

SEPTEMBER 1980 \$1.25

the contemporary
music magazine

downbeat®

MILES DAVIS

Breaking His Long Silence?

**JAMES
BROWN**
Seeks
New Stardom

**BOB
WILBER**
Reshapes His
Image

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UNITY
ORCHESTRA**
Individuals
Sound Shaping
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(ISSN 0012-7568)

CONTENTS

- 6 FIRST CHORUS
8 CHORDS AND DISCORDS
10 NEWS
16 MILES DAVIS
"Resting On Laurels? Changing His Silent Ways?" by Charles Mitchell. The trumpeter-bandleader's absence from the scene has frustrated jazz fans who seek new directions. Former *db* editor Mitchell surveys the changes wrought by Davis, while Howard Mandel talks with the inveterate innovator's latest recording group.
- 20 BOB WILBER
"Personalizing The Trad Repertoire," by Burt Korall. Multi-reedist Wilber concentrates his efforts on the jazz tradition, and his swing sound is state-of-the-art.
- 23 JAMES BROWN
"Anything Left in Papa's Bag?" by Steve Bloom. The Godfather tries to bounce back from the commercial depths, and part of his strategy is concerts in new wave rock halls. His success or failure will shape the future of funk.
- 28 GLOBE UNITY ORCHESTRA
"Free Players From Many Lands," by Lee Jeske. After catching the band in its India Jazz Yatra act (*db* June '80), our East Coast Editor talks with three of these avant Western Hemisphere all stars.
- 34 RECORD REVIEWS
Jimmie Rowles; Kalaparusha Maurice McIntyre Quartet; Dexter Gordon Quartet; Lennie Tristano; Red Norvo/Buddy Tate/Urbie Green/Dave McKenna; Walter Norris/Aladar Pege; Cedar Walton; Sal Nistico; Jay McShann; Yusef Lateef; Boz Scaggs; Average White Band; John Lee/Gerry Brown; The Jeff Lorber Fusion; Bob Magnusson Quintet; Paul Motian; Bill Evans; Chick Corea; Bobby Hutcherson; Sam Jones' 12 Piece Band; Tony Kinsey; Waxing On: Self Produced Younger Artists (Noah Young, New York City Artists Collective, Larry Gelb, Nathan Page, Paris Smith/Kenneth Hill, Dickey Myers, Acoustic Jazz Trio, New Life, Tim Berne, Vinny Golia Trio, Michael Lytle/George Cartwright.
- 50 BLINDFOLD TEST
Michael Franks, by Leonard Feather.
- 51 PROFILE
Paul Berliner, by R. Bruce Dold; David Pritchard, by Frankie Nermko-Graham.
- 54 CAUGHT!
Houston Person/Etta Jones Quartet, by Sam Freedman; Moers International New Jazz Festival, by Joachim-Ernst Berendt; Tete Montoliu, by Fred Bouchard.
- PRO SESSIONS
60 "How To Integrate Jazz And Legit, Part 2," by Dr. William L. Fowler.
64 Guitar Transcription of Jay Graydon's solo on Manhattan Transfer's hit *Twilight Tone*, by Don Swigert.
65 "The Art Of Accompanying, Part 1," by Joyce Collins.
- 71 PRO SHOP
74 CITY SCENE
Cover Art: Kelly/Robertson

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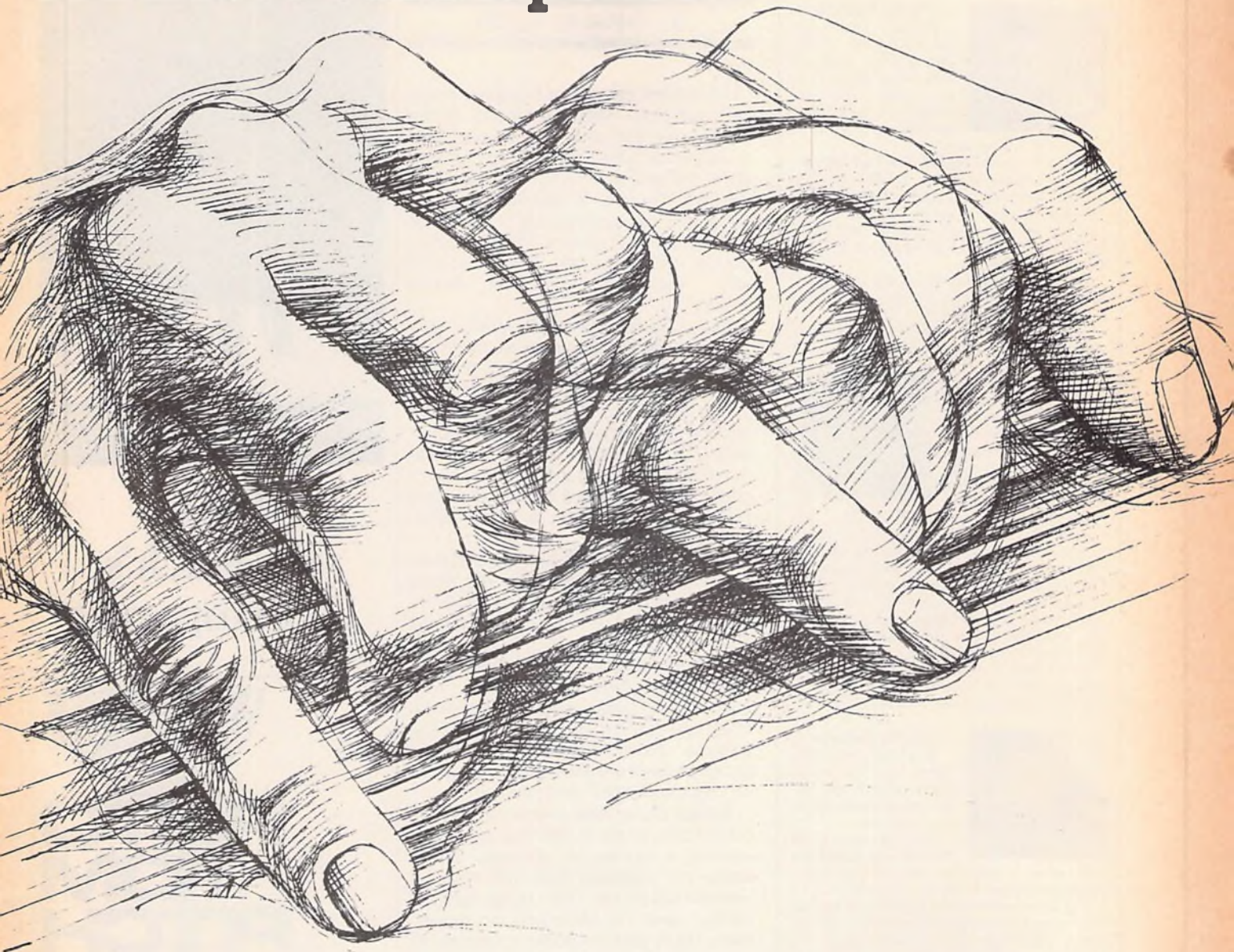
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Pat La Barbera

Berklee really got me into music: writing, playing, and just concentrating on music. The first six months I had more harmony than most

cats get in four years.

Berklee was the best choice I could have made. I studied all the reeds with Joe Viola, arranging with John LaPorta, improvisation with Charlie Mariano, and had the opportunity to play in and write for Herb Pomeroy's recording band. I was learning all the time.

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

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

John La Barbera

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



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

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



Joe La Barbera

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

My teachers at Berklee equipped me with what it takes to play drums on a professional level—in any situation.

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

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

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the first chorus

BY CHARLES SUBER

The current careers of two legends-in-their-own-time—Miles Davis and James Brown—are discussed in this issue. One is voluntarily retired from public performance; the date and format of his return a mystery. The other is fighting involuntary retirement; the whereabouts of his former preeminence a mystery. ("Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who's the funkier soul of all?" "You were, you were, James Brown.")

Miles Davis was—and without evidence to the contrary, is presumed to still be—an innovative musician of the first rank, a composer of many jazz standards; but only by force of character and talent can be considered to be an entertainer. James Brown is, first and foremost, an Entertainer, then a composer of once popular rhythm & blues songs; and by his own admission, a so-so instrumentalist.

Miles Davis is shy and naturally arrogant about his talents but invites others to share his spotlight. James Brown is seemingly self-confident but doesn't share center stage. Davis has been responsible for aiding and abetting the careers of dozens of today's star musicians—all of whom respect his musical integrity—and is proud of what they have become. Brown doesn't credit anyone except himself and blames his falling star on "conglomerates" and what all.

James Brown was a genuine hero to black youth when, in the '60s, they most needed a symbol of success. Brown spoke his message loud and clear on network talk shows: "Don't hate, communicate!" and "I'm black and I'm proud." Miles Davis avoided public comment but there was no doubt about which color he favored.

Miles Davis' music has the mark of genius: the unique talent to strip art down to an essential truth and the rare ability to anticipate what an audience will accept. James Brown had it all; there's no doubt of it. But he stayed grooved to another time. ("Mirror, mirror, on the wall, what does it take?" The mirror merely stares back, silent and impenetrable.)

Don't forget to vote in this year's down beat Readers Poll. Your vote is important as it only takes 40 votes for a musician to have his or her name listed in the most highly regarded musicians poll in the world. Fill out the postage-paid ballot card on page 55 of this issue.

Next issue examines the escalating career of powerful alto player Richie Cole; and the current doings of synthesizer virtuoso Bernie Krause, guitarist James Blood Ulmer, and more. **db**



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CHORDS AND D·I·S·C·O·R·D·S

Open letter to Miles Davis

We all know that it has been many years since you last recorded and issued an album, and as everybody will admit, all your records through the years have been treasures for every human being who could lay hands on them. In fact, it wasn't even difficult to buy them (any place in the world) because CBS has a very well organized distribution system.

Since the first record you made, Miles, people have loved your music and, on account of that, love you. That's the mystery that this fine art of music can generate, and you know it.

All over the world people have collected the music you made, paid money to get hold of it. That's more or less the same bread you received, which enabled you to live the life you live nowadays. Dig?

That is also why you owe it to the world to come out wherever you are. There is no sense in letting your "clients" guess about how bad your health is, or how disappointed you are in the recording scene. Or let people wonder about a story I heard recently that you played in a small New York jazz club. Or, that so far, 15 minutes of recent music have been put on tape.

You, Miles Davis, should stop all that

bullshit by telling your record buyers what your plans are for 1980.

You have to explain something and come back as soon as possible. After all, we love you and want to hear more from you.

Jaap Lüdeke
Netherlands
db Correspondent

P.S.: N.O.S.-Radio (Holland) invites you to appear at their International Jazz Festival Amsterdam (formerly Laren), in August. How about it?

Ed note: You know further, Mr. Davis, that db would like to interview you.

Rumors of Miles

Having used *Agharta* to wake myself up this afternoon, and then opening the latest **down beat** to see a release of previously unavailable tracks by Miles Davis (*Circle In The Round*). I wonder what the man's up to these days. I have been told: He's released nothing in two years; his recording company is sitting on some new material which it thinks is too far out; he's dead. What's going on? Can you put these tribal superstitions to rest? It's almost as bad as the pop scene.

Span Hanna
Aldgate, Australia

Turn to page 16 for an assessment of Davis' career and news of his latest recording venture. Ed.

Erroneous *Rise* review?

I've been a faithful reader of **down beat** for years, and it's been poor reviews such as that given by John McDonough for Herb Alpert's *Rise* (June '80) that tarnish a usually brilliant magazine. Mr. McDonough is in error when he says that Alpert wouldn't even consider

improvisation; on *my* album, Alpert improvises on all but two cuts, or maybe Mr. McDonough doesn't know what improvisation is. It made me wonder if Mr. McDonough really listened to the album, or if he just played 30 seconds of each cut and reviewed it from there. Personally, I thought *Rise* was one of the best fusion albums released in a long while. It certainly had more drive than anything Chuck Mangione or Maynard Ferguson has released in the past couple of years, yet while **db** had yet another interview with Ferguson I can't recall any interviews with Alpert, who I think is one of the most ingenious people in music. I don't want to comment on Mr. McDonough's suggestion that we the audience are fat heads for buying *Rise*.

Bill Bernardi
Austin, Texas

Mr. McDonough replies: As a jazz writer, I look at work in terms of the best, classic standards of the jazz idiom. Rise may well be "one of the best fusion albums in a long while," but that doesn't impress one like me, who's inclined to regard fusion music as a lower order of the species. Sorry. Perhaps I should not even write about it. But if a performance suggests that it wants to be considered as a jazz work, I'm happy to oblige. Jazz is a tough track in which integrity is still valued . . . or so I like to think. I'll show no mercy.

Fine v. Alpert

Thanks for the informative review (June '80) of the Milo Fine Free Jazz Ensemble's *Hah!* On the other hand, I don't think reviews like the one of Alpert's *Rise*, which appeared on the facing page, do anything to educate your readers. As McDonough states,



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Rise is "not really performed, it's extruded." People will either eagerly buy *Rise* or avoid it like the plague, not because of anything that's written about it, but because of what is played on the radio. The air waves have already revealed the disco Herb Alpert as a "thumping bore" to the reviewer and myself, and as a "get down player" to those who enjoy that thumping sound.

Nothing has been changed in my perception of Alpert's music by the review. I assume a commercial record by Alpert, Mangione or Hancock—to name only a few—will be trash until I read something good about it. If there is nothing positive to say about such music, a one star review is a waste of space. If the music is awful, then why bother with it?

Educate me, tell me something new, turn me on to a musician playing something challenging and creative.

Bob Zander address unknown

Fine finds it fine

Dear Elaine Guregian:

This is just a note to thank you for your straightforward and honest review of Steve Gnitka's and my first Hat Hut album, *Hah!*, in the June *db*. Certainly we don't agree with everything you said, but, in our opinion, any honest review is a good review. You listened carefully and you reacted in a way that was both subjective and objective. In the past, we have been subjected to personal attacks—based on misperceptions of our musical intents and/or personalities—disguised as record reviews. Yours was the *total* opposite, and, in fact, provided both of us with added insight into our music. As we indicated in the

liner notes, the music is a combination of the player and the listener, mutually providing insights. Again, on behalf of Steve and myself, thanks.

Milo Fine Richfield, Minnesota

Fine points of Dreams

Charlie Haden did not record a duet with Dewey Redman on Haden's A&M records as Conrad Silvert stated in his story on *Old and New Dreams* (June '80). And Jackson Pollack did not hear Ornette's band at the Five Spot—the painter died three years earlier.

David Gitin Monterey, California

Lee's laurels

I would like to congratulate Lee Jeske for an absolutely incredible review of Max Roach and Cecil Taylor's concert (April '80). I have experienced Taylor's music many times in live performances, and Jeske's account of that monumental concert moved me as no musical review I have read in the past 15 years.

Lee, keep writing!
Jim Dorsey, M.D. Toronto, Canada

Most perspective

I applaud Arthur Moorhead's four star review of Sam Most's latest release, *Flute Talk* (June '80). As a critic, Mr. Moorhead's skill cannot be doubted, but as a jazz historian his insight is, I feel, somewhat questionable.

Mr. Moorhead mentions Frank Wess, James Moody, Eric Dolphy and Roland Kirk, and claims that these men "set the standards by which all jazz flutists are judged." To omit Sam Most himself from that list is folly; a

more accurate appraisal would be to say that Most, to a very great extent, pioneered and elevated jazz flute to the position it occupies today.

Frank Wess, while enjoying a wide exposure with the Basie band, would be the first to credit the influence that Most has had on his playing. And Most's technique of humming into the instrument was in evidence long before Kirk brought it to public acclaim. In short, anyone who plays jazz flute has, at some point, lent an ear to Sam Most.

Barry Cooper North Hollywood, California

Better Perspective?

As a devotee of the art of jazz since the era when *down beat* sold for 15¢ a copy, I find the ongoing hassle in your pages over the ECM label to be utterly ludicrous.

The average ECM release is from the laid back, subtle side of jazz. What I find difficult to understand is why many people object to this approach to the art so vehemently. Though there are many ECM items in my record collection, and I await eagerly new releases by certain artists on the label, I do not confine my listening entirely to this genre. I still derive many hours of pleasure from the works of such artists as Duke, Billie, Coleman Hawkins, Bird, Lester, etc.

For those who find Manfred Eicher's method of operation not to their liking, there must be hundreds of labels and thousands of albums which would please them more. What ECM *does* is invariably done superlatively well, and Eicher has nothing to apologize for!

Let's get off his case, folks!
Charles Sords Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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NEWS

Playboy's 2nd Success

LOS ANGELES—"The festival is a virtual sellout. It's the largest gross for a non-charity event ever held in the Hollywood Bowl. Quite obviously, jazz is alive and well. The Playboy Jazz Festival will be an annual event at the Bowl—thanks to you," said Hugh Hefner, Playboy's chairman of the board, to an audience of 17,000 just halfway through the first day of a jazz weekend. By its end, producer George Wein reiterated Hefner, promising an equally full program for 1981.

Twenty acts performed during 18 hours June 21-22, and there was indeed something for everyone. Benny Goodman, returned from last year's debut fest, was augmented with a brass trio, and introduced as his proteges a female singing threesome, Raw Silk, purveying indigenous 1940s vocals and dress. Nostalgia was a hit, as Mary Lynn, Gayle Gillaspie and Marguerite Juenemann inspired the fest's first standing ovation.

Straightahead jazz fans were served the Contemporary Records All Stars, with tenorists Joe Farrell and Joe Henderson, trumpeter Freddie Hubbard, and George Cables, John Heard and Ralph Penland the rhythm section. The Gentlemen of Swing (Benny Carter providing elegant alto sax, Harry "Sweets" Edison blowing fine trumpet, Shelly Manne on drums and Ray Brown, bass)

enraptured even the younger audience segment.

Hiroshima, the Asian-American amalgamation featuring June Kuramoto's Japanese koto playing, further diversified the event. Ronnie Laws presented a somewhat Las Vegas style revue, with two gyrating, white gowned backup singers, an interpretive dancer and the saxist himself singing.

Buddy Rich's orchestra closed the first night with its leader displaying his characteristically extroverted solos. Mid point in the set Mel Tormé walked on, to charm the stars from the sky with singular vocalizing.

Sunday was another mixed bag, the old and new presented in close juxtaposition. A Battle of the Saxes had Arnett Cobb, Richie Cole, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis and Zoot Sims ably supported by Nat Pierce, Frankie Capp and Allen Jackson. Perennially youthful Stephane Grappelli offered 40 minutes of sophisticated, gentle and swinging violin accompanied by the superb young guitarists John Etheridge and Martin Taylor, and bassist Jack Sewing.

Lew Tabackin excelled on both tenor sax and flute during the exciting big band set he co-led with Toshiko Akiyoshi. Then Angela Bofill drew an overwhelming response, repeating her record successes. Though not a jazz singer, Bofill's commanding voice



DEBORAH FEINGOLD

NEW YORK—Giorgio Gaslini, Italy's premier jazz pianist/composer, brought his quintet (L-R, Gian Luigi Trovesi, reeds; Gianni Cazzola, drums; Marco Vaggi, bass; Gaslini; Gianni Bedori, reeds) to New York for a week-long stint sponsored by the Italian Cultural Institute. Their highlight was a Public Theatre performance where the unit displayed its repertoire of originals and Italian folk themes, gliding easily between free and mainstream styles. Bedori and Trovesi each commanded a battery of reeds, including the rarely heard E-flat clarinet.

The popular pianist performs over 140 concerts a year, directs the jazz program at Milan's Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi, produces records for his label, Dischi Della Quercia, composes for television, theater and films (notably Antonioni's *La Notte*), and has recorded with Don Cherry, Steve Lacy, Gato Barbieri, Jean-Luc Ponty and Roswell Rudd. But for appearances at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival in '76 and '77, Gaslini has been stateside only with dance or theater troupes. After New York, his quintet began a four month Italian tour.

FINAL BAR

New Orleans-born clarinetist **Leon Albany (Barney) Bigard**, the composer of *Mood Indigo*, *C-Jam Blues* and *Clarinet Lament*, died June 27 in Culver City, CA from complications of cancer. He was 74.

As a teenager, Bigard played with King Oliver from 1925-1927, after which he joined Duke Ellington, remaining until 1942. It was with Ellington that he co-composed *Mood Indigo*, the standard for which he will probably be best remembered.

Bigard toured with popular pianist Freddie Slack's band, then joined Louis Armstrong's All-Stars in 1946. In later years Bigard appeared in concerts across the country as a guest artist, and lectured on jazz history.

He is survived by Dorothe Bigard, his wife of 38 years, and numerous offspring.

Philip Harold Cook, 50, a lead trumpeter in the big bands of Woody Herman and Harry James during the 1950s, but more recently a professor (of English and linguistics) at San Jose University, died June 11 of a heart attack. Surviving are his wife, two children and mother.

POTPOURRI

"This low, decadent and pornographic music demoralizes people and sabotages social customs. Some people take this coarse, low-quality, decadent, pornographic music as light music." So much for jazz and rock, two hot selling items in Peking and Shanghai drawing irate criticism from crusading Chinese newspapers. A letter to the editor of Shanghai's *Wenjiu Bao* paper complained that Western music is now being played in buses and hairdressing salons. . . . **Anthony Braxton** led two workshops for the Community Center for the Performing Arts in Eugene, Ore. dealing with experimentation and compositional notation (Aug. 18-25). An original Braxton score for 35 piece orchestra was performed and recorded in conjunction with KLCC Public Radio; the workshops drew 70-75 people each, and orchestra members were elected from attendees, who paid \$50 per workshop. . . . **Lars Lystedt**, db's Swedish correspondent, reports the **Umea**

Jazz Festival ("the world's northernmost") is preparing its 13th event for October 24-26; other news: the monthly *Orkester Journalen* (continuous publication for 48 years) has had critics and readers choosing the best Swedish jazz production as its Golden Record, annually since '55—1979's winner was composer/pianist/arranger Nils Lindberg's *Saxes Galore* (Bluebell) with U.S. expatriate Herb Geller prominent on lead alto; bassist Red Mitchell took second and third places with *Blues For A Crushed Soul* (Sonet) and *What I Am* (Caprice). Also, Sweden's trumpet star Rolf Ericson, active in West Germany for many years, is said to be moving to New York this fall; he can be reached at Angerburger Allee 55, Etage 10, 1 Berlin 19, W. Germany. . . . report from **Jaap Ludeke**, db's Dutch correspondent: "**Boy Edgar**, biochemist, bandleader arranger, pianist and Ellington admirer, died in Amsterdam April 8 at age 65. Boy over the years worked with such Americans as Max Roach, Abbey Lincoln, Betty Carter, Nina Simone, Benny Bailey, Dizzy Reece, Jimmy Owens and Slide Hampton. In 1974 he brought a Dutch group to New York to

appear in Carnegie Hall for Duke Ellington's birthday party" . . . **Benny Goodman** will play his first dates in Japan since '64 during a brief tour scheduled to start Sept. 2 in Tokyo, continuing to Yokohama and Osaka; accompanying musicians include Teddy Wilson, Eddie Duran (guitar), Al Obidinski (bass) and John Markam, drums—it's sponsored by Dai Ichi/Toshiba. . . . **Temple University's Music Fest** brought Keith Jarrett, Janis Ian and Earl Klugh, Lionel Hampton's orchestra, Earl Hines and Marva Josie, Al Hirt, Booker T. Jones, Maynard Ferguson with his orchestra, Esther Salterfield, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Ray Charles' show, Cleo Laine and John Dankworth into Philadelphia from June 20 through August's end. . . . the **American Federation of Musicians** intends to revamp its dues structure to bring an additional \$2½ million into union coffers annually. . . . winner of the ninth International Jazz Composers Contest of Monaco is **Marlene Tachoir**, a Canadian, '77 grad of Berklee College of Music, now living in Nashville with her jazz vibes-playing husband, Jerry Tachoir. *Infraction* was her winning entry.



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Monterey Fest Dates And Sked

The schedule for MONTEREY Fest: Friday (Sept 19, 9 p.m.): Sarah Vaughan, Cal Tjader's sextet, Dave Brubeck's quartet, and Fest All-Stars John Lewis, Connie Kay, Mundell Lowe, Michael Moore, Bob Brookmeyer, Slide Hampton, Clark Terry, Richie Cole and Buddy Tate. Saturday afternoon: Jay McShann with Claude Williams, James Cotton's blues band, Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson and others; Saturday night: Manhattan Transfer, JoAnne Brackeen's trio, Freddie Hubbard's quintet, the Tokyo Union Orchestra premiering new compositions by Slide Hampton, with guest artists. Sunday afternoon: the 10th annual CA High School Allstars, directed by Dr. Jack Wheaton, and the Foothill College Fanfares; Sunday evening: Lionel Hampton's "house party" with Louie Bellson's big band, Helen Humes, Richie Cole's Alto Madness and John Abercrombie's quartet. Call (408) 373-3366 for ticket info.

Michigan Music: Motown & Eclipse

DETROIT—Southeastern Michigan's summerlong jazz feast will end in September with the rich dessert of two major jazz festivals. The Montreux-Detroit International Jazz Festival will unfold over five days (Aug. 28-Sept. 1) with activities centered on Detroit's riverfront and nearby downtown concert halls. Four weeks later (Sept. 26-28) the University of Michigan's Eclipse Jazz organization will present its third annual Ann Arbor Jazz Festival at UM's Ann Arbor campus.

The Detroit affair is co-sponsored by the umbrella organization Detroit Renaissance Inc. and the Stroh Brewery Company.

The Motown-Montreux fest will include among the local performers Dave Wilborn and the Little McKinney's Cotton Pickers, Lenore Paxton, Ursula Walker with saxophonist George Benson, Larry Nozero, the Brookside Jazz Ensemble, Mixed Bag, Sippie Wallace, Roy Brooks, the Katalenic Kwek Band and Peter 'Mad-

cat' Ruth. National and international talent includes the World's Greatest Jazz Band, Ramsey Lewis, the Heath Brothers, Clark Terry, Supersax, Spyro Gyra, Oscar Peterson, B. B. King, and Laurindo Almeida.

Closing night "Detroit Jams at Music Hall" with Tommy Flanagan, George Bohanon, Billy Mitchell, J.C. Heard, Kenny Burrell, Ron Carter, and many local jazz players. Tickets went on sale in late July; call (313) 259-6162 for details.

Eclipse's third annual Ann Arbor Jazz Festival runs September 26, 27 and 28. The festival has quickly established an excellent reputation in two years. At presstime only Oregon and violinist Stephane Grappelli were confirmed; call Eclipse at (313) 763-5924 for the schedule.

The two festivals cap a summer filled with open air jazz. Detroit boasted two outdoor concert series, the "P'Jazz" series at the Hotel Ponchartrain and the "Ren-

naissance Live" concerts at the Plaza Hotel (in the Renaissance Center). P'Jazz began June 11 with Chico Hamilton; following were Lonnie Liston Smith, Ursula Walker with the Brookside Jazz Ensemble, McCoy Tyner, the Katalenic Kwek Band, Akiyoshi-Tabackin, Mongo Santamaria, Herbie Mann, Hugh Masakela, Art Blakey and Les McCann.

At the Renaissance Center, early evening performances were scheduled on successive Tuesdays by Ramsey Lewis, Noel Pointer, Gil Scott-Heron, Mark Colby and Lenore Paxton, Roy Ayers, Yusef Lateef, Jeff Lorber Fusion, Freddie Hubbard and Dizzy Gillespie and more. During the Detroit/Windsor International Freedom Festival (July 3-6), the Detroit Jazz Center presented a festival of its own, with concerts by Lyman Woodard, Sam Sanders, Allen Barnes and Vassal Gradington. (The Jazz Center usually has details on music in the area—call 962-4124.) —david wild

NYC, LA, & Chgo

CHGO: three nights of Chicago's second annual free **Jazz Festival** were scheduled for live broadcast over the National Public Radio satellite system, including Charlie Parker's 60th Birthday Party (Aug. 29), a reunion of Earl "Fatha" Hines' Grand Terrace Orchestra and the collaboration of Roy Eldridge with Barrett Deems' big band recreating swing era charts (Aug. 30), and the capstone evening (Aug. 31) with the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Muddy Waters, Stan Getz' quintet and Lionel Hampton with his orchestra. An evening of traditional Chicago jazz (and blues, from Walter "Shaky" Horton's band), and a Duke Ellington tribute were taped for consideration by *Jazz Alive!* . . . Joe Segal will keep his **Jazz Showcase** open during the fest, (which killed business for jazz clubs last summer) by running late night jam sessions led by Ira Sullivan and Red Rodney, the long absent Chris Anderson on piano, Bill Lee, bass and Wilbur Campbell, drums . . . Budweiser trumpeted its Summerfest concert headlined by **Teddy Pendergrass**, with Smokey Robinson, the O'Jays, Ashford & Simpson, Rick James and the Stone City Band and G.Q. as the summer's "largest soul show" (at 60,000 seat Soldier Field, it began at 11 a.m. and ran through the night) . . . *Flash*—**Muddy Waters'** band—comprising Pinetop Perkins, Guitar Jr., Bob Margolin, Jerry

continued on page 72

. . . **Ms. Lena Horne**, sounding and looking swell at age 63, began a three month tour in June with a benefit concert at the posh Ahmanson Theater . . . good news/bad news: the day pianist/composer **John Serry** got a gig at the Roxy on Hollywood's Sunset Strip, he learned Chrysalis Records cancelled his contract (despite a Grammy nomination in '80 for *Sabotage* from his *Exhibition* LP) . . . new agent in town is **Ellie Shuman** (213) 464-1112), formerly of Boston and Laguna Beach, who's clients are trombonist Raul de Souza, drummer Carl Burnett, bassist Henry Franklin, trumpeter Jerry Rush and pianist Dwight Dickerson, among others . . . tenor saxist **Don Menza** formed a 19 piece orchestra featuring his compositions at Carmelo's . . . the **Sacramento Traditional Jazz Society** held a four day fest in May with 75 bands, 18 guest stars and some 25,000 listeners in attendance at 30 locations. Teddy Wilson got standing ovations; other players included Florida's Rosie O'Grady's Good Time Jazz Band, Papa Bue and his Vikings from Copenhagen, the Nightblooming Jazzmen from Claremont, CA and the Jazz Minors of Eugene, Ore. . . the **Fourth Annual Songwriter Expo** at Beverly Hills High School (Aug. 15-17) had concerts by alums, workshops, panels and classes in important business matters, all for \$45 (college credit offered through Cal State). For next year's bash write Songwriter Showcase, 943 N. Palm Ave., West Hollywood, CA 90069 . . . trombonist **Jimmy Cleveland** formed a seven piece band called *Eclipse* to showcase new arrangements by Benny Golson, Gigi Gryce, Quincy Jones and others . . . **Chick Corea** sat in with bassist Jamie Faunt, drummer Terry Mintz and pianist Mike Garson, at Two Dollar Bills two days before headlining at the Hollywood Bowl; Corea's *Writings On Music* are available for \$10.60 from JFCMC, 1933 Grave Ave., LA, CA 90068, as is bassist Faunt's newsletter on his Creative Music Courses . . . alto/soprano saxist **Frank Morgan** has been working Jack Duganne's Workshop in Santa Monica (2651 Main St.)

continued on page 72

NYC: The Public Theatre, whose new music concert program was floundering for lack of funds, received a grant from Warner Communications to buoy next season's series, starting in late September . . . **Marian McPartland** performed for the inmates of the Woman's Prison at Riker's Island in early summer, and gigged at the Cafe Carlyle through July and August . . . **Steve Lacy's** quintet starts its first U.S. tour at September's end, performing at The Smithsonian Institution (D.C.) on November 2 . . . **Joe Lee Wilson** returned from his Brighton, England home to sing his *Children Suite* at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine with two poets, eight singers and a dozen youngsters . . . "Salsa En El Barrio," a summer cultural festival in East Harlem, was dedicated this year to **Tito Puente** and **Machito**, featuring them performing along with Bobby Rodriguez, Charlie Palmieri and others . . . **Panama Francis** and the **Savoy Sultans** performed at the exclusive Maxim's in Paris for the exclusive price of \$500 per couple . . . guitar whiz **Tiny Grimes** is back on his feet and playing after recuperation from various bone ailments which had him hospitalized . . . Jazz writer extraordinaire John Chilton has just published *A Jazz Nursery*, telling the story of the South Carolinian **Jenkins' Orphanage** bands whose alumni filtered into the Ellington, Basie, Gillespie, Hampton and other orchestras through the years (available for \$5 from the Bloomsbury Book Shop; 31-35 Great Ormond St.; London, WC1, England) . . . **Jay McShann** played his first Harlem gig in 40 years, doing two dates at Small's Paradise . . . **WKCR-FM** continued its marathon series with a *250 hour* around-the-clock Louis Armstrong festival which began July 1 and ended some ten days later, celebrating Pop's 80th birthday (July 4). Aired were a great many of the great man's recordings, besides interviews with some of his associates . . . **Jazzmania Society** threw a June Brazilian jazz festival featuring Claudio Roditi, Thiago De Mello, Guanabara, Angela Suarez and many others from down South America way . . . Mingus

continued on page 72

LA: Veteran jazzman **Benny Carter**, 72 and very active, was honored by the American Society of Music arrangers with the Golden Score Award for continued excellence in composing, arranging and orchestrating . . . **Stan Kenton: *Artistry In Rhythm*** is by Dr. William F. Lee (Dean of Music, U of Miami), from LA's Creative Press, over 700 pages with some 200 photos covering the late bandleader's career from 1941 through his last concert, August, 1978



Paul Sequeiros

Jazz on a summer's day should be heard outdoors—leave the club cruising 'til nighttime, and get to a park or beach or favorite street and blow . . .

Twin Cities Dares New Music

MINNEAPOLIS—New and experimental music, ranging from the sounds of the Art Ensemble of Chicago to avant garde concert music, new (or no) wave rock, synthesizer/computer compositions and several sound "installations" comprised the Twin Cities' New Music America Festival, June 7-15, sponsored by the Walker Arts Center and the Minneapolis Star.

Some of this "new" music succeeded in enlightening and entertaining its audience; some of it merely befuddled and bored listeners. But the festival succeeded in providing an outlet for all types of post-Cageian music—ambient, participatory, installed and improvisatory.

Audience response to the festival, happy to say, was exuberant and fairly widespread. Attendees included composers, critics and aficionados, as well as Minnesota high school music students and Governor Albert Quie, who performed Soundstair—a new musical instrument that translates peoples' movements on tuned steps into sound.

Events included eclectic performances from practically every segment of new music. From the jazz tradition were the Art Ensemble, Anthony Braxton, Oliver Lake and Leroy Jenkins. Talking Head's David Byrne and British theorist Michael Nyman performed diverse

works, as did Philip Glass, *Village Voice* writer Tom Johnson, Robert Ashley and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

The centerpieces were nine concerts at the Walker, but adding to the variety were such constructs as Liz Phillips' *Wind Spun For Minneapolis*, which responded to people walking on Peavey Plaza (near Orchestra Hall), wind force and its own electrical system.

British rock composer Brian Eno had his hybrid version of Muzak, *Music For Airports*, played at the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport, one of several forms of ambient music presented by the fest.

Proving new music doesn't even have to remain stationary, Richard Lerman's *Travelon Gamelon* was performed several times during the week, winding its way around some 26 city lakes. The Gamelon, an experiment that amplifies the noises of spokes, chains and brakes from a pack of bicyclists, recreates the rhythmic sounds of an Asian gamelan (percussion orchestra).

An expansion on last year's New Music New York, the fest will have many beneficial long range effects. Through seminars, critics in attendance heard the many problems composers have in the financing and interpretation of their music; inversely, the composers learned how to deal more effectively with critics. —jeff molter

Playboy

cont. from p. 10

and stage presence were persuasive. Carmen McRae thrilled her fans with timeless standards as well as some good contemporary material, and undoubtedly picked up a few new admirers.

When Chick Corea ran onstage, the crowd went wild. After several numbers with his current group (Al Vizzutti, trumpet; Steve Kujala, sax; Bunny Brunel, bass; Tom Brechtlein, drums; Don Alias, percussion; Gayle Moran, vocals), Chick was joined by Stanley Clarke on upright bass, Lenny White on drums, and Dizzy Gillespie. A good time was had by all.

At last, Herbie Hancock, surrounded by electronics and supported by Alphonse Mouzon, Wah Wah Watson and percussionist Sheila Escovedo, wound the audience to feverishness with *The Monster*, then brought the mood down, suddenly switching to a long, slowly introduced *Maiden Voyage*, during which the decibels rose again. Dizzy returned and the Brecker Brothers added magic to the final moments of this generally outstanding festival, wittily emceed by Bill Cosby. Also appearing were Bob Crosby and his Bobcats, Baya, vocalist Bobby McFerrin, McCoy Tyner's sextet and dancer Gregory Hines. The L.A. Playboy Jazz Fest 1980 proved Southern California is finally on the jazz fest map.

—frankie nemko-graham

RELEASES

Summer is drawing to an end, and there's already a big crop of new records to harvest:

Helen Merrill turns record producer on **Al Halg Plays The Music Of Jerome Kern**, **Tommy Flanagan** doing it for **Harold Arlen**, and **Roland Hanna** favoring **Alec Wilder**, all on Inner City, as are **Earth Songs** by **Solar Plexus**, **Hiroshi Fukumura's Hunt Up Wind**, **Compassion** by **Cecil McBee** with Chico Freeman, **Atilla Zoller's Common Cause**, **Pony Poindexter's Poindexter**, **Ernie Krivda's Glory Strut**, and **Other Mansions** by **David Friesen** and **John Stowell**.

Columbia has a big two-fer reissue from its '50s vaults, **Mr. Five By Five—Jimmy Rushing**, of course. They also offer **Saved**, the new **Bob Dylan**, "H" by **Bob James** and **Natural Ingredients** by **Richard Tee**; subsidiary Epic label has **Jeff Beck's There And Back**. A new CBS Masterworks offering is **The Complete Music Of Carl Ruggles** conducted by **Michael Tilson Thomas**, with a brass choir, the **Buffalo Philharmonic**, and it's also a two-LP set.

Reissues just keep rollin' along—RCA's Bluebird series brings us **Volume VII (1938-39) of The Benny Goodman Story**, with the band, quintet, and quartet. Savoy has two-fer of **Sahib Shihab's All Star Sextets** and **The Black Swing Tradition**, the latter mostly from the '40s but beginning with

1931 Fletcher Henderson. Blue Note has **Live Sides** by the **Jazz Crusaders**, a one-LP album, as is **Hank Mobley's** long-awaited **Thinking Of Home**, not a reissue—it's his 1970 return to America session.

San Francisco's The Beak Doctor label caught **Evan Parker** playing solo soprano sax **At The Finger Palace**. Berkeley's Metalinguage caught **Henry Kalser** playing solo electric guitar, **Outside Pleasure**.

Rounder offers **Strange Celestial Road** by **Sun Ra**, and two albums of Mississippi to Chicago blues: **Robert Jr. Lockwood-Johnny Shines' Hangin' On**, and, from the vaults, **Robert Nighthawk Live On Maxwell Street 1964**. More Chicago blues: **Son Seals' Chicago Fire** (Alligator) and **Big Twist & The Mellow Fellows** (Flying Fish).

Steeplechase, from its American offices, has five new titles: **Lazy Afternoon** by singer **Shirley Horn's** trio, duo guitarists **Boulou and Elios Ferre** play **Pour Django** (their uncle), **Cunningbird** by the **Jimmy Knepper Quintet**, **Divine Gemini** by the duo of vibist **Walt Dickerson** and bassist **Richard Davis**, and **Volume 1 of Clifford Jordan And The Magic Triangle On Stage**.

Earl Hines is the latest to be honored as a **Giant Of Jazz** by Time-Life Records. To celebrate, he offers **Eric & Earl**, co-led by his reedman **Eric Schneider** (Gatemouth, Island Park, NY).

The long-running New York revue **One Mo' Time**, "An Evening Of 1920s Black Vaudeville", highlights this month's Warner Bros. releases—it features trumpeter **Jabbo Smith's** return to action after almost half a

century of retirement. Also from Warner's: **Candi Staton**, **Chaka Khan's Naughty**, and **Al Jarreau's This Time**. From the same distributors come **Symbiosis** by **Guido Manusardi's** quartet on Atlantic, and **Arthur Tollefson** playing the **Piano Music Of Virgil Thompson** on Finnadar.

The Best Love is **Jerry Butler's**, and don't you forget it (Philadelphia International). It's **Prime Time** for **Roy Ayers** and **Wayne Henderson** (Polydor)—that's when the **Brecker Brothers** reach **Detente** (Arista), which is not the same as a **Love Approach**, from **Tom Browne** (also Arista).

South Plainfield, NJ, seems to be a new stronghold of rock: consider this month's **Random Hold, Do They Hurt?** by **Brand X** and **The Apocalypse Now Sessions—The Rhythm Devils Play River Music**, all from Editions EG, and **Fourth World Vol. 1—Possible Musics** by **Jon Hassell** and **Brian Eno**, and **Ambient 2—The Plateau Of Mirror** by **Harold Bud** and **Brian Eno**, both on Passport; the same city has permitted the **National Lampoon's White Album** to escape, on Jem.

Multiply talented **Manu Dibango** has **Gone Clear** on Mango, which also presents **Just Like That**, the new **Toots And The Maytals** jam, and **More Intensified! Volume 2**, another Original Ska album from 1963-67. Mango's parent label, Island, is releasing **Arise In Harmony** by **Third World**.

Revive with revival jazz: **Boogie In The Barnyard** with the **Widespread Depression Orchestra** (Stash) and **Classic Jazz** by the **New Black Eagle Jazz Band** (Philips).

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MILES

Resting On Laurels?

Changing His Silent Ways?

by CHARLES MITCHELL

It's been five years or so since Miles Davis last performed in public or recorded any music that has been heard elsewhere than on studio or corporate tape machines. Since competition for listener attention in the overcrowded music arena remains as intense as ever, several great musicians in jazz and rock who've gone into seclusion, for even lesser periods of time, have slid into semi-obscure. But Davis is not merely a great musician. He bears, however reluctantly, a symbolic stature as focal point for directions in modern music. Most jazz enthusiasts under 35, regardless of the opinions they may hold of the individual phases of his development, await Miles Davis' return to the scene with the same intense expectations that rock people hold for a Beatles reunion.

We have to look outside of music, to cinema and the visual arts, in order to find creator-personalities comparable to Davis in terms of impact; and these points of reference are no less than Marlon Brando and Pablo Picasso. The musician and the actor share an affinity for the controlled yet significant gesture, the performed essence, a result of concentrated internal selection from a vast repertoire of expressive options. This stripped-down approach to craft often obscures a wider technical command than is immediately apparent. But early on, both men must have realized that eschewing obvious displays of virtuosity would gain them the advantage of mystery, further cultivated out of the limelight by their fierce insistence on privacy illustrated by a close-mouthed hostility towards intruders.

Though even Davis can't match the depth and breadth of total *oeuvre* and influence in his field that Picasso achieved in painting and sculpture, both artists play a similar, Janus like role in the modern eras of their respective art forms. They're synthesists, observing and interpreting past and current events from deeply personal perspectives, while pointing out new paths for art to follow. Both failed to rest content with one of a variety of single styles, however revolutionary, they helped innovate, establish, and then push further.

Davis, Brando and Picasso share yet another similarity. All three concerned themselves enough with personal image to practice their arts on a precarious interface with show business. In lesser

men, this tightrope walking often results in rather nasty falls into self parody; and Brando, indeed, has suffered some embarrassing moments when his willingness to risk everything artistically has clashed with inferior material written solely to cater to his image. On the other hand is Picasso, with his voracious desire to remake everything, including all aspects of himself, from his own point of view. He turned the buffoonish dissonances of self-parody into art, amplifying his humanity while remaining larger than life.

Self-parody is lacking to the greatest extent in Davis' work, though much of its attendant visual packaging—from certain album graphics to onstage behavior—has ranged from off-putting to absolutely silly. Still, as soon as Davis starts making music, the only image that concerns him is the one he projects aurally. One can acknowledge this while still recognizing the essential value of Davis' extra musical image in the formation of his charismatic position as contemporary music's reigning sage. Since his disappearance from the scene, in a haze of controversy surrounding his most recent playing, no one else has arrived to assume his place.

The last musician before Davis to mean as much to the music in this larger sense was Charles Parker. Partisans of the jazz avant garde may hold John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman up for scrutiny, but the seminal achievements of these saxophonists lacked Davis' colossal stride, over past, present and future—even though in purely musical terms they may be equally influential. In any event, it's highly symbolic that Davis received his professional baptism of fire in Parker's employ.

The true test of any embryonic talent is how strong an independent identity one can forge in the direct shadow of a giant such as Parker. Davis, a youngster who should have been uncontrollably swayed, realized from the beginning that he would not make a name for himself by trying to match the virtuosity of his boss or Parker's soulmate on Davis' instrument, Dizzy Gillespie. Davis' first recordings as a leader show that he was trying to fashion a more concisely edited, relaxed and simplified lyrical line than bop had previously heard. At the same time, the dense harmonic underpinnings of the new music were to be retained and even



TROMBERT

Miles Davis' New Direction is a Family Affair

Miles Davis first heard his 1980 backup band during his daily telephone calls to his sister in Chicago. Since May 1, Miles has put in 60 hours at CBS Studio E working on music that's a family affair. "Miles knows the guys," says Vincent Wilburn Jr., the trumpeter's 22 year old nephew and drummer on the demos his mom played to Miles through the phone. "We all have a very close relationship. Miles talks to us, tells us not to mix with drugs, helps us get our business together, and cooks for us—a great dish called bouillabaisse."

But what Miles has done most for Vince and his friend from kindergarten Randy Hall, and their pals Robert Irving and Felton Crews, is work with them. "Miles liked what he heard, so we went to New York to cut one tune. But Miles liked it so much, and Columbia liked that Miles liked it, so we just kept working." Hall, a 21 year old guitarist and singer who has studied at Berklee, collaborated originally on self-produced demo tapes with keyboardist Irving, 26, who studied at University of North Carolina; Crews played bass with the group. In New York, the four Chicagoans plus reed and wind player Bill Evans, studio percussion ace Sammy Figueroa and Angela Boffill's backup singers completed 11 tracks—*Spider's Web*, *Solar Energy*, *Space*, *Burn, I'm Blue*, *Mrs. Slurpey*, *Thanksgiving, 1980s*, and *The Man With The Horn* are some of the titles—and returned in July to complete three more, Teo Macero producing.

"Our concept in Chicago was different from what Miles told us to play," Vince



Vincent Wilburn, Davis, Randy Hall

explains. Their basic quartet had been gigging individually in Chicago, subbing and sitting in with local bands led by guitarist Pete Cosey (part of Miles' mid '70s sound), vocalist Sherri Scott, pianist Ken Chaney and a combo called Panama. With tenor and alto saxophonists, a second keyboard player, a rhythm guitarist, percussionist and two women singers, they'd been rehearsing a band called All. But now Wilburn, Hall, Irving and Crews are uncertain about staying in Chicago. They speak of moving to New York or to L.A. They hope to have this new Miles Davis record out in autumn, and expect there will be changes made.

"Miles has been talking about coming out," Vince says, "and he's in good health, for all those who've been wondering. He talks about touring Europe and Japan."

"We're going to turn some heads around," Irving states quietly. "People will be imitating songs, they'll be imitating

Vince's drumming. Miles has been playing the stuff for other musicians and friends of his over the phone. Dave Liebman heard it, said it had a lot more changes to play over. Al Foster heard it; Miles played it for Cicely Tyson . . ."

It's the music of young men who say they listen to "reggae, funk, Parliament, jazz, classical, rock (Journey)," spiced by producer Macero's creative input in the studio, and mixed and molded by the principal collaborator, Miles himself. Vincent mentions that his favorite Miles records from earlier days include *Four And More* and *Bitches Brew*. Hall knows Miles' backlog well. Robert Irving says he hadn't been exposed much to Miles Davis prior to their meeting, so the collaboration has been particularly good for him.

What does it sound like? "Well, there's something for everybody," says Randy Hall. "Vocals, electronics, to appeal to young people. It's commercial enough that people who never heard Miles before will get it. Older fans of his will dig it, too. Some tunes are, like, pop. It's into a wide spectrum. The music is mostly ballads, but there's up tempo funk, fusion, an open hi-hat sound with lots of drive that Miles instructed Vince to play, hip melodies on the top, lots of melodic changes. Miles plays trumpet and Fender Rhodes. The tracks average about five minutes each."

Says Vince, "There's no one doing anything like it. It's beyond sophisticated funk. Eddie Henderson? Hughie Masekela? Herb Alpert? No, it's simply new Miles." —howard mandel

further crowded.

The trumpeter resisted temptations to play high and fast—perhaps because, as Gillespie once remarked to him, he didn't hear that way, or perhaps because Davis figured to set himself off from these musical terrors by playing it cool. Some of his early "mistakes" on Parker sides can be heard as tense attempts to reconcile his simpler desires with bop's will to unbridled virtuosity. Thus began a history of creative reaction, rather than personally embellished imitation, in pursuit of a unique voice.

The first Davis-led pieces featured Parker on tenor sax, a move that softened ensemble tone and frankly recalled the progenitor of easy lyricism, Lester Young. When the time came for Davis to step out from under Bird's wing, he continued to move in this more tonally subdued direction. The innately contrary nature that had him making his own way in the area of personal instrumental style, also manifested itself in a search for

ensemble inspiration where no one else was looking. He found it in some almost somber arrangements Gil Evans had done for the Claude Thornhill dance band. Davis, always the editor, opted for a nonet combination, the fewest number of instruments he needed to express harmonies and colors similar to Thornhill's. The result of Davis' application of bebop melody and harmony to this quieter instrumental blend (trumpet, trombone, baritone and alto saxes, french horn (!), tuba (!), and rhythm section) was *Birth Of The Cool*, Davis' first important contribution to jazz literature.

Whatever sins were later committed in this recording's name are not the leader's fault. Rhythm was not utterly neglected, as some contend: Kenny Clarke and Max Roach were the drummers, and provided strong momentum. But the possibilities expressed elsewhere in the music overshadowed its solid and conventional rhythmic content. Davis may have set a

trap for less imaginative, more cerebral players, but he didn't step into it himself. True to form, he was expressing one or two colors of many possible to him. As if to confirm this, at a Paris concert, co-led by Tadd Dameron, two weeks after the second of three nonet dates, the trumpeter was found playing unexpectedly flamboyant, fiery horn in a pure bebop context.

Davis turned completely away from the cool in the early '50s, typically just as the impact of the session was beginning to register. Engaged in a personal war with drug addiction, he set about a decade long musical project of opening up bebop—assessing what in the music was of lasting significance, what its limits were, and how to move past them. Some warm and expansive Blue Note sessions with J. J. Johnson, Jackie McLean, the Heath brothers, and others took a frank look at late bop jazz repertoire: *Woody 'N You*, *Tempis Fugit*, *Ray's Idea*. But the culmination of this look back in order to

look ahead came, meaningfully enough, after Davis had won his non-musical fight with heroin. It was the *Walkin'/Blue 'N Boogie* session of April, 1954.

Once again, Davis the reactor and commentator made a statement of thoroughgoing significance. These sides averred the primacy of some old values which had been lost in the convolutions of bebop, especially its cool extensions. Strongest among these qualities was the blues form as a classic jazz essence capable of not only withstanding the most modern melodic development, but also framing and contextualizing it. For-saken here were the complex harmonies and busy but quiet line movement of cool jazz; in their places appeared intensely distilled melodic forthrightness, crisp instrumental tones, and unabashed rough energy.

Reflection on the exceptional playing here by a comparatively fresh pair of hands belonging to Horace Silver gives rise to further recollection of Davis' unequalled abilities as an employer of the best young talent. One is familiar with the litany of names from the '60s and '70s; but this gift stretches back to his first days as a leader, with the recruiting of Gil Evans, Gerry Mulligan and Lee Konitz for *Birth Of The Cool*, continuing from a completely different tangent into the post-bop era with the hiring of Silver and a rough hewn Sonny Rollins. Those two subsequently became paragons of the hard bop style triggered by *Walkin'* and *Blue 'N Boogie*.

This shrewd location of voices from largely unexpected places bore fullest fruit with the assembly of Davis' First Quintet, about a year and a half after *Walkin'*. Such a delicately balanced group could only have been held together by a leader skilled in exacting interactive creativity from disparate elements *first within himself*. By late 1955, Davis had reconciled and fused relaxation and intensity; reflective lyricism and the blues; sophisticated harmonics, compact melodic material, and unafraid rhythmic attack all into a cohesive instrumental style. No small achievement, and no wonder that he would seek to combine many of the same qualities in a small group.

Enter John Coltrane, a "hard" tenor player from Philadelphia who, as Martin Williams has pointed out, was a foil for Davis' lyricism as the trumpeter had conversely been to Parker. In the rhythm section, Red Garland, a light, almost casual stylist, was set against the flaming, barely controllable polyrhythmist Philly Joe Jones. Young bassist Paul Chambers rounded out the First Quintet; unobtrusive on first hearing, he subsequently revealed himself to be an ensemble welder of subtlety and strength.

As he had with Thornhill, Davis drew a certain amount of inspiration for this group from a strange source, this time

Ahmad Jamal. This Chicago pianist affected various facets of the Quintet music, from repertoire (an affinity for clever melodic and harmonic reworking of hoary show tunes and standards) to rhythm (a jaunty two-beat that lent a calculatedly offhand quality). There's a more direct echo of Jamal in the easy openness of Garland's playing; but to his credit, the latter lined his approach with Texas blue steel, a strength sorely missing from the former. Especially when Garland accompanied Coltrane, the intense resolve of the First Quintet prevented a wandering into merely pleasant trivia.

Davis had carried on all of his work within the jazz tradition up to this point, but four recorded orchestral reunions with Gil Evans moved him slightly outside of it. Contemporaneous with his combo playing in the late '50s and early '60s, they are essentially detours from this primary course, bearing virtually no resemblance to contemporary big band jazz either. Rhythm was largely de-emphasized on the Evans collaborations, while Evans painted a richly toned backdrop of dense harmonic colors from his orchestral palette. As one might guess, it was Davis' responsibility as soloist to provide forward movement and whatever "pure" jazz content there is to be found. But if one comes to these performances with high expectations in the jazz area, one will come away disappointed. They are more valuable on their own terms, exemplary of Davis' ongoing fascination with new sounds and new directions, jazz relatable to, but outside of, the mainstream.

Coltrane's rising star precipitated an amicable breakup of the First Quintet, leaving Davis with a broad but stable repertoire of standards, blues and hard bop to constantly reconsider with fluctuating personnel. Despite the comings and goings, Davis was enjoying peak popularity. And he found the opportunity, in 1959, to explore more new pos-

sibilities, again just off the beaten path. It seemed like an isolated incident in Davis' career at the time, but *Kind Of Blue* turned out to be an early tremor in the final earthquake of bebop. It was a harbinger of other developments, being worked out without Davis' direct knowledge, by an alto saxophonist in Los Angeles named Ornette Coleman.

Post-Parker jazz, which Davis had done so much to air out and simplify without rendering it trivial, was ready to break open completely. *Kind Of Blue*, recorded in one take with no prior rehearsal, cracked the music from the inside through the introduction of scalar patterns as the basis for modal improvisation, rather than the customary invention over chord systems of varying elaborateness. It was an undeniably rarefied climate, and Davis couldn't have attempted it without pianist Bill Evans, present on four of the five selections. Evans' reflective concepts of harmony brought modern jazz into direct contact with the French impressionist composers. Though the pianist is not a bluesman, the blues structures and their congruent modalities are broad enough in this music so that Evans could complement the hornmen rather than clash with them. They, in turn, could roam a freer area of melodic activity while maintaining blues feeling throughout.

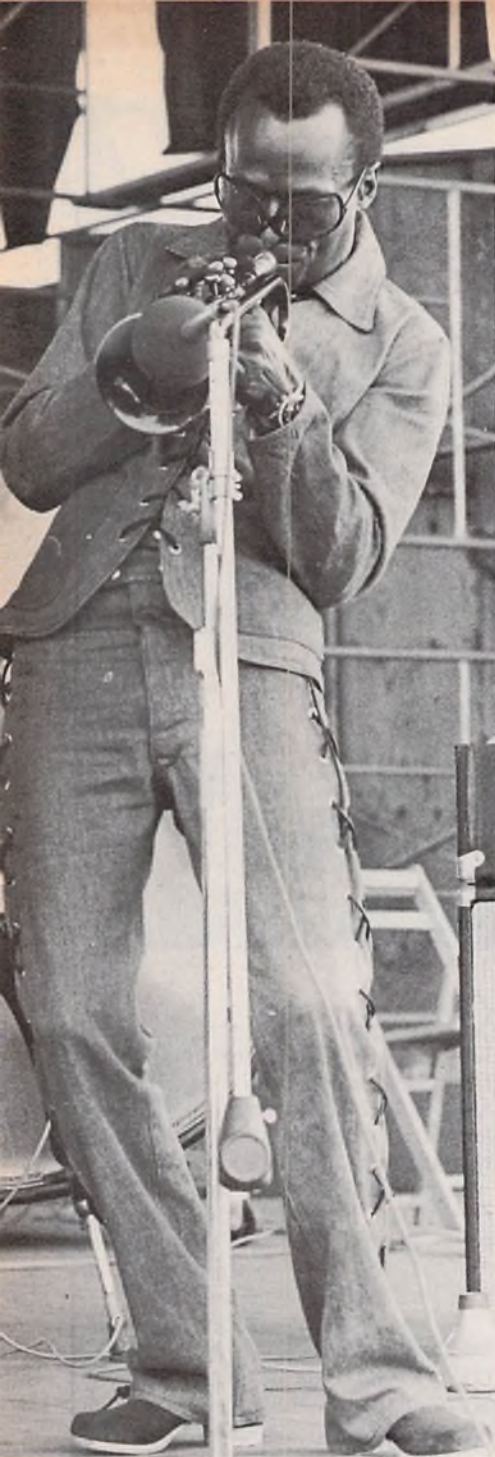
Kind Of Blue is a thoroughly haunting, magic experience in music, over and above its considerable significance to the history of jazz. It exists on a level apart from Davis' other work carrying a melancholy freedom, without going "outside." Its melodies are simple, spare, memorable and uncondescending. Unlike *Birth Of The Cool* and the Gil Evans collaborations, this session was not an isolated *cul de sac* for its leader. It opened up fresh territory, albeit unexplored by Davis for a few years to come.

It's difficult in retrospect to understand why Davis, the music's Janus, was so slow in confronting the challenge of the

SELECTED MILES DAVIS DISCOGRAPHY

THE COMPLETE BIRTH OF THE COOL—Capitol Jazz Classics M 11026.
KIND OF BLUE (with John Coltrane and Bill Evans)—Columbia PC 8163.
MY FUNNY VALENTINE (with Herbie Hancock)—Columbia PC 9106.
IN A SILENT WAY—Columbia PC 9875.
BITCHES BREW—Columbia PG 26.
ON THE CORNER—Columbia KC 31906.
GET UP WITH IT—Columbia PG 33236.
AGHARTA—Columbia PG 33967.
LIVE-EVIL—(with Gary Bartz, Keith Jarrett, John McLaughlin et. al.) Columbia CG 30954.
MILES DAVIS AT THE FILLMORE—Columbia G 30038.
DARK MAGUS (Japanese import)—CBS Sony 40AP 741/2.

BLACK BEAUTY (Japanese import, recorded live at Fillmore West)—CBS Sony SOPJ 39/40.
PANGAEA (Japanese import)—CBS Sony SOPZ 96/97.
GREEN HAZE (Reissue of *The Musings Of Miles*, Prestige 7007, and *Miles*, Prestige 7014, with Red Garland, Philly Joe Jones, Oscar Pettiford, Paul Chambers and John Coltrane)—Prestige P 24064.
MILES DAVIS (Reissue of *Cookin' With The Miles Davis Quintet*, Prestige 7094, and *Relaxin' With The Miles Davis Quintet*, Prestige 7129, with Coltrane, Garland, Chambers and Jones)—Prestige 24001.
MILES DAVIS AND THE MODERN JAZZ GIANTS (with Milt Jackson, Thelonious Monk, Percy Heath and Kenny Clarke)—Prestige 7650.
SKETCHES OF SPAIN (with Gil Evans Orchestra)—Columbia PC 8271.



R. HOWARD

post Parker limits to their most taut.

Four years after *Kind Of Blue*, Davis consolidated a new, young rhythm section. Herbie Hancock seemed to be steering a middle course between two dominant courses of new piano: the impressionistic lyricism of Bill Evans and the percussive dissonance of Cecil Taylor. Ron Carter, an elusive counter-melodist with a penchant for unusual accents, was counted on to subtly guide the group, but loosely and broadly. And in Tony Williams, Davis discovered the Philly Joe Jones of the avant garde—an irrepressible percussionist who listened to the soloist, unflaggingly maintained a swinging pulse, and simultaneously orchestrated his own universe of splashing, rolling, independent polyrhythms.

The addition of saxophonist Wayne Shorter, following stints by George Coleman and Sam Rivers, brought the Second Quintet into full relief in 1964. Its early days were spent in further interpretations of Davis standards like *All Of You*, *Autumn Leaves*, *My Funny Valentine*, and various modal pieces. The group virtually threw themselves into these performances, as themes were treated tersely, brusquely, epigrammatically. Tight paraphrase was the general rule, followed by explosive improvisation at breakneck tempos. The music was wide open, yet severely controlled by strong implications from the accompanists—chords, riffs, linear fragments—which the soloists could choose from and work upon at will.

The Second Quintet soon evolved a fresh book of compositions unique to it. The ever present need, especially in Shorter and Davis, to prune their solos to bare essences, spilled over into the written music. The restraint with which it was constructed went against the grain of the times; but the intensity and freedom with which the players moved was of a piece with the emotional commitment of the more structurally loose and/or radical avant gardists. As a result, the Second Quintet's albums are more listenable, a decade or more later, than most other music of the period. They consistently deliver fully realized musical insights. At a time when looking had become just as important as finding, Davis felt it unnecessary to externalize his search. He just presented the results, and they were classic.

Despite the high level of these performances, Davis' fascination with new textures and instrumental colors prevailed. The new rock had thunderstruck popular music with overwhelming force, undercutting jazz among young musicians of all kinds. Davis began flirting directly with electronics as early as 1967; but one also recalls that a much earlier innovation of his had been the muted horn, closely miked. It was a typically simple, yet acute understanding of how

electronics could modify a personal voice in a singular way.

Of course there were deeper reasons for Davis' increasing interest in electronics, rock and r&b in the late '60s. He and others had been engaged in opening up modern jazz since the early '50s. That task has been accomplished; but the popular thread in jazz had been lost in the process, as further and more extreme abstractions prevailed. It's possible that Davis, faced with a dwindling audience of elitists, was seeking to widen his own musical horizons while getting in touch with a new group of more liberal listeners, unafraid of electronics, rock, or anything at all. Integrity was not at issue; Davis' identity was so strong by now that his personal musical standards couldn't be compromised, no matter what the newly evolving context.

In 1968, the trumpeter must have found that his carefully cultivated image as the impeccable, enigmatic hipster had become passé. He had become, in spite of himself, a respected musical elder. Assuming his mantle as the baddest of the bad were two more outrageous, uninhibited black outlaws, Jimi Hendrix and Sly Stone. Despite their external flash, these performer-musicians were seriously involved in much the same project for rock, blues and soul music that Davis had repeatedly undertaken in jazz—no less than the reinterpretation of basic musical language in a progressive atmosphere. But Davis clearly wasn't ready to go quietly to the old folks' home. His famous remark in *Rolling Stone* that he could put together a better rock band than Jimi Hendrix was as much macho challenge as statement of musical fact.

While non-musical stimuli such as these can help spur a proud man to new achievements, music must be sustained by a more profound artistic will. In 1968-75, Davis escalated his perpetual pursuit of ever shifting instrumental texture and color. Underpinning these were a series of increasingly harsh riffs and ostinatos, loosely pasted together with broken pieces of thematic material. Everything was set in an expanded percussive field in which the thicker, but no less explosive, rhythmic attacks of Williams' successors Jack DeJohnette and Al Foster were amplified and embroidered by the "little instruments" of Airtio Moreira and Mtume.

Davis' movement through electronic fusion swept across the muted, eerie ethereality of *In A Silent Way* (the electric *Kind Of Blue*) and *Bitches Brew* to the more volatile, jagged and high flying Fillmore Band, the Davis ensemble most concerned with "free" collective improvisation. Changes in personnel led to *On The Corner's* shift to a more repetitive, honed down, abstract funk, shaded with peculiar Indian colors of sitar and tabla drums. From this lean mixture

jazz avant garde, especially in light of Coltrane's interest in Ornette Coleman and *Kind Of Blue's* own moves in an expanded direction. But the trumpeter expressed nothing but hostility for Coleman. One finds it hard to believe that he felt upstaged by the altoist, as he quite possibly did by Jimi Hendrix and Sly Stone ten years later. A better explanation would be that Davis the sophisticate was put off by Coleman the primitive, who sometimes reached rather progressive conclusions by methods that seemed crude at face value. Still more plausible is the theory that Davis, unwilling to reject formal harmonic options out of hand, was working out his own answers, involving a further stretch of

continued on page 63



BOB WILBER

PERSONALIZING THE TRAD REPERTOIRE

by BURT KORALL

Often, through the years, Bob Wilber has suggested in his performances and compositions what he might become. Now, at 52, with seeming suddenness, the saxophonist-clarinetist-composer-arranger's work demands close attention.

A concert at New York's Carnegie Recital Hall brought Wilber sharply into focus. Clearly his playing and writing had the authority and ease of an artist who truly has integrated his resources.

To open proceedings, he brought life to Beethoven and Brahms trios, rendering his clarinet parts in a fluid, feeling, personal and thoroughly untimidated manner, while indicating complete understanding of the composers' intentions. As expected, however, the bulk of the recital was devoted to jazz. During five sections—*New Orleans Memories*, *Chicago Style*, *Kinda Dukish*, *Words And Music* and *New Directions*—a revealing picture of this musician was progressively developed.

Bob's creative application of jazz history dominated the program. His impressive capacities as an improviser (on clarinet, soprano and alto saxophones), composer and songwriter, often in collaboration with his wife, singer Joanne "Pug" Horton Wilber, were convincingly illustrated. A key aspect of the Wilber performances was an infectious sense of swing. Even his ballad renditions sometimes suggested the inner vitality and joy of jazz pulsation.

At the reception after the concert, I

found my enthusiasm shared. Critics and music men, who seldom agree, happily mingled and, between glasses of wine and bits of cheese, made very positive noises about Wilber.

Very pleased, he threaded his way across the Blue Room and accepted congratulations for himself and his musical colleagues, including Russian cellist Leo Winland (a marvelous player), pianist Doris Konig, and such able jazzmen as Milt Hinton, Jimmie Maxwell, Britt Woodman, Derek Smith, Carmen Mastren and, of course, his spouse.

Later, at our interview, Wilber was still quietly buoyant. "I feel so good about myself. All I've wanted, musically, now seems within reach," he said. With Pug close by, he seemed far more confident than in years past. Freer, calmer and relatively unencumbered, he has also changed his physical image. He uses contact lenses: "I no longer need glasses to hide behind." He has a well-trimmed beard of comparatively recent vintage. His clothes are modern. His hair is styled in the "curly," up-to-date manner.

When I noticed, Bob said, "My hair always was curly. But I kept it neat and well controlled, much as I did the rest of my life. Now I allow my hair to grow freely and cut it the way it looks and feels best."

Pug smiled at her husband across the table, and pointed out, "The changes in Bob stem from feelings he's had for a long time. For them to surface and take hold, he needed people who truly believed in him and cared about him and his music. Anders Ohman, his record producer, has been so helpful.

"Like any sensitive artist, Bob has to have warmth and people in his corner. Certainly the compatibility and depth of our relationship, the security we've found together, have helped free Bob to do as he will. A good personal life has so much to do with how a man or woman performs, writes, behaves with people."

Bob added, "Since we've been together—I guess it's three years now—so many things have fallen into place. Now it's possible to release a lot of pentup musical energy.

"I'm playing and recording classical chamber music on clarinet. I can't tell you how long I've wanted to do that. I compose more freely; my ideas flow. I'm improvising better, with a sense of relaxation and concentration that eluded me in the past. Solos often seem to shape themselves because my emotions are no longer locked up. Also, my involvement with the jazz tradition has deepened and really taken shape.

"Maybe I'm a late bloomer," Bob mused. "Pug calls it coming of age in my 50s. All I can say is that I feel marvelous about my life and my music. I look forward to each day. It's great to be me!"

Bob began finding his way as a musician comparatively early. As a teen-

age player, having listened to and played various types of jazz, he opted for tradition and the glorious past.

Surfacing in the mid '40s, his seemingly shy, passive position was contrary to the trend of the times. Diz and Bird and bop were "happening," but you wouldn't have known it listening to Wilber and his friends.

He and trumpeter Johnny Glasel, cornetist Johnny Windhurst, drummer Eddie Phyfe, bassist Charlie Traeger, Charlie and Denny Strong (trombone and drums, respectively), trombonist Eddie Hubble and pianist Dick Wellstood—most of whom lived in or near Scarsdale, the affluent Westchester village 40 minutes from Broadway—expressed themselves in a manner best described as highly traditional. Lovingly, they made their own the techniques and language of such innovators as King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Sidney Bechet and Jelly Roll Morton. They also admired younger players, mostly from Chicago, like Bix, Bud Freeman, Jimmy McPartland, Dave Tough, Gene Krupa and Benny Goodman, who had earlier been inspired by the New Orleans pioneers.

Wilber and his associates were into the music of the early trailbreakers in a way that only the young can be: it dominated their lives. They performed the old time music with unusual understanding and accuracy, while bringing to it youthful honesty and energy.

The rise of interest in older figures and their music during the mid '40s made the success of these kids from Westchester predictable. Critics who had grown up loving Bechet and Armstrong and Jelly Roll, and were not too happy about what Bird and Dizzy were doing, found the recordings made by Wilber's Wildcats very much to their collective taste.

Speaking for an entire wing of criticism, George Avakian raved (in a 1947 *Jazz Record*): "The records were sensational. The ensembles will remind

you of those marvelous Ladnier-Bechet records of years ago—and that's a pretty marvelous sound. . . . The total effect is the biggest shot in the arm yet recorded for the future of jazz."

Despite the excellent reviews, the audience encouragement wherever he appeared, and his musical devotion, Wilber was not entirely sure of his ground. He explored more formal music at the Eastman School in Rochester and at Juilliard in New York. (Later he studied at the Manhattan School of Music and took piano instruction from Sanford Gold.) He traveled the New York club circuit, hoping to find more of himself.

"I spent a lot of time at Nick's in the Village checking out Hackett and Pee Wee Russell, Wettling, Wild Bill Davison and Condon, the guys who came out of the Chicago style. And I continued to collect the old records," he said. "But I was also on the scene on 52nd Street. I dug everyone: Bird, Hawk, Billie Holiday, Diz, Ben Webster, Pres when he sat in.

"My experience in the 52nd Street clubs had a lot to do with how I ultimately came to think about music. I learned by listening to and being instructed directly by the jazz masters. I really believe in this method because only the 'great ones' possess all the secrets. I was particularly lucky: Bechet took me on as a student. I got a view of jazz from the inside from a man who knew all there was to know. In an informal manner, he taught me how to make meaningful music."

Bechet emphasized the importance of melody. He insisted the listener be given a foundation to refer to when improvisation came along. While encouraging Wilber to find his own way and to play in a manner that was both comfortable and individual, he also insisted his protege do two things: never lose sight of the past and familiarize younger musicians with their heritage.

"I lived with Sidney at his home in Brooklyn for about eight months," Bob recalled. "He kept showing me things; we practiced, worked and recorded together. My studies with him spanned about two years [1946-'48]. It was inevitable I would play like him, particularly on soprano sax—broad vibrato and all. But there came a time I had to break away."

On his own, Wilber further immersed himself in the multiple streams of jazz. He experimented, leaning on the past for a sense of security. His reputation grew significantly among those who treasured the older forms of jazz, while he continued to seek his true identity.

Wilber played traditional jazz at the Savoy Cafe in Boston in 1948-1950, usually in the company of older men. There was peer pressure about going more modern, which expressed itself in his work. One heard elements of Bird and Buddy De Franco, in addition to Bechet, Benny Goodman and Johnny

SELECTED BOB WILBER DISCOGRAPHY

SWINGIN' FOR THE KING—A TRIBUTE TO BENNY GOODMAN—Phontastic 7406/7

RAPTUROUS REEDS (with Arne Domnerus)—Phontastic BW 16

ORIGINAL WILBER—BOB WILBER WITH DAVE MCKENNA AND PUG HORTON—Phontastic 7519 BW 17

BOB WILBER AND THE SCOTT HAMILTON QUARTET—Chiaroscuro CR 171

SOPRANO SUMMIT—World Jazz WJLP-S-5 BW 7

SOPRANO SUMMIT IN CONCERT—Concord Jazz CJ-129 BW 11

CENTURY PLAZA—World's Greatest Jazz Band World Jazz 1 BW 6

BLOWIN' THE BLUES AWAY—Classic Jazz 9 BW 3

THE MUSIC OF HOAGY CARMICHAEL—Month-Evengeen 6917 BW 4

*All Wilber recordings are available through Bodeswell Record Distribution, 24 Skippers Drive, Harwich, MA 02645.

Dodds, listening to Bob through an evening. Perhaps more than most, he was a victim of factionalism in jazz.

"A division occurred after World War II and continued to be a factor into the 1950s," Wilber noted. "On the one side was the faddist who had to be into the latest thing and discarded all that was old. On the other was a group that was equally fanatical against accepting anything new. All in all, a terribly destructive situation for jazz."

In the fall of 1950, George Wein asked him to put together a band for the entrepreneur's first major venture, Boston's Storyville club. Though not completely conscious of it then, Wilber made the first of a series of moves that ultimately would enlarge his scope, enrich his improvisations, and enable him to be at peace with himself.

"I hired adventurous mainstream musicians like the DeParis Brothers and drummer Sid Catlett," he said. "I wanted to put together a band different from what I had before—one with a 'swing' feeling.



Wilber and Pug Horton

Catlett turned out to be the central force in the group. A magnificent accompanist, he listened to each player and sensed what would be best to play behind him. Catlett was an education in rhythm."

Other learning experiences followed: first a period with Lennie Tristano. "Bop formulae were taking hold in the early 1950s. Lennie and Lee Konitz did all they could to counteract that trend. I was intrigued with their ideas and felt it would be stimulating to talk and play with them. Though the relationship was important to me, I left Lennie after a few months. He didn't seem sufficiently concerned about jazz's past.

"Then the Army during the Korean War. Up to that time, all I had played were clarinet and soprano sax. I took up the tenor sax so I could get into a service band. My army experience as a tenorist and arranger and composer proved very beneficial."

Clarinet teacher Leon Russianoff put Wilber in closer touch with all music. "Working with Leon for five years in the 22 □ down beat

1950s developed my technical chops and knowledge of classical literature. The insights he provided also enhanced my ability to improvise."

In the latter 1950s, a philosophy about jazz began to take hold within Wilber and manifest itself in his projects. The first of these was a group called The Six. Another was the Bobby Hackett band. Both brought old and new ideas and techniques into compatible union.

"I felt then and even more so now that there's a *oneness* about jazz. Style shouldn't be a barrier between musicians," Bob explained. "Whether players are into Bunk or Monk, they should be able to create a common ground and communicate. Of course, this concept makes explicit demands on performers. They cannot remain in one corner of the music; they have to open themselves to jazz's many worlds."

So Wilber has tried all types of expression within the jazz milieu, with the exception of "free" music, making no self-limiting choices.

evolves, and emphasis varies from period to period. Today, harmonic and rhythmic complexity is in. But unfortunately, 1980 jazz is primitive tonally, particularly when compared with the variety of sounds heard in the 1930s and 1940s.

"Those were the years when jazz reached its peak of tonal originality and subtlety. Just think back. Every major tenor player, for example, had his own way of doing things. All you needed to hear were a couple of notes to make an identification. We could use more of that kind of individuality today!"

Individuality and the sense of identity which directly stems from it have concerned Wilber from the very start. But only over the past 15 years has he advanced steadily toward singularity as a player and composer. Key events and band experiences have helped move him along.

He discovered a curved soprano saxophone in a New York music store early in the 1960s. "I noodled a bit on it," he recalled, "and instantly realized I could express *me*." That's the way it's turned out; he's played the little instrument with increasing effectiveness and originality since then. (Bob had given up the straight soprano, "quite a different animal," in the 1950s because of the inevitable comparison with Bechet.)

Inspired by the possibilities of this curved, soulful saxophone, Wilber has consistently placed himself where he could use the soprano to best advantage. Particularly memorable were mid '60s concerts for the Duke Ellington Jazz Society, for which Bob developed small band scores based on famous and relatively obscure Ellington material. Within them, he often structured warming, pithy, ever-so-fitting solos on soprano. The atmosphere and feeling of his charts and solos produced an unmistakable Ellington ambience, while simultaneously commenting on it. People began talking.

Wilber drew more positive comment as a member of the World's Greatest Jazz Band from 1969-'75. With such lively players as Bud Freeman, Carl Fontana, Gus Johnson and the late Lou McGarity, he continued to develop.

He became a technically impressive and emotionally arresting clarinetist. His solos on alto and tenor sax also had logic and quality. As a soprano saxophonist, he reached a point where he consistently combined elements of Johnny Hodges, Lester Young, Charlie Parker and Bob Wilber in a provoking manner. As a composer-arranger, he gave pleasure and inspired thought while stressing his wide range of interests.

Only when the WGJB no longer was a challenge did he finally leave. Then with clarinetist and C-Melody and soprano saxophonist Kenny Davern, he organized Soprano Summit. It featured the two leaders plus bass, drums, guitar or

"I can play with most anyone—older men, people like Diz, as I did recently, and youngsters as well," he declared. "The only thing I insist upon is form. There seems little sense running all over the place, with no specific goals in sight."

Wilber admits partiality to the swing style: "I love the strong pulsation that is the hallmark of that idiom. Swinging frees the player; it carries him along, opens his mind.

"Jazz rhythm is an absolutely unique phenomenon. It's central to much of our music's vitality. Why turn away from it entirely, as some of the avant garde players have? The essential character of jazz time should be retained, regardless of modifications that are periodically made to keep it contemporary. I believe rhythm players, particularly drummers, should parallel and support the innovations made by exploratory musicians like Parker and Coltrane. But they should never stop swinging. That link with the past is a must.

"Jazz doesn't really progress! It



ANYTHING LEFT IN PAPA'S BAG?

by STEVE BLOOM

I'm riding in an elevator at New York's elegant Sherry Netherland Hotel with James Brown, the world-renowned Godfather of Soul. As we descend some 20 floors to the lobby, Brown kibitzes with the operator.

"May I ask you a question, sir?" he begins. "Am I the greatest soul singer to ever stay in this hotel?"

The operator, sensing a perfect opportunity, smiles and drapes his arms around the Godfather's muscular shoulders.

"Pendergrass stayed here, sir," he says, staring directly into Brown's unblinking eyes. "But he couldn't even shine your shoes."

Everyone in the elevator bursts with laughter. Brown, totally ingratiated, shakes the operator's hand and thanks him "very much." As if on cue, the car suddenly lands. Two well built members of Brown's predominately male entourage fan out to the left and right, each holding a door. Brown takes the lead and bounces on through. The contingent follows the Godfather of Soul into the lobby.

There is little doubt that James Brown, whose career now spans four decades, is *the* legend of modern black popular music.

There is little doubt, too, that James Brown especially enjoys letting people know all about it. In conversation, he repeatedly compares himself to Elvis Presley, but that's not all. One of his

favorite braggadocios goes something like this: "My contention is that there were three B's, and now there's four: Beethoven, Bach, Brahms and now, Brown."

That Brown insists on informing others of his talents and of the inestimable gifts which he has bestowed upon mankind is often laughable; his words, however, are also pointed and usually contain bits of the truth. Certainly if egos were balloons his would be a blimp. Still, James Brown hasn't shined anybody else's shoes since he was a young turk growing up in Georgia. That is, not until the last few years.

There was a time when James Brown records were fixtures on every turntable in every black home across America. A tune called *Please, Please, Please*, recorded by the Cincinnati-based King Records, started the ball rolling in 1956. Soul classics like *I Got You (I Feel Good)* (1965), *Papa's Got A Brand New Bag* (1965) and *Cold Sweat* (1966) followed, bringing James Brown to the attention of millions of listeners. He shouted and hollered; he wore sequins and wigs and makeup. Like his peers Little Richard and Chuck Berry, his appearance was that of a rock and roll star.

But there was one difference. Brown's music—an amalgam of gospel testifying, backwoods funk, and even jazzy innovation that had never been heard before—was a modern twist on rhythm and blues. Though it really was just a stone's throw from early rock and roll, Brown was relegated to second class status, confined to the chillin scene. James Brown didn't go for

that at all—instead of touring low pay, funky nightclubs, he wanted a piece of the concert action that rock and rollers took for granted. Since no one was about to steer him in that direction, he grabbed the controls himself.

According to his manager Al Garner, Brown decided to forego a club engagement he had scheduled for Houston back around 1965. Brown asked Garner, director of a local black radio station, for help in promoting his own Civic Center show. An artist promoting himself was—and still is—relatively unheard of, but Brown felt it was time to test whether or not a black performer could fill a concert arena. "We went to work one month ahead of time," Garner recalls in his native North Carolina accent, "and sure let everyone know about it. Why, we not only sold out the concert (14,500), but even broadcasted it live over my station." This story is only one of many that detail Brown's strong mindedness when it comes to taking care of business.

Says Polydor Vice President Dick Kline, whose career includes a sales stint at King in the late '50s, "Working with James has always been a trip in itself. He's always had his own methods, his own thoughts and his own direction. He's always done everything on his own because he's rarely trusted anyone in the business. I will say one thing about him, though—James Brown is the greatest promoter of James Brown that there ever was."

As of 1980, all Brown's commotion and promotion has done little to revive his sagging sales. James Brown, much to his own disbelief, could no longer sell out Yankee Stadium on any given summer night as he did in the late '60s much less Carnegie Hall, or even the Bottom Line. Disco was something he was not prepared for.

While the Bee Gees and the Doobie Brothers jogged to the bank, the Godfather (who claims *Sex Machine* was the original disco song) continued laying down those infectious funky tracks on albums titled *Jam/1980's* and *Take A Look At Those Cakes* (both released in 1978).

That these releases were very much in the original funk tradition of James Brown, but still did not produce healthy sales, proved that the market was even further bottoming out for the waning Godfather of Soul.

By '79, changes had to be made. In some very confidential meetings with Polydor (he signed with them in 1971),

Brown was urged—for the first time in his career—to accept the common practice of employing an outside producer. Polydor felt that his technique had been slipping. (Conversely, Brown would say the same about Polydor's promotional work or lack thereof.) A studio ace might be able to transform Brown's sound without radically altering it. In what amounted to a major compromise, the Godfather agreed to stand a disco trial with Miami-based producer Brad Shapiro (Wilson Pickett, Millie Jackson) presiding. It was TK Records President Henry Stone, one of Brown's confidantes in the business early on, who negotiated this agreement.

The result was *The Original Disco Man*, both an album and

a promotional gimmick. On the surface, Brown was pleased with it, especially when the single, *It's Too Funky In Here*, momentarily bulleted on the black sales charts. At the time, Brown said of Shapiro, "Brad has the sound we need today—technique. I can do ten times more arrangements than Brad can, and he knows that. But I don't have the sound. So Brad's my right arm. Brad can produce James Brown better than James Brown can produce himself. You cannot take that away from Brad."

But it didn't take long for their romance to ebb. When it came down to recording a second disco-styled project with Shapiro, Brown began to holler. "The problem with Polydor is that they're followers, not leaders," he told me, blasting the label for which he has recorded 19 albums in less than a decade. "They wait for somebody else to do something and by the time they jump in it's all over with. That's what they did with disco. Right now they're not doing anything."

"What the Germans should do," he continued, referring to Polydor's German-owned parent firm, Polygram, "is give me a label on the side like Gamble and Huff [Philadelphia International, a division of Columbia Records], and then let me go and do what I have to do."

"They delayed me because they wanted to sell disco. Now it's over with. They've sold as many of my old licks as they could and now they want new ones," the Godfather grumbled. "I'm not going to give them no complete albums of funk, they ain't gonna get that no mo'."

"Never again?" I cried.

"No, never."

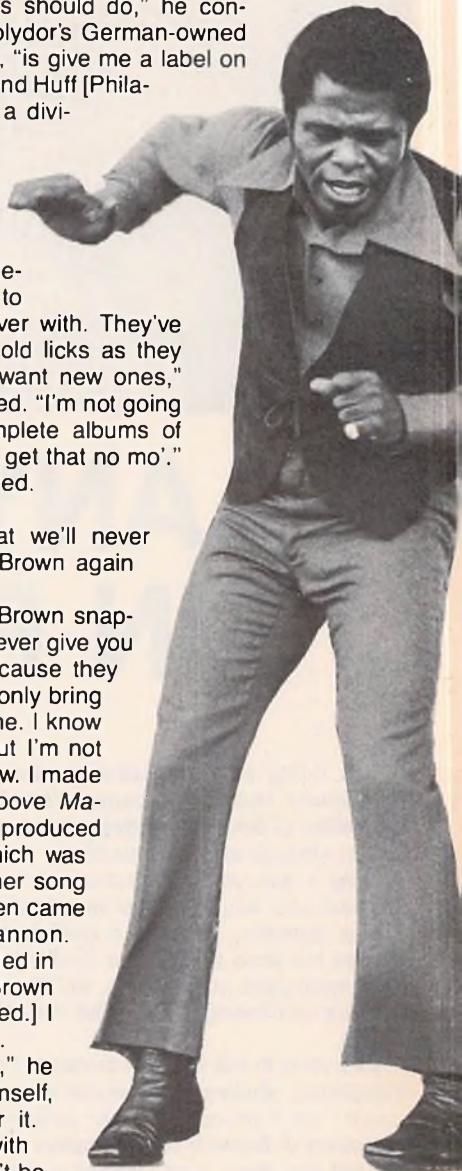
"Do you mean that we'll never hear the real James Brown again on record?"

"I didn't say that," Brown snapped back. "I said I'll never give you a full album of that 'cause they copy too much. I can only bring out one single at a time. I know what I want to cut, but I'm not going to cut it right now. I made that mistake with *Groove Machine* [A song Brown produced and recorded, but which was never released. Another song by the same name then came out, sung by Bohannon. They were both recorded in the same studio, so Brown believes he was robbed.] I should've held it back."

"If I don't record it," he said, chuckling to himself, "then you won't hear it. They may come up with a synthetic, but it won't be James Brown original funk."

Earlier this year, Brown begrudgingly recorded again with Shapiro. What could he really say to Polydor after *The Original Disco Man* posted his most impressive sales stats (175,000) in nearly a decade? But with the followup album, *People*, mastered and ready for pressing, Brown took still more potshots.

"It's not funk, but it's good. It's different. It's a new direction, but it's still not James Brown original funk," he pointed out. "It's



TOM COPI

a very establishment all-funk sound."

Had he not just returned from a tour of Japan where he recorded his first live concert since *Sex Machine*, the Godfather might have had a few more kind words about *People*. But James Brown has never been noted for his patience. In a telegram to Dick Kline, Brown asked that the live package (two records, though Polydor pleaded for only one) be released in tandem with *People*.

"The live album is unbelievable," he repeated several times. "If Dick Kline and them were smart, they'd release it right now. They'd put *Regrets* [the single on *People*] and *Let The Funk Flow* [also on *People*] on it and release it. They wouldn't take time messin' with that other stuff. They're wastin' time with that.

"See, they were committed to the *People* album first, but they're stupid for doing that. They are very stupid for doing that. The people in Europe are smarter than the people in America when it comes to records, 'cause people in Europe release what they hear. Americans release what they are told." Our conversation closed with Brown once again laughing to himself.

Despite Brown's urgings Kline decided to stick with his plan, one which he hopes will raise Brown from the murky mess he is in.

"Since James appeals to a core audience," Kline explained, "the trick is to expand that core. Having a Top 15 hit on the r&b charts with *Too Funky* has already begun to revitalize his career. I am hoping that *People* will further expand that core. Then, with that interest built up, we will go with the live record [planned for release this summer]. James has to trust me now. I'm doing what I think is best for James and at the same time trying to sell records."

Did *The Original Disco Man* and *People* arrive too late, as Brown said, on the disco scene?

"Maybe it was too late, maybe it was too early—who's to know?" Kline replied. "The music business is extremely volatile today. Everything is timing. And, of course, it has to be in the grooves."

James Brown's life has not always, so to speak, been "in the grooves." Born more than 50 years ago in Augusta, Georgia (where he still resides), the son of a gas station attendant, young James grew up fast. Before the age of ten, he washed cars, picked cotton and shined shoes. Whatever change he could scrape up was added to the family stash that covered the \$7 rent for their broken down shack of a home.

"My family was so poor you wouldn't believe it," he remembers. "In the afternoons during the winter I'd walk home by the railroad tracks and pick up pieces of coal left behind by the trains. I'd take that home and we'd use it to keep warm."

Entertainment was a natural path for the enterprising young James to follow. Brown recalls:

"I always loved to dance, especially as a little boy. When I was eight years old I used to go dance for the National Guard soldiers who camped outside of town. They threw nickels and dimes and sometimes even quarters at me."

In 1956, James Brown was "discovered" by Sid Nathan, the owner and founder of King Records. With each hit a new nickname seemed to arrive: first "Soul Brother Number One," then "The Godfather of Soul" and finally, "The Minister of the New New Super Heavy Funk." "Mr. *Please, Please, Please* himself" (as he is most affectionately called by his personal emcee, Mr. Danny Ray) has been plain funk'n' down ever since.

Where does that unmistakable James Brown sound come from? Asking Brown himself is like imploring a magician to

explain his tricks. He does acknowledge childhood favorites like Roy Brown, Buddy Johnson and Louis Jordan, but that's usually as far as he's willing to consult his memory. Otherwise, the Godfather likes to give much of the credit to God.

"He gave me a knowledge and built the antennae in so I can recognize what I should be saying. From a conversation, I can record. Just write something down and I can sing it in tempo. Other people can't do that. I can sit down at a piano and show you so many things it's frightening.

"All that stuff I'm playing, I taught it to them—I did it years ago. That's why when the young acts go into the studio today they say, 'Gimme that James Brown sound.'

"The James Brown sound I didn't learn from nobody. It's from me."

Brown rates his work with the greatest American musical innovations of the 20th century. He maintains that his music has been so far ahead of its time that he had no choice but to restrict the complexity of the compositions and arrangements. Otherwise, James says, we never could have understood it.

"A lot of times I used to do arrangements and they'd be too good," he thinks back, "so I would take the one that was less precise 'cause I knew the one I was shooting for would've been too sharp. Like when I did *I Got The Feelin'*, I took the very first cut, which was the weakest. And I remember the first time I cut *I Feel Good*—it was like jazz.

"I went back and made it slower and the sound muddier. I did that on purpose. People were not ready for that sharp sound.

"But everytime I came out the box it was gold or platinum 'cause I always cut James Brown," the Godfather continues, relishing each and every thought. "I can cut at four o'clock in the morning. When I get an idea I call everybody to wake up and the engineer rushes right over. I wrote *Sex Machine* on the back of a placard when we were playing a gig in Nashville. Afterwards, we went right on over to the studio and cut *Sex Machine* and *Super Bad*.

"King needed me and depended on me, so they let me do it. It just made them more money after money.

According to Brown's management, he has sold over 50 million records, 44 of which they claim are gold singles. But the Recording Industry Association of America, which certifies gold records, says that Brown has had only two gold singles (*Get On The Good Foot, Part 1*, 1972 and *The Payback*, 1974) and one gold album, *The Payback*. As with many aspects of James Brown's career, the truth is elusive. But the sales discrepancy may be explained by the practice, particularly common among r&b record labels, of under-reporting sales. Whatever the facts, Brown's greatest hits never achieved their expected RIAA certification levels.

Brown is dissatisfied with his current, larger label for other reasons.

"See, conglomerates can't afford to take many chances," James explains. "They got to move according to the GNP. Gross National Product, that's what they go by. It's very bad. Try to move in the safety zone, but when you move in the safety zone your profits are very small. That's why it's so hard being an innovator. Big companies don't feel that they can take that big of a risk. But small companies just don't have all that much to lose."

Sweet Georgian Brown paints an almost idyllic picture of his days at King, but he admits it wasn't all peaches and cream.

"No matter what," he strains to recall, "every song I ever cut





CHARLES STEWART

with that strange sound—like *It's A Man's World*—they said was no good. *Live At The Apollo*—I had to spend my own money to do it. *Prisoner Of Love*—they said I couldn't sing ballads. They always said, "Why sing a song that you've sang all your life?" I said, "Cause when you do it live it's never the same."

For "James Brown The Entertainer" (as he calls himself when dialing strangers on the phone), live performance has always been bread, butter, and lifeline in a very fickle business. When Americans decided to stop listening to him, Brown began accepting countless invitations to travel abroad. The Japanese, Italians, Germans, Mexicans and British and others can be credited with supporting the Godfather during his worst moments of professional distress.

During the '70s, Brown's empire suddenly caved in; not only was his ego blown, but his pockets were empty. Gone were the personal Lear jets, the extravagant expenses, the mansion
26 □ down beat

with a moat in Queens, New York. Also lost were two of his three radio stations, victims to bankruptcy. James Brown, forever the Godfather of Soul, had painfully fallen to earth.

His most recent problem is with the Internal Revenue Service, which is assessing Brown \$2,100,000 for unpaid taxes covering the years 1975-'77. It has erroneously been reported that Brown has already been indicted for this sum; however, the parties are negotiating and Brown claims to have lost money during this period.

Meanwhile, on the concert trail, things have begun to pick up for the irrepressible Brown. As of May, he began touring the rock club circuit for the first time in his 24 year career. After years of playing to mostly black audiences, it has finally come to his attention that hordes of teenage rock and rollers have been digging James Brown for quite some time. This realization crystalized during spring of 1980 when Brown flew to Chicago to play Reverend Cleophus James in the recently released *The Blues Brothers* movie. There he was greeted with the kind of respect he had not received in the States for years. Says James, "It was deeper than respect: it was love."

I next saw him and his eight man band at one of New York's new wave rock palaces called Irving Plaza, a former Polish meeting hall now disguised as a high school auditorium. Brown, as always, was most candid.

"I know what this place is and I'm proud of it," he told me. "I'm proud that even though I was acting under instruction with my last two albums, the younger people have demanded that James Brown do what he's noted for. They want to hear that again 'cause," he said with emphasis, "it's authentic. They want the real thing—they want it raw."

"See, blacks know what I was doing, but they don't know as much as they think they do. They never knew that I was making history then. But you whites know I'm making history because your schools are better. See what I'm saying?"

"When someone makes history, it's current until you're reminded that this is history. But like I've said before: everyday I live is another day added to history."

Black, white, purple or green, the fact remains that Brown's two day engagement at Irving Plaza was his most successful appearance in the New York area since he arrived back in town about a year ago. The packed houses danced with the kind of fervor that used to mark every James Brown and the Famous Flames show. He could've literally pleased them playing all night.

The same, however, could not be said for one particularly disconcerting series of dates last winter. On a Saturday night he was only able to fill one-third of the seats at Newark's Symphony Hall. The next evening he barely sold half the tickets for a gig at the Westchester Premier Theatre. Prior to both concerts, Brown was visibly upset. Poor sales at halls where he had once sold out—like Symphony—does not exactly raise the spirits of the very sensitive Godfather. He responded with performances that were simply not up to par.

Brown's new-found new wave audience is all well and good, but blacks are still not buying James Brown. *People* has failed miserably, unable to even locate a spot on the top 75 black album charts in the trades. At a time when black acts like Kool & the Gang, the Spinners, Ben E. King, Gladys Knight & the Pips, the Whispers and many more are recouping with hits after years of silence, James Brown—in terms of airplay—is in the doghouse. Some say James Brown—who's not the easiest person to get along with—has made too many enemies in radio over the years; others simply believe *People* is not "in the grooves."

Says Dick Kline: "He's definitely disappointed with the results so far. The street response has not been that good. But there are many things that enter into the picture with James as to *why* his records don't sell. It becomes difficult putting the normal situations together that you would with any particular artist that you release. He constantly wants to do things his own way. Evidently, in the past few years, that's proven

limitedly successful for him."

According to a spokesman at WBLS-FM, New York's top-rated station (which is also black owned and operated), *People* is "not what people are listening to now. James seems to still be into that old sound. But that doesn't mean we wouldn't play a tune like *Escape-ism* on which James does a lot of improvising. He should go back to rapping because people are into rap records now.

"I know for a fact that Frankie [Crocker, the station's manager and one of the major tastemakers in black pop] is into James Brown. It's just that he probably hasn't heard what he wants yet."

What blacks don't want is a reminder of the days when black entertainers wore wigs and matching suits with sequins. Times have changed. Chic and GQ, upturned collars and upward mobility—as long as it has the beat—are now in. James Brown's raw, original funk is definitely out.

Maybe Brown's next studio release will do the trick. He's already announced that it will be "James Brown from the '60s in 1980. It'll be the way I feel in 1980. Polydor wants me to be myself again. Even all the executives are saying that they want me to do my thang. It's gonna be fantastic."

So much for Brad Shapiro, who Brown says "had good intentions."

And so much for Dick Kline, who claims he has "no idea what James is talking about."

I'm sitting in New York's City Hall. Major Ed Koch is two seats to my right. James Brown, the Godfather of Soul, reclines in a couch directly across from me. Dick Kline, Al Garner, Brown's personal Reverend Al Sharpton and several other members of the retinue are either seated or standing around the room.

The main purpose of the meeting is to introduce Koch and Brown, who've never met. Another function is to discuss the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in respect to the government's unwillingness to declare his birthday, January 15, a legal holiday. Koch agrees that something should be done, then shifts the conversation into Brown's lap. The Mayor asks how he's doing, how his career is going. Brown is uneasy with the prospect of discussing his problems, but decides to anyway.

"What does it take for a man to get true recognition in this country?" Brown asks, apparently referring to both himself and Dr. King. "What does it take for a black man to totally succeed?"

"Wouldn't you say that you've totally succeeded?" Koch returns.

"No, sir."

"Why do you say that you haven't?"

"Because I'm still economically doing the same thing."

"But aren't you one of the most noted, accomplished people in your field and universally . . .?"

"So was Jesse James, sir."

"I don't understand," Koch says. "You are someone who has risen to the very top of your field, not as a black but as a performer. Isn't that so?"

"I feel that."

"So then what is it that you're saying is missing?"

"James Brown is a legend, sir. Kids see me in the dark and they say, 'That's James Brown.' Again, I ask what does it take for a man like me—who is rated only second to Elvis Presley in the statistics—to put a record out and have it played? There should be no question."

"Do you think that the stations are not playing you?"

"I don't want to single out no stations, sir," Brown says. "I didn't come here for that."

What James Brown, Soul Brother Number One, the Godfather of Soul, the New New Minister of the Super Heavy Funk, Mr. *Please, Please, Please* himself asks is one very simple question: What does it take? **db**

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Free Players From Many Lands Form **GLOBE UNITY ORCHESTRA**

by LEE JESKE

Every *Single One Of Us Is A Pearl* is an Evan Parker composition for the Globe Unity Orchestra whose title sums up this roaring ensemble of exceptional jazz talents from around the globe. Like the classic Ellington orchestra, every single one of them is capable of strong individual performances in all the music's idioms; in *Globe Unity*, though, they move and breathe together in a mass of texture and timbre.

Alexander von Schlippenbach, the tall, steely leader of the Orchestra, has been assembling various versions of the ensemble at intervals for 15 years now. Like Ellington, Schlippenbach is concerned with the shape and texture of the music—in this case, "free" improvisation. He uses players who can move easily between playing inside and outside, who have a particularly strong command of their instruments, and who are all sublime improvisers. Put them in one place, nudge, and see what happens: this is Alexander von Schlippenbach's method. Add to the melee the sounds of bag-

pipes, accordions, musical saws, howling dogs, alphorns, euphoniums, hubcaps, cellos, tubas, whoops and hollers, and the result is a glorious noise which reeks of fun, intensity and *Europe*.

There is no mistaking it—the Globe Unity Orchestra is the culmination of the work of many jazz pioneers in the respective European countries where they live and work. Even most of the players from the North American continent—Canadian Kenny Wheeler and Americans Steve Lacy and Tristan Honsinger—are longtime denizens of Europe. Only tubaist Bob Stewart, a recent replacement for founding member Peter Kowald, resides in his native U.S.

Globe Unity deals mainly in sound. At times the music sounds like a traffic accident; at times it sounds like a drunken oom-pah band; at other times it sounds like what has come to be called 20th century classical music. Solos rise and fall and there is never any lack of surprises—Gerd Dudek might take a swaggering, straightahead tenor solo

over a background of mewling and squealing, or over the sound of nothing more than a tuba. Paul Lovens might play red hot ride cymbal or he might send a pile of junk crashing to the floor. *Ruby, My Dear*, the Monk standard, can get a thick, sonorous dirge-like pounding beneath the reedy treatment of the melody. Even Jelly Roll Morton's *Wolverine Blues* can be worked over with a certain blend of respect and satire.

Globe Unity's strength is in its players. Trombonists Paul Rutherford, Gunther Christmann and Albert Mangelsdorff and saxophonists Steve Lacy and Evan Parker are accomplished soloists. Trumpeters Kenny Wheeler and Enrico Rava can play in a fiery post-bop mode or wail freely. These are not newcomers or charlatans, but highly skilled, accomplished and established jazz musicians who have, more important than anything else, sensitive ears. Standing in a semicircle, they are attuned to each other. When the spirit moves them they can solo, join a soloist, keep still or add to the

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general sound of what's happening. A squeak from Steve Lacy or a low moan from bass clarinetist Michel Pilz can send the whole band in a new direction. It is free playing at its very best.

At the heart of the band are the pianistics of von Schlippenbach. He has the intensity of Cecil Taylor, but his music is less dense. His piano work is dissonant and spatial, but always pushing and throbbing. His composing is, somehow, distinctly non-American, and Globe Unity is his baby. He is proud of the way the Orchestra has survived in spite of discouragement and the impossibility of constant work.

Alexander von Schlippenbach tells the story of Globe Unity:

"The Orchestra was founded in the fall of 1966 when I got a commission to write a piece for the Berlin Jazz Festival. Actually, it was an offer to work out something in cooperation with Boris Blacher for a string quartet and some jazz soloists like Carmell Jones and Leo Wright. At this time I was strongly obsessed by the idea of making a piece for a bigger group of free jazz players. Fortunately, this was accepted by the employers, so the commission was changed and I could start to work on something I had in mind for awhile.

"Free jazz was coming up in Europe in the early '60s. The most important groups at this time in Germany were the Manfred Schoof Quintet and the Peter Brötzmann Trio. The Orchestra for Berlin was based on a fusion of these two groups. After taking some more horn players, there was a 14 piece band together.

"We did three days of rehearsal in Cologne and performed my composition entitled *Globe Unity* at the Philharmonie in Berlin on the third of November. The reaction of the critics and audience was extremely strong in both directions—some of them considered it just as a joke or noise, some wrote about a fusion between jazz and so called serious music. Don Heckman wrote in **DOWN**

beat about a first solution to the problem in connecting elements of jazz with the advanced techniques of composition in modern music. He also pointed to the specific European attitude of the result.

"The piece was released on Saba the same year. For the B side I wrote another piece entitled *Sun*, which was based more on sound shapes. We did some more live performances in Germany, and were called the Globe Unity Orchestra.

"In 1967 I got another commission for a piece which was performed with 18 musicians in the band. Krzysztof Penderecki heard the performance and offered to write a piece. There was also an invitation to the World Exhibition in Osaka in 1970. From 1970-'74 the Orchestra worked mostly by the musicians' own initiative. The Wuppertal Jazz Workshops in Germany gave us a good chance to rehearse and perform, and in 1974 we had an interesting collaboration with the NDR Radio Choir. The next year we played at the International Jazz Festival in Reims with guest artists Anthony Braxton and Enrico Rava. In '76 we played many European festivals and in '77 went on a ten day tour of England on an invitation of the Arts Council of Great Britain.

"Since then we've played at festivals in Grenoble, Rome, Bologna, Berlin, Moers and Lisbon and several concerts in Paris. Most recently we finished a Far East tour organized by the Goethe Institute, which took the band to Hong Kong, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia and India."

On a balmy afternoon in Bombay, Alexander von Schlippenbach, Albert Mangelsdorff, Enrico Rava and I sat by a pool overlooking the harbor and spoke about the current state of jazz in Europe and about the Globe Unity Orchestra which, on this particular tour, consisted of

Lacy, Parker, Pilz and Dudek on reeds; Wheeler, Schoof and Rava on trumpet; Mangelsdorff, Rutherford and Christmann on trombone; Honsinger on cello; Buschi Niebergall on bass; Stewart on tuba; Paul Lovens on drums and percussion (hubcaps, musical saw); and von Schlippenbach on piano.

Jeske: What is the basis of Globe Unity?

Schlippenbach: Think of all of the different musicians as kinds of musical energies. It's very abstract. Imagine if all those energies could be like portents, coming to a result that works. I'm always sure that it is possible to do that. To come to those moments is worth the work. It also respects ideas and compositions and solos—any contribution of any musician in this band means everything.

Mangelsdorff: I'd like to modify this a little bit. For me, the primary interest in this group is actually the possibility of playing improvised music with a large group. And this is something which is very difficult, even for a small group. It's more of a challenge for a big group, and sometimes, when it works out, it's just the ultimate of music, to me.

Jeske: How much of the music is written?

Schlippenbach: The way we play now, I can say 50 per cent . . . *really* written it's less, but let's say it's arranged. It's half and half.

Mangelsdorff: We might do a concert of compositions and the next day we might do a completely improvised concert, without any conception.

Jeske: Do the soloists know how long to solo?

Mangelsdorff: No. How long to play is up to the individual player, unless something in the background comes in and throws you out.

Schlippenbach: It's not based on a measure of choruses. What's happening is happening in free space.

Jeske: Doesn't that lead to some jealousies in the band?

Schlippenbach: Not very much, but

Below: Globe Unity at Bombay's Jazz Yatra '80: Wheeler, Rava, Schoof, Schlippenbach, Lovens, Stewart, Christmann, Honsinger, Rutherford, Mangelsdorff, Pilz, Parker, Dudek, Lacy.



there is some.

Rava: I don't think jealousy, though.

Schlippenbach: Not jealousy. But about this thing that somebody is playing more or less solos. We have arguments about that, but it's not heavy.

Rava: But this is just because everybody wants to have space to play or to solo. And we are many—we are 14 and everybody is a very strong individual soloist. Of course, everybody wants to play, but this is not on the level of jealousy at all.

Schlippenbach: If a person is in the band, he is a member with responsibility to express what he wants to do.

Jeske: How is it possible to keep such a diverse, spread out group of musicians together?

Schlippenbach: It's impossible to have them all the time. Nobody would come to spend the rest of his life in Berlin just to be in this group. What I really would like is two weeks only to practice together. Without concerts. That's what we never can do and that's what would be necessary to get more of an understanding of how we work together.

Rava: Sometimes I think that the beauty of this band is that everyone is a leader. Everybody grows up continuously doing his thing. So every time we get together it's different. This is very different from a big band that sticks together always. We grow up individually and when we get together, for me at least, it's very nice. I'm always looking forward to seeing all the cats.

Schlippenbach: The process is growing over a very long distance. There's never any continuity. There are still a lot of fights before you can even play, because it costs a lot of money. I have to convince people like the Goethe Institute about the reasons for doing it. It's still a lot of work, and sometimes I have to do it all, which makes me crazy. I can't care for the music and at the same time do all this organization. The Goethe Institute is a German office for supporting German culture in foreign countries, and it took me two years to get this tour arranged.

Jeske: Do you compose for the individual players, Alex?

Schlippenbach: I think in most of our pieces the soloists can absolutely be changed. Of course, sometimes when I write a piece I think, 'Ahh, Lacy will play the solo,' or Enrico or somebody, but they are also changeable.

Jeske: The audience here in India didn't respond well to the Orchestra. Does this happen a lot during these tours of countries which aren't used to this type of music?

Rava: I think that it is up to us, really, most of the time. Even if it is a totally new kind of audience. If we are with the music, we will somehow reach the people.

Jeske: What about the difficulty of featuring every player every night?

32 down beat



KURT STANDT

Von Schlippenbach

Mangelsdorff: I am very much for having every soloist solo. Every guy in the band is so strong that they should be featured at every concert.

Schlippenbach: But we need very long concerts for this. If we play one set, like here, it is a weird scene. For me, it is absolutely not too long, but they complain about length. I would like to play two hours, not just one hour.

Rava: The other night I didn't feel too well, and five minutes would have been too long. I think a restriction to only one hour can help the music, too.

Jeske: Did you all grow up with classical training?

Schlippenbach: I think so.

Mangelsdorff: Not me. I actually started with jazz. I got some lessons on the violin and later on on the trombone a bit, but I couldn't say I had classical training. When I started playing, bebop and cool jazz were the things. I got into the music listening to horn players like Bird or Lee Konitz more than trombone players.

Rava: Jazz is really the music which I

was loving and listening to since I was nine or ten, because my older brother had a bunch of records. So I started playing jazz right at the beginning. I started with the trombone, playing New Orleans-style. When I was 16 I was really a freak for New Orleans. I played with a band imitating the Hot Five.

Schlippenbach: I think I started when I was 13 or 14 to play boogie woogie and blues that somebody showed me. I was amazed at the first piano players I saw live, like Oscar Peterson. Then I followed the records of Monk and Bud Powell.

Jeske: Is there a jazz scene in Europe today that is free of America? Some players in England, like Paul Rutherford from your band, have been trying to escape from American influences and become more and more a part of a free European movement.

Schlippenbach: I don't think it's so far away from the music that's played in America, because there are people influencing each other. I'm sure that when it started there was a special kind of European consciousness about the music that made the thing go. So you can say a whole scene was established in Europe at the time.

Mangelsdorff: To me, to find an individual way of playing jazz would be just enough. I don't deliberately try to avoid being American-influenced. Jazz comes from there, and there's this big African thing in jazz which has to be there for me.

Schlippenbach: For me, it's the same. I have learned improvising from playing jazz, and I really get my attitude as an improviser from playing jazz.

Mangelsdorff: For me there is a very strong American influence, because at a certain time in my life I practically lived

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with Americans, when we played in American Service Clubs in the Army. With one unit we stayed for a year; we played with them every night. There is an American influence, I cannot deny that.

Rava: What Albert said before, looking for our own individuality, that's enough. If there is a difference between now and 20 years ago, it's that today there are more European players who have very strong styles. Mangelsdorff is one of them: there are people imitating him. But to say *European jazz* . . . personally I like to think of jazz as just music.

Mangelsdorff: You might start now to make a national jazz and try to discover folk songs and all of these kinds of things. But in our German folk music, I can't find anything that would be really worth making jazz out of.

Rava: Of course, of course. And I think this is for everybody. I am an Italian and they are German, and somehow that comes out, too. We talk differently and I move differently from the way they move. Somehow this thing is coming out.

Schlippenbach: I would like to complete something about this scene of Paul Rutherford's which is going away from American jazz. I think it comes from a certain development in music itself, and doesn't mean so much the country as the way the business is involved. You have

second and even third generation experimental players in England and West Germany. They work very seriously on their own thing, which is no more considered as jazz.

Mangelsdorff: In general, I can say that becoming a jazz musician is much more attractive now than it was ten years ago.

Jeske: Are there more jobs or just more respect for young European players?

Rava: There was always a kind of respect. I think when I started, the idea of being a jazz musician in Italy was almost ridiculous. There was nobody interested, so I felt like a very weird person. Now you can be a jazz musician in Europe, in Italy, and when you become a little bit established you can survive decently.

Jeske: What about American players who come over and have an easier chance of getting work than the local players?

Rava: In Italy it's okay, and I think that's the way it should be. I think of jazz as an art, and if you want to listen to a particular American musician, you don't want to hear another one. Or if somebody wants to hear me, it has to be me. Then, of course, there are other economic problems. In these cases, I agree with the Europeans when they get kind of mad, because there is a discrepancy between what an American musician is paid and what a European musician is paid. Even on an equal basis of popularity and creativity.

Mangelsdorff: And you could complain about the situation of European festivals where there might be 99 per cent American players and maybe one national. The discrepancy is just too big there. Not in all the festivals I've played so far, but some of them.

Jeske: Do you feel a need to impress the United States, or is that gone?

Mangelsdorff: I think it belongs to the profession to be known as much as possible. Particularly considering the U.S.A.

Rava: Through the U.S.A. you become known everywhere.

Mangelsdorff: Let's put it this way: we all wish that we can be as well known in the United States as, say, equivalent American musicians are in Europe.

Jeske: Have you ever considered migrating?

Mangelsdorff: I once, in the '60s, actually meant to move to the United States, but I finally didn't because things started getting better in Europe.

Rava: I lived in New York for seven years.

Schlippenbach: No, not me. I would like to go there and play, but I won't move.

Mangelsdorff: No, me neither—I per-

sonally have a feeling that if they don't call for me, I won't go. I have enough to do in Europe.

Jeske: In what contexts do all of you normally play in?

Schlippenbach: I have a trio; I play in duo with Sven-Ake Johansson, a Swedish drummer. Sometimes I play solo and I also write compositions and arrangements—free style.

Rava: I have my own group and I work consistently. I don't really know what free is. I feel I am a very free person. I might play sometimes with changes and tempo and it can be very free, and sometimes I can play completely outside. There are plenty of avant garde musicians who, to me, are not free. As soon as I get back to Italy I start my own tour with my quartet.

Mangelsdorff: I do mainly solo work. But also, on and off, I might put a group together—there's a group with Michel Portal, a French reed player, which is kind of a steady thing.

Jeske: How much has the European jazz scene changed over the past few years?

Rava: I think Italy is a country which has been going through very big changes. Today in Italy certain modern groups like the Art Ensemble of Chicago, for instance, are definitely more popular than Chick Corea or Herbie Hancock. In Italy, it's better business to have avant garde concerts than fusion. There are a lot of political and economic reasons which would be very difficult to explain.

Mangelsdorff: Generally, I think that we don't have to be afraid that jazz will go down, because there will always be strong individual players. I won't be able to tell what kind of style or what direction, but I have no doubts about that. Concerning myself, there are so many things to still be done.

Jeske: Is there any chance that we'll be able to hear the Globe Unity Orchestra playing in the United States?

Schlippenbach: The only possibility for us is to do it together with the Goethe Institute, because somebody has to pay the fare to go. It's so expensive, and I don't know if any American employer would be able to take the risk. We must have a large amount of concerts.

Rava: Not to mention the old problem of immigration. The only way would be . . .

Schlippenbach: Like if we were sent from Germany by the cultural officials.

Mangelsdorff: Yeah, but if you measure up how many American musicians played how often in Europe, we should be able to go to America and play for the next hundred years.

Jeske: All in all, is Globe Unity a good idea? Does it work?

Schlippenbach: I cannot answer this question.

Mangelsdorff: I can. I think it's a great idea. I think it's beautiful. db



Mangelsdorff



LEE JESKE

Rava

RECORD REVIEWS

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

JIMMIE ROWLES

PAWS THAT REFRESH—Choice CRS 1023; *Chess Players*; *Pretty Eyes*; *Skeleton In The Closet*; *Medley: Over the Rainbow/Irene/Honeysuckle Rose/Over The Rainbow*; *Duke's Dooji (Far East Suite)*.

Personnel: Rowles, piano, vocal; Buster Williams, bass; Billy Hart, drums.

These tunes are from the same March 1976 recording session(s) that produced that other "paws" album, *Grandpaws* (Choice CRS-1014). That was one of Rowles' numerous delightful releases, done in that special relaxed yet stimulating manner of his.

Paws That Refresh has more fire and substance to it, as the opening 11:34 treatment of Wayne Shorter's *Chess Players* makes clear. Rowles alternately rocks firmly and swings lightly. Initially he sticks to a series of embellishments and variations on the theme, then he's off to a flowing series of choruses tinged with both funk and lyricism, broken by occasional stacks of thick chords.

Rainbow gets a solid, earthbound treatment that's as eccentric in its handling of the melody as in its use of a samba rhythm. Rowles does not so much as improvise on the melody as rework the melody, going off in unexpected directions.

Irene, which the trio worked over, including a false start, on *Grandpaws*, is here slipped into the medley as a polished performance, sparkling with Rowles' dancing bright single notes. Suddenly, without a bridge, or even a run (an approach that marks this entire medley), Rowles is into a *Honeysuckle Rose* that has as much Ellington and Tatum as Waller in it, and, of course, even more Rowles, who plays a sort of contemporary version of stride at times.

A lengthy solo by Williams ends *Rainbow* and it's Hart's turn before Rowles picks up a thread of *Honeysuckle*, and shifts into less than a full chorus of *Rainbow* to bring a warm close to the medley.

Rowles gently rocks in the lower registers on the opening of *Duke's Dooji*, his own title for this music from *Far East Suite*. ("It sounded Dooji to me, so that's what I call it," he explains.) There's some of that same thick chorded playing Duke often used, but with the open sound Rowles employs, bringing clarity to the rhythmic accents he places on notes within the chords. Then he sails off lightly into the middle and upper registers as he stretches out, occasionally returning to that rocking, hammering bass rhythm, getting freer with that pattern each time. And in the middle of his restatement of the opening, he suddenly breaks out into sunlight-filled stride.

Finally, there's the vocal side of Rowles: he sings a ballad in a soft, husky voice, filling a brief lyrical piano solo with rich arpeggios. *Skeleton* drolly tells of a party thrown by

ghosts and goblins at which a skeleton's rhythmic dance delights assorted banshees, goblins and witches. It prompts Rowles to rumble out a swinging solo with fine assist from Williams, who makes pizzicato notes groan on the bass, and from Hart, who rattles his cymbals.

Throughout this release, Williams, who takes lengthy solos on *Chess*, *Rainbow* and *Dooji*, displays great sensitivity to the new identities Rowles can stamp upon a tune. And Hart moves along with it all.

In all, this release is more varied and adventuresome than *Grandpaws* (was producer Gerry McDonald overly cautious in what he chose to release first?), making this a stronger and more enjoyable album.

—de muth

KALAPARUSHA MAURICE McINTYRE QUARTET

PEACE AND BLESSINGS—Black Saint BSR 0037; *J&M*; *African Procession*; *Anyway You Want It*; *No. 39*; *Not This*; *Hexagon*.

Personnel: McIntyre, tenor sax, flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, wood flutes, shenai, bells, tambourine, monkey drum; Longineu Parsons, trumpet, flugelhorn, flute, soprano sax, soprano and alto sax, recorders; Leonard Jones, bass; King L. Mock, drums.

An early associate of Roscoe Mitchell, Kalaparusha was consistently one of the leading voices of Chicago's AACM throughout its formative years. In his own group, *The Light*, and in Muhl Richard Abrams' sextet and big band, his powerful tenor sparked many a session with its gut-wrenching passion and cathartic melancholy. Two albums for Delmark, a third for a Japanese label, and a small segment on the *Wildflowers* series were not widely received, and the introspective McIntyre failed to win the recognition accorded some of his more gregarious colleagues. Finally on this Italian session he has been captured in a well-focused and cohesive recording that displays his soulful intelligence and depth in a context of marvelous quartet empathy.

Abandoning his former brimstone, Kalaparusha, like many AACMers, has manifested a greater concern for the subtleties of form and the glories of tradition. Virtually the entire A side is given over to an exposition of neo-bop that rings with an authenticity of feeling often lacking in revivalist facsimiles. *J&M* and *Anyway You Want It* are classic hard bop breakdowns energized with new wave polyrhythms and timbral effects. Drummer King Mock lays down a driving free form barrage and bassist Leonard Jones harmonizes with pristine logic as McIntyre and trumpeter Parsons trade soaring, lyrical solos. Kalaparusha alternates pensive long tones with involuted whorls and squiggles on tenor and bass clarinet, while

Parsons crosses Booker Little's machine-gun staccato with Lester Bowie's sneaky valve techniques to achieve a brilliant and original synthesis. *African Procession* is a brief but haunting intermezzo, a brooding vamp that builds to a crescendo and quickly fades.

On *No. 39*, *Not This* and *Hexagon*, the quartet explores a spacier terrain where composition and improvisation are barely distinguishable. McIntyre's solemn tunes often recall Mitchell's *Sound* LP, on which he participated, with their odd interval leaps and deliberate pacing. He and Parsons broaden the instrumental palette to include flutes, recorders and soprano sax in a continuous tapestry of fluctuating textures replete with Eastern drones and twittering nature effects. No mere "free" jams, these are tightly plotted scenarios in which every note contributes to the larger perspective—indeed, several leitmotifs crop up through the entire session. In conception as in execution, this is a superlative performance in which all four participants emerge as players of the first rank.

—birnbaum

DEXTER GORDON QUARTET

SOMETHING DIFFERENT—SteepleChase SCS 1136; *Freddie Freeloader*; *When Sunny Gets Blue*; *Invitation*; *Winther's Calling*; *Polkadots And Moonbeams*; *Yesterday's Moods*.

Personnel: Gordon, tenor sax; Philip Catherine, guitar; Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

Dexter Gordon's 1975 homecoming, ending 14 years of artistic self exile, left little to chance. Too much was at stake: Gordon's own career, the introduction of bebop to a growing, young jazz audience, the reopening of American shores to fellow expatriates, particularly his personal friend Johnny Griffin. The recorded fruits of Gordon's return evidence the immense care and thought behind the endeavor. From a live date released in the afterglow of his inaugural tour (*Homecoming*, 1976), to a silken large group album (*Sophisticated Giant*, 1977) to an extended piece for his working band (*Manhattan Symphonie*), to a veritable all star game on vinyl (*Great Encounters*, 1980), the special—and the calculated—permeated each disc.

What makes *Something Different* something special is its lack of planned novelty. The album was made in a day, culminating a 22 day, four album spree for Gordon in 1975. And, title and absence of a piano aside, it showcases the excellence that any great artist must summon under ordinary conditions. Being transcendent at Montreux or Newport is not enough.

More than anything else, *Something Different* presents Gordon the interpreter, the stylist. Rather than accede to composers' designs, he stamps with suaveness each selection. His urbanity, so typified in long, lush notes, unifies his approach to all the songs. Gordon is a man who wears his ascots well, and sounds like it.

His liberties start with Miles Davis' *Freddie Freeloader*. Gordon attacks this staple of starkness with swing and upbeat emotion. Rather than spearing the active rhythm section, as Davis did, he rides over it, equally frisky. He treats the album's two ballads—*Sunny* and *Polkadots*—with judicious evasiveness, for a straight reading of either standard could descend into triteness. While revering the rhythm and intent of the songs, after the



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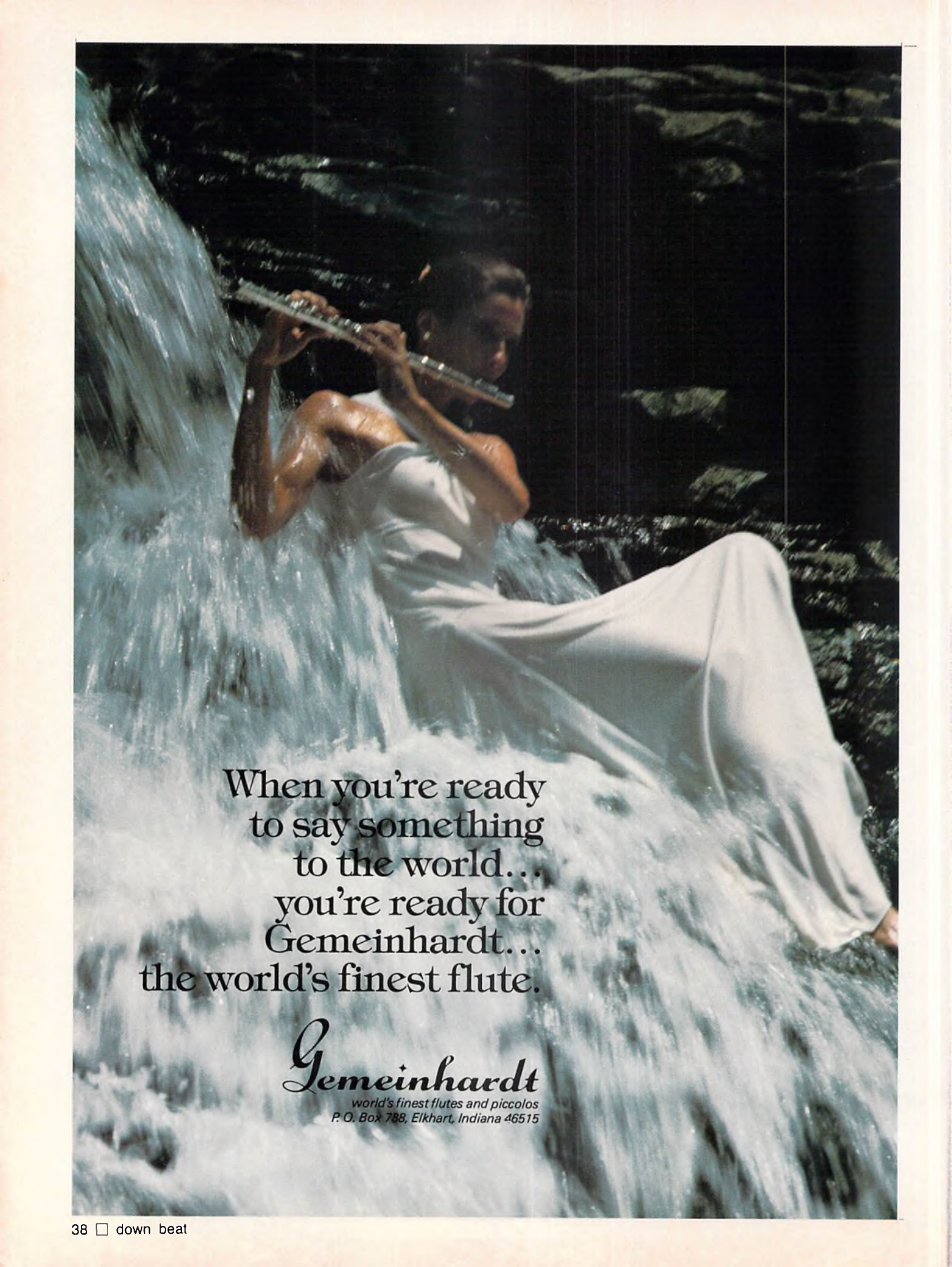
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first few bars Gordon abandons the melody except to touch base every sixth or seventh note. In fiery Slide Hampton's *Yesterday's Mood*, Dex lays at low volume, letting the changes, rather than the decibels, establish the piece's power.

But Gordon remains capable of building changes into mounting spires, things truly grand, like his *Body And Soul* and *Blues Up And Down*. *Invitation* fills the bill here. With a flat or sharp prominently displayed, an upward shift of tempo, a luxuriously, patiently extended note, he spirals upward. The sensation is of watching a pyramid built, angling skyward.

None of this occurs without enviable support. Guitarist Philip Catherine emerges as the "different" element alluded to in the title. He speaks compellingly in two voices: one, the Jim Hall-influenced soloist who hooks the end of each note, letting out solos like lengths of chain, and the other the modern embodiment of Django Reinhardt, a slashing chorder, one who supports and even usurps the rhythm. Altogether, his encounter with Gordon equals any guitar-sax match this side of *The Bridge*. Bassist Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen and drummer Billy Higgins, given less solo time, maintain an unbreakable groove. Even when Catherine solos and Gordon lays out, the pace doesn't suffer.

The liner notes declare *Something Different* one of Gordon's finest works; for once, a compliment-for-hire is hardly hyperbole. Only the timing of the album disconcerts: five years after its recording, Gordon has yet to equal its elegance in simplicity, although *Manhattan Symphonie* comes close. Not to demean his many recent achievements, but Gordon is due for a similar no frills knockout. Here's hoping *Something Different* proves the harbinger of what a repatriated Gordon will do, not just a memorable period piece.

—freedman

LENNIE TRISTANO

QUINTET LIVE AT BIRDLAND 1949—Jazz [R-1: *Remember*; *Pennies*; *Foolish Things*; *Indiana*; *I'm No Good Without You*; *Glad Am I*; *This Is Called Love*; *Blame Me*; *I Found My Baby*.

Personnel: Tristano, piano (solo, cuts 6-9); cuts 1-5: Warne Marsh, tenor sax; Billy Bauer, guitar; Arnold Fishkin, bass; Jeff Morton, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

The great advantage of the three or four minute 78 rpm record was that the performers could concentrate their best efforts within its confines, producing a finished product in the studio superior to their nightly efforts on the bandstand. The great Tristano sextet (add Lee Konitz to these five) created six wonderful Capitol sides, distinctive among other features for their conciseness and shared esthetic. These newly discovered performances reveal an appropriate bass-drums team and a Marsh freewheeling in solo (*Remember*), more constrained in duets and chases. They also reveal that Bauer was not up to the others' level, noodling like a distracted Charlie Christian in *Pennies*, and conventionally elsewhere. Unfortunately, he chords at the beginnings of piano solos, and because he was miked relatively closely, the listener must strain to hear Tristano.

The beginnings of the first two tracks were dubbed from a backup wire recorder (about 1:15 each), and in *Remember* the pain in the ears is less annoying for the fanciful Marsh. Tristano begins by turning a Bauer noodle into a fantasia on fourths, then creates three

choruses with a citric tingle. The other quintet pieces favor the pianist's solo space. He generates power through a peculiar sense of structure in which the linear continuity, no matter how incisive in passages (*Pennies* in particular), appears less crucial to musical flow than the web of harmonic substitutions—in every piece, the original changes are viewed every possible way except straightforwardly. Indeed, the listener has little sense of location in these solos: the accents shift with the unpredictability of a breaking wave. Much of Tristano's power derives from his touch, ever percussive and ideally clear, perfectly delineating every note even in the quadruple-time section of *Love*—characteristically, the smallest 16th note is as important as an accented quarter note. At no time does the music become decorative. The often inspired lyricism of Tristano's solos is as angular metrically as harmonically, and the many delightful turns of phrase must have surprised the player as much as the listener.

For all of Tristano's ordered intensity, an essential optimism seems close to the surface throughout his work here—overt at the beginning of his *No Good* solo, particularly distinctive in the four unaccompanied solos from 1945. Are these later the earliest Tristano on record? They reveal a mature artist, as sophisticated harmonically as ever, if not as rhythmically interesting. They are brief solos that tend to move through will rather than sustained invention, but *I Found* is a giddy, complete work, and the smashing chords that are the main line of the beginning of *This Is* and the substitute melody of *Glad* are especially creative moments. Despite Tristano's persistent improvisation, Art Tatum's harmonic and structural techniques are recurrently suggested.

So this is a piano album, with incomplete solos by Marsh and Bauer, superior to last year's *Descent From The Maelstrom*. We have Fishkin to thank for the recording; Jazz Records is at P.O. Box 23071, Hollis, NY 11423. Incidentally, the liners solemnly maintain that all the tunes here are by Tristano, C & C Jazz (ASCAP). Hah!

—litweiler

RED NORVO/BUDDY TATE/ URBIE GREEN/DAVE MCKENNA

LIVE AT RICK'S—Flying Fish FF 079: *Green Dolphin Street*; *I Can't Get Started*; *Everything Happens To Me*; *Here's That Rummy Day*; *Undecided*; *Just Friends*.

Personnel: Norvo, vibes; Tate, tenor sax; Green, trombone; McKenna, piano; Steve LaSpina, bass; Barrett Deems, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

This is the sort of album at which writers once glared down their noses. It swings in a boisterous sort of way, rather like a Saturday afternoon action movie. There's a gunfight in every chorus and nobody ever seems to stop running. But it's the sort of thing heard too rarely these days—an honest to God jam session that really gets off the ground.

It's a particular treat to hear Urbie Green back on form after years of bland prosperity in the studios. His playing is full of bumping strut and punch. He rolls out just the right sort of riffs behind Buddy Tate, especially during Tate's blitzkrieg on *Undecided*. As for Tate, we get some of the liveliest, most leaping tenor work he's ever committed to record. He builds *Undecided* through five smashing choruses, with the fifth climaxing

in the best JATP manner.

Dave McKenna, whose solo piano LPs of late have tended to make excessive demands on an essentially simple style, is in the thick of his element here—a hot, driving ensemble aggressively powered by Barrett Deems' drumming. The rolling, even momentum of his right hand and the rich, well turned phrases it generates are irresistible. McKenna and Red Norvo exchange fours with extraordinary sensitivity on *Just Friends*, as well. Norvo is silky and civilized whenever he plays. Although a bit overwhelmed by all the wham-bang goings on, he makes the album entirely his own during *Rainy Day*, a mini-masterwork of texture and mood. Two other ballad performance by Tate and Green are routinely lackadaisical, and only mark time until the next shootout. Otherwise, *Live At Rick's* is a lively, swinging romp, sure to please.

—mcdonough

WALTER NORRIS/ ALADAR PEGE

SYNCHRONICITY—Enja 3035/Inner City IC 3028: *Synchronicity*; *Spacemaker*; *Escalator*; *Romance*. Personnel: Norris, piano; Pege, acoustic bass.

★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2

Walter Norris is a remarkably resourceful instrumentalist whose work has enhanced the music of Ornette Coleman (*Something Else*, Ornette's Contemporary debut) and Pepper Adams (*Julian*, issued by Inner City, and *Twelfth & Pingree*—on Enja). Now living in Berlin, he continues to produce inspired music like that captured here, recorded at Nuremberg's East-West Jazz Festival in May 1978.

Integrating elements of Art Tatum, Bud Powell, Frederic Chopin, Bela Bartok and Claude Debussy into his own conception, Norris executes quick, probing runs clearly and precisely. Furthermore, he is a master of the pedal. On *Synchronicity*, for example, the keyboardist uses the sustaining lever judiciously, alternating between bright, crystal sounds and rounder, full-bodied textures.

As on his previous Enja album, *Drifting*, Norris favors a duo format. On the current LP he is joined by Hungarian Aladar Pege, who, although unknown to most U.S. listeners, is a remarkable musician with awesome technical and artistic skills. Throughout *Romance* the bassist creates intense, melodic lines, both unaccompanied and in tandem with Norris.

Synchronicity features a well balanced program of pieces with predetermined harmonic progressions by Norris—the title track and *Spacemaker*—and works without preset patterns by Pege—*Escalator* and *Romance*. The title composition includes a haunting, Chopinesque impressionistic section as well as some heated, up-tempo swinging. Norris' use of dissonance towards the piece's conclusion is particularly effective, further intensifying the already gripping music.

Spacemaker is based on the chord progression of *I Got Rhythm*. (The downward moving theme is somewhat reminiscent of Bud Powell's *Parisian Thoroughfare*.) During a solo, cadenza-like passage, Norris changes moods at will throughout his surprise laden improvisation. In addition, the pianist tosses in a quote from *A Child Is Born*, briefly resolving the tension that his rhythmically charged lines have generated.

Norris and Pege also make a compelling case for free music on *Escalator* and *Romance*.

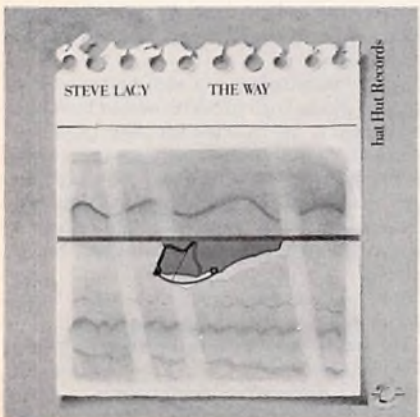
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JOE McPHEE/OLD EYES HH1R01
with André Jaume, Jean-Charles Capon, Raymond Boni, Steve Gnitka, Pierre-Ives Sorin and Milo Fine.
Recorded May 30, 1979/Paris



CECIL TAYLOR/ONE TOO MANY SALTY SWIFT AND NOT GOODBYE HH3R02
with Jimmy Lyons, Raphé Malik, Ramsey Ameen, Sirone and Ronald Shannon Jackson.
Recorded live June 14, 1978/Stuttgart



STEVE LACY/THE WAY HH2R03
with Steve Potts, Irène Aebi, Kent Carter and Oliver Johnson
The first complete recorded performance of TAO; live January 23, 1979/Basel

With no chord progressions to rely on, the musicians have to play off of each other in order to create cogent art. At times, their empathy is uncanny. On *Escalator* they produce Bartok-like and jazz passages with equal success, fusing them into a tightly unified whole.

Romance, on the other hand, begins as a ballad, with Pege's lyrical bowed and pizzicato statements and Norris' soaring comments intertwining in an impassioned dialogue. The music comes in waves, rising and falling like the human heart beat. Later, the music quickens, and the two musicians swing spiritedly before settling back into a more reflective mood. —*safane*

CEDAR WALTON

EASTERN REBELLION—Timeless Muse 306: *Bolivia; Naima; 5/4 Thing; Bittersweet; Mode For Joe*.
Personnel: Walton, piano; George Coleman, tenor saxophone; Sam Jones, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2
EASTERN REBELLION II—Timeless Muse 318: *Fantasy In D; The Maestro; Ojos De Rojo; Sunday Suite*.
Personnel: Walton, piano; Bob Berg, tenor saxophone; Jones, bass; Higgins, drums.

Recorded slightly more than a year apart, these quartet dates are welcome additions to the discography of one of the consistently finest jazz composer/performers active over the last several decades. Each set features a different tenor player, Coleman having just succeeded Clifford Jordan when the first album was recorded in late 1975, Berg replacing Coleman for the second, taped early in 1977. Thanks largely to Walton's forceful shaping of the group's music, the longstanding participation of Jones and Higgins (with him since 1974), no less than the quite similar approaches of the saxophonists, the two sets possess a strong cohesiveness of conception and execution that will come as no surprise to those familiar with Walton's music. These albums maintain his high standards of creativity and musicianship within the bebop rubric to which he has held steadfast.

Of the two, I prefer the earlier set, primarily for the greater interest and authority of Coleman's playing. Berg performs at a commendably high energy level, but often what he plays consists of this quality at the expense of, or in place of, meaningful content. This observation is meant as no slight of Berg's accomplishments: at 26 he already has achieved much, and his promise is sure to deepen and intensify as he gains in maturity. At present, he seems just a shade too reliant on his sources to give much impression of individuality or originality of thought.

Coleman, on the other hand, is an intense, passionate player who draws on many of the same sources as does Berg; the chief influence for both is Coltrane. The major difference between them on these two sets is Coleman's much greater strides in forging an approach of some individuality within their chosen conventions. Coleman's playing possesses greater cohesiveness of thought, and relates with firmer inner logic to his materials than does Berg's at this stage of their respective developments.

All this is of decidedly minor interest considering the strength and vitality of the music the two groups deliver. For me the focus of every group Walton has led has been

the pianist himself. He is ceaselessly exploratory, a risk-taker in the best sense of the term, whose solos always compel attention primarily because he always sounds totally engaged by what he's doing. He seems to constantly challenge himself; as a result, Walton's playing is remarkably free of cliché. Not only is every solo approached freshly and enthusiastically, but his imagination is so fertile and his command of his instrument and of music itself so comprehensive, that he seems to go virtually anywhere his agile mind and fingers take him. And while he's a thinking musician, he's also an intelligent one (not always the same thing) who knows when to let intuition have its head—thus he occasionally paints himself into corners from which he can't always extricate himself gracefully. This is an important part of his chance-taking nature and I'd rather hear Walton make his interesting "mistakes" than other, more glib players perform perfectly.

Not everything he plays in these sets is of equal merit but—and this is the important thing—it's not for want of trying. He's always allowing his reach to exceed his grasp. When his efforts work perfectly, as in his long, ceaselessly, powerfully inventive improvisations on *Bolivia* and *Fantasy In D*, both full of surprising twists and turns and marked by a masterful rhythmic agility, they're definitely worth it. You know you're hearing a jazzman of singular power and creativity responding fully to, and transcending the raw materials of his art. It's what the music is supposed to be all about.

In the first set Walton's two originals—*Bolivia* and *Mode For Joe*—find perfect accompaniment in Coleman's *5/4 Thing*, Jones' aptly titled *Bittersweet* and a sustainably heated, sweeping version of *Naima* that simply is lovely: an excellent program excellently played. The second LP consists of Walton originals, each interesting and infused with his thoughtful, muscular lyricism and utter logic of thought. Of special interest is the lengthy *Sunday Suite* which, at 18 minutes, takes up the entire second side of the disc. It consists of a series of attractive movements—episodes is perhaps a better term—of contrasting moods and textures that employ various combinations of the four players, producing a totality quite effective in its impressions of the urban landscape. The second and fourth episodes, featuring the pianist, are particularly outstanding. Berg acquits himself most commendably in the work's legato episodes, playing with moody effectiveness, but falling back into his Traneisms on the uptempo sections.

Two valuable, instructive, richly enjoyable additions to Walton's already impressive body of work. Highly recommended. —*welding*

SAL NISTICO

NEO NISTICO: Bee Hive BH 7006: *Blues For K.D.; Bambu; Fee-Fi-Fo-Fum; Anthropology; You Don't Know What Love Is; Be My Love*.

Personnel: Nistico, tenor sax; Ted Curson, trumpet, flugelhorn; Nick Brignola, baritone sax; Ronnie Matthews, piano; Sam Jones, bass; Roy Haynes, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★
It is difficult to understand why this is Nistico's first American date as a leader. His work with Woody Herman, Buddy Rich and many others has shown him to be a superb jazz player: relaxed, confident, swinging like crazy on the breakneck tempos; lulling, soothing, romantic on the ballads. And what

we hear on *Neo* says that, if anything has changed, Sal has gotten better over the years.

Stylistically, he owes a lot to Sonny Rollins for his easy flow and to John Coltrane for his abstractness; Nistico combines these influences into his solos, showing one side, then the other. Somewhere in the middle, Nistico emerges, playing with a swarthy tone, though here he sounds lighter than in person.

Nistico functions better in a small band, and on *Anthro* and *Bambu*, the sextet tunes, there are just too many players for comfort. Scoring the former in fourths for bari and tenor doesn't work, and the fast time finds Curson sloppy and straining. Sal wails, as does Brignola (easily the most under-discovered barman), but they don't have enough space. On *Bambu*, a samba, it all feels just a little bit cutesy, like Sal didn't really mean it.

But *You Don't Know* and *Fee-Fi* are much more with it, especially *You*, which is a quartet smoker. The shadow of Rollins looms briefly, but then Sal lays out the phrases with a smooth, even assurance that really makes the music move. The accompanying trio of Matthews, Haynes and Jones sets him up beautifully, and Matthews' solo shows emotional depth and sense of structure. Wayne Shorter's *Fee-Fi* is for quintet, and here Curson uses his splattery tone, with all the little bubbles inside, to great effect. Sal just eats up this easy groove, spinning out the chords in juxtapositions, hitting a nicely resolved phrase, then working in a diatonic mood for another idea.

If the setting had been Nistico with just a trio, as he plays live, this date would be worth five stars. And that would be this writer's advice: let the man stretch out. As it stands, *Neo* has plenty of very good music, some of it excellent. The best news is that this marvelous tenorman is back on wax. —stewart

JAY McSHANN

KANSAS CITY HUSTLE—Sackville 3021: *Round Midnight*; (*Since I Lost My Baby*) *I Almost Lost My Mind*; *Kansas City Hustle*; *Willow Weep For Me*; *Blue Turbulence*; *Don't Get Around Much Any More*; *Baby Won't You Please Come Home*; *Rockin' Chair*; *My Sweet Mama*.

Personnel: McShann, solo piano.

★ ★ ★ ★

The foundations of jazz piano, from early swing to current day modern forms, revolve around the blues. To define the blues is to say that there is only one breed of bird, or one species of wild animal or flower. Cities like Kansas City, Chicago, St. Louis present styles and schools, but you have to almost sit next to each artist and just listen.

In this solo recording, Jay McShann pulls an easy chair up to the piano and gives us his own personal blues design. He has mastered not only the classical blue clusters and forms, but moved into the so called intellectual jazz territory, with grace and beauty planned.

McShann's version of Monk's *Round Midnight* opens side one. The introduction sweeps across the piano, gently falling on the tonic and melody. The bass line is out of the Tatum school, wide tens played clean and open, with an aggressive punch. A hot southern mood prevails, as midnight is a magic time and the family is over drinking wine, telling strange old stories, and feeling the pattern of the cottonwoods against the white full moon and country stars.

Willow Weep For Me is simply blue impressionism. The melody dances into the air,

blurred by the pedal and the constant shifting of styles. Tatum and Hines riffs are cast in like shots of lightning, or quiet conversations, with near perfect control and balance.

The piano recording by Phil Sheridan is very clean and strong. There is a good stereo image, and the punch of McShann's left hand is preserved.

This is not a hard or flashy record. The mood and the styles projected are easy and relaxed. To say that Jay McShann is just a blues pianist is absurd. The music here is the work of a man who hears and feels many forms and emotions: it is the way a willow tree lays against the summer sky, or the sound of children playing; it is *life*. —sparrow

YUSEF LATEEF

IN A TEMPLE GARDEN—CTI 7088: *In A Temple Garden*; *Bismillah*; *Confirmation*; *Nayaz*; *Jeremiah*; *Honky Tonk*; *How I Loved You*; *Morocco*.

Personnel: Lateef, tenor sax, flute; Tom Schuman, keyboards (cuts 3,5,8); Jeremy Wall, keyboards; Eric Gale, guitar; Will Lee, bass; Steve Gadd, Jimmy Madison, drums; Randy Brecker, trumpet; Michael Brecker, tenor sax; Jerry Dodgion, alto sax; Jim Pugh, trombones; Thomas Beyer, Syndrums; Ray Barretto, Sammy Figueroa, Jeremy Wall, percussion; Suzanne Cianci, synthesizer programming.

★ ★ ★ ★

In A Temple Garden should mark a turnaround in Lateef's production. Not only is it his first solid effort in many years, it is also his best album since the lopsided but unforgettable *Suite 16* from 1970.

This surprising but most welcome change, from a musician who has been recording steadily for three decades, is not the result of renewed inspiration or any directions explored—those never seem to be problems for Lateef—but rather of a return to essence. For some time Lateef has been given to presenting himself as a philosophical avant gardist, with some very erratic performances and recordings as the most obvious harvest. On *Temple Garden* he sheds all pretensions to pursue instead the domain that is truly his, namely, an esoteric brand of rhythm & blues with Middle Eastern and other ethnic overtones.

In this attempt to re-focus his music Lateef is greatly aided by Wall's arrangements and compositions (*How I Loved You* is a Lateef original, and *Honky Tonk*, of course, is the famous Bill Doggett hit). Wall provides even and melodic material with the breathing space that enables Lateef to unwrap his momentum building solo style.

Nayaz is particularly satisfying: Lateef paints the slight but beautiful ballad with emotionally drenched broad sweeps, and as the song slowly intensifies, he allows it to climax in a perfectly inserted tremolo figure.

Confirmation is another high point, with Lateef stretching out his sweat-dripping sax sound, reaching dronelike plateaus and carefully carved peaks. Again one notices Wall's lean but effective backdrops, which add the color and resonance that become a relatively limited improviser like Lateef.

Lateef's ebb and tide solo structure is most fluently expressive on slower material, but he is in such buoyant spirits here that even a true rocker like *Honky Tonk* takes off within form. I also happen to like his singing on *How I Loved You*—eerie yet deeply evocative—but I may stand alone here.

Welcome back, Yusef!

—gabel

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BILLY BANG/DISTINCTION WITHOUT A DIFFERENCE
Solos recorded live August 12, 1979/
New York N.Y.

HH1R04



DAVE BURRELL/WINDWARD PASSAGES
Solos recorded live
September 13, 1979/Basel

HH2R05



MAX ROACH
feat. ANTHONY BRAXTON
ONE IN TWO/TWO IN ONE
Recorded live August 31, 1979/Willisau

HH2R06

BOZ SCAGGS

MIDDLE MAN—Columbia FC 36106: *Jojo*; *Breakdown Dead Ahead*; *Simone*; *You Can Have Me Anytime*; *Middle Man*; *Do Like You Do In New York*; *Angel You*; *Isn't It Time*; *You Got Some Imagination*.

Personnel: Scaggs, vocals; Lenny Castro, percussion; David Foster, keyboards; Don Grolnick, keyboards (cuts 2, 8); James Newton-Howard, clarinet (6); David Paich, organ, synthesizer (3, 6); Ray Parker Jr., guitar, bass; John Pierce, bass (1); Jeff Porcaro, drums; Carlos Santana, guitar (4); Adrian Tapia, sax (1); Paulette Brown, Rosemary Butler, Bill Champlin, Charlotte Crossley, Venetta Fields, Charles Irwin, David Lasley, Sharon Redd, Bill Theoford, Oren Waters, Julia Tillman Waters, backup vocals.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

AVERAGE WHITE BAND

SHINE—Arista AL 9523: *Over Time Has Come*; *For You, For Love*; *Let's Go Round Again*; *Whatcha' Gonna Do For Me*; *Into The Night*; *Catch Me (Before I Have To Testify)*; *Help Is On The Way*; *If Love Only Lasts For One Night*; *Shine*.

Personnel: Roger Ball, keyboards, alto sax; Malcolm Duncan, tenor sax; Steve Ferrone, drums, percussion; Alan Gorrie, vocals, bass; Onnie McIntyre, guitar; Hamish Stewart, vocals, guitar; David Foster, keyboards; Lennie Castro, Paul Lani, Paulinho da Costa, percussion; Brenda Russel, backup vocals; Jerry Hey, Gary Grant, Larry Hall, trumpets and flugelhorn; Lew McCreary, Bill Reichenbach, trombones; Ernie Watts, Kim Hutchcroft, Larry Williams, saxes and woodwinds.

★ ★ ½

Both Boz Scaggs and the Average White Band have in the past produced such excellent r&b-laced pop as *Lowdown* and *If I Ever Lose This Heaven*; in addition, Scaggs has penned rockers and ballads, and AWB has had its funky instrumental hits. But Scaggs, always a fine rock vocalist, has now made a great leap forward, writing songs of greater dramatic intensity and singing them with more urgency than his ultra-cool image might lead us to expect. AWB, meanwhile, is stuck in the same old groove.

More sophisticated musically and production-wise than most of *Silk Degrees*, more focused and accessible than *Down Two, Then Left*, Scaggs' new album is by far his most effective to date.

Not that he could have done it alone. David Foster, who was co-composer of Earth, Wind & Fire's *After The Love Has Gone*, collaborated with Scaggs on six of the nine songs and arranged the strings. A first-rate group of session players contribute exceptional performances. Producer-engineer Bill Schnee (who's worked with Steely Dan) affords production which is dense, sometimes even lush, but the guitars are crisp, and the drums and bass pack a punch. Scaggs needed this producer, this arranger and these musicians to achieve his potential as fully as he does here—he is truly the man in the middle.

Scaggs' suave presence smoothes the transitions from soulful pop to hard rock shuffle to romantic crooning. His singing, never better, is as loose as the band is tight: gritty, inventive and risk-taking.

Jojo and *Simone*, composed in the mid-tempo r&b-jazz style of *Lowdown*, are the most sophisticated work he has ever done. *Jojo* is an amalgam of urban anti-heroes, a gun toting, high-living pimp, pusher, bad cat—"Jojo likes his fun." The lyrics are sharp and, ultimately, poignant, and the ensemble playing is perfect. During a stirring sax solo by Tapia, the bass drops out, leaving the r&b guitar riff, light piano, strings, and Porcaro's drums suspended like a cloud; at its climax, Porcaro fires a stunning fusillade, then the descending bass reenters, bringing this 42 □ down beat

weightless mass back down to solid ground.

Simone is a true pop masterpiece. The lyrics, about a smoldering love affair, are delivered on the wings of a genuinely romantic melody; Boz soars with it. This is the album's outstanding production number, using strings, horns, acoustic and electric pianos, guitars, synthesizers and female voice; an Earth Wind & Fire style counter-melody on flugelhorn, and accordion in the verse, conjuring up a sad Parisian ambiance. It is a beautiful example of a 24 track mixdown without mud. A sense of space is created by picking a single element to dominate the midrange at a given time and keeping the others low, barely present, but adding crucial harmonic support. Drums and bass are mixed high, keeping the rhythm from being buried under the weight of so many harmonic tracks. For example, almost inaudible rhythm guitar and electric piano tracks fill out the first verse behind a more dominant, funky, staccato guitar riff. In later verses, all three take a back seat to the accordion, but their contribution is still felt if not consciously heard.

The rockers are nasty, with strong lyrics; *You Can Have Me Anytime* is a memorable ballad, highlighted by a typically piercing, lyrical guitar solo by Santana.

If everything comes together for Scaggs on his latest, AWB is just treading water on theirs, despite producer David Foster's creditable work. While these Scots have been surprisingly successful in their quest to sound like a black soul group, they necessarily risk comparison with the best of black r&b. Sadly, as good as parts of their new album are, only one song, *Into The Night*, compares to the catchy, funkied-out bliss of, say, the Brothers Johnson's *Stomp*.

Funk continues to be AWB's strong suit. The most enjoyable cut here, *Night*, is performed in the percolating, syncopated style of their earlier *Pick Up The Pieces*. As on those two, a sax section plays the melody, mostly in unison. This time out, unwhite drummer Steve Ferrone churns out a delightful quasi-military beat. Throughout the album he enhances his reputation as an uncannily steady drummer.

Aside from the drumming, a few sax riffs, and enthusiastic singing, there's not much here. The melodies are bland and forgettable and the lyrics full of vague, positive sentiments; lots of "Don't give up" and "Oh, girl, thank you for my life." Even Foster's assistance is not enough to bring back the magic of AWB's gem-laden first two LPs.

—morrison

JOHN LEE/GERRY BROWN

CHASER—Columbia NJC 36212: *Chaser*; *Will It Last?*; *Fate Ripper*; *Daily Planets*; *Celebration*; *What It Is*; *New Waves*; *Prospect Park*.

Personnel: John Lee, four and eight string basses, percussion; Gerry Brown, drums, percussion; Eef Albers, guitar; Kenneth Knudsen, Fender Rhodes, acoustic piano, MiniMoog, PolyMoog, Prophet V, Roland M100; Bobby Malach, tenor sax; Darryl Thompson, guitar (cuts 3, 8); Palle Mikkelborg, trumpet, percussion (2, 5).

★ ★ ★ ½

Anyone expecting wishy-washy pop-jazz from bassist John Lee and drummer Gerry Brown will be nonplused by *Chaser's* overruling jackhammer rock 'n' roll. Those conversant with the two Philadelphians' rock band, Medusa, and their concomitant careers as confidants to a host of jazz-rock performers—including Philip Catherine, Larry Cor-

yell, Joachim Kuhn and Alphonse Mouzon—will have their vicarious thirst quenched by the maniacal playing which pervades nearly every groove of the duo's latest feature recording, waxed in Copenhagen during the summer of 1979.

The opening number, *Chaser*, is rather incongruous alongside the other seven rock oriented songs because its pretty melodic repetitions—Stanley Clarke's tenorman Bobby Malach is the soloist—and perky though relatively constrained rhythmic undercarriage put it on the fringes of that pop-jazz miasma. *Will It Last?*, the next track, throws off the shackles and lets the participants frolic. This Brown composition—with Danish trumpeter Palle Mikkelborg's fanfares for an unknown coronation releasing just enough steam to keep things from exploding altogether—is bright and irresistible. They play like they care about the music. Call it passion, an emotion seldom found in contemporary commercial sounds.

Eef Albers, showing his flair for half-tones, and earning a spot on the roster of potential guitar stars (teammates: Catherine, John Clark, Clem Clempson, Alan Holdsworth, Gary Moore), complements Msrs. Lee and Brown with melodramatic passages which regulate the mood of the music. He adroitly spars with his mates on *Prospect Park*—brazenly staying abreast the firm, powerful drums and buzz bomb bass—and he sensitively (by hard rock standards) works his way through *What It Is*, his own song.

Were Hendrix numbered among the living, he would find Lee and Brown the ideal pair to fill out a trio. Sure, the Summer of Love was a millennium ago, but don't let on to these players—they're stomping like hard rock will still save the planet. We could do worse than listen to *Chaser*, a time warp equation of verve and commitment. —hadley

THE JEFF LORBER FUSION

THE JEFF LORBER FUSION—Inner City IC 1026: *Funky Gospel*; *Glisten*; *Deva Samba*; *Refunk*; *Terry's Lament*; *Lift Off*; *Chinese Medicinal Herbs*; *River Winds*; *Cousin Stu*.

Personnel: Lorber, keyboards; Lester McFarland, bass; Terry Layne, reeds and flute; Dennis Bradford, drums; Jeff Uusitalo, trombone (cut 5); Tod Carver, guitar (6,8); Ron Young, percussion (2); Bruce Smith, percussion (4,6,8).

★ ★ ★ ½

WIZARD ISLAND—Arista AL 9516: *Wizard Island*; *Sweet*; *Can't Get Enough*; *Reflections*; *Fusion Juice*; *Lava Lands*; *City*; *Rooftops*.

Personnel: Lorber, acoustic piano, Yamaha Electric Grand, Fender Rhodes, Moog Modular System, Prophet Synthesizer, OBX Synthesizer, MiniMoog; Dennis Bradford, drums; Kenny Gorelick, flute, tenor and soprano saxes; Danny Wilson, electric bass guitar; Paulinho Da Costa, percussion; Jay Koder, guitars; Chick Corea, MiniMoog (cut 9).

★ ★

It's not difficult to understand why Jeff Lorber has broken Inner City's sales records or why his releases climb the *Billboard* charts. This young keyboardist's infectious blend of funky dance music with gospel, Latin and pop, and his tight, businesslike arrangements are as cunningly woven as a plot by Neil Simon and have the technological glitter of *Star Wars II*. Clean, hip family music. Moreover, there's that buzzword *fusion*. If Chick does it, if Herbie does it, if Weather Report does it, and if Miles himself laid its foundations, it can't be all bad, right?

Indeed, the kicky *Funky Gospel*, the lead cut on the first of these releases, is almost another *Birdland*. Happy churchy cadences lead into a long, boppish lick, prodded by

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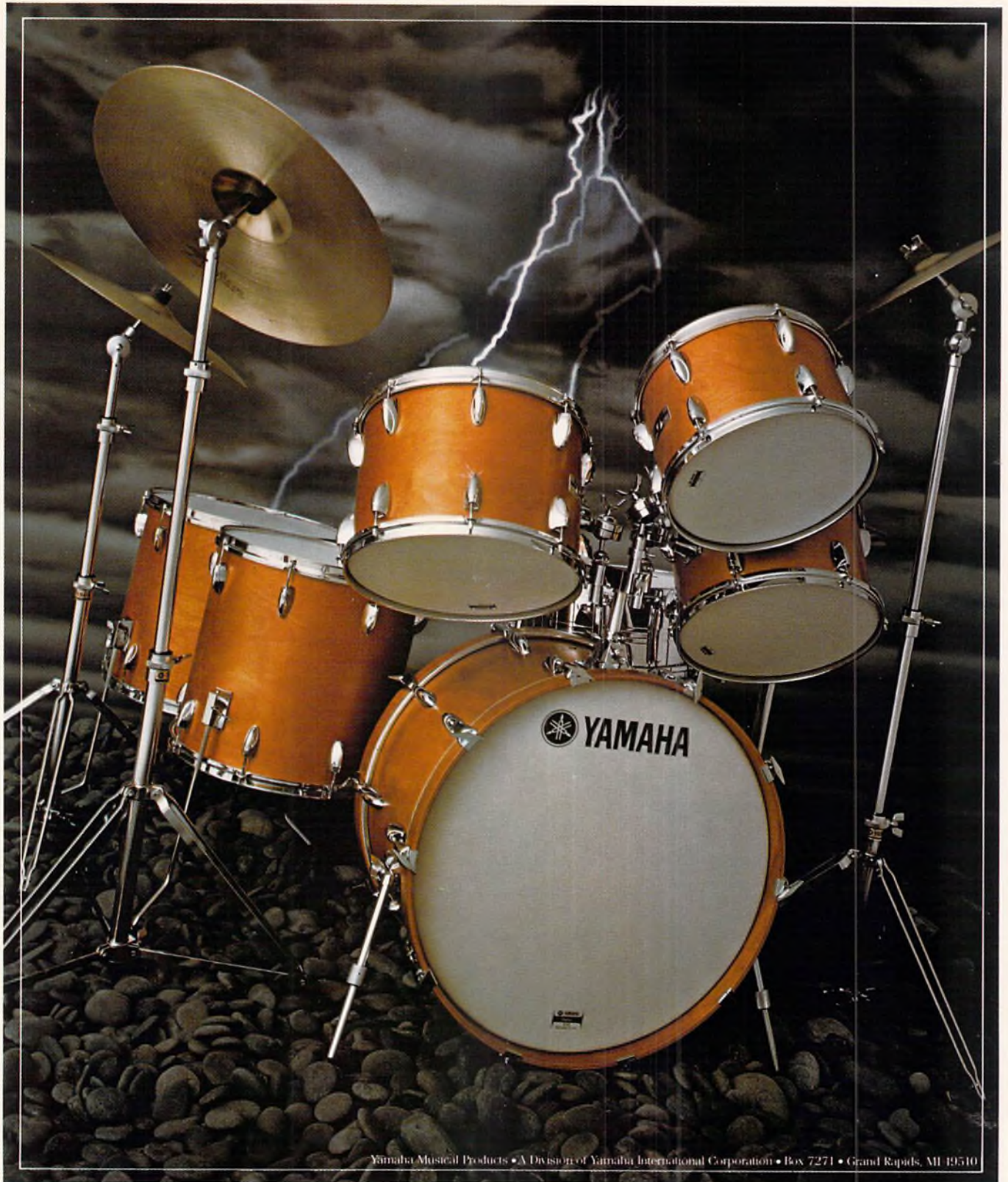
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carefully mitered bass and drums rhythmic unisons. Moving into straightahead swing, Lorber's dancing, tripping lines recall Wynton Kelly at his brightest. Former Kentonite Terry Layne's honking, singsongish phrases merge into Traneish scalar excursions to continue the blend. Clever, effective fusing throughout.

Other bright spots come on *Terry's Lament*. Here Lorber calls in Uusitalo, whose gritty, carefully contoured ballad 'bone solo slides into a 12/8 gospel line, ending in intricate, blues-tinged trombone/alto gymnastics.

The remaining tracks, though, are less inspired. All is premediated sweetness and light on *Glisten*, a slow rock ballad which prompts Lorber into lick-crunching a la Ramsey Lewis on *Sun Goddess*. *Refunk* is electrophonic disco, right down to its metronomical sock cymbal splashes and its mechanical sax/synth riffs. Even the electronic percussion pings and glisses can't bring this one alive.

Throughout, Lorber's synthesizer playing is melodically uninspired and unimaginatively patched. On a solo he's liable to retreat to envelope generator filter sweeps, resulting in a plethora of lines that quack, wa-wa and twang, confirming Frank Zappa's recent remark that most keyboardists really want to be guitarists. Left to his own devices on acoustic piano (*Cousin Stu*), Lorber tellingly loses all sense of stylistic identity, sounding like one of a thousand lounge pianists.

But again, it can't be all bad, right? If you're still optimistic, consider *Wizard Island*. With the exception of Chick Corea's guest shot on the two-beat Latin *Rooftops*, an appearance which prods Lorber into his most inventive energetic playing on either of these discs, here's an album remarkable in its cultivated, uniform banality. It's the anesthetizing sound of fuzak, an etude in James Brown funk rhythms *reductio ad absurdum*, a compendium of more melodic hooks than you might find by casually sweeping across the dial of an AM radio, and a study in excitement without content.

Fusion Juice is typical. A rock vamp of pure, sticky bubble gum is joined by Gorelick's sax reading of Lorber's incrementally developed melody. After crossing over into jazzy tenor wailing, Gorelick's replaced by tinkling flute/orchestra bell synthesizer noodling. Even ascending modulations, like those used by the old swing bands, can't relieve the monotony. *Lava Lands*, *Shadows* and *City* likewise exploit similar numbing formats.

Can it be all bad? Nearly so, alas; especially when promising players assume the way to the top is paved with potboiler material, however well intentioned. —balleras

BOB MAGNUSSON QUINTET

REVELATION—Discovery DS-804: *Revelation 21:4*; *Assured Expectation*; *Gentle Rain*; *Coisa #10*; Artist's Spoken Autograph; *Take Some Time To Walk With The One You Love*; *Dark Moment*; *No Exit*; Artist's Spoken Autograph.

Personnel: Magnusson, acoustic bass; Joe Farrell, tenor and soprano saxes, flute; Bill Mays, acoustic and electric piano; John Guerin, drums; Jim Plank, percussion. ★ ★ ★ ½

Bassist Bob Magnusson's first album as a leader is a solid success, featuring fine players in a mainstream setting accurately described in Lee Underwood's liner notes as "complexity without pretentiousness . . . beauty with muscle and fire." Magnusson's classical training (his father was a symphony clarinetist for 20 years) was not wasted when Bob turned to

jazz in the late '60s, playing with Buddy Rich for two years, then Sarah Vaughan off and on throughout the '70s. Magnusson is schooled but soulful on his sonorous upright, and he writes well, too.

Maybe it was Magnusson's impressive performance on last year's power trio outing by John Klemmer, *Nexus*, which first indicated that the bassist was ready for his first date as a leader. *Revelation* contains elements of hard bop. Latin melodies and rhythms, and a keen sense of both the traditional and modern. Above and beyond that, the session swings on strong fundamentals and substantial soloing. Rhythmically, the meter men are tight, Magnusson having played with both Guerin (on Klemmer dates) and old buddy Plank, who at one point played traps alongside Magnusson in a cooking San Diego fusion group that also included guitarist Steve O'Connor and keyboardist Butch Lacy, two good ones still waiting to be discovered.

The set starts off with laid back flute jazz on a rather optimistic *Revelation 21:4*, but soon gets into a simmering bop groove on *Assured Expectation*, with Farrell typically hot on soprano. *Gentle Rain* is a bass soliloquy full of harmonics and light blue moodiness, very accomplished and sensitive. *Coisa #10*, a Moacir Santos tune, is perky and carefree, a melodic gem spun and polished by the magic of Farrell's flute.

Side two contains two upbeat showcases for Farrell's tenor, *Take Some Time* and *No Exit*, plus Bill Mays' idyllic duet for bowed bass and piano, *Dark Moment*. The musicianship is high quality throughout, and the tunes are often refreshing.

Unfortunately, both sides of the record are marred by little tags called the "artist's spoken autograph," Magnusson's spoken listings of songs and players. These monologues have all the impact of a grade school book report or a 1957 hi-fi demonstration record. Ray Pizzi does the same tacky raps on his new Discovery release, too. This practice effectively destroys the artistic mood conjured by Magnusson's music, gives us no information that can't be found on the jacket credits, and doesn't bring us any closer to the artist as a communicating human being, either. Good jazz speaks for itself, and Discovery should keep that in mind on future pressings. —henschen

PAUL MOTIAN

LE VOYAGE—ECM 1-1138: *Folk Song For Rosie*; *Abacus*; *Cabala/Drum Music*; *The Sunflower*; *Le Voyage*.

Personnel: Motian, drums, percussion; Charles Brackeen, tenor, soprano saxophones; J.F. Jenny-Clark, bass. ★ ★ ★ ★

This most recent album by the Paul Motian Trio picks up where the previous edition left off—in creating enduring, endearing, intensely engaging music of an extremely understated, rarefied nature. The only change in personnel from their excellent ECM album *Dance* finds the French bassist J.F. Jenny-Clark replacing the late David Izenzon, and though he is certainly competent and occasionally melodically inspiring, the group misses Izenzon's timbral panache and contrapuntal wizardry.

While the bassist is fairly well known for his 1960s European work with nearly every avant garde musician extant, and Motian's reputation has continually grown from his early association with Bill Evans through extensive activities with Keith Jarrett and a variety of

other ad hoc aggregations, saxophonist Charles Brackeen's talents have been hidden under a bushel too long. His unique tone on soprano is alternately sensual and laced with strychnine, and his powers of invention manifest themselves in lines long and pungent, utilizing narrative, rather than motivic, development.

Together, the trio has a distinctive, airy ambience afforded through terse, succinct solo statements and muted, moody thematic material. Their sense of dynamics and sparse textures result in a colorful yet subtle lyricism which never shouts, but suggests flavors, aromas and sentiments. Each of the five compositions on *Le Voyage* are miniature tone poems created by musicians more concerned with a unified ensemble empathy than solo histrionics, and they succeed brilliantly.—lange

BILL EVANS

SYMBIOSIS—PA/USA 7050: *First Movement*; *Second Movement*.

Personnel: Evans, acoustic and electric piano; Eddie Gomez, bass; Marty Morell, drums; orchestra arranged and conducted by Claus Ogerman.

★ ★ ★

I WILL SAY GOODBYE—Fantasy F-9593: *I Will Say Goodbye* (two takes); *Dolphin Dance*; *Seascape*; *Peau Douce*; *The Opener*; *Quiet Light*; *A House Is Not A Home*.

Personnel: Evans, acoustic piano; Eddie Gomez, bass; Eliot Zigmund, drums.

★ ★ ★ ½

Comparing these recordings serves a twofold purpose: first, as an analysis of the music itself, to promote discussion or to inform the prospective buyer. Secondly, to illustrate the idea that two very different records by the same artist must be evaluated in terms of that artist's specific intentions for that recording, not the success or failure of other, dissimilar projects. If stars were awarded solely on the basis of ambition, preparation and care for detail, *Symbiosis* would rate ten and *I Will Say Goodbye* two. But in terms of a clearly focused presentation, the latter recording (though by no means a "classic" Bill Evans trio date) comes across as the more cohesive of the two.

Symbiosis is more of a showcase for the arranging/composing talents of Claus Ogerman than for the piano work of Evans. In fact, the pianist's role throughout the entire two movement scheme is rather confusing.

Certainly jazz harmonies play an important role in this piece, and in Ogerman's concept of orchestration. But the rhythmic implications of a swinging jazz trio, and the emotions that accompany that experience, somehow don't seem to mesh with the lush, classically influenced writing of the composer.

This problem of overall design, however, doesn't necessarily inhibit the tremendous range of colors and textures that can be felt in this music. There are some beautiful moments of symbiotic interplay between Evan's rubato improvisations and Ogerman's marvelous string writing, especially in the *Second Movement*. The effects of a two part conclusion in the final *Largo* work very well, and in the hands of a less imaginative pop/jazz composer would have come across as utter schmaltz.

I Will Say Goodbye, perhaps the last record Evans did while under contract to Fantasy records, is more of a nightclub presentation than a concept recording (as is *Symbiosis*). It doesn't appear that much was done to prepare for this recording besides load the musicians and the equipment into a car, drive

them to the studio, set up and let them play. The arrangements are straightforward, mostly medium to slow in tempo, and the tunes are compatible with the spirit of probing sentimentality that is so often an integral part of Evans's approach.

The inclusion of two takes of the Michel LeGrand title tune might have served a useful purpose had a different approach been used for each, but there seems to be little more here than matching some of the rhythmic and harmonic nuances of one night's performance against another's.

Dolphin Dance, a Herbie Hancock composition, is the freshest sounding track on the record. Evans shows more vitality in his tone and attack; it was around this period ('77) that his playing generally became more aggressive than during the several preceding years. Here, as throughout, he establishes a strong sense of harmonic rapport with Eddie Gomez, the strongest accompanist to have graced his trio since Scott LaFaro. Zigmund plays a fairly subordinate role throughout this record; his contributions are largely confined to coloring the ensemble with cymbal swishes and the occasional rustling of brushes.

Each of these recordings has plenty to offer any Evans enthusiast. If the pianist's role had been more clearly defined in *Symbiosis*, it would rank as one of his best efforts in recent years (hopefully it is not the last word on his collaborations with Ogerman; both are currently under contract to Warner Bros.). On its face, however, *I Will Say Goodbye* imparts a clearer image of what the man and his instrument are capable of doing.

—moorhead

CHICK COREA

TAP STEP—Warner Bros. BSK 3425: *Samba L.A.*; *The Embrace*; *Tap Step*; *Magic Carpet*; *The Slide*; *Grandpa Blues*; *Flamenco*.

Personnel: Corea, MiniMoog, Moog 55, Vocoder; Oberheim OBX, Rhodes electric piano, acoustic piano, Clavinet, handclaps, wood block; Bunny Brunel, fretless bass, Yamaha 2000; Jamie Faunt, piccolo bass; Stanley Clarke, piccolo bass, talk box; Al Vizzutti, trumpet, flugelhorn; Joe Farrell, tenor and soprano saxes; Joe Henderson, tenor sax; Hubert Laws, flute, piccolo; Tom Brechtlein, drums, snare drum; Don Alias, congas, lya drums; Aírto Moreira, cuica, snare drum, tamborim, whistle, drums, pandero; Laudir Oliveira, agogo, surdo, ganzá, tamborim; Flora Purim, Gayle Moran, Shelby Flint, Nani Villa Brunel, vocals.

Style and cliché are next door neighbors. No fence separates them. Neither owns a vicious dog. So it's easy to go from one house to the other.

Chick Corea knows that. With *Return To Forever*, his works quickly strayed into derivative drivel. Song after song asked the musical question: "How fast can we play this set of unison triplets?"

On his solo LPs, Corea began with novel phrases and voicings. All too soon they went hackneyed; all too often they were unconscious *Variations On A Theme From La Fiesta*.

Corea's latest recorded venture starts on cliché's front porch. *Samba L.A.* has the sound of Sergio Mendes in 1966. "Come on, let's do the samba/Let's love into the night"—it's a cinch these lyrics were never meant to be carved in stone.

The Embrace has the grace of those clumsy Olympic hymns sung at Lake Placid last winter. Undoubtedly, the source of the melody Gayle Moran sings must be an improvisa-

tion; it has *scat* written all over it. There could be more writing, but the words get in the way of the notes so often, her vocal becomes a tempest-tossed word salad.

At this point, *Tap Step* appears destined for a dreadful demise. Only a diehard Coreatic or record reviewer would be tempted to stick around for the end. That's too bad: the title track is next, and its presence saves the album. Enough of those clichés, it shouts. Back to style.

Tap Step (the song) is dedicated to Charlie Parker. While it has Bird's unmistakable influences and a melodic reference to *Billy's Bounce*, it comes closer to being a crash course covering the history of jazz in eight minutes and 19 seconds. Bop resides in the hesitating melody. New Orleans marches with Tom Brechtlein's snare drum cadence. The detached stance of Al Vizzutti's trumpet solo represents cool. Rhythm and blues rides upon the jabbing accents from Joe Farrell's tenor sax. Corea makes a case for modernity with the bell shaped tone of his electric piano and the horn timbre of the MiniMoog.

The power of *Tap Step* erases the bad feelings produced by its predecessors. This mood continues on the disc's second side. Corea's playing is awesome. His acoustic work on *Magic Carpet* demonstrates just how steeped he is in the styles of his instrument. Dedicated to Ahmad Jamal, this number finds Corea tangling with Jamal's trademarks, the clipped left hand and enticing right hand lines enhanced by bluesy trills. Corea's performance is no parody or imitation. He simply uses Jamal's calling cards to show what riches can result when the right hand goes in style with the simple splendor of the left.

—radel

BOBBY HUTCHERSON

SPIRAL—Blue Note LF-996: *Ruth*; *The Wedding March*; *The Poor People's March*; *Spiral*; *Visions*; *Jasper*.

Personnel: Hutcherson, vibes; Harold Land, tenor saxophone; Stanley Cowell, piano; Reggie Johnson, bass; Joe Chambers, drums; cut 6; Andrew Hill, piano; Freddie Hubbard, trumpet; Sam Rivers, tenor saxophone, bass clarinet; Richard Davis, bass.

*** 1/2

The music found on this disc is 11 years old (except for one tune, with different personnel, that goes back to '65) and already sounds rather dated. Hutcherson in '68 was just escaping the creative throngs of the New York new music scene by moving to the West Coast, where he embraced a more relaxed musical atmosphere. The war waged by the energy-players and artists was on the decline, giving "conventionally oriented players" an opportunity to "just play music." Tenorist Land as well as vibist Hutcherson are in an extremely mild, mundane mood throughout this date, which might suggest a fundamental uneasiness of these musicians towards the music.

The 1968 tracks are from the earliest period during which Hutcherson co-lead a West Coast quintet with Land. Although their band developed far beyond what is represented here, it nevertheless failed to really fulfill the promise that its informed melodicism and rhythmic fragility should have made easy. The music of bassist Johnson, pianist Cowell and drummer Chambers has a certain weight to it that shifts and oscillates throughout the best of this album—a quality that was to subsequently develop, with various musicians, throughout the

band's four year history of activity. This suspenseful interchange effect is most pronounced on the two pieces written by Chambers, *Ruth* and the title tune, *Spiral*.

The "rebel" tune of the album, *Jasper*, was written by pianist/composer Hill and dates back to the famed *Dialogue* session, the first under Hutcherson's leadership. This tune has fairly good, although rather contrived, Hubbard; rhythmically mind-blowing inversions by tenorist Rivers; inventive bass work by Davis and a very revealing solo spot by Hill. Hill's music on this boppish, swiftly-paced, angular line is a small wonder and shows—as Chambers once pointed out—the pianist's rhythmically displaced, psycho-analytic approach to the improvisers' art.

—riggins

SAM JONES' 12 PIECE BAND

SOMETHING NEW—Sea Breeze SB-2004: *Unit Seven*; *Stella By Starlight*; *Tropical Delight*; *Antigua*; *Tender Touch*.

Personnel: Jones, bass; Richard Williams, Spunky Davis, John Eckert, trumpets; Dick Griffin, Sam Burtis, trombones; Pete Yellin, alto sax; Harold Vick, Bob Mintzer, tenor sax; Ronnie Cuber, baritone sax; Fred Hersch, piano; Mickey Roker, drums.

*** 1/2

TONY KINSEY

THAMES SUITE—Spotlite SPJ 504: *Sunbury Seminar*; *Chertsey Mead*; *Kingston Reach*; *Backwater*; *Henley Ho!*; *Hard Times*; *Cookham Bridge*; *Beachy Head*; *Girl Friday*.

Personnel: Kinsey, drums, composer/arranger; Derek Watkins, Leon Calvert, Les Condon, Hank Shaw, trumpets; Keith Christie, Dave Horler, Geoff Perkins, Chris Smith, trombones; Ronnie Chamberlain, alto and soprano saxes; Pete King, alto sax; Duncan Lamont, Jimmy Hastings, tenor saxes; Ronnie Ross, baritone sax; Pat Smythe, electric piano; Dick Abell, guitar; Lennie Bush, bass; cuts 6-9; substitute Tony Fisher, trumpet, for Calvert; Maurice Pratt and Geldard, trombones, for Smith and Perkins; and Louis Stewart, guitar, for Abell.

With less than a half dozen permanently organized big bands left in the country, and the future of some of those preordinately brief, it remains in the hands of other, younger musicians to carry on the tradition. And if the tradition is worth perpetuating at all, then the newer bands must offer something at least as vital and as dynamic as that which preceded them, that which served as both an artistic definition and a means of sustenance throughout the entire swing era. Of course, we have had our share of "ghost" bands and, to a lesser extent, historically determined repertory groups; but neither of these are seen to aspire to anything more provocative than mere recreations of the past. To anticipate a healthy future in an uncertain tomorrow, today's big band must be far more flexible than any which came before. It must have a potential for growth in a variety of different directions; for if the heterogeneity of the current scene provides any clue, then an even more bewildering array of musical possibilities lies ahead.

It is not known whether Sam Jones would even want to carry a big band through the energy-threatened '80s much less his chance for success if he did. But if it should develop that he does, then this present 12 man crew harbingers well his fortunes. Though hardly a star studded combination, it nonetheless boasts more than a few soloists of merit, including Jones himself, and a library that is at once contemporary, tradition-rooted and forward-looking.

Trumpeter Tom Harrell, whose earlier association with the Jones band accounted for his co-leader billing, does not play on this session, but the first arrangement heard, that of Jones' *Unit Seven*, is his. It is a bright bossa and serves as a showcase for the boppish Fred Hersch, the fat-toned and seldom savored Richard Williams, a here Rollinsish Bob Mintzer, and a Cannon-shot Pete Yellin. The bass of Jones is, quite understandably, in the forefront throughout, pushing, prodding and propelling. Judging by the tempo and mood of the next chart, arranger Fred Jacobs must have thought that *Stella* was more swinger than slyph. After a brief but dissembling debut, she is soon found in the vise-like hands of Jones, his irreverent scrutiny only being halted by the entrance of the brutally Gordonian Vick. But just when all seems hopeless, her fate at the whim of this rude, muscled intruder, a champion arrives. Hersch, ultimately to prove her benefactor, is a consoler by nature. However, he cannot offer his gentle caresses until first her attackers are dispatched. This he does with cunningly veiled ruses; but an inflamed citizenry, with a gruff Cuber in the lead, soon invade his moment. He and *Stella* are forced to flee, with the crowd at their heels in bustling pursuit. But even as their silhouettes are seen to fade, we sense their benevolently shaped destiny. Justice prevails, but not without added wisdom—poor, put-upon *Stella* will never again be quite the same!

Altman Yellin returns to lead off his own bossa, *Tropical Delight*, while brass players Burtis and Eckert wait in the wings. All three soloists luxuriate in chops aplenty, with their tones alone marking them a plus. Following an ensemble interlude, there is a section of four bar swapping that the trio enjoys just prior to Yellin's solo reprise. A slower Latin piece, Bob Mintzer's *Antigua*, is next, and its rather conventional tutti opening is elevated to the range of interest only by the rugged sound of Cuber's baritone cutting through. The composer solos on flute, and Hersch comes in for another one, but his appearance here is only of slight import. Cuber evokes happy memories of Harry Carney again during the closing passages.

Ernie Wilkins both composed and arranged the final selection, *Tender Touch*. Here it is treated to an extended exposition by Harold Vick, and while his tenor work is compellingly forthright within the hallowed big-sound tradition, there is little to commend its ideational component. What he says, he says very convincingly; it is just that he is not saying anything that has not been said before a myriad times.

Sam Jones' band is an excellent one, and this is a very good record. But to make it a great band, one capable of making truly important records, would demand a striking upgrade of individuality among the soloists, a tad more daring, and a wealth of assimilated lessons from the past. Ellington, Basie, Goodman at his peak—all combined exceptionally varied solo talent with books that were virtually timeless. Jones, if he is to thrive in his venture, must also.

Tony Kinsey's all-British band is heard in two editions, one on a 1974 state-of-the-art BBC broadcast, and the other, with but minor personnel substitutions, on a concert tape made two years later. Without pandering to fashionable trends, the band seems geared for mass palatability, for its swinging tempos are eminently danceable, its visible

library (here, all Kinsey originals) melodic, and its soloists both boppish and polished. The first five pieces, which comprise all of side one, constitute the drummer/leader's programmatic tribute to the river he calls home. There is nothing lachrymose or sentimental about the *Thames Suite*, though, for sparking the various, diversely tempoed movements are top-rate jazz solos by Shaw, King, Lamont, Hastings, Calvert, Chamberlain and Ross, and Kinsey himself, but only briefly. The writing is, for the most part, straight-ahead, and, despite the presence of the electric piano, surprisingly redolent of the '50s. Not part of the *Suite*, the four independently composed pieces on side two involve two bossas, and feature to impressive effect such soloists as Lamont, Condon, Smythe, Stewart, King, Hastings, Ross, Kinsey and Shaw. *Hard Times* and *Beachy Head* are the standout swingers.

Kinsey's semi-organized group of jazz session men may not include any incipient giants, but the sidemen are all on a healthy competitive level with their American counterparts; and, what is more, they are virtually free of the pernicious taint of rock. For that reason, they emerge as real people, and not the automatons that their better-paid state-side cousins often seem. King, a richly idiomatic bopper, is also co-owner of the famous Ronnie Scott's in London. —sohmer

WAXING ON . . .

Self Produced Younger Artists

- Noah Young: *Unicorn Dream* (Laughing Angel LAR-33): ★★½
 New York City Artists' Collective: *And You Ain't Ready For This One Either* (NYCAC 502): ★★
 Larry Gelb: *New Souls* (Essene ES-7001): ★★
 Nathan Page: *Plays Pretty For The People* (Hugo's Music HMS-108): ★★
 Paris Smith/Kenneth Hill: *Quartets* (Oracle 1079): ★★½
 Dickey Myers: *Dickey's Mood* (Quadrangle QDR-104): ★★
 Acoustic Jazz Trio: *Acoustic Jazz Trio* (Jewel JRC-941): ★★
 New Life: *Visions Of The Third Eye* (Mustevic MS-6001): ★★
 Tim Berne: *The Five-Year Plan* (Empire EPC-24K): ★★
 Vinny Golia Trio: *In The Right Order* (Nine Winds NW-0103): ★★
 Michael Lytle/George Cartwright: *Bright Bank Elephant* (Compride East CP-003): ★★

Among the less immediately noticeable effects of the economic recession and the energy crisis—beyond the problems of filling our stomachs and our gas tanks—is the somewhat severe cutting back within the recording industry. First of all, oil is an important component of each album you slap on your turntable, and the same increases which have caused the price of gasoline to skyrocket have triggered consistent rises in the cost per unit of records—forcing even the major companies to closely reconsider whom they record and how many copies they press. Secondly, the tightened economy has caused us to buy less records, with the result that the record companies are working with greatly reduced profits—meaning they are less willing to take a chance on unknown musicians and music of less than mass market appeal. This naturally cuts a crucial slice out of the jazz and new music recording action, since these are much less apt to reward their publisher with sales in



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the millions. As a result of this large company neglect, many musicians have been forced to produce and publish their own recordings; this is a survey of 11 such recent recordings.

Noah Young might be familiar to most listeners under his former name (Richard Youngstein) via his pliant bass backing of Jimmy Giuffre, Roswell Rudd and Bobby Naughton, among others. Certainly, Perry Robinson should be, as one of the few creative clarinet players post-Pee Wee Russell. The three tracks on *Unicorn Dream* on which Robinson appears are the album's strongest, especially the bluesy abstractions of *The Wizard*, where his blustery phrasing and incongruous organization of notes compare favorably with the great Pee Wee. Three cuts also feature the reeds of Mark Whitecage, whose alto is heard to good advantage on the elastic tempoed *Heart Seed*. Young's frequent collaborator, vibist Naughton, pops up alongside Whitecage, the bassist and the chattering drums of Cleve Pozar on *Blue Whiskers*, in addition to being featured on two trio numbers which display his lush romanticism. Also included on *Unicorn Dream* is the title cut, an expansive, probing piece for Young's bass overdubbed four times, and a pedestrian performance of Andy LaVerne's *Lake Taco*, with the composer's electric keyboards and Peter Loeb's tenor in tow. It is these last two cuts, however, and the constantly shifting personnel, which give *Unicorn Dream* its too widely varied anthology feeling, despite some fine moments.

On their second release, the **New York City Artists' Collective** has fashioned an occasionally fascinating showcase for the vocal talents of Ellen Christi. The four pieces on *And You Ain't Ready For This One Either* are not strictly songs, but rely on Christi's power of scat persuasion for enlivening and enlightening. She seems to be covering much the same ground as the ever remarkable Jeanne Lee, inventing her own syllables on which to weave colorful, energetic mosaics of melody. Her cohorts (Juan Quinones on guitar, bassist John Shea and drummer Tom Bruno) are not so much accompanying personnel as instrumental equals in creating sparsely textured, free flowing fabrics of soap bubble sound on *Dewey* (dedicated to Miles Davis, and including echoes of *In A Silent Way* guitar riffs), the ballad *Mystic Lover*, and the aptly named *New Blues*. Unfortunately, the album is all of an emotional and textural piece, and could easily stand a bit more compositional and instrumental variety. Equally engaging along with Christi's vocalese, however, is Quinones' acoustic guitar work, which adopts a percussive phrasing a la Sonny Sharrock or the non-electric John McLaughlin, and concentrates on rhythmic contour, texture and dynamics rather than sheer melody.

Another vocalist, Kim Ibeko, is prominently featured on pianist **Larry Gelb's** *New Souls* album. Ibeko's light, fetchingly naive tone is occasionally reminiscent of Sheila Jordan, though the emphasis here is not on her improvisational prowess but rather the tongue in cheek, genuinely witty lyrics Gelb has written for *I'd Like To Melt Your Ego For Dinner*, *The Beast*, and especially the paean to sidekicks everywhere, *Waltz For Gabby Hayes*. The rhythm section (in addition to Gelb, consisting of bassist Doug Smith and drummer Bob Ventrello) swings in delightfully nostalgic fashion, as the material conjures

images of the early 1960s, aided by Gelb's spare, lithe, evocative keyboard stylings, which have definitely been influenced by Herbie Hancock's early acoustic tenure with Miles. Saxophonist Gary Lefevbre is impressive in his too few outings, notably a Wayne Shorterish tenor fervor in *The Beast* and a fine, fluid soprano solo on the bossa like *Tales Of Imaginary Beings*. The latter also shows off Ventrello in his most favorable light, as a drummer who uses his whole kit inventively, and is supportive without being obstreperous. If Gelb's group has any serious flaw, it is a tendency to fall into a floating, comfortably rhapsodic tempo too often, and this tends to lend a certain sameness to much of this well packaged LP. Nevertheless, this is an immediately gratifying introduction, and given the time to grow together and the proper exposure, this could prove to be a satisfying ensemble for years to come. The potential is there.

As the title implies, **Nathen Page Plays Pretty For The People** also remains solidly in the mainstream groove, and the material—three jazz standards and three pop favorites—elicits workmanlike performances from all hands. Guitarist Page has played with Sonny Rollins, Jackie McLean and Charles Tolliver in the past, though it is probably his more commercial work with such as Roberta Flack, Herbie Mann and Jimmy Smith that informs his playing on this date. On the insipid anthems *Just The Way You Are*, *What Are You Doing The Rest Of Your Life* and *Once I Loved*, his playing is uninspired and unimaginative, despite the touches of funk in the first, the echoes of flamenco techniques in the second, and the bell like sonorities of the third. The jazz side is another story, however, as Page brings his biting, percussive attack to bear in *Invitation*, adds nicely florid ornaments to the richly lyrical *Lush Life*, and doubletimes *Body And Soul*, inventing angular counter-melodies, and varying his rhythm effectively—alternating in-tempo phrases with jumbled, fluttering, tumbling runs which barely come in under the wire. Drummer Mike Smith and bassist Steve Novosel provide firm, if unauthoritative support, and the latter takes a brief attractive solo, ripe with double stops, on *Once I Loved*. The remaining participant, pianist Charles Covington, injects some rich comping and sturdy, two fisted soloing in the manner of Stanley Cowell or Dave Burrell.

A poor engineering job distorts the music on the **Paris Smith/Kenneth Hill Quartets**, making an echoey blur of the rhythm section (either Michael Smith or Donnell Lambert, bass, and Usama, drums) and adding a watery reverberation to the vibes of co-leader Smith. The overall sound quality is reminiscent of an aircheck from the 1940s, but the album is listenable. What can be heard is only partially impressive. Smith's vibes work essays some charm through a chunky, chordal approach unlike the glittering, starstruck single line dazzle of most practitioners. Saxophonist Hill (not to be confused with the recently rediscovered D.C. tenorist Buck Hill) is, for the most part, full toned, with an on the beat aggression that wears its Illinois Jacquet well. The material is most forgettable, merely excuses to lay down chord changes—the two exceptions being the saxophone/vibes duets, *Mood For John* and *Vitamin C*, which have a fresh, loose limbed quality, probably due to the lack of rhythm section.

Hill's playing there is by far his best of the date, encompassing a lean torrent of runs and idea-rich phrases not in evidence elsewhere. If the entire album had consisted of duets, cleanly recorded, we might have had something of substance.

Like the previously mentioned Buck Hill, tenorist **Dickey Myers** has recently been uncovered and allowed to record—and in both cases the pleasure is all ours. *Dickey's Mood* is a fine set of neo-bop performances, and obviously Myers and pianist Joe Albany are familiar with the territory. Albany's articulation splatters ideas across the keyboard almost haphazardly, while Myers' hard, tight tone welds together seamless flurries with a tense, firecracker edge (as on a ferociously fast *Yesterdays*). He can also lay back and torch a ballad, doing so on *I Can't Get Started* and *When Sunny Gets Blue*. The original numbers include an oblique *Riff Raff*, a jovial calypso entitled *Carrie B. Nice*, and a solid blues line, *Dickey's Mood*, which finds the tenorist initiating his solo with a quote of Tadd Dameron's *Good Bait* and ultimately incorporating doubletime flurries like Johnny Griffin. The final two cuts, the aforementioned *Sunny* and an aggressive sheets of sound version of *Lester Leaps In*, are performed sans Albany's piano, and allow bassist Jeff Fuller and drummer Frank Bennett to strut their stuff. But this is thoroughly Myers' show, and his playing has a definite personality. *Dickey's Mood* is an auspicious debut, and an entertaining one.

Another highly recommended album, similar in instrumentation to the pianoless cuts on the Myers' LP, is that by the **Acoustic Jazz Trio**. This record marks not an unveiling, however, but a rediscovery, as it returns the tenor of Paul Plummer to recording activity, backed by Lou Lausche on bass and Ron Enyard on drums. Plummer should be remembered for his exciting work with George Russell in the 1960s—and his relaxed swing on *Scraple From The Apple* here reminds one of his elastic solo on Russell's revamping of Parker's *Au Privave*. Throughout the date the tenorist is accomplished, confident and inventive, as he plumbs the breadth and depth of four standards. On *Round Midnight* he can be found tugging gently at the harmonic guidelines, while altering his rhythmic values expressively and engagingly; here, too, bassist Lausche is solid foundation for Plummer to build upon, and drummer Enyard's subtle brushwork and staggered rhythmic emphasis brings favorable comparisons with Joe Morello. *It Don't Mean A Thing* swings mightily, and *Willow Weep For Me* displays the extent of Plummer's range, as he skips lightly from top to bottom register without a hint of strain or artifice, occasionally invoking a pointillistic disjointing of phrases along the way. This record deserves to be heard, and this trio deserves another studio session—from a major label.

Yet another trio, consisting of percussionist Steve Reid, guitarist Brandon Ross and bassist David Wertman, collectively known as **New Life**, unfortunately doesn't rate quite so highly. On *Visions Of The Third Eye*, Ross' acoustic guitar cannot sustain the weight of lead voice; there is not enough projection or personality to his playing. There are moments on *Chinese Rock* and *Prelude To Grace* where the polyrhythmic, polytonal interaction of the trio brings the music to life, but too often they bog down in repetitious riffs or improvisations which simply meander. There

isn't enough variety of structure or instrumentation to sustain the six tracks; the ultimate tone of the album is grey and monochromatic, and the music cries out for a meatier, more colorful solo voice—which is exactly what altoist supreme Arthur Blythe brings to Reid's previous two Mustevic albums, *Rhythmatism* and *Odyssey Of The Oblong Square*. Reid's rockish rhythms are heard to much better advantage when enveloped by a larger, heavier ensemble, and *Visions Of The Third Eye* is lightweight when compared to his earlier work.

Tim Berne's *The Five-Year Plan* provides just what *Visions Of The Third Eye* lacks—a full palette of instrumental colors and a well-thought out conception of the music's construction. *The Glasco Cowboy* is the display piece for Berne's alto, backed by bassist Roberto Miranda and percussionist Alex Cline, an homage to Julius Hemphill which borrows some of the dedicatee's structural devices for its suitelike proportions. Berne's alto alternately articulates a tough, bitter sneer, long, lyrical melismas (influenced, too, by Oliver Lake), and an r&b stomp. The other three compositions (they are too well arranged to be merely tunes) add instruments according to their dramatic necessities—for example, John Carter's rarified clarinet, Vinny Golia's musky baritone sax, Glenn Ferris' ferris wheel trombone, and the leader's alto combine for an intriguing wind choir over Cline's tribal drumming throughout *A.K. Wadud*. *Computerized Taps For 12 Different Steps* utilizes an ingratiating ostinato in the bass and Golia's piccolo underneath Cline's Krazy Kat percussion and Ferris' surrealist encyclopedia of slide effects—all part of a polyphonic maelstrom. *N.Y.C. Rites*, finally, is a concerto for Carter's warm, graceful clarinet which flutters and darts like a butterfly struck by lightning through the tender, intuitive ensemble accompaniment, ending with a winsome unison reed melody energized by Cline's perceptive, arhythmic jolts and splashes of percussive color. In all, Tim Berne's *The Five-Year Plan* is a provocative document—and his more recent Empire album, *7X*, is equally as surprising and variegated, this time adding electric guitarist Nels Cline's rock predilections.

Multi-reedman **Vinny Golia** fronts his own trio (bassist Miranda and percussionist Cline again) on *In The Right Order*, a double album recorded live at two separate concert performances. On his previous two recordings, *Spirits In Fellowship* (db, November 1979) and *Openhearted*, (db, July 1980), Golia revealed a compositional essence similar to that of Gunter Hampel, dictating the direction of each piece but allowing the ensemble to indicate individual details. Without assisting horns, this most recent date emphasizes the improvisational aspects of Golia's own talents in place of his compositional abilities. Thus we are treated to nine pieces, eight of which adopt different reeds, but all of which are characterized by tight interaction among the three musicians, a free floating pulse which retains its tension as a result of the familiarity of the players, and an evasive sense of harmony. The best cuts are *V.A.R.*, where Golia's soprano begins mournful and grows virulent; *Complexities*, where again his soprano is full of a visceral immediacy and shares space with a truly thunderous rolling drum solo by Cline; and the brief but witty theme, belched out by the bass sax, of *Voices*,

Belfrey's, Bass And Dreams, which is unfortunately all too quickly abandoned in favor of an arhythmic wandering which infects most of the material here. Golia's virtuosity cannot be faulted, as he exhibits flavorsome chops on each of his arsenal of reeds, and his close rapport with bassist Miranda is evident—note the imitative clarinet squeaks and bass harmonics on *Takamiyama*, and *Lament's* unison dirge for bass clarinet and bowed bass. Cline, too, is a model of taste and inventiveness; apparently all that was needed to make *In The Right Order* an unqualified success was stronger material, the kind which would provoke the trio to some truly inspired playing, rather than the comfortable, familiar sounds that seem somehow secondhand.

Finally comes the least recognizable of duets—the reed tandem of **Michael Lytle** and **George Cartwright**. These two, veterans of the Creative Music Studio at Woodstock, NY, have joined for 11 etudes which study various problems of texture, gesture and form, none of which (outside of the vastly different sounding *Warm Lines Etched In Ice*) reveal clear cut proportions or structural boundaries to differentiate one from another. This is not an instrumental music intent on using horns for virtuosic means, but rather a dramatic instigation, investigating the timbral and textural areas Lytle and Cartwright have mapped out for each other. In other words, though both participants are accomplished reed players and make full and varied use of their instruments' sound and color potential—including reed squeaks, harmonic overtones, thick sustained notes and

brisk flurries—these pieces could be played on any two instruments and achieve equal results. Of special interest is the clear cut, composed intervallic theme of *To(A)te-o*, the oblique soprano blues accompanied by a guttural ground bass groan of bass clarinet in *It Nears*, and the electronic wash of *Warm Lines Etched In Ice*, from which lyrically sustained, simplified horn lines slowly emerge and recede. At its most intense and least congenial, as on the Webernesque miniatures *Willie, Lap* and *Wish*—each under a minute in length—or *Dust*, with its especially sparse textures and silences framing fragmented motifs, the music has purity and evocativeness; unfortunately, one suspects that many of the music's inherent subtleties are lost on record, without the added ritual of live communication.

The Lytle/Cartwright and Dickey Myers albums (along with countless similar others) are available from the New Music Distribution Service, 500 Broadway, NYC 10012, NY. Addresses for the others are as follows: Laughing Angel Records, 2508 Arizona Ave #1, Santa Monica CA 90404. NYC Artists' Collective, 501 Canal St, NYC NY 10013. Essene Music, PO Box 911, Scranton PA 18501. Hugo's Music, 7105 Loch Court, Oxon Hill MD 20022. Oracle Records, PO Box 5491, Chicago IL 60680. Jewel Records, 1594 Kinney Ave, Cincinnati OH 45231. Mustevic Records, 193-18 120th Ave, NYC 11412 NY. Empire Records, 136 Lawrence St, Brooklyn NY 11201. Nine Winds, 9232 McLennan Ave, Sepulveda CA 91343.

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BLINDFOLD TEST



MICHAEL FRANKS

BY LEONARD FEATHER

Michael Franks is a maverick artist who has managed to swim against the tide of contemporary singing and songwriting. In an era dominated increasingly by disco, rock and funk, he has managed to establish himself as a composer and interpreter of high caliber melodies, with sometimes surprisingly intelligent lyrics, backed by a jazz-oriented or Brazilian beat.

Born in September 1944 in La Jolla, Ca., Franks during his brief career as a recording artist has used such sidemen as Joe Sample, Wilton Felder, John Guerin, Kenny Barron, Ron Carter, Bucky Pizzarelli, Eric Gale, Eddie Gomez, David Spinozza and Don Grolnick. At press time his *One Bad Habit* LP (Warner Bros.) has lately been issued. His previous LPs are *Tiger In The Rain* and *Nines* (also on Warner's).

A laid back performer who characterizes himself as "a sort of standup Mose Allison," Franks formerly relied for his success on the recordings of his songs by other artists, among them Ringo Starr, Melissa Manchester, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Patti Labelle and Manhattan Transfer. But he has performed at the Newport Jazz Festival among other prestigious dates. This is his first Blindfold Test; he was given no information about the records played.

1. EDDIE JEFFERSON. *So What?* (from *The Jazz Singer*, Inner City). Jefferson, vocals; Miles Davis, composer.

I think it was Lambert, Hendricks & Ross, and it sounded like Jon Hendricks doing Miles' tune, but I haven't heard this before. The record which I have of theirs, that I'm most familiar with, is *Sing A Song Of Basie*, on which, like this record, most of the time Jon sings the instrumental solos and writes lyrics.

This song—which is probably why you chose it—is the one which kind of inspired my *When The Cookie Jar Is Empty*, melodically, just modulating a half step . . . this is what I was kind of thinking of for that tune. But typically I think my tune *The Lady Wants To Know*, with its references to Coltrane and Miles, is closer.

I really love what they do; I met Jon Hendricks once. Ben Sidran was producing an album of his. He's really a character; it was a treat to meet him.

I've been looking at some Monk compositions and I've actually written some lyrics to a few of them. The one I'm most happy with is *Ruby My Dear*. This kind of thing is something I'd like to do more of as a writer . . . try to write lyrics to compositions which are already well known. My whole influence in music is rather more looking backwards than looking around me at my contemporaries.

This album—for my taste, I would give it the highest rating.

2. MEL TORMÉ-BUDDY RICH. *You Are The Sunshine Of My Life* (from *Together Again—For The First Time*, Century Records). Tormé, vocals; Rich, drums; Stevie Wonder, composer (*You Are My Sunshine* is the intro).

It sounded sort of like Mel Tormé, but I'm really not sure. Diction-wise it didn't sound much like him, but musically it did. I don't like medleys; I think they're seldom successful, although this wasn't really a medley—more of an introduction and transition.

I like the tune; I prefer it by Stevie Wonder. I'm not sure it translates into all these styles. It seemed the arranger tried to make the tune interesting by putting it through some changes. I kind of liked the band sound, but it seemed to retard the value of the song somehow—that's just for my personal taste.

My final guess is still Mel Tormé, but there were a lot of things he didn't do that Mel would have done. I'm not really fond of Tormé, although I think he's got a great instrument. I love him until he starts to scat, and whoever this was, I was pleased he wasn't doing that. Lambert, Hendricks & Ross pull it off, but not too many other people do. Sarah Vaughan I like, and I can sort of tolerate it when Ella does it. But some of those singers . . . it's sort of like overkill. I'm sure their loyal fans really appreciate it, but generally I like the instrumentalists to take the solos. That's my own personal esthetic. It's great when someone has enough of a range, enough of an instrument, enough talent and enough ideas musically to be able to perform that way; I think it's exciting. But I think a little goes a long way.

I wasn't really knocked out by this. I think the original was a lot more appealing. I like the tune; in the tradition of really good pop tunes. I'm a fan of Stevie Wonders. This one may be a little simple minded lyrically, but nice. Certainly the melody is strong enough to carry the rest of it.

I'm really uncomfortable with this rating system. I hate to give someone a two, it seems like a real degrading mark.

3. EDDIE HARRIS. *I'd Love To Take You Home* (from *How Can You Live Like That?*, Atlantic). Ronald Muldrow, Sara E. Harris, composers; Harris, vocals; Richard L. Evans, arranger.

That's great; I have no idea who that was but I'm going to run out and buy that as soon as you tell me. I don't even know who the composer is; I think I *might* have heard the tune before. I thought the vocalist was really imaginative; I love the phrasing, the ingenuity of the vocal. It was just full of surprises.

I love the arrangement, too. I grew up listening to Stan Kenton; my father was a real Kenton fan. This reminded me harmonically of, not exactly goose-egg type sounds—the chords, the horns, the way they were phrased. It reminded me of *Midnight Sun* a bit.

I love that sound; the vocalist was really unique, really ingenious; especially the ends of his lines were interesting. This composition sounded like it was an instrumental before it was a song. Five stars.

4. FRANK SINATRA-DUKE ELLINGTON. *Indian Summer* (from *Francis A. & Edward K.*, Reprise). Sinatra, vocal; Johnny Hodges, alto sax; Billy May, arranger.

Well I know that was Sinatra; I know that composition, too, but I'm embarrassed to say I don't know what it is. It's definitely not Nelson Riddle's chart! It sounds like Sinatra with Ellington or Basie, and I know the saxophone solo was by some heavyweight, but I can't think of who that is either.

It's easy to take somebody like Sinatra for granted because one has heard so much of him. I prefer him when he does more swing-type material, although I like his album with Antonio Carlos Jobim; that's my favorite. He has such a beautiful voice, such beautiful intonation—he's like Mt. Rushmore vocally—but it's easy to nod out on the whole thing, because he's such a standard that if the lyrics aren't happening, if the arrangement is a little predictable—or conventional—it's easy to lose interest. And I did about half way through.

This composition sounded like something by an Ellington or a Basie being treated as a song. The lyrics kind of left me cold, rather a "moon-June-spoon" type of thing. I'd rate that three, I'm sorry to report.

5. HERBIE HANCOCK. *You Bet Your Love* (from *Feets Don't Fail Me Now*, Columbia).

I'm afraid that was Herbie Hancock . . . I've been trying to avoid that, but this goes off the low end of the scale. I've only heard this album for the length of time it's taken me to walk over to the radio and pan the dial, and it's incredible to me that the person who wrote *Maiden Voyage* would be into this. Also, I think in this incarnation of Herbie Hancock, one finds a very deprived person. In his previous incarnations, musically, one finds a very original person. I thought the tracks on this were poor Brothers Johnson tracks.

I'm very attracted to the funkier types of music—I liked the Brothers Johnson *Looking Out For Number One*, the album Quincy Jones did. But I just noticed that this album by Herbie sounded like Brothers Johnson out-takes, or Stevie Wonder out-takes. Words cannot express how disappointing it is to see somebody who is such a talent . . . take this turn.

This dance music which we seem to be encumbered with now, I try to approach it in an open-minded way. As in this tune, it tends to be a wasteland lyrically; the lyrics are very unimportant. I'm sure it's my own point of view and my own axe to grind; but it's also my own prerogative, being a lyricist.

Content-wise this is a very empty genre. The dance music of my parents' era I found lobotomized in a way, but I love the uptempo sound of the big band music. But that music *did* at least support maybe two gears of music, beat-wise. And this music, which we seem to be impaled on, hasn't yet provided us with a slow type of a thing.

I find this kind of music very depressing, especially coming from Herbie. I think if it was coming from somebody else, it wouldn't be so depressing.

I know Herbie has released other things, with other configurations of personnel, so this isn't the only side of him. I also think that the other work he's done stands so high that he shouldn't be crucified for this. Nevertheless, the rating is zero, absolutely.

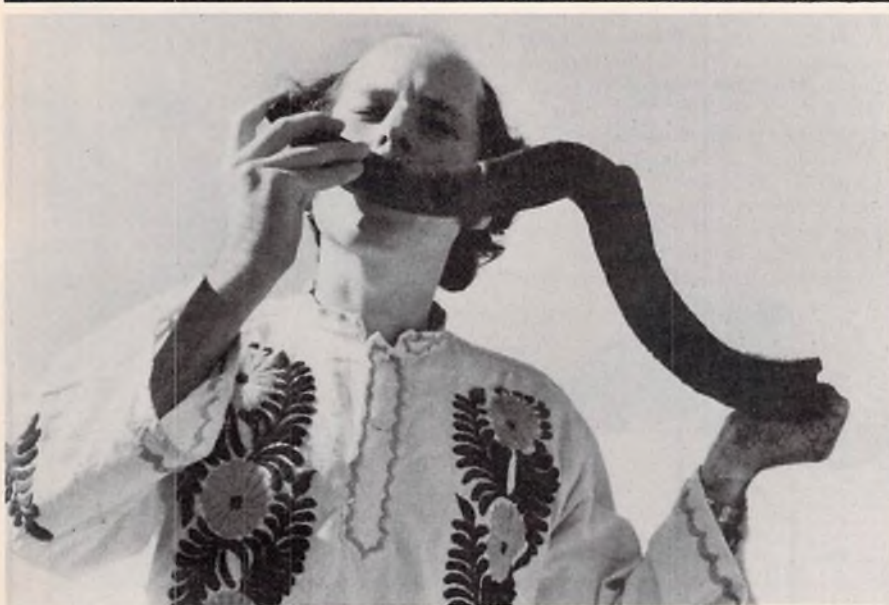
6. AL JARREAU. *Fly* (from *All Fly Home*, Warner Bros.). Jarreau, vocals; Freddie Hubbard, flugelhorn.

That's Al Jarreau's album, *All Fly Home*. I think Al is great. I first met him when he was in the studio doing *We Got By*. Tommy Lipuma and Al Schmitt, with whom I've worked several times successfully, took me to meet Al Jarreau, and I remember standing there looking into the goldfish bowl; I just freaked out.

I haven't looked at this album carefully; I must confess I haven't heard it a lot. It sounded an awful lot like Oscar Brashear on trumpet. My favorite Al Jarreau composition is *We Got By*; that's a spectacular tune. I give this a five.

Al is really a fresh person, and is definitely in the right direction. I've seen his career in the last couple of years take on meteoric proportions. He's such an incredible performer live. I've consistently turned down offers to work with him, because I've felt that the two of us are so different live that next to him, I might look like a still photograph!

PROFILE



PAUL BERLINER

BY R. BRUCE DOLD

Paul Berliner first heard the African mbira in the mid 1960s when a musician friend in Boston played the melodic, highly resonant instrument for him. Berliner liked the little mbira enough to buy one in an import shop, but he dabbled with it just as a sideline while he went to college and played trumpet with several free jazz groups.

Berliner might never have been more than a dilettante of the mbira if he hadn't heard Dumisani Maraire, an mbira master from Rhodesia, perform at a Midwest conference on ethnomusicology in 1969. Since then, Rhodesia has become Zimbabwe, student Berliner has become Professor Berliner, and the mbira has become the focus of a fully developed fusion of traditional African instruments and Western jazz techniques, with traces of Indian, Middle Eastern and American folk elements.

It is an elusive fusion. Berliner doesn't have a name for it. He has formed a group called Kudu, but it has performed in public only a couple of times, and the five members, most based in Chicago, go their own way. The most accessible example of Kudu's music is an album released earlier this year called *The Sun Rises Late Here* (Flying Fish FF092).

When Kudu performed at Northwestern University, where Berliner is a professor, the stage appeared to be littered like a child's playroom. Strwn across a rug were shakers, clay drums, bongos, foot bells, Ugandan drums, an Indian scruti box, as well as the more traditional drums, bass, saxes and flutes. Berliner, in the African style, drew his audience into performing, first in three part chorus vocals, later in rhythmic hand-clap-

ping. They heard two hours of liting, easily engaging, Third World music.

The center of all that is the mbira and, to a lesser extent, the kudu horn. The mbira is a simple instrument with slightly curved metal or reed keys arranged on a block of wood in a geometric pattern and held in place with a restraining bar. The instrument, which is better known in its Westernized version as a thumb piano, is held inside a gourd that adds warmth and resonance to the tone. Bottlecaps and shells are strung to the gourd and mbira to add a percussive quality.

The kudu is an African antelope, and its horn is blown like a trumpet; the kudu horn has a tonal quality that ranges from a french horn sound to a flute sound. The kudu horn was given to Berliner as a gift, and he has developed its capability and molded it into his African-American fusion.

For Berliner, the kudu horn and the mbira provide more than a musical expression—they provide a political pulpit. He was non-political, intending to be a biology major, when he entered Antioch College in Ohio. But in the winter of 1965, Malcolm X was shot dead near where Berliner was working, as part of his schooling, in New York. "The whole thing was shocking," he said. "It drew me out of the biology lab and into another kind of world."

He spent the summer of 1965 working for the Birmingham Council on Human Relations, a group that was registering blacks to vote, fighting for school desegregation, and documenting cases of police brutality in the South. Berliner also got involved in the anti-war effort.

But the work took a toll. "People were beaten down, they felt overwhelmed by the course of events," he said. "So I turned to music for the opportunity of more positive expression."

Berliner concentrated on the trumpet and played with several jazz groups in Boston and Antioch. But in 1969, after hearing Maraire,

he decided to seriously study the mbira. He took lessons from Maraire, who was a visiting musician at the University of Washington.

"Most people still relate to African music as though it is all percussion, or all drumming. But in fact melodic instruments are as widespread as the percussive instruments. I thought that the mbira would be a good candidate to confront some of the stereotypes that were still prevalent in our own culture about African music. This was part of my own political interest in the music. It would be a way of calling attention to the struggle of the people of Zimbabwe to obtain freedom in their own country."

Berliner received a grant in 1971 to study the music and culture of the Shona people of Zimbabwe. It was a chance to study with the masters of the various mbira. Berliner specialized in a larger, 24 key mbira dzavadzimu ("mbira of the ancestors").

"It was a little bit like out of the frying pan and into the fire when I first went to Zimbabwe. The white and black populations were bitterly polarized and there seemed to be a race war pending. I found myself once again involved in many of the same issues, except the people had different accents. I began to see the universality of some of the problems," he said.

Berliner spent a year on his first trip to the African country, and returned for two more summers of study. But by the third trip the political situation was growing more tense, and when a telegram Berliner sent to a friend caused police to harass the friend, Berliner decided he shouldn't stay in Zimbabwe until the political situation was resolved.

By this time, Berliner had stopped playing trumpet and was concentrating entirely on African music. He recorded mbira masters in Zimbabwe, had several albums of their music released by Nonesuch Records, and published a book, *The Soul of Mbira* (University of California Press). He taught musicology at the State University of New York and appeared on several tours with the Paul Winter Consort, playing the mbira. The Consort's *Common Ground* album has Berliner in the instrument's first recorded performance.

But he was writing music, heavily influenced by the traditional African style, that wasn't right for the Consort. "I wanted to experiment with songs using the musical setting of some of the great mbira pieces, with the power they had, to come up with songs which would evoke strong images and move an audience here as much as audiences are moved in Zimbabwe by singers in their own language," he said.

He found that he could also extend the possibilities for the kudu horn, which in Africa "was usually used percussively, for one or two note riffs or in a horn band. Over the years I developed my own way of playing, which really involved carrying over techniques of playing trumpet. Through overblowing, I began playing up on the overtones through the different range of the instrument." By listening to flute players from throughout the world, he evolved a melodic style for the instrument.

Berliner learned to sing in the plaintive shout and wail of the Shona singers, and used English lyrics with the African vocal style. He brought the flugelhorn into the repertoire, placing tin foil over the cup to simulate the percussive sound of the mbira.

Working with Chicago jazz musicians, he fused jazz bass and drums with the African instruments. Finally, he began to orchestrate the music for a larger ensemble involving horns and other percussion.

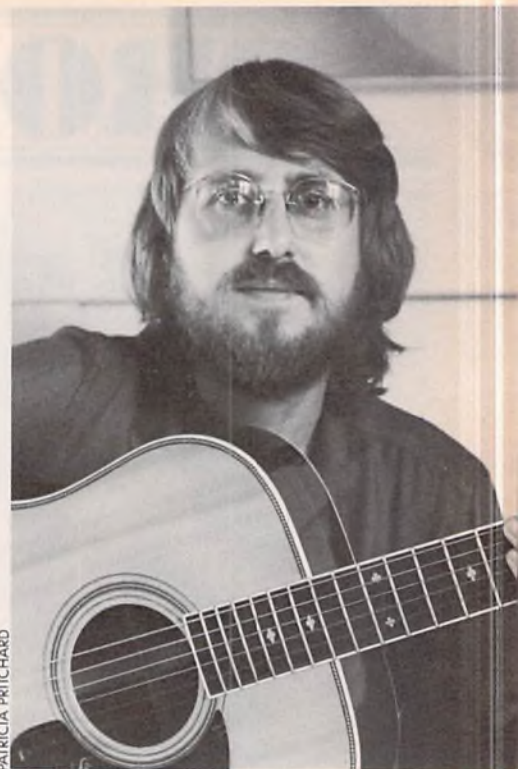
For now, that's where the process ends. Berliner is taking a one year leave of absence from teaching to work with jazz musicians in New York and study jazz improvisation through a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship. He would like to work with the Kudu ensemble, but says there hasn't been time to drum up interest in a tour. As a solo performer, he finds work at colleges and folk festivals. Berliner would like to organize a U.S. tour for a Shona mbira ensemble, and there is always the lure of returning to the country where he studied his instruments: Zimbabwe is free now. **db**

DAVID PRITCHARD

BY FRANKIE NEMKO-GRAHAM

Guitarist David Pritchard's latest Inner City album, *City Dreams*, has a sticker attached to the cellophane wrapper proclaiming "Fusion Band of the '80s." This is not so much a description of the music being played as of the musicians playing it. While Pritchard himself is very much a product of the last decade or so of non-categorizable music, the guest appearance of trumpeter Freddie Hubbard lends a distinctly jazz flavor.

The choice of Patrice Rushen to handle the



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keyboards, and the inclusion on one side of drummer Chester Thompson further serve to give *City Dreams* its diversity. Asked how a relatively unknown recording artist like himself came upon the opportunity to work with such heavyweights in only his second album, Pritchard explained that producer Chase Williams was the catalyst.

"Chase had worked with Patrice on a couple of her albums; we needed a piano player for *City Dreams*, and Patrice was available. As for Freddie, Chase had road managed for Freddie's band, so it seemed like a natural thing to invite him to play a couple of numbers with us."

Chase Williams has been an important adjunct to the David Pritchard story. He was first called in to produce *Light Year*, Pritchard's debut album for Inner City. "At that time we were on a real tight budget. Irv Kratka gives his artists a lot of freedom and allows them to do their own production. However, I really only wanted to concern myself with the music, and our bassist Larry Klein (who also plays for Hubbard on the road) suggested Chase. He was totally unfamiliar with my work and I with his—but we hit it off perfectly."

David Pritchard is fairly unknown even in his native Los Angeles; and yet, hearing him and his group (Charles Orena, saxophones; Jamie Faunt, bass; Mike Jochum, drums; and John Novello, keyboards) at the Roxy in Hollywood, one would assume that he is well represented on disc, has made many local appearances, and has his act very much together. Only the final statement is completely true.

A well-schooled and virtuosic guitarist, Pritchard has remained somewhat in the background of jazz. "But I still think of myself as a jazz musician," he told me, "because the improvisational nature of the music is the most important to me. I feel that it's the composition and its attendant mood

that really affect how the improvisation is going to be.

"I've found that some improvising players tend to take the compositional aspect for granted. For example, even when bebop—a truly revolutionary departure—was at its freshest, it was still very much based on that Tin Pan Alley tradition of writing: those 1-4-5 progressions. There were some marvelous performances done over just basically standards, though. But I think today one has to think more compositionally. My main interest right now is in the total effect of the music. Whenever I write, I try to think of a specific mood that the piece is going to have.

"Miles Davis was a great early influence on me. He could take the barest sketch and just by the way he organized the music—and the musicians—some really magnificent things would come out. Chick Corea has that same facility. I would like to reach a point in my writing where I need use only the basic essentials."

Another influence on Pritchard was Gary Burton. Pritchard had not been playing very long when Burton heard him. David's group of that time, the Quintet de Sade, opened a concert for the vibraphonist. Several months later, Larry Coryell left Burton; he was replaced by Gerry Hahn, who shortly afterward split too. Burton called Pritchard and invited him to join his group.

"We went straight to Europe! I was around 19 or 20. It was a great shock. Let me tell you. Looking back, I don't really think I was ready for that, musically. But it was quite a learning experience, of course, and I got to meet a lot of European musicians and listen to their music: people like the English saxophonist John Surman, the Norwegians Jan Garbarek and Terje Rypdal."

It's not surprising, therefore, to detect a trace of that European influence in Pritchard's playing and writing. Additionally, the openness of the Europeans deeply affected him. He demonstrated this some time later when he was trying to organize a record deal, and was introduced to Peter Robinson, an experimental keyboardist who had played for some time with the radical Don Ellis orchestra.

"Pete and I finally did an album for Epic in 1971 under the group name Contraband, which featured Charles Orena on reeds. That was a real idealistic period for us. When I think of all the great music that was created in Pete's living room! By the time we got to record it, though, it was difficult to go into the studio and lay it down. See, we had played so much together that we just felt we could go in and improvise freely on Pete's compositions. Now that's pretty risky, and as a consequence the album had only limited appeal, and was taken off the catalogue after less than a year."

During this period Pritchard met Gil Melle, who by that time had become a busy movie and TV scorer. David's guitar can be heard on *The Organization* sound track, which also boasted the presence of bassist David Holland. And by way of complete contrast, Pritchard gained valuable exposure during a stint with a group known as Ogo Moto, led by multi-keyboardist and synthesist Don Preston. There were gigs at the Whisky in Hollywood, the Mermaid Tavern and an unlikely appearance at the classically-oriented Ojai Music Festival.

Classical music was Pritchard's earliest

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training, so, after several years of experimenting with jazz-rock, he went back to studying the classic guitar. His teacher was Herb Stewart, who had himself been a student of Julian Bream and John Williams in England and of French composer Nadia Boulanger.

"Herb's approach is totally musical," said David. "In other words, when you learn a piece, it isn't just a matter of 'how do we go about playing this on the guitar?' You go about analyzing and seeing exactly what the music requires. Then the interpretation will tell you how to play it on *any* instrument.

"We've worked on a lot of 20th century contemporary music, and I've been listening to things by people like Olivier Messiaen. I'm now using some of his harmonic and rhythmic concepts in my own writing. You know, in jazz today I just don't hear that much that hasn't been done as well or better before. It's ironic, really, because now there are so many good players and the technological innovations are just fantastic. But the end result—at the moment—just seems to be somewhat of a stale musical period."

So for David Pritchard, woodshedding seems to be the name of the game right now. He pays his rent by teaching what he knows to students, by occasionally going on the road, or appearing in Las Vegas as accompanist to the likes of Andy Williams or Vikki Carr. And he makes record dates, such as the recent *Marchin'* by David Axelrod. Most importantly, he's concentrating on his own next album for Inner City which, he says, will feature more solo acoustic guitar.

CAUGHT!

HOUSTON PERSON- ETTA JONES QUARTET

NEW APARTMENT LOUNGE
CHICAGO

Personnel: Houston Person, tenor saxophone; Etta Jones, vocals; Sonny Phillips, organ; Frankie Jones, drums.

There is touring and then there is going on the road. One means press parties and someone else driving, the other do-it-yourself survival. The Houston Person-Etta Jones quartet, without a single group album after five years together, works the road. From Hartford to Oakland, Chicago to Baltimore, they play the lounges and motels and diners on the black side of any American city's Mason-Dixon Line. They come and go and the press rarely knows; neither the *Chicago Tribune* nor the *Sun-Times* managed to mention this performance in weekend listings that had room for Wazmo Nariz.

But what the quartet loses in clippings, it makes up in a deservedly devoted audience. This night on Chicago's South Side approaches the warmth of a reunion. "Uncle Houston," someone calls Person. "Aunt Etta," another beckons Jones. The last time through town, the group let the ticket taker, an aspiring vocalist, join them for a few songs. And the interaction between Person, Jones, organist Sonny Phillips, and drummer Frankie Jones is no less familial. "Perfect

comfort," Etta Jones has termed the feeling.

This quartet puts a premium on tradition. Night in, night out, the performance differs little. Each set follows a similar blueprint: two wailing workouts for Person and the rhythm section, one ballad and four or five standards with Jones on vocals. The quartet's strength derives not from what they do, but from the vibrancy, invention and heart with which they do it. Few performers grace warhorse material with such freshness.

Comparisons to Billie Holiday or Dinah Washington hardly demean Etta Jones, but they do evade the issue of her talent. She embosses a song with her notary mark: slightly quivering tone, bluesy delivery, care for each word. On record she holds hard by melodies; live, she steers any tune—*But Not For Me, I Saw Stars, Since I Fell For You*—into the middle of her range and makes it her playground. She stretches word and tone until both ripple behind the beat, then scattishly spurts to catch up to the verse.

It is a running joke that this magazine mistakenly referred to Person and Jones as husband and wife. Onstage the gaffe seems plausible enough. Jones mouths Person's changes, holds the mike to his tenor for his breaks. And Person, in turn, harnesses his huge tone until, as on the final bars of *Moonlight In Vermont*, it adheres to Jones' own. He possesses a range of skills that belie his "big horn" monicker, sprinting through credible bop on *Wee* and *Love For Sale*, reading ballads straight and moving, even quoting a Bach cantata.

Phillips glues the group together. He forgoes formidable solo piano skills to churn huge, forceful chords from his organ. This rich sound determines both harmony and rhythm for the group and allows Person, Etta Jones, and Frankie Jones their chances for subtlety and understatement.

One leaves the New Apartment with a mix of satisfaction and disgust. Midway through the third set of the night, a quarter to three, patrons outnumbered by chairs, the band plays on, absorbed. Nobody minds knowing the secret that is a neglected group, but sharing it would be even better. —sam freedman

NINTH MOERS INTERNATIONAL NEW JAZZ FESTIVAL

MOERS, WEST GERMANY

The Moers International New Jazz Festival was not the best in its nine year history, but Moers is still Europe's—if not the world's—leading free music festival. The small city in northwestern Germany near the Dutch border is quite a sight during the festival's four day run, with thousands of people from all over Europe camping, and ten to 15 hours every day of some of the world's leading musicians and groups. There were visitors and critics from Canada and Australia and a group of Japanese fans all the way from Tokyo.

The Bennie Wallace Trio, with Eddie Gomez on bass and a wonderful, swinging drummer, Alvin Queen, had the greatest success. The group's beautiful and exciting playing aroused the 5000 listeners in the festival park to a 20 minute ovation—one of the wildest and warmest this writer has ever

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1. Vote once only. Ballots must be postmarked before midnight Oct. 1.
2. Use official ballot only. Please type or print.
3. **Jazz and Rock/Blues Musicians of the year:** Vote for the artist who, in your opinion, has contributed most to jazz/rock/blues in 1980.

4. **Hall of Fame:** Vote for the artist—living or dead—who in your opinion has made the greatest contribution to contemporary music. The following previous winners are not eligible. Cannonball Adderley, Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Sidney Bechet, Bix Beiderbecke, Clifford Brown, Benny Carter, Charlie Christian, Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Paul Desmond, Eric Dolphy, Roy Eldridge, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Goodman, Coleman Hawkins, Fletcher Henderson, Jimi Hendrix, Woody Herman, Earl Hines, Johnny Hodges, Billie Holiday, Stan Kenton, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Gene Krupa, Glenn Miller, Charles Mingus, Thelonius Monk, Wes Montgomery, Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver, Charlie Parker, Bud Powell, Django Reinhardt, Buddy Rich, Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, Pee Wee Russell, Bessie Smith, Billy Strayhorn, Art Tatum, Cecil Taylor, Jack Teagarden, Lennie Tristano, Joe Venuti, Fats Waller, Ben Webster, and Lester Young.

5. **Miscellaneous Instruments:** Instruments not having their own category, with these exceptions, valve trombone, included in trombone category; cornet and fluegelhorn, included in the trumpet category.

6. **Jazz and Rock/Blues Albums of the Year:** Select only LPs issued during the last 12 months. Do not vote for singles. Include full album title and artist's name. If your choice is part of a series indicate volume number.

7. Only one selection counted in each category.

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seen. In a festival dedicated to free music, the success of this straightforward music was a surprise. In a way, it was like the audience saying: if you don't give us new and exciting free sounds, we would just as well take anything else which is good and strong. It also testifies to the openness of the audience—and, of course, of the Moers festival organizer, Burkhart Hennen.

The festival even included Irakere from Cuba in their first-ever German appearance. The band is fantastic and unique with its wild cross rhythms, with Chu Chu Valdes' intricate arrangements and its two trumpet players, Jorge Varona and Arturo Sandoval, sounding like a much bigger section. And yet, the group has played better on their records than it did under the difficult, open air conditions at Moers. At least a thousand of the 5000 fans at Moers were dancing. Before the concert, Chu Chu Valdes had said, "At home in Cuba we are a dance band."

However, it was trio music which really seemed to make it with the Moers audience. In addition to the Bennie Wallace Trio two others were especially successful: the Rick & Lee Rozie Trio from New York and the Ethnic Heritage Ensemble out of Chicago's AACM. Bassist Rick Rozie (who has played with Don Pullen, Oliver Lake and Anthony Davis), his brother, tenor player Lee Rozie, and drummer Rashied Ali are a tight, well-knit group. Rick has a style all his own—somewhere in the middle between the European chamber music concept and the aggressive strength of American players. The Ethnic Heritage Ensemble features Kahil El Zabar on electrified thumb piano and two reed players, Edward Wilkinson and Light Henry Huff. Their music is African rooted, but not in the sense of wild power and strength usually associated with Africa. Quite the contrary, it has tenderness and fragility and, of course, it's important to be reminded that this, too, can come from Africa. These musicians are, so to speak, third generation AACM. Muhal Richard Abrams' Chicago school seems to have an endless capacity for finding new talent.

The lightest, clearest, most transparent ensemble music of the festival was played by clarinetist John Carter with his quintet, which includes flutist James Newton and Carter's old buddy, Bobby Bradford, on cornet. Carter, truly, is in line with the all time greats of his instrument—that great line which began with Johnny Dodds and Jimmie Noone. And as free as he plays, he has inherited and intensified their mobility and expression. This is the wise, mature, mellow man who—like his fellow traveler Ornette Coleman—remains linked to the roots of his Texas home. It's most gratifying that finally Carter, over 50, has found the success that he should have had 20 years ago.

If Carter's music was the lightest and most sensitive of the festival, then the New Direction Unit from Japan was the most intense and loudest—to the threshold of pain. Guitarist-leader Masayuki Takayanagi is one of the father figures of Japanese free music. The four pieces he played in Moers are a memorial of protest and rage against the devastation of the world by big industry and its profit-greedy management. Takayanagi's music, which uses moving texts of both a Korean and a German poet against oppression and atomic contamination, is full of self-intensifying, screaming, tumultuous collectives. In the encore Takayanagi also proved

himself to be an outstanding cool jazz guitarist.

The "newest" music that happened in Moers came from James Blood Ulmer's Revelation Ensemble: this is "punk jazz" or, if you will, "free punk." The outstanding talent of the group is drummer Shannon Jackson. Some musicians at Moers felt that Jackson is, after many years, the first drummer who really produces something new. He plays funk rhythms freely, doing with rock rhythms what Elvin Jones did with bebop rhythms in the beginning of the '60s: freeing them. All music in which he participates gains a positive, jubilating quality.

There were three large ensembles: the Mike Westbrook Orchestra from England, the Odean Pope Saxophone Choir from Philadelphia and the Uli P. Lask Urban Music Ensemble from Germany. Westbrook, surely the leading figure of large orchestral music in contemporary England, presented his new composition, *The Cortège* ("A trilogy on the theme of life-death-life"), using lyrics of poets from France (Rimbaud), Germany (Hesse), Spain (Lorca), England (Blake), Sweden and Finland, which were beautifully sung by, among others, Mike's wife, Kate Westbrook. Westbrook's *Cortège* might be the most important large orchestral work to come out of jazz since Carla Bley's *Escalator Over The Hill* (which was released on JCOA Records in 1972).

Uli P. Lask's Urban Music Ensemble is what the title implies: contemporary city music—based as strongly on Coltrane's *Ascension* as it is on rock and funk—with soloists from West and East Germany, England and Holland,

among them British singer Maggie Nichols, one of the warmest personalities of the entire festival, and German Theo Jörgensmann, who is among those who have attracted new interest for the clarinet in recent years.

When I saw the lineup of the nine saxophonists who belonged to Odean Pope's Saxophone Choir, I thought this had to be a sort of "Super World Saxophone Quartet." Without a doubt, Pope is a strong saxophone player, but he just doesn't utilize the possibilities of nine saxophonists. His writing is weak and not even contemporary; Benny Carter wrote more "modernly" 20 years ago than Pope does now. Pope's music swings beautifully, but that could have been accomplished just as easily with one horn and his very good drummer, Cornell Rochester.

And then there were the masters: Old and New Dreams and the Art Ensemble of Chicago. If I were to go into details here I would have to write full length articles about each of these two great groups. Let it suffice to say that they played according to the standards that match their reputation and status. Charlie Haden on bass and Ed Blackwell on drums were the best rhythm section of the festival—and not just of this festival!

Among the many good ideas of Moers program chief Burkhart Hennen were the "Projects" which took place every day from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. in various halls of the city: a String Project, a Vocal Project and a Brass Project. Outstanding interpreters of a diversity of instruments explained their manner of playing and gave solo concerts—as a free service of the festival! Especially impressive



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among these was Maggie Nichols, who explained the associations between body movement and voice. Some critics described the sounds which Maggie emitted as being "sexual," but it's typical of a male dominated society to all too quickly misinterpret the sounds emitted by women when they are relaxed and natural as being sexual.

The other vocalist of the festival—Diamanda Gallas from San Diego—begins where other vocalists stop. At the outset, on the level of a most insane and frightening intensity, she blitzes the ears of her listeners with screams and sounds like a raving Bacchante. (She comes from Greece and appears tremendously Greek!) It is as if she transforms hysteria into art.

As the finale of the festival, percussionist

Michael Jüllich formed the "Moers Music Publikums-Orchester" (Moers Music Audience Orchestra). Imagine almost 150 festival visitors playing Miles Davis' *All Blues* with the rest of the audience—3000 people—joining in singing Oscar Brown's beautiful lyrics (which had been distributed earlier on hundreds of slips of paper): "... all blues—all shades—all hues..." The song was a strange monument: one of the world's great anti-racist songs, sung by thousands of young people in a country which still cannot even integrate a million southern European workers.

More power to Moers! The small city with approximately 100,000 inhabitants spends 75% of all the money raised for cultural purposes on new jazz. Let's hope that next

year—for the tenth anniversary of the Moers festival—the program will be even better!

—joachim e. berendt;
translated by reni & joe weisel

TETE MONTOLIU

MORSE AUDITORIUM
BOSTON UNIVERSITY, BOSTON

Personnel: Montoliu, acoustic piano.

"Blessed is he who expects nothing," said Alexander Pope, "for he shall never be disappointed." I was damned from the start at the long-awaited Boston premiere of the great Catalonian pianist Tete Montoliu. Boston's biggest jazz radio station and sponsor of the event, WBUR, campaigned hard for Tete. The Spanish Consul in Boston, a fellow Catalan, rolled out the red carpet. The crowd was SRO and up for it; we had all the makings of a real happening.

What wasn't happening, incredibly, was the piano playing. Tete was, to these ears, having an off night. There were pyrotechnics aplenty—certain flashy licks reappeared with disconcerting regularity—but little of that profound, bittersweet Catalonian soulfulness that wrenches your heart. Tete panned his ringing, melodic gold, but only flakes, never nuggets. I'd been through the Boston *Globe* Jazzfest's week of pianists—transitional Evans, gossamer Shearing, rumbling McKenna, intriguing Harvey Diamond, rosiny Pinetop Perkins—and was really hankering after some heady bop. But Tete's mixed program (one-third each of standards, bop classics, and originals) never got off the ground.

Tete—dressed in grey pinstripes, darker ascot, dark glasses, his jet hair swept back—sat ramrod straight at the well tuned Baldwin, noodled rhapsodically, then eased into a blues, his freely ruminating right flying over simple bass figures. *Miss Jones*, again taken easily (but then doubletimed), had that amazing right running glibly through fields of broken chords, à la Oscar Peterson.

In *Hot House* and *Airegin*, he broke into a walking bass that just wouldn't move; it seemed that Montoliu missed having a rhythm section behind him. Tete drové those fast tunes headlong, but they remained static displays, like tableaux of windswept figures. Moreover, his best came out with simply lyric exposition, as on *Lush Life* (slow, formal, with much rococo decoration and inappropriately boisterous hammer chords), pretty though innocuous cameos of *When I Fall In Love* and lullabyed *A Child Is Born*, and a very slow but well-sustained *Guess I'll Hang My Tears Out To Dry*.

Conversely, the lengthy variant of *Catalan Suite* (so electrifyingly rendered with Pedersen and Tootie Heath on the recent SteepleChase album *Tete A Tete*) dragged and muddled, and *Giant Steps*, fuller if not faster than the Jaki Byard and Adam Makowicz versions, was wooden and monotonous in effect. Even the encore of *Come Sunday*, ingeniously sandwiched between slabs of the fleet, glossy *Oleo*, sounded out-of-sorts. Oh, well. Such a tonic Tete provided nonetheless for the young crowd, on their feet and cheering, that he's sure to draw at least as well his next time through. I know I'll be there.

—fred boucheard

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banjo, and offered, wrote Whitney Balliett, "spontaneous counterpoint, unison passages and endlessly changing colors and timbres."

Soprano Summit conformed to Wilber's view of music by bringing together yesterday and today in harmonious relationship. They traveled widely, recorded a good deal, and rose to popularity. Then after three years, the band broke up in 1978. According to Wilber, it was time: "We did everything possible with the instrumentation. Kenny wanted to go on, but I had to do other things."

"I began working and recording with Dave McKenna, one of the great pianists. Pug and I took jobs as a team. She's a melodic singer in the tradition of Lee Wiley, Helen Forrest and Ethel Waters, with a lot of show business know-how and she looks good onstage. We've become a very salable act.

"Our base of operations is our house on Cape Cod. We do move around a good deal," Bob noted. "There are an increasing number of festivals and concerts throughout the country that favor traditional music with contemporary overtones. We play most all of them. We also perform a lot in Europe.

"Here and in foreign countries, there is a trend emerging. More and more people who come to jazz presentations want to be both entertained and involved."

Pug added: "An audience deserves to feel good after an evening of music—several of today's jazz performers realize that. And certainly many of the greats from the past have been entertainment-oriented."

"Louis and Duke knew the value of making contact," Bob interpolated. "The truth is that the show business thing is just an edge, an attention getter, so that people will listen more closely to the music.

"What else am I into? I record a good deal—four or five albums a year, some with Pug for Phontastic and Artemus. The labels, which are available via our mail order distribution setup, are owned by Anders Ohman, a Swedish lawyer, clarinetist and dear friend. I do both classical and jazz albums. The jazz things fall into the modern mainstream category; the predominant stylistic influence is swing.

"I have several recording projects that I'm about to embark upon. The most immediate of these is an LP with the nine piece Widespread Depression Orchestra, a unit that specializes in Ellington. I plan to arrange and be featured on a variety of Duke's pieces, some well known, some not so familiar.

"I anticipate writing a big band LP that will feature some good cats and myself. I'm also going to do a small band LP with Pee Wee Erwin, one of our finest trumpeters.

A bit further down the line, I'll start on Pug's favorite subject—a tribute to Bechet, featuring his 1950s hits as played by top jazzmen and a string section.

"I continue to transcribe the great jazz performances from recordings and bring them to life in concert. I began doing that with the New York Jazz Repertory Company. Now I'm involved in this kind of activity as director of the Smithsonian Jazz Repertory Ensemble. I feel it's important work—accurately mirroring what originally was done, while bringing something of yourself and your players to the material.

"Because I feel young musicians need to know how the most significant pieces

in the jazz repertory are put together, I recently accepted another educational assignment—the transcription of 15 items from the valuable *Smithsonian Collection Of Classic Jazz*. I'm working on records covering a wide range from King Oliver's *Dippermouth Blues* to *Pent-Up House* by Max Roach and Clifford Brown.

"What's most important to me? Playing and writing at an optimum level and remaining associated with inspiring musicians.

"I'm very optimistic about my tomorrows. I've found what is necessary for a happy life. And at last it's penetrated that I don't need to be old fashioned or up-to-date. Just myself. It's enough." **db**

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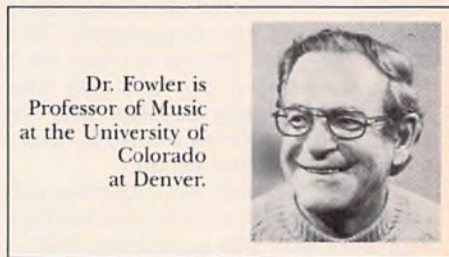
PRO-SESSION HOW TO

INTEGRATE JAZZ AND LEGIT, Part II

BY DR. WILLIAM L. FOWLER

Part I of this article (db, July, '80) scanned both jazz and classical characteristics. Part II now examines how Patrick Williams unites those characteristics in his recently recorded *An American Concerto* (Columbia JC 36318), featuring jazzmen Phil Woods, Dave Grusin, Grady Tate, and Chuck Domanico alongside the eclectic London Symphony Orchestra.

* * *



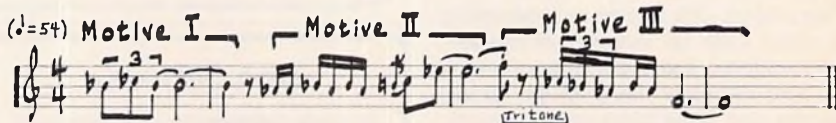
Dr. Fowler is Professor of Music at the University of Colorado at Denver.

Classical concertos have long relied on complex forms—rondos, sonatas, and such—to maintain order among multiple contrasting melodies. One classical form, though, the theme and variations, builds from a single melody base, the same form inherent in jazz charts and jam sessions.

Since Pat's concerto spans both classical music and jazz, the mutually-serviceable theme and variations becomes his logical choice of form. Within it he can establish continuity through related rather than opposing melodic materials, meanwhile providing the variety necessary to all long works in his succession of contrasting styles, styles which move along a path from dark Neo-Primitivism into colorful Impressionism, then via historic jazz highlights into current jazz practices. Furthermore, he can pave his winding melodic path with similar bricks.

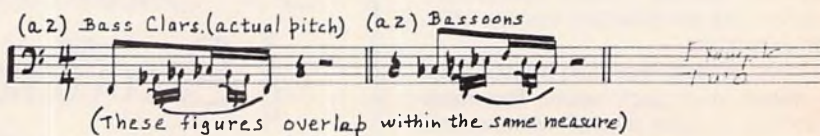
They're called *motives*, those tuneful building blocks whose repetition and consequent recognition customarily shape melodies and link movements. When they reappear intact, they pique the conscious memory; when they recur as alterations, they stir the subconscious. But however they might affect aural recall, they always effect melodic cohesion.

Phil Woods' five bar unaccompanied alto solo, which will motivate melodic lines throughout all three movements, signals the start of *An American Concerto* (all examples show actual pitch):



In this opening statement, three consecutive motives appear: the germinal chromatic upper neighbor, as yet a tonal enigma in the absence of key defining harmony, yet a universal building block because of its very simplicity; then an upward surge of major key energy; and finally a falling blues cry along the Locrian pentatonic, that ultimate blues mode which lowers even its dominant. Recurring upper neighbor figures in Motives II and III clearly relate them both to Motive I and to each other, while a hidden chromatic upper neighbor—from C flat in Motive I to C natural in Motive II, then back down to C flat in Motive III—constitutes a more subtle interrelationship.

By immediately repeating his initial statement, this time supported by the low symphonic strings and percussion, Phil affirms it as the exemplifying theme. Below it, the strings set down a turgid tremolo pedal chord—F, C, D flat, E flat—whose shimmering harmonic gloom deepens the downward pull of Phil's C flat blue notes. And only when the theme has rerun its affirmation course does Phil yield his personal expression of it to Variation I, an extended version boldly drawn in rich earth tones by unison French horns and tuba, a massive line moving through the same low string turbulence, but now punctuated by miniature tritone geysers erupting and subsiding among the low orchestral reeds:



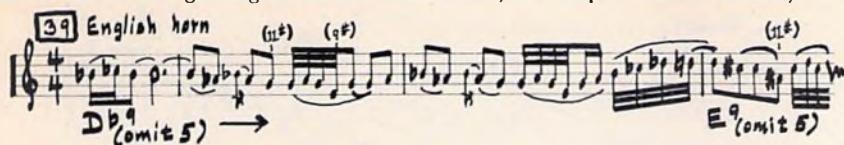
As the symphonic forces assume the main melodic responsibilities, Phil's role shifts from interpreter of the written line to improviser of counterlines against it. In this demanding role, the breadth of Phil's stylistic experience and his sensitivity to stylistic idiom begin to emerge. He grasps the implications of Pat's Movement I title, *Out of the Darkness*; he recognizes that Pat in the beginning must paint a primordial symphonic landscape from which full blown modern jazz can eventually arise. And his responding low-key improvised eloquence adds sepia brush strokes to Pat's dark orchestral scene.

In Variation II, Michael Jeans' solo English horn, its exotic timbre far more suggestive of medieval Arabian nights than of primordial African dawns, moves the concerto from its dark

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Neo-Primitivism to a glowing fusion of Islamic melody and Impressionistic harmony:



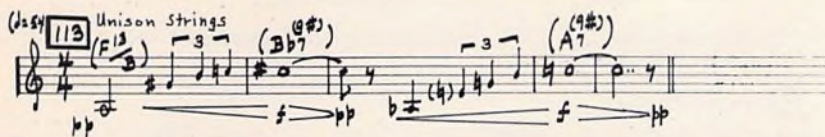
To intensify the melodic exoticism in this particular variation while updating its harmony, Pat transfers his original Locrain-pentatonic E flat and F out of the melodic line and into the D flat 9 background chord, meanwhile replacing them with E natural and G, notes which form an augmented ninth and an augmented 11th against the background D flat 9. Now only one note, the C flat remains common to both harmony and melody. Moreover, that C flat gathers energy from its tritone relationship with the F in the harmony. Small wonder this sultry song maintains its melodic mystique throughout its motivically repetitive line.

Having twice paid his respects to classicism, Pat now prepares the concerto for its entry into current jazz. Mindful of the importance of jazz past to the jazz present, he sets aside thematic development for a moment to observe some jazz yesterdays—a touch of Mardi Gras merriment, a blues line from Beale Street, the Ellington *A Train* intro, plus assorted section riffs and 'bone glisses and plunger doo-wahs, those trademarks of the swing band era. Then after one farewell orchestral reference to the original theme, this time against a brighter string background, the jazz quartet finally takes charge. As the concerto heads into the second half of the 20th Century, Grady's drum set, Chuck's Fender bass, and Dave's Rhodes piano for the first time team with Phil's alto sax.

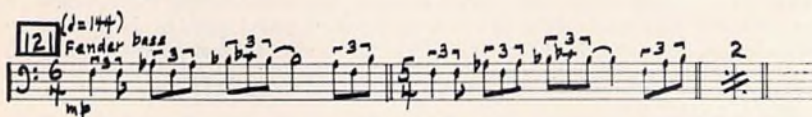
Variation III, a rubato ballad, features dialogue between piano and saxophone. To add rhythmic grace, the upper neighbor figure now enters on a weak beat, and in bars three and four delays its resolution while its return portion intervenes a perfect fifth above. In the parallel chords which constitute the harmony, each melody note sounds a harmonic augmented 11th. To avoid excessive accidentals among his potent parallels, Pat spells them enharmonically. But to the ear they stack up as 3rd, 7th, flat 3rd (or sharp 9th), sharp 11th, 7th again, normal 9th, and sharp 11th again:



As the ballad line unfolds, the symphonic woodwind and brass sections alternate in successive doublings of the piano upper neighbor figure, while a unison octave counterline derived from the original Motive II rises up to C, then up to C sharp, then again up to C natural, a neighbor note subtlety typical of Pat's contrapuntal care:



Variation IV fuses multiple historic styles. In classic *scherzo* triplet rhythm and modern mixed meter, the electric bass begins a prancing Baroque *basso ostinato*, joined immediately by a jazz saxophone improvisation:

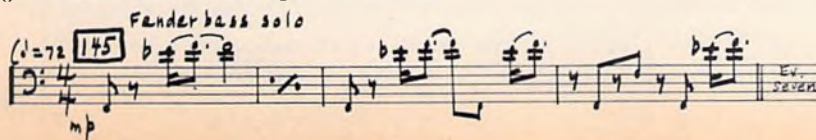


As the ostinato repeats, the keyboard doubles it at the octave, while drums add rhythmic support. Pat next applies the longstanding symphonic principle of compounding musical interest by adding to orchestral texture. Over the ongoing quartet, he brings in, one by one, each orchestra section, each with its own separate set of energetic and joyful melodic particles. When all these intermittent melodic particles have entered, they combine into the translucent bustle of sound known as Pointillism among *avante garde* buffs.

In Variation IV, even the conductor becomes somewhat of an improviser, for Pat's instructions read, "Various sections of orch enter on cue, and repeat till cue to go on."

As the jazz quartet finally fades out, the joyous orchestral melee continues to charge the atmosphere with flying fragments. But that activity also ends, and Pat, after a strong then subsiding French horn/tuba reference to the theme, begins a more sweeping buildup, the long, long line of Variation V.

Again the solo electric bass begins the buildup:



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Again a jazz solo joins in. But this time it's a boogaloo, and this time it's on electric keyboard:

154 Rhodes piano and viola section (8va ↓)

(Vlns + celli added)

As successive keyboard and saxophone solos first rise to rhythmic intensity then ebb to rubato reverie, darting woodwind flutters, glittering harp glissandos, ringing percussion punctuations, broad brass chorales, and glowing string counterlines increasingly illuminate the background. Variation V takes Movement I to its emotional apex: Movement I now needs no further development.

Accordingly, Pat turns his musical forces toward the coda. After one high energy reprise of the Variation IV bustle, the full orchestra flexes its full muscle behind the quartet in a cyclical, expanded restatement of Variation III to end the movement.

The logic of musical form holds that change will intensify effect, that calm, for example, will feel deeper when it follows tension, or that tension will seem stronger following calm. Like all staturesd symphonists, Pat subscribes to that logic. So after the twin surges of emotion and energy in Movement I, he turns to musical introspection. In Movement II, he limits his orchestral motion to either floating or flowing, and restrains his jazz from moving beyond an easy lope. He retains that simplest of symphonic forms, the theme and variations, and sustains interest within it through tonal rather than rhythmic means. Movement II dwells on the beauty of the ballad.

The opening unaccompanied Locrian line expands the original upper neighbor motive, first by one note, then by two:

♩ = 5♭ Sordino (violas + celli unison)

This melody continues through several orchestral repetitions, all colored by occasional subdued alto sax responses, and by gently undulating bitonal harmony, until Dave transforms it into an acoustic piano soliloquy harmonized in parallel third inversion seventh chords over a pedal bass note:

16 Acoustic piano Rubato

(Flute cadenza)

After an Impressionistic cadenza, the soliloquy becomes rhapsodic for a moment, then spins a related melody, still unaccompanied:

17 Freely (Rubato)

(L.H. arpeggios) E mi 9 →

After Dave's frequent fermatas, rubato tempos, and quiet ending, the concerto begs for more rhythmic stability, a stability the ensuing ballad supplies. Aided by harp splashes etched into sustained orchestral strings and low brass, the quartet hints at another jazz buildup:

♩ = 60 18 alto sax solo (Rhythm section double-time feel)

But the returning keyboard soliloquy momentarily interrupts, this time warmed by creamy string section parallel thirds. Jazz, however, can no longer be denied in this movement. Grady's brushes and Chuck's electric bass set up medium tempo tiptoe triplet figures, Dave's electric piano adds tasty comps, and Phil's alto, obedient to the authority of its master, gradually increases its improvised intensity. Orchestral woodwinds and brass contribute short on the beat riffs, while the symphony strings stabilize the total texture as they flow along the theme:

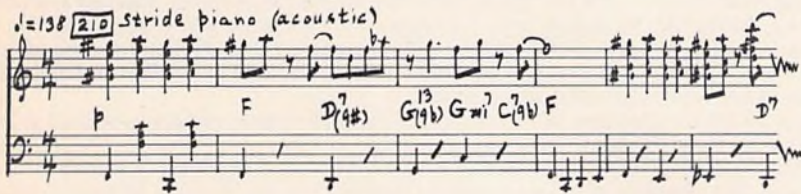
19 (Stabilizing line in unison Vlns, Vlas + Celli behind improvised sax)

Yet just as the jazz voice seems to be reaching toward full throat, an unexpected ritard throttles it, and the sound stream veers into a symphonic coda, a shortened restatement of the opening theme, again in half-step-related bitonal harmony (A sharp Major over B Major), and again colored by Phil's meditative responses. From a jazz point of view, Movement II seems to end more in a question mark than in an exclamation point.

But Movement III immediately answers with an emphatic jazz *Yes!* At the very outset, the quartet jumps right on, Phil hotfooting as soloist and the orchestra pushing in furioso figures. Then after this volatile mixture has reached its boiling point, everybody suddenly cools it; everybody settles down to some serious swinging, first behind Dave's solid solo, then behind Phil's display of most everything an alto can do.

Amid all this jumping joy, though, Pat still remembers its roots: in a flashback sequence worthy of any filmmaker, he first resets his primordial scene, then reenacts a Dahomey tribal drum celebration. Led by Grady as chief drummer, the London percussionists soon join in as celebrants. Now the concerto is marching to the sound of a half dozen different yet unified drummers, together driving themselves and everyone else toward a smoking up tempo straightahead, all out, jazz bash climax.

Yet Pat has still another jazz root to tap. A sudden dramatic silence—the symphonic grand pause; a ghostly two chord string turnaround; then again a flashback, this final time to the keyboard father figure, Mr. Stride Piano Man. His tune? A barrelhouse of neighbor notes. Its counter melody? The concerto-opening theme, still in unison French horns and tuba:



Pat's compositional cycle is now complete: his concerto can now rocket up a line of neighbor note triplets to its concluding explosive chord.

DAVIS

continued from page 19

Davis again built up the density and heat. Three chattering, chanting, bickering guitars were added, and Davis himself played organ. Remaining were the welter of percussion and the omnipresent deep patterns of ex-Motown bass guitarist Michael Henderson.

Limits were again being pushed, tested and strained by Davis, this time ruthlessly, with less attention to editing. There's less open space in the post-*On The Corner* music than at any other time since *Birth Of The Cool*. Except for random, unexpected, harrowing stop times, every moment is filled. There's so much sound in this boiling, teeming mass of pure rhythms, timbre and texture that conventional means of getting it out to the listener—concert sound systems, multi-track stereo recording—seem inadequate. Most of Davis' later recordings are technically muddy and obscure, compounding the difficulty of finding the handle on this alternately over-stimulating and forbidding, exhilarating and unfulfilling phase.

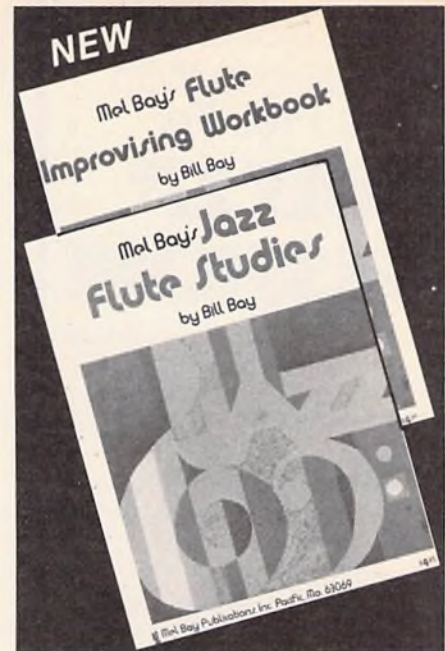
A certain amount of positive critical revisionism has lately occurred where *On The Corner*, *Get Up With It* and *Agharta* are concerned, but it has cleared little of the cloud of uncomprehending negativism that surrounded Davis when he left the active scene five years ago. Nonetheless, his return is anxiously awaited.

Though it's more likely to happen than a Beatles reunion, Davis will undoubtedly face the exalted, probably unfulfillable, expectations attendant upon a near legend. He'll be a critical sitting duck.

If Davis does decide to come back, it will be his utter disregard for anyone's artistic ideals but his own that will see him through. Long ago, he realized that a complete, contrary independence would serve his music and his image equally well. Commercial popularity has followed a separate axis, depending on each phase's congruence with public taste. It's significant that record sales, or lack thereof, have never compromised Davis' overall position of dominance when he has been active.

And if, after repeatedly unsatisfactory rehearsals and recording sessions, Davis finds all the possibilities exhausted and decides not to return, would it really be so hard to comprehend after the scope of his 30 years at the forefront? When one has redrawn the boundaries of contemporary music as often as this man has, rewriting the rules of the language time and again, he has earned the right to silence. Still, one suspects that the ever present need to react, comment and point the way ahead will soon bring about Miles Davis' waiver of his prerogative. When that happens, we can expect new directions to again be heard in the land.

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PRO SESSION
GUITAR TRANSCRIPTION

Transcribed by Don Swigert

Singer-guitarist Don Swigert currently attends the Guitar and Bass Institute of Technology, where he is co-authoring a book with Howard Roberts. Mr. Swigert also contributed the comments below on Jay Graydon's *Twilight Tone* solo from the hit LP *Extensions* by Manhattan Transfer (Atlantic 19258).



Manhattan Transfer's *Extensions* was produced by Jay Graydon (see the MT feature in *db*, March, '80). LA's superlative guitarist, and a master of screaming, notebending solos. On *Twilight Tone*, which he co-authored with MT's Alan Paul, he executed one of his most exciting solos, comprised of two guitar tracks overdubbed in perfectly matched articulation. Most interesting are his unique style and choice of notes. Each solo is a coherent but very emotional statement (for a special example, his solo on Steely Dan's *Peg*), and one listens in vain for any cliched licks. Jay uses very light strings to create his fluid note bends and that ringing sustain of his, especially in the upper register.

1. This 16-bar solo, because of its predominantly stratospheric register, is written in actual pitch except for the Dorian run in measures 9 and 10.
2. The overall shape of this solo shows Graydon's horizontal approach to playing. He starts very high and continues to descend until the beginning of bar 9, where he ascends again to climax at bars 13-14.
3. Note the use of harmony in thirds (bars 1-5, 11-13, 15-16), fourths (6, 9-10), and unisons that occur only at the low and high points.
4. At the climax in bar 13, he bends ever closer to the top note, while laying back with the tempo until beat three.
5. The straight line between two notes means the first (bent) note is released back down to the original pitch to become the second note (bars 2, 8, 14); this also occurs just before the next (new) note is picked (bars 1, 12, 13).
6. Bars 7-8 and 14-15 show both guitars in unison.

**From Manhattan Transfer's "Twilight Tone"—
Jay Graydon's Solo**

The transcription shows a 16-bar solo in D minor. The notation is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. Chord changes are indicated above the staff: Dm7 (measures 1-5), Dm/MAJ7 (measures 6-10), Dm7 (measures 11-13), G7 (measures 14-15), Gm7 (measures 16-17), A7+5 (measures 18-19), and A7 (measures 20-21). The solo features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some notes bent and a final notebend in measure 21. The transcription is presented in a four-measure system format.

PRO-SESSION

PIANO: THE ART OF ACCOMPANYING, PART I

by Joyce Collins

Pianist Joyce Collins has recorded and toured with her own trio, flutist Paul Horn and singer Bill Henderson; she is featured as pianist, arranger and singer on Henderson's *Street Of Dreams* (Discovery 802), and is presently recording her new trio LP. Author of *Jazz/Rock For Kids*, published by Warner Bros., she teaches keyboard self-accompaniment at the Dick Grove Music Workshops and piano classes at Los Angeles City College and East Los Angeles College. She presented this lecture at the National Association of Jazz Educators Jan., 1980 convention in Albuquerque, NM.



Accompanying is an art in itself. It requires more than pianistic ability: sensitivity, control, subtlety, and the ability to listen are at the top of the list.

You will definitely broaden your work possibilities if you can develop accompanying skills. And, if you can play *and* sing, you'll never be out of work.

Here are some guidelines that should prevent you from being fired seven times before you manage to hold onto a steady job:

Remember—the singer is the thing! If there's anything you should show off as an accompanist, it should be your consummate good taste. You can dazzle people with your chops on your own job.

- ★ Don't play the melody (except sometimes). The singer may want to vary the melody or phrase it differently. However, sometimes you might double melody to strengthen the line. This is done more in contemporary music than it is with standards and jazz.
- ★ The mid range of the piano sounds richest behind the singer.
- ★ Follow the singer's dynamics. This is harder to do with electric pianos, of course, but *try*. The Morley pedal used with the Fender Rhodes piano is an asset for dynamic control.
- ★ Know the lyrics to the song—you'll play it better.
- ★ Know the melody, and don't put notes in your chords that conflict with the melody.
- ★ Phrase harmonically with the singer *no matter what the chord symbols say*.
- ★ Fill when your singer holds a whole note, and keep your fill in the musical context of the song.

INTROS

The intro should lead the singer comfortably into the song. This is no time to be mysterious or play "stump the singer." The intro should not be too long, and should be in the style of the song.

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③ *C* *C#07* *Dm7* *G7*

Jazz and ballad:

① *Gm7* *C7* *F#7* *B7* *Em7* *A7* *Dm7* *G7*

② *F#7* *B7* *Fm7* *Bb7* *Em7* *A7* *Dm7* *G7*

③ (for ballads) *G7* ARPEGGIO (BELL TONE)

Contemporary:

① (POP BALLAD) *C* *G/B* *(Gm/Bb)* *F/A* *Fm/Ab* *Dm7/G*

② (GOSPEL) *C* *F*

③ (Rock + Fusion) *Fmaj7*

④ (WHEN IN DUB) *Dm7/G*

Intros Into I Minor Chord

Commercial style:

① *Cm* *Fm6* *G7*

② *Cm* *Ab9* *G7*

Jazz and ballad:

① *Em7(b9)* *A7(b9)* *Dm7(b9)* *G7(b9)*

② *Cm* *B+* *Eb/Bb* *Am7(b9)* *Abmaj7* *Dm7(b9)* *G7(b9)*

Intros Into II Minor 7th Chords

Commercial style:

① *Dm7* *G7* *C* *Am7* 2

② *Dm7* *C7* *C* *A7* 2

Jazz and ballad:

① *C* *F9* *Em7* *A7* *Dm7* *G7* *Em7* *A7(b9)*

② *Dm7* *G7* *Bb9* *Eb9*

(To be continued.)



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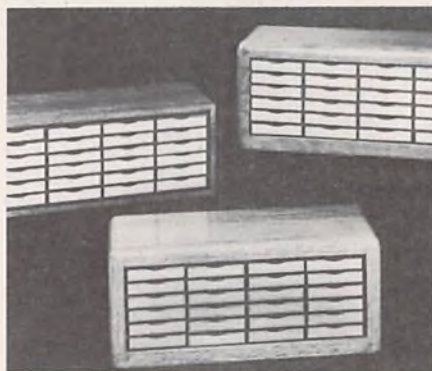
SOUND MODIFICATION AND SYNTHESIZERS

Step on it! The **Big Jam** from **Multivox** (Hauppauge, NY) is a new line of special effects pedals which promises a full range of electronic effects. A noiseless, maintenance-free FET switch circuit eliminates unwanted clicks and breakdowns, and recessed front-mounted slide controls aid command of your sound effects. You can distort your sound the traditional way (the **Big Jam** has separate controls for drive, tone, and level output), or you can use the compressor (recommended for bassists), the unique jazz flanger (a flanging circuit combined with a separate overdrive distortion circuit), a phaser (for low and mid-range frequencies), a flanger which sweeps the whole range of amplified sound, an analog echo unit with a separate reverb circuit, and a bi-phase pedal that allows integration of two phasing effects in one unit.

And there's more—an envelope filter makes a wah-wah, and an octave box makes instant Wes Montgomery. When it's time to play, a little green light shows when your effects are turned on, while a little red light shows that your sound is natural.

ACCESSORIES

Aargh! Who smeared peanut butter and jelly all over my guitar, then left it in the sandbox? Clean off all that gook immediately with my five ounce spray can of reformulated **Guild AC-107** guitar polish, from **Guild Guitars** (Elizabeth, NJ), which is made of a blend of pure Carnauba wax and lemon oil to penetrate the dirt and old wax, and restore the natural beauty of my guitar's wood—fortunately, this polish protects the wood by resisting smears and scratches. And after you're done polishing my guitar, you can use this Guild guitar polish on the furniture, too. No, don't tell me it's environmentally unsafe: the spray formula contains no fluorocarbons. Now get to work.



The cassette storage case from **Shape West** (Bellevue, WA) is made of solid oak and walnut, comes in six, 12, or 24 packs, and when you press your finger, the tape drops into your hand. Considering that your expensive stereo system, your tape deck, and your record shelves all look so classy, why do you still store your cassettes in that raggedy old cotton sack?

GUITAR FAMILY

After **Music Technology, Inc.** (Garden City, NY) did a long and comprehensive analysis of the sounds, instruments, and playing styles used by guitarists throughout the history of rock music, they did not write a book about their studies. Instead, they made the **Vantage 709** rock guitar, to match the power of traditional designs with up to date technology. A combination of coil tap and phase switches offers sounds characteristic of many different types of guitars; individual volume controls for each pickup and a pickup selector permit blending and alternation between the pickups. The MF-790 pickups allow detailed chords and penetrating lead sounds because they're "engineered to be hot without sacrificing frequency response."

PERCUSSION



Drummers will welcome the **Synare S3X**, the world's first preset electronic bass drum, from **Star Instruments, Inc.** (Stafford Springs, CT). You don't have to beat harder to project a louder sound—simply increase the volume controls, and it's bombs away at the flick of a wrist. Moreover, the S3X has a double, triple, and repeat function to emit multiplied sounds. The six position switch permits you to find the sounds you want: front panel, sweep down, sweep with modulation, noise, dual oscillators, and chimes. A thin, dense drum pad improves "hit" response, and head sensitivity is adjustable; it all runs on AC power.

ACCESSORIES

Rock bands—**Sico Incorporated** (Minneapolis, MN) knows what a drag it is when crowds of fans, excited by your music, try to rush the stage while you're playing. So they're now making a portable, adjustable crowd barrier of steel framed plywood to take to the gigs with you. It's built in sections five feet high and eight feet long; the sections connect and clamp to stage fronts, and two men, says Sico, using hand tools can set up 80 feet of barrier in a half hour; the barrier stays four to eight feet from the front of the stage (it's adjustable). Optional floor panels attach to the barrier, and under the weight of the music-crazed crowds, provide support for the barriers. Then at concert's end, simply detach the barriers and push away from the stage like big brooms to clean the floor area of popcorn, drink cups, toilet paper rolls, zonked-out freaks, and other litter. Sico claims that their barriers have "Strength and Solidarity", which must come in handy at political conventions.

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