movies. You know, the Jimmy Stewart, John Wayne, Gary Cooper type movies have become popular around the world. And there is a tie between the movies and that type of music."

Haggard has been on the road for close to 20 years. During that time, he has become almost symbolic of the purist, professional, non-nonsense approach to performing rooted American music. It came as something of a surprise to some fans, then, when his 1979 album *Serving 190 Proof* contained a brilliantly personal introspective song (*Footlights*) that indicated a disenchantment with the performer's life.

"I've got to be honest," he explains, "I went through a period where I hated it. I don't know, call it change of life or whatever. But I had a lot of problems at the time, and it's always been a part of me to write what I feel. And *Footlights* was something that came out of that."

"What I was trying to say in that song was that everybody has 'footlights,' whether he's a cement worker, a bricklayer or an entertainer. You get to that point where you wonder, 'Is this what I want to do for the rest of my life?' And while you're wondering about it, you're usually bored at the same time, tired of it all."

As Merle emphasizes, however, it was a "passing thought" that's long gone, and for the last year and a half, he's been enjoying playing his music as much as ever. Would he do it for free if he had to?

"Probably would. I'll tell you what, we've had some awful good sessions that *should* have been on tape. One time my wife Leona had a birthday party for me when we were down in Florida. It was a surprise party, and she had the whole band come down to this little nightclub down in Lake Jackson, Florida."

"Really, it's hard to conceive how a guy could work every night with these guys and turn around and say, 'The thing I'd like to do most on my birthday would be to work with them.' But they're entertaining to *me*. I'm always entertained when I'm on stage with them."

Speaking of which, the time to go back to the footlights is drawing nigh for Haggard. Merle ties up the interview with an invitation, delivered in his most courtly, deferential manner.

"I'd just like to say to the readers of *down beat*: If they like good plain jazz with no bullshit electronics involved, come around and see what we have to offer. They may be surprised."

Surprised, maybe. Impressed, certainly.

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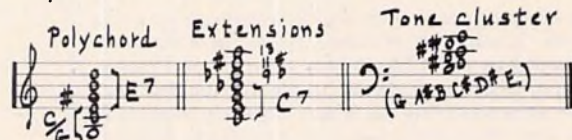
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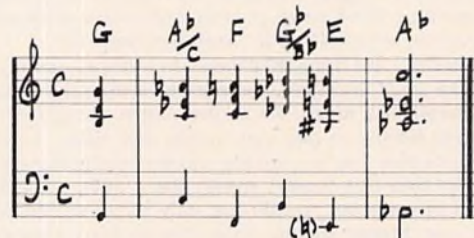
For stirring up harmonic excitement, nothing surpasses such dissonant marks of modernity as polychords, component extensions, or tone clusters:



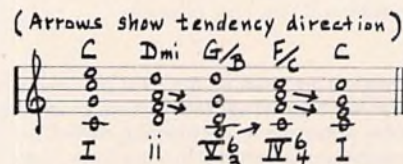
And for fostering the mild in music—sweetness, charm, and such—simple consonances excel, specifically the Major and minor triads:



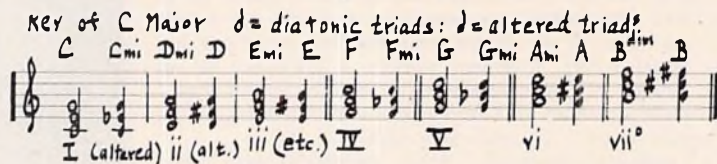
But the ongoing and increasing interest in dissonance has spurred a corresponding interest in more active and less ordinary relationships among Major and minor triads, until now unexpected turns and twists along the triad trail often furnish their own brand of excitement—harmonic surprise:



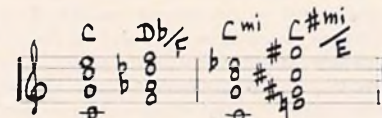
Neither Major nor minor triads contain self-activating intervals—no dissonant tritones, no augmented sixths, no minor seconds. Instead, these triads gain their harmonic propulsion from the collective melodic energies of their individual components. In triads restricted to diatonic scale-notes, that propulsion remains comfortable and limited:



In triads not restricted to diatonic scale-notes, though, that propulsion intensifies and its opportunities multiply. When rooted on scale notes, Major triads containing chromatic notes sound robust, while minor triads containing chromatic notes sound veiled:



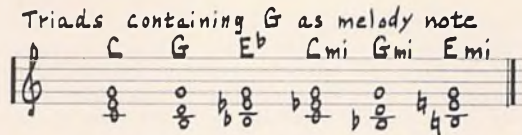
When rooted on altered scale notes, both Major and minor triads sound dramatic:



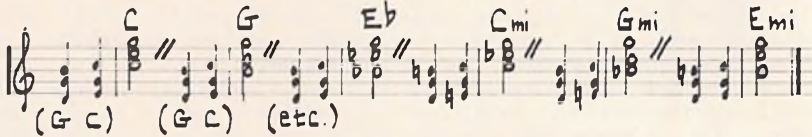
But whether or not all or some of their component notes coincide with the key signature, both Major and minor triads share an inherent quality of acoustic blend, as can be heard in the following harmonic versions of a phrase from the Beatles' *Yesterday*:



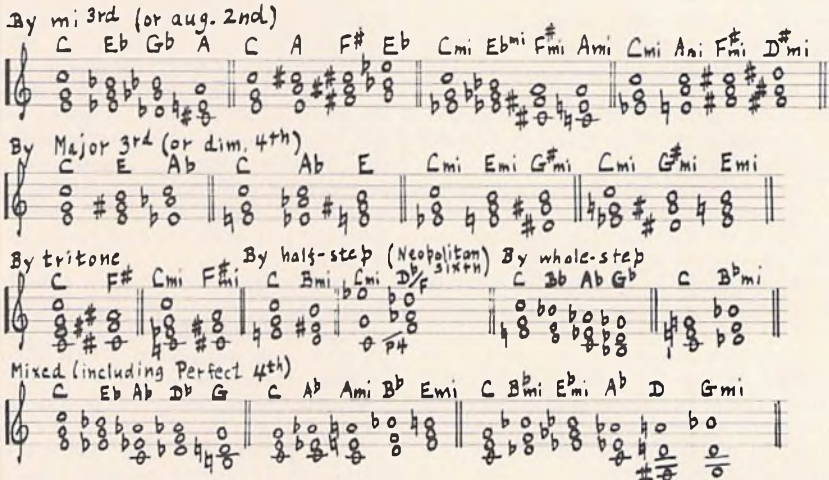
Since any given melody note can be the root, the third, or the fifth of either a Major or a minor triad, six different triads can furnish its harmony:



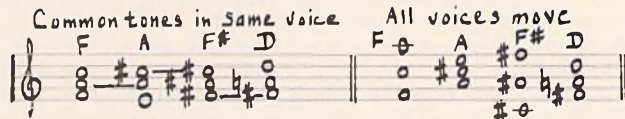
But because the harmony preceding any chord helps determine its propriety, not all those triads fit any one progression, as playing the following will illustrate:



Harmonic tastes differ—a dramatic triad-change which thrills one set of ears might offend another. Hard and fast rules therefore risk being inaccurate. Still, some sample non-diatonic root motions which please this particular set of ears might prove useful as starters for reader exploration:



Keeping any available common tone in the same voice smoothes the chord-connection: Moving all the voices accentuates the next chord:



PRO-SESSION

INTERFACING WINDS TO SYNTHESIZERS

by Carl Fravel

Carl Fravel teaches electronic and computer music at the University of California at Santa Cruz. He plays synthesizer, oboe, Indonesian woodwinds, and Gamelan. He founded Gentle Electric in 1975 for which he has designed synthesizers, computer music equipment, and interfacing circuits.



One of the most exciting new areas for wind players is the possibility of using wind instruments in connection with synthesizers. Many new and unusual sounds can be made by synthesizers being controlled by wind instruments, including all brasses, woodwinds, and even voice. This often has significant advantages over keyboard synthesis due to the wider range of nuance and phrasing control offered by wind technique, and this can be transferred to the synthesizer sound.

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continued on page 66

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FRAVEL

continued from page 65

phasing, flanging, ring modulation, amplitude modulation and various "non-linear" transformations such as fuzzing and waveshaping have been used. Many of these functions have been available separately in effects boxes or foot pedals. So, at the most basic level, using a synthesizer with winds is like having a whole collection of effects boxes in one cabinet. Almost any synthesizer can be used in this way. The best synthesizers for this application are those designed to be controlled by foot controls and programmers, so as to require a minimum of "hand-holding." This, of course, then leaves the player's hands where they are needed—on the instrument.

Recently a whole new approach has been developed. In addition to processing the audio signal in the synthesizer, new interfacing circuits have been developed which analyze the instrument sound. These interfacing circuits are available as separate *interface units* which can be attached to any synthesizer, as *interface modules* incorporated into a modular synthesizer, and as *integrated interface/synthesizers*.

The interface detects various parameters of the sound such as pitch, loudness, attacks, envelopes, etc. The interface then presents these parameters in the form of control voltages which can be used to control similar parameters in a voltage-controlled synthesizer.

For example, the *pitch follower* part of the interface detects the pitch of the wind melody. The pitch follower puts out a control voltage which tracks the melody. This can be connected to the pitch control input of a voltage-controlled oscillator in the synthesizer. The result will be that the oscillator tracks the pitch of the wind instrument. The way synthesizers are designed, the tracking interval (unison, octave or other intervals) can be easily set by a knob, foot control, keyboard or programmer.

Similarly, the *envelope follower* portion of the interface detects the loudness of the instrument sound, putting out a loudness control voltage which can control the loudness of the synthesizer sound. This is usually done with a voltage-controlled amplifier in the synthesizer.

Other parameters may be detected by the interface also. Frequently there is provision for detecting the attacks and endings of notes. This generates controls which can be used by envelope generators in the synthesizer. In this way entirely new note shapes can be generated.

Of course, you don't *have* to connect the control voltages to the synthesizer only in this most simple way. For example, you could control the synthesizer pitch using the loudness of your instrument, or any of countless other arrangements. By combining direct processing of the instrument sound with resynthesized sounds, you can get rich textures, chords, automatic accompaniment, or subtle duet interactions.

There are now a number of interfacing products on the market. Some of these are general purpose interface units, designed to connect any sound (winds, strings, voice, etc.) to any synthesizer on the market. These units produce the best effects with winds because the pitch followers work only with a monophonic signal.

Some products are designed to work with a particular instrument, such as the various "guitar synthesizers." Guitars and some other chordal instruments require special circuitry in order to reliably analyze their sound.

In addition to interfaces which are separate from the synthesizer that they control, some products incorporate an interface and a synthesizer into a single cabinet: the integrated interface/synthesizer. This simplifies the setup and portability of the system, with possibly some loss of flexibility in sound production.

Another single cabinet option is the modular synthesizer with an interface module. This system offers more flexibility in sound production while sacrificing some portability and ease of setup.

By far the most critical aspect of interface performance is the reliability of the pitch follower. When shopping for and using an interface you will want to know what to listen for and how to get the best results. Reliable pitch following is tricky because it requires getting several things right. First, of course, is the quality of the circuit. You should select a unit that has good tracking and intonation. It should also be as immune as possible to noise and to timbral (harmonic) variations in the sound—you should be able to change the timbre of your sound without errors in pitch tracking.

However, since reliable pitch following is dependent on good signal quality, you must also pay attention to how the sound is picked up from your instrument. By far the most reliable scheme is to use a high-quality instrument pickup designed for your instrument.

Many players feel that pickups don't reproduce the instrument sound faithfully, preferring to use open air microphones. But perfect fidelity is not the primary issue in pitch following. What is important is to have a really clean signal: very low noise or distortion, no resonances or reverberation, and no pickup of other sounds such as other players, room noise, key mechanism noise, or even the output of the synthesizer itself. For live applications, this really necessitates use of a high quality instrument pickup for the synthesizer interface. Of course the direct instrument sound can be amplified with an air microphone at the same time if necessary.

With a little experience, and good equipment properly set up, excellent results can be had.

Here are some of the well known interface manufacturers and what they currently make:

Gentle Electric, 130 Oxford Way, Santa Cruz, CA 95060, (408) 423-1561. General purpose interface unit, custom systems.

Aries Music, Inc., P.O. Box 3065, Salem, MA 01970, (617) 744-2400. Interface module in modular synthesizers.

Polyfusion, 160 Sugg Rd., Buffalo, NY 14225, (716) 631-3790. General purpose interface unit, modular synthesizers.

Roland Corp., 2401 Saybrook Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90040, (213) 685-5141. Integrated interface/synthesizer, guitar systems.

Serge Modular Music Systems, 1107 1/2 N. Western Ave., Hollywood, CA 90029, (213) 461-7987. Interface module in modular synthesizers.

Unicord, Inc., 89 Frost St., Westbury, NY 11590, (516) 333-9100. General purpose unit, integrated interface/synthesizer. **db**

PRO-SESSION

SUB-GROUPING

by Larry Blakely



Larry Blakely is president of CAMEO and works as a consultant in development and marketing. Blakely has been an on-location and studio recording engineer for 20 years.

The terms "sub-group" and "sub-group mixing" are becoming increasingly popular these days. "Sub-group" is the feature and "sub-group mixing" is the use of sub-groups. Expensive sophisticated mixing consoles have offered sub-group features for several years. Today many of the less expensive mixing consoles used by musicians are offering this feature. Many often ask, "What is this and what do I need it for?"

Close microphone placement techniques are being used today for almost every stage sound application, providing more presence, apparent increase in fidelity, and more sound level before acoustic feedback. This technique allows almost every instrument or group of instruments to have its own microphone. Close microphone placement is also widely used in professional recording. Les Paul was an early pioneer of this technique.

If every instrument or group of instruments is to have its own microphone one finds the size of the mixing console getting increasingly larger. The size of typical sound reinforcement mixing consoles has grown from six or eight input positions to 12 or 24 and over. The size of mixing consoles has often gotten so large that one almost needs roller skates to get from one end to the other, not to mention the "octopus" mixing engineer with eight arms and 40 fingers needed to manipulate all of those faders to do a mixing job.

When using a large number of microphones it is not uncommon to have four or six microphones on a trap drum set. Keyboards can often utilize several microphones, one for each of the horns, vocals, and sometimes microphones for the bass and guitars. For example: there could be five microphones used on the trap drum set (snare, bass drum, hi-hat, floor toms, and one overhead). This will occupy five input faders on the mixing console. When mixing, each of these five faders must be adjusted to obtain the desired overall drum sound (mix). It is not uncommon for a mixing engineer to labor a good number of minutes to obtain such a drum balance (mix). If more level is needed from the drums, all five of the drum faders must be increased in direct proportion to each other or the drum balance may be lost. If so, time must be taken to re-obtain the sound of the previous drum mix.

Mixing is a continuing process of adjusting and re-adjusting faders (often a large number of them). For example, five microphones

continued on page 68

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on the trap drum set, three mikes on the keyboards, one mike for bass, two for guitars, two for the horns, and three for the vocals (a total of 16 microphones). The mixing engineer will adjust the keyboard faders (piano, organ, synthesizer) as well as the individual bass and guitar faders for their desired musical balance (which can occupy a good amount of time) and when this is added to the drum mix it will constitute the mix of the entire rhythm section. If more level is needed from the keyboards, all the keyboard faders must be increased in direct proportion to each other. If not, the keyboard mix will be lost (out of proportion) and must be re-mixed. This can be embarrassing if it happens in the middle of a performance. The same situation applies to the horns, vocals, drums, or anyplace where a number of faders control the overall sound of a particular instrument, group of instruments or vocals.

Is there a solution? Sub-grouping is a process whereby a number of individual microphones can be assigned to a single fader. The five drum microphone inputs would be assigned to a sub-group. The desired drum mix is obtained with the individual faders as usual. Now, the level of this mix can be increased or decreased with the movement of a single sub-group fader. The drums can be assigned to sub-group #1, horns to sub-group #2, keyboards to sub-group #3, and vocals to sub-group #4; the bass and two guitars faders are not assigned to sub-groups.

Now, the majority of the mixing action can take place with four sub-group faders and a few additional input faders (which are not assigned to sub-groups). The mixing engineer will have far better control of the mix, and will have the ability to go back to any individual fader to make minor level adjustments if necessary without getting rattled by trying to keep track of and control a million little knobs and all that goes with it. Once a mixing engineer has used sub-groups he usually prefers it over the conventional method of mixing.

Mixing consoles with the sub-grouping feature usually have a switch above each fader so it can be assigned to any of the available sub-groups. Normally there are some four sub-groups available; however, some models may have more. The availability of sub-groups indeed brings a new level of sophistication to lower priced mixers.

Sub-group mixing is a proven procedure for recording and sound reinforcement applications. The utilization of sub-group mixing will provide the mixing engineer with new flexibility and freedom. He can now have greater control over the entire mix and have the ability to make changes quickly and efficiently, with far less chance of error. Sub-grouping now makes it possible to do mixing with a tremendous number of microphones while having complete control of the mix with a small number of faders. Those who have done mixing with a large number of microphones can quickly see the tremendous advantage to the sub-group mixing system. The mixing engineer who needed to be an eight-armed octopus can now be a normal human with only two hands and ten fingers, while still performing like he was indeed an "octopus."

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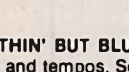
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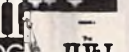
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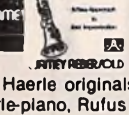
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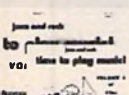
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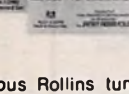
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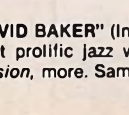
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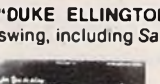
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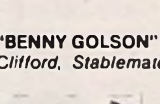
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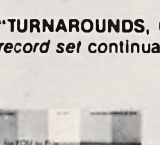
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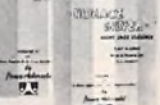
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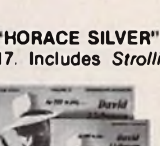
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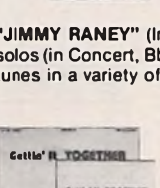
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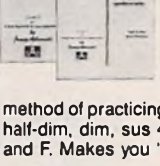
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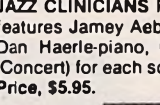
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PRO-SESSION

PIANO TRANSCRIPTION

Transcribed by Jeff Lorber

Portland (Oregon) based multi-keyboardist Jeff Lorber has been enjoying considerable success lately with his band, the Jeff Lorber Fusion, and their three albums (see *Forging Fusion's Future*, db, Jan. '80). He credits transcribing and analyzing the solos of master piano players—like Horace Silver, Wynton Kelly and Chick Corea—for helping his playing immensely.



Lorber transcribed Kenny Barron's solo on *Swamp Demon* from the LP *Sunset To Dawn*—Muse 5018. (For more about Kenny Barron, see Steve Blooms' feature in an upcoming issue.) Lorber writes: "In this 1973 recording the versatile Barron was playing a Fender Rhodes in a jazz-funk context, a change from the more traditional styles at which he also excels.

"After a short riff which serves as the head, the tune is basically a vehicle for soloing over a D7 ostinato pattern with very sparse left hand accompaniment, the background consisting of a group of percussion instruments. The lack of chordal comping allows a great deal of harmonic freedom. Barron makes the most of this by taking his solo alternately inside and outside, contrasting bluesy, pentatonic runs with polychordal superimpositions, sequences and whole tone patterns, while emphasizing tensions such as the flat fifth and flat 13th."

Kenny Barron's Solo on *Swamp Demon*

Handwritten musical score for piano accompaniment, consisting of 15 staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, notes, rests, and dynamics. The score is written in a single system across the staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *mf* and *sfz*. There are also some unusual symbols like 'svat' and 'b' with a plus sign. The score ends with a double bar line and a fermata.



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Dynamax, a new rock and roll guitar string designed for maximum high frequency and volume response, has been introduced by **Fender Musical Instruments** (Fullerton, CA). Tight close-set nickel alloy wrap on a high quality Swedish steel hexagonal core, manufactured to close tolerances, makes for a longer lasting string. Fender Dynamax strings are available in regular, light and extra light gauges.

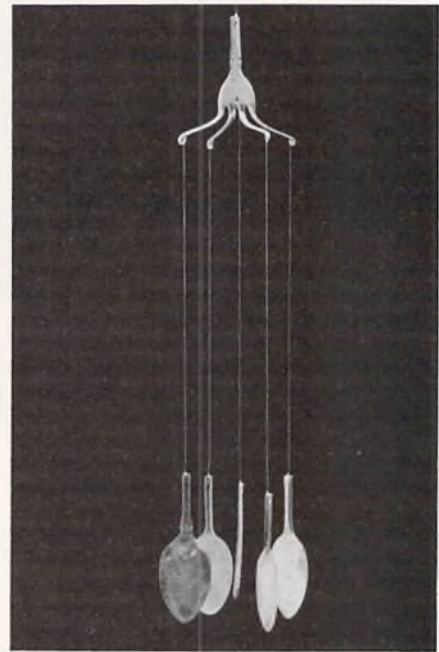
ACCESSORIES

Custom cases for shipping instruments are now available from **Excalibur Industries** (Lake View Terrace, CA). The cases can be ordered in a variety of materials including ABS plastic on plywood, fiberglass on plywood, and metal clad or carpeted plywood. All cases feature reinforced metal corners and recessed hardware, and are built to exact customer specifications.

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Royalstar drum sets feature heavy wood shells and are available in Metallic White and Platina finishes. Suggested retail price is \$795.



Latin Percussion, Inc. (Palisades Park, NJ) has added the **Spoon Chimes** to its line of percussion instruments. The chimes are made from selected spoons suspended from the teeth of a fork. Suggested list price is \$29.50.

Also from Latin Percussion are the **Bill Summers shekeres**, a custom line of shekeres designed by percussionist Bill Summers. (The shekere is a beaded gourd percussion instrument which originated with the Yoruba people of Nigeria.) Summers and his wife, Renni Vann, also produce and handcraft their own shekeres under the auspices of their new company, Gourd Art. Their clients have included Patrice Rushen, Herbie Hancock, Billy Cobham, and Guilherme Franco.

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The **Fender 75**, a new tube-type guitar amplifier, has recently been introduced by **Fender Musical Instruments** (Fullerton, CA). The amp features two footswitchable channels, a three spring reverb unit with foot-pedal control and 12 foot cable for remote operation. A midtone control with 40 dB capability and boost switch expands mid-range potential. Individual pull boost switches also give additional control to both bass and treble. High/low power switch gives an option of 75 watts \pm 15 watts RMS. Rear panel effects include an effects in/out jack, hum balance control, plus a full complement of accessory input and output jacks. Power is supplied through six tubes and five silicon diodes. A 15" heavy duty Fender speaker is provided.

GUITAR FAMILY

The **Pedalboard Effects Case** is new from **Pro-Co Sound, Inc.** (Kalamazoo, MI). The case, molded from two pieces of ABS plastic, comes with Hedlock fasteners and a removable floor ready to mount all kinds of effects pedals. The snap-on fasteners allow quick removal of effects and pedals for battery replacement or rearrangement of effects. Because of the protection afforded by the case, connecting cables and plugs should last longer with fewer on-the-job troubles. The pedalboard can be easily moved when needed, but effects are always in the same relative location for more confidence while playing.

KEYBOARD

The **RoadMaster Flightcase Piano** is new from **Helpinstill Designs** (Houston, TX). This piano combines the string and hammer mechanisms of a conventional piano with built-in Helpinstill Sensors which permit plugging into any amplifier or sound system. For portability the keyboard folds down into the bottom half of the body, giving the appearance of a standard flight case when traveling. The keyboard range is 64 notes, equivalent to a standard 88 minus the top and bottom octaves. Total weight of the unit is 210 lbs.; exterior dimensions are 43" by 38" by 12". The Roadmaster carries a suggested retail price of \$1995.

BAND INSTRUMENTS

The **Director Series**, a new line of student instruments, has recently been introduced by **C. G. Conn** (Oak Brook, IL). Included in the Director line is the **18F trumpet**, the **18H trombone** and the **18A cornet**.

The new trumpet features a redesigned valve system with a top-sprung mechanism. Both the trumpet and trombone have enlarged bell flares.

Trombone features also include solid nickel inner slide tubes and newly constructed stockings. All three horns have been designed for smoother playability and more precise intonation.



Conn's new 15J tuba plays two ways—bell up for concert projection, and bell forward for over the shoulder marching band projection. The 15J offers two leadpipes, one for each playing position. Just change leadpipes, exchange the first and third valves, and you're playing a whole new tuba. Piston valves are hand lapped and fitted and adjusted to the finest tolerances.

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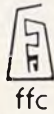
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Le SOLEIL

Senegalese dancer jumps for joy upon jazz' arrival; Foster looks on.

pitch pipes and tuning forks. Ifangbondi had recorded an LP on the small Senegalese independent label, Griot. They had travelled by bus with their instruments one day from Banjul to Dakar, a five hour trip, laid down all the tracks in one take, and shipped the tape off to New York for mixing and master-

ing unheard, as the studio in which they worked had no playback facilities. Without money for meals or lodging, they returned to Banjul the same day, and some months later were presented with their disc, now available in the few record stores of the major cities of neighboring countries. The album

presents a repertoire mixing Wollof and regional folk songs with electric instrumentation, collectively constructed arrangements and skilled musicianship; Oko Drammeh, the group's manager, dubbed their music "the Afro-Mandingue sound." And he claimed Wollof origins for jazz: "Jazz' comes from the French word 'jairs,' meaning gossip, and meaning, in Wollof, 'to play about.' When slaves gathered in New Orleans, they wanted to hear the jazz, the gossip that was going around, and they would go where music was being played to hear this; some of the gossip or news would be carried by the musicians, themselves, in their music; if you were a good listener, you could understand the jazz."

Maintaining his national identity with pride ("New Orleans could not be like we live, here in Banjul"), Oko had considerable acquaintance with Chicago blues (claiming Luther Allison's *Little Red Rooster* as a personal favorite) and more mainstream pop stars with solid musical values, from Stevie Wonder to Santana to Bob Dylan. AC/DC, AM/FM radio-cassette decks are the ubiquitous musical reproduction technology in this part of the world where electricity, modern plumbing and telecommunications are not taken for granted. Albums, frequently

pressed and produced in Europe, cost as much as \$20 new, while 45s, even those from Nigeria and Ghana, cost about \$5, and blank cassettes of good quality are also at a premium; the hot climate, with its seasonal changes in humidity, plays havoc with the inexpensive tapes marketed there.

The gap between cultures is vast. "I cannot imagine New York City," Oko Drammeh admitted, adding, "I simply must see it." Possibly the same is true of Americans imagining Africa, as the Foster entourage discovered by shopping Dakar's complex market and bazaar. Ask Phil Woods, Billy Hart, Clifford Jordan, Wilbur Campbell, Tommy Flanagan, Walter Booker Jr., Stan Getz, Andy Laverne, Bob Cranshaw, Azar Lawrence, Roy Haynes, Billy Mitchell and Al Cohn (who recorded live in Africa as the Xanadu All-Stars), Jimmy Owens, the New Orleans marching band who celebrated Senegal's independence day April 4 and 5—along with Oscar Peterson and Dizzy Gillespie—Sonny Fortune, Lee Konitz, Slide Hampton, Harold Danko, Beaver Harris, Dexter Gordon and Woody Shaw—all of whom, thanks to Club Med and Air Afrique, have helped educate a simpatico new audience in the art of jazz.

—howard mandel

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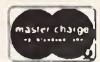
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