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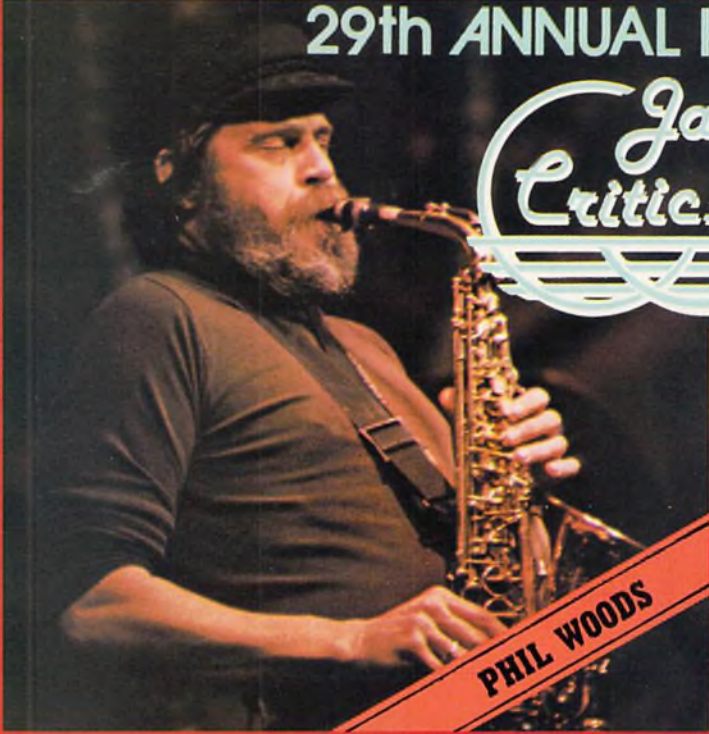
GEORGE CABLES: BREATHES LIFE INTO PIANO
JIMMY KNEPPER: "JAZZ-SHALLOW AND SUPERFICIAL"

down beat®

THE CONTEMPORARY MUSIC MAGAZINE

29th ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL

Jazz
Critics Poll



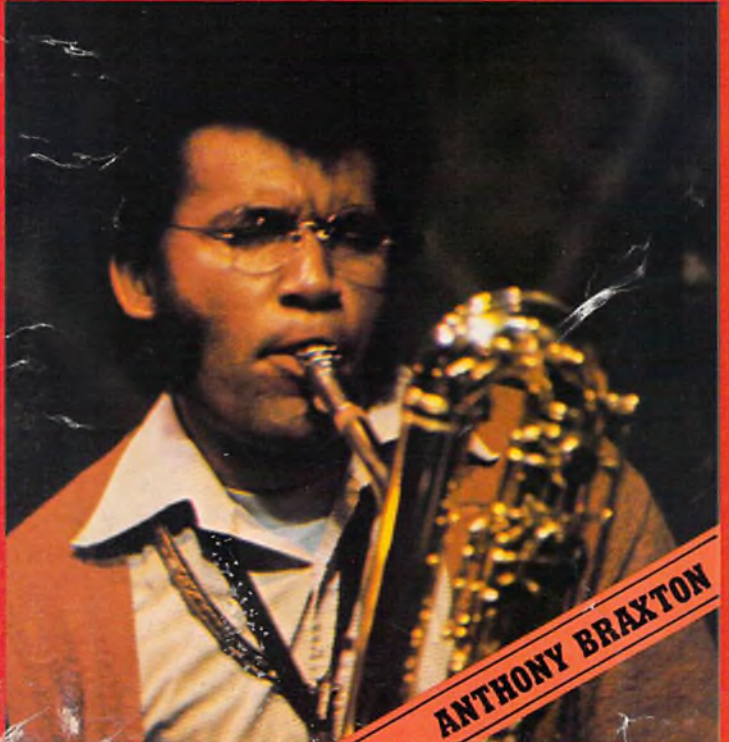
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East Coast: Lee Jeske
Phone: 212/286-9208
West Coast: Lee Underwood
Phone: 213/829-2829**ADVERTISING SALES OFFICES:****East:** Dennis S. Page, Larry Smuckler
Jeffrey/Richard Associates, Inc.
310 E. 44th St., Suite 1710
New York, NY 10017
212/490-7950**Midwest:** Charles Suber, Jack Maher
222 W. Adams St., Chicago, IL
60606
312/346-7811**West:** Frank Garlock
458 W. Douglas Ave., El Cajon,
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George Cables

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ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO EXECUTIVE OFFICE:
222 W. Adams St., Chicago, IL 60606
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BY LEE JESKE

“Some people might think jazz is a high art form and worthy of the utmost consideration but, in my years, very little of it is. And it shouldn't be taken very seriously. Some people get very deep about jazz. It has the possibilities, but it's a cyclical music and, in a lot of ways, it's just shallow, superficial, and pyrotechnical—crowd-pleasing—and the musicians aren't really aces. Even the ones who are considered aces aren't. 'Cause a lot of players I see, I think: 'He's just got a sloppy technique, he plays out of tune, he's got a bad sound.'

“I don't have the respect—people say, 'Oh, this is our American art form'—and all that shit, or 'Oh, the

JIMMY

kids can play just as good as the symphony guys or the serious musicians.' I don't know more than one or two that could actually work up a clarinet concerto—or any serious piece—and play it without making a mistake, play it with a good sound, in tune, with expression and the whole bit. To work up to play a serious piece is difficult.

“You can understand why the serious musicians don't think much of jazz. Oh, they listen to it and they like

it and they enjoy it and all that, but they don't take it very seriously, because most of the time it's not very serious music.”

Dem's fighting words.

But Jimmy Knepper is a rare bird: a Musician, with a capital M. He is self-critical to an absurd degree; one can reel off a list of renowned trombonists all day before getting a flicker of respect to flash behind his inch-thick eyeglasses, and he would sooner spend a

spare hour in his bedroom practicing horn exercises than do almost anything. On the Mingus Dynasty tour of India and the Mideast, Knepper remained eggshell-pale and looked undernourished enough to be unable to blow up a balloon, let alone play the slide trombone. Because, while the rest of the band sprawled by the hotel pools, Knepper sat on his bed playing out of a book of Bach.

When Leonard Feather, in one of his questionnaires for a volume of *The Encyclopedia Of Jazz*, asked musicians to list their best recorded solos, Jimmy Knepper wrote just three words: "No Good Solos." Yet, there are some who would alter that to read, "All Good Solos," for Knepper, whether he knows it or admits it or likes it, is one of the most consistent trombonists to ever play jazz. His solos are small, lilting, divine creations that blend the best bop elements with a great deal of wistfulness. His solos begin and end, and, when all is said and done, this is one of the simple secrets to great jazz playing.

Jimmy Knepper's career has been a most peculiar one. Perhaps his greatest work was done with another perfectionist, Charles Mingus. Knepper's role on some of the seminal Mingus sessions—*Tiajuana Mood*,

of Broadway shows and union dates. "I'm an introvert by nature," he says, "and I'm not very sociable, and that has probably influenced my career and working opportunities to a large extent. I never used to hang around and call a lot of people to let them know I'm not working. I remember reading something in *down beat* about Phil Woods, that he's tired of playing *Stella By Starlight* with local rhythm sections. If you were back doing studios or Broadway shows or club dates, you'd be happy to play *Stella By Starlight* with whomever. I'd be very happy to play *Stella By Starlight* with local rhythm sections."

On the day that we speak, Knepper is between gigs. The weekend before he played his first bar mitzvah in years—reading through *Hava Nagillah* and the score of *Fiddler On The Roof* at a Long Island extravaganza. The next weekend he will be subbing in an orchestra that is performing a concert of orchestral works by the iconoclastic 20th century composer Edgard Varese. If he had his druthers, he'd be playing in a jazz club, but he'll take whatever job anybody calls him for.

Jimmy Knepper was born in Los Angeles on November 22, 1927 and began playing the trombone in his ninth year. By the time he was a teenager he was knocking around in the West Coast big band of Chet Cascales and hanging out with Dean Benedetti, the legendary sax player and Charlie Parker-follower. In 1945, Benedetti formed a small group in Reno that tried to slip *Hot House* and other bop tunes, which were quickly coming west from New York, into their repertoire of rumbas and *Clair De Lune*. After the band acquired some spiffy

Billy Berg's for a couple of nights. And, shit, there were three or four horns and no music. We just played *Ornithology* and stuff like that, that was about it. And that was Mingus."

Knepper claims no particular influences on the trombone at that point. The only musician to knock him on his musical ear was Charlie Parker, and that sort of spoiled him for the rest of his life.

"When Bird came along," he remembers, "the musicians in my circle were enchanted by him. The effect was that we couldn't listen to anybody else. People that played with Bird—even Diz—just sounded silly. They sounded like they were children, playing the game that he was a master of. Whoever was on those early records with him would sound childish. That kind of stunted my diversification, my catholic tastes. It was only years later that I could appreciate what Diz and others did."

Dean Benedetti, with Knepper frequently at his side, shadowed Charlie Parker while he was in California. Knepper recalls them sitting with a clunky disc recorder at the Hi-De-Ho club recording their idol.

After getting out of high school, Knepper played with local bands led by Ray Baudac and Tommy Reynolds before traveling to New York with Freddie Slack's band. The band became unhinged in the Northeast, and Knepper "got a little frightened of New York. I had about \$50 and no work, and I figured maybe I'd better go back while I had a chance."

Back to LA and work with Roy Porter, back East with the Glen Henry Band, back West with the Henry aggregation before hitchhiking back to New



DARRYL PITTECORE

KNEPPER

Mingus *Ah Um*, *The Clown*—led to the praise-stingy Mingus calling him, "probably the greatest trombone player who ever lived." Yet Mingus is also known to have committed his share of violence to Knepper's scrawny frame: punching him in the stomach onstage at the Village Vanguard and smacking a tooth out of his head in Mingus' apartment. More on this in a moment.

Despite critical accolades in the jazz realm, Knepper has had to do his share

cardigan jackets, they returned to California as, according to Knepper, "the first bebop band in Los Angeles. But we didn't work very much.

"One time we had a one-nighter in San Pedro and Dean said, 'The bass player can't make it. Mind if I get a colored guy?' So it was Mingus. Mingus showed up and didn't say a word all night, didn't say one word. A few weeks after that, Mingus called me up and hired me to work with him at

York with saxophonist Joe Maini. Maini and Knepper became residents of a tenement apartment on Broadway and 136th Street that was to become legendary. The tales of all-night jam sessions, with drugs, women, and the best musicians in New York, are tantalizing. However, Knepper remembers it somewhat differently.

"It was like hand-to-mouth then—paying the rent, eating at the automat, stealing milk off the fire escape. It's

glamorized—it wasn't the best musicians in New York coming up to jam, it was the worst musicians in New York, excluding Bird, of course. We actually didn't have that many sessions, and they weren't all-night orgies and all that. We had drums there and a beatup piano and four feet of concrete on the ceiling, so you couldn't hear out. Bird came up because he liked Joe."

Apartment jam sessions might have been plentiful, but paying gigs were, as usual, scarce. Knepper worked with a variety of bands during 1950 and '51—Sam Donahue, Charlie Barnet, Charlie Spivak, and Gene Roland's huge rehearsal band which included Charlie Parker. Knepper also experienced the musical highlight of his life around this time—a week in Philadelphia with Parker, Jimmy's trombone subbing for Red Rodney's trumpet.

The vagaries of the music business led Knepper to return to Los Angeles in 1953 and enroll in college. "I was in training to be a teacher," he says. "I got credit for sociological and psychological foundations of education. I got a bunch of credits, probably close to a degree, but I never finished. I was also doing some music copying at the time and leading a little band with my wife, who used to play trumpet with the Sweethearts Of Rhythm. I thought we had a good commercial thing, two girls and two boys. Anyway, we did a few little jobs working for about five dollars a night, and I'd go around and try to sell this thing. But Los Angeles is dead—I couldn't give this music away.

"At the same time, Pacific Jazz started a publishing company, and they'd put out books of solos from records—Chet Baker, Dave Pell, Shorty Rogers, and four or five others. They were looking for somebody who could transcribe from the records and somebody said, 'Jimmy Knepper is taking off Bird solos.' So I started doing that. Anyway, the very last one they brought me was Bud Shank and three trombones: Maynard Ferguson and Don Fagerquist, both of whom are trumpet players, and Bob Enevoldsen, who's a valve trombone player, all playing valve trombones. I said, 'Geez, let me get out of this town.' Two trumpet players and a real valve trombone player! I thought 'Boy there's no future here for me at all.' It's like a dead end out there. So I dropped out of school and figured, 'I'm not going to be a teacher of music in a public school.' Gene Roland got me on Ralph Marterie's band. This was in 1956."

The Marterie job landed Knepper, his wife, and daughter in Chicago. His wife became ill, which caused him to quit the band. "Then we milled around Chicago, and the attitude there was that they didn't give a shit about music. We

had a car, so we said, 'Let's go to New York. If we're going to do anything, let's do it in New York.' It was raining buckets and we got a flat tire; I was out there with a jack that didn't work and I got wet to the skin. I took off my pants and said, 'To hell with it.' I drove to New York in my shorts. We got here around Halloween, 1956."

Knepper was working with Claude Thornhill by the end of the year, when Willie Dennis phoned and said, "Hey, Charlie Mingus is going to be needing a trombone player, because I'm going to quit."

"Before I called Mingus," Knepper recalls, "he called me and asked me to come up to his apartment. I did and we started rehearsing *Reincarnation Of A Love Bird* and *Haitian Fight Song—The Clown* was the main thing he was real hot on at the time. And about a month later we made the first job, driving in one car, the whole band, from New York to Oberlin, Ohio for a concert. We recorded *The Clown* for Atlantic and worked the Half Note and the Five Spot and did a week in Boston at Storyville. A few jobs—there weren't many—but it was enough to get me into the name jazz business. Everybody plays jazz, but when you get your name on a record or in print or something like that, it gives you a little bit of fame. We made a bunch of record dates after that for Atlantic, Bethlehem, Candid. Some of them were put out on different records."

Although Knepper also worked with Tony Scott around this time, it was the work with the Charles Mingus Jazz Workshop that put him on the critical map and led to his winning the **down beat** New Star award on the trombone for 1958. "I thought, 'Oh yeah, I've got it made.' Not one job for about three months. I panicked and Gene Roland got me on Stan Kenton's band."

But Jimmy's wife took ill again and he had to leave the road. Back to New York and Mingus.

Knepper has a cynical, wry attitude toward the world, and as he talks about Mingus, he scratches his scraggly beard and looks into space. "Everybody thinks Mingus was a genius. I don't. A lot of his stuff is music by accident, almost. He had kind of a genius for taking snatches of this and snatches of that and gluing them, forcing them, together somehow and making it come off. He never wrote anything, anyway. He'd sing it to us. He'd play it over and over again, and I'd just sketch it down. Nothing about accuracy or notation or anything.

"And we never rehearsed. The working band I was with never rehearsed. One night we were sitting in an empty Half Note waiting for a customer to

come in so we could play a set, and I said, 'Gee, we can learn another tune or polish something up.' Never did.

"One particular day I happened to have two record dates, or something like that, the only thing I'd done for six months. And I came in for the job that night, at the Vanguard, kind of tired. I said, 'Mingus, can you take it easy on me tonight, I'm not very strong.' And he got a little mad and wanted me to cut out the solos. The solos were the easy thing, you could play whatever you could play on those, but it was hard playing something that was hot and heavy in the 'head.' And after the night was over he came up and hit me. He didn't hit me hard, it was no thundering blow, he just hit me in the stomach. It didn't hurt or anything, and he just said goodnight and walked out. It was the end of the night.

"Right after that, he fired the whole band—me, Dannie Richmond, John Handy. I've still got the letter at home, a typewritten thing which gives his reasons for firing all of us. It says 'John Handy is practicing high notes on the job, Dannie's in another world, and I disagree with him on orchestration.' I told him one time, 'You've got a trumpet and an alto; why don't you have the alto play this note the trumpet's playing? It's the lowest note on the trumpet, he's got three valves down and it's a little out of tune and kind of hard to play. But it's a beautiful note on the alto—easy to play and all that.' Mingus said, 'Oh, er, I want that strained quality.' Bullshit.

"The real reason he fired us was he wanted a younger band, because he thought we were too old. And he was worried. Mingus' popularity was nil. Ornette Coleman had just come out and was at the Five Spot. So Mingus got Eric Dolphy and Ted Curson, because he wanted them to play like Ornette Coleman and Don Cherry. Of course they said okay and just played themselves. That was a remarkable band that he had. I didn't work with him for quite a while after that. Then he got this concert in Town Hall, and there was about a month or two notice, so he started writing. He added me onto the small band, and he added another trombone, another trumpet, another saxophone. He ended up with about six trombones, six trumpets, eight saxophones, two pianos, two drummers. Hugs."

The tale of the 300-pound Mingus hitting the 150-pound Knepper in the mouth is legendary. Some say Knepper's jaw was broken or that he ended up in the hospital. What follows is the true account of the story, from Knepper's standpoint. It is, by any standard, a rather bizarre tale.

"The Town Hall date was Mingus' first big concert in a place like that, and



he just wasn't prepared for it. He came out with a great big band, and he didn't have any music for it. I'm a copyist, too, and Mingus knew that, so I'd go up to his place on 130th Street and copy a few bars, what he'd have scored. And I'd say, 'Mingus, this is too low a note for the tenor saxophone.' He'd say, 'Put it up higher.'

"So, I'd go there night after night, and he'd only have a few bars done, which, for a copyist, is a drag, 'cause you want to work and work fast—otherwise, you're just spending time at it. Finally, days were rolling around. Two days later there was the only rehearsal, at midnight, and then the next night was the concert. So, he had his cousin, Fess Something-or-other who had a band in the '20s, give him an arrangement—his trumpet player did an arrangement—and he said, 'Who can I get to arrange?' So I mentioned all the arrangers in town, and he called them up and the only one who showed was Gene Roland. And Mingus gives him some score paper with a few notes here and a few notes there and he said, 'Expand this into a piece.' Well, it was straight composition. Then he pulled out a few old scores from his Lionel Hampton days and managed to get enough music so that they could have a concert.

"By this time, I copied what I could, and at the very last day all these scores came in, and I couldn't do it. That afternoon, Mingus calls up and says, 'Jim, Jim, come here, you've got to help

me.' So I go up to his apartment. He says, 'I want you to write some backgrounds for the solos.' And I said, 'No, Mingus, this is your music, you should write the thing.' And he blew up at that. He said, 'You're not going to help me, you white motherf*cker.' And he just kind of slapped me in the mouth. And it just happened to break off my incisor—which was capped at the time—it kind of broke off the enamel and the stub itself. And I felt all this gravel in my mouth and all this blood. Then I breathed in and felt the air, 'OOOOH' I just walked out of his apartment, went back to the copying service, kept my mouth shut the rest of the day to keep the air from it, got the work done, brought a pile of music over to rehearsal, and dumped it on the floor.

"The next day I went to the dentist and the dentist said, 'Your nerve is exposed, the thing has been broken off.' Then he had to make what they call an apparatus. I asked people, 'What'll I do?' The musicians all said, 'Kill him.' A few of them said, 'It costs a hundred dollars and you can get him killed.' And I said, 'What?!?' Another guy said, 'You want a piece, here's an address in New Jersey, you can get a gun and do it yourself.'

"A few other people said sue him. So I got a lawyer who said, 'Well, we'll file a criminal action against him.' So we did, and made about five appearances up at the court in his neighborhood. And Mingus told a different story every

time—he perjured himself. He said to this black judge, 'He called me a nigger.' He was trying to get sympathy. And the judge said, 'That has nothing to do with it.' Anyway, he convicted himself and was found guilty and given probation or something like that. And then the lawyer says, 'Now we file a civil suit.'

"So we got the papers. I served the papers on Mingus myself, with a policeman. The policeman said, 'Don't go in, just hand it to him.' So I did, and all that. I was working then with Peggy Lee at Basin Street and there was some party or something so I got home about six in the morning. At eight o'clock my wife says, 'There's a mailman here and he's got a registered letter for you.' I said, 'Well, sign for it.' 'He wants you to sign for it.' So I staggered downstairs and I signed and these two guys appear out of the bushes and, flashing badges, say, 'Treasury Department.' And I thought, 'Oh Christ, Mingus is bringing some sort of action against me.' So I said, 'C'mon in.'

"They came in and said, 'Well aren't you going to open the letter?' And I said, 'Oh, yeah' and opened it and the first thing that falls out is a glassine envelope of horse. And there was some dumb note saying, 'I'll meet you at the same place,' or something like that. And I said, 'Well, you know what this is about, don't you?' And they said, 'No we don't, we got an anonymous phone call.' 'Well this guy I'm filing a suit against is trying to set me up.'

"They took me down to the station, photographed me, and then turned me loose. While this suit was going on, I used to get phone calls from Mingus threatening my life, my wife's life, my children's lives. I answered one time and there was a recorded message from Dial-A-Prayer. Man, he was a dirty guy."

This, needless to say, ended the relationship between Mingus and Knepper for quite a while. Yet, remarkably, when Charles called Jimmy in the mid-'70s to perform on a concert at Carnegie Hall which would include the pieces from *Tiajuana Moods*, Knepper accepted. He was also to play on Mingus' two final record dates before his death. They never discussed the incident of the tooth and the heroin, and Mingus had only the highest praise for Jimmy Knepper in the years before he died.

After a brief tour of Russia with Benny Goodman in 1962, Knepper left the jazz scene. He played the full Broadway run of *Funny Girl* as well as *The Me Nobody Knows* and did two stints at the Palace Theatre with Marlene Dietrich. But, despite the willingness to accept lucrative Broadway offerings, Knepper never managed

continued on page 66

Jazz Critics Poll



HALL OF FAME

26	Bill Evans	7	Eddie Jefferson
13	Albert Ayler	7	Fats Navarro
9	Art Blakey	7	Sarah Vaughan

Bill Evans . . . 53rd inductee into the down beat Hall of Fame.

down beat Achievement Award

Q In reviewing the honor roll of musicians who have been named to the **down beat** Hall of Fame over the years, the **db** editors recently noted the extraordinary number who, to one degree or another, owed much of their finest recorded work to the insight, influence, enthusiasm, and energy of one man: John Hammond.

Hammond began his career as a "record producer" 50 years ago next month—September 11, 1931, to be exact. Over the years his sessions have produced a monumental body of work unprecedented in its breadth and range—from Bessie Smith to Bruce Springsteen. He has helped chronicle for all time the finest work of Fletcher Henderson, the Billie Holiday/Teddy Wilson/Lester Young partnership, the Benny Goodman sextets of 1939-41 (including guitarist Charlie Christian, who was a special Hammond project), Mildred Bailey, Gene Krupa, Benny Carter, the original Count Basie Band, plus countless recordings by Walter Gieseking, Bela Bartok, Joseph Szigeti, Aretha Franklin, Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger, George Benson, Springsteen, and many more.

As critic, talent scout, and producer he discovered or was closely associated with many of the key movers of jazz in the 1930s, as well as the individual who, more than anyone else except the

Beatles, influenced the course of music in the 1960s—Bob Dylan. Because Hammond pursued his remarkable instincts with such integrity, his sessions never chased trends. Often, however, they ignited them—however long the fuse might have been.

Many of Hammond's opinions and judgments, we are proud to say, first appeared in **down beat**. Beginning in June 1935 he regularly reported on the music he heard. Equally important, he helped expose the extent to which racial prejudice in unions, radio, records, clubs, and the system in general undermined good music.

His account of the death of Bessie Smith—a hospital refused to admit her despite critical injuries from an auto accident—was first published in **db** in



1937. His writings also appeared in *The New Masses*, the *Brooklyn Eagle*, *Melody Maker*, *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, and his own autobiography, *John Hammond: On Record*.

Today, at a time when he might be expected to rest on his enormous contributions, Hammond continues to be busy, perhaps busier than ever. For the first time in a career which has been spent in the service of major record companies (Columbia, Brunswick, Vanguard, Majestic, Keynote, Parlophone, Decca), Hammond has turned entrepreneur and formed his own enterprise, John Hammond Records, in order to record contemporary artists of today and tomorrow.

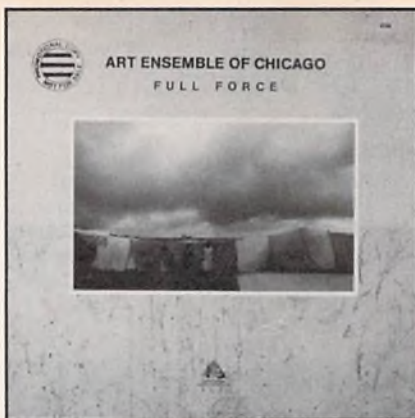
The editors of **down beat** therefore take an unprecedented step. In recognition of his extraordinary contributions, a new award is being created: the **down beat** Achievement Award, for lifetime service to jazz. And John Hammond is named as its first recipient.

In conjunction with future Critics Polls, other recipients of this special award will be named by the editors of **down beat**, as contributions and achievements warrant. It will become the editors' way of honoring significant work in the furtherance of contemporary music by those who are not musicians or composers. The editors feel no higher standard can be established than by making the first recipient John Henry Hammond Jr.

—john mcdonough

RECORD OF THE YEAR

- 6 Art Ensemble of Chicago
Full Force (ECM)
- 6 Archie Shepp/Horace Parlan
Trouble In Mind (SteepleChase)
- 6 Cecil Taylor
One Too Many Salty Swift And Not Goodbye (hat Hut)
- 5 Arthur Blythe
Illusions (Columbia)
- 5 Miles Davis
Directions (Columbia)
- 5 David Murray
Ming (Black Saint)
- 4 Chet Baker
The Touch of Your Lips (SteepleChase)
- 4 Sam Rivers
Contrasts (ECM)
- 4 Steve Swallow
Home (ECM)



RECORD LABEL

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 8 Concord | 6 ECM |
| 7 Black Saint/
Soul Note | 5 hat Hut
5 SteepleChase |

Established Talent

Talent Deserving Wider Recognition



BIG BAND

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 131 Akiyoshi/
Tabackin/
Sun Ra | 40 Globe Unity
26 Jaki Byard
Apollo |
| 87 Sun Ra | Stompers |
| 82 Count Basie | 26 Rob
McConnell |
| 36 Carla Bley | Boss Brass |
| 31 Woody
Herman | 19 Carla Bley
19 Gerry
Mulligan |

JAZZ GROUP

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 108 Art Ensemble
of Chicago | 27 World
Saxophone
Quartet |
| 42 Weather
Report | 23 Air |
| 42 Phil Woods | 18 Old And New
Dreams |
| 31 McCoy Tyner | 18 Red Rodney/
Ira Sullivan |
| 29 Air | 17 Steve Lacy |
| 25 Art Blakey
Jazz
Messengers | 17 Mingus
Dynasty |

COMPOSER

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 60 Toshiko
Akiyoshi | 17 Kenny
Wheeler |
| 35 Carla Bley | 16 Muhal Richard
Abrams |
| 35 Wayne
Shorter | 14 Steve Lacy |
| 26 Joe Zawinul | 11 Anthony Davis |
| 21 Cecil Taylor | 10 Leo Smith |



REISSUE OF THE YEAR

- 10 Lennie Tristano
Requiem (Atlantic)
- 9 Django Reinhardt
Volume 1 (Inner City)
- 8 Max Roach
Freedom Now Suite (Columbia)
- 6 Red Allen/Coleman Hawkins
(Smithsonian Collection)
- 6 Miles Davis
Chronicles (Prestige)
- 5 Lester Young
Giants Of Jazz (Time-Life)



RECORD PRODUCER

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 11 Michael
Cuscuna | 4 Manfred
Eicher |
| 10 Nils Winther | 4 Werner
Uhlinger |
| 9 Norman
Granz | |



ARRANGER

106 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gil Evans	27 <input type="checkbox"/> Jimmy Knepper
100 <input type="checkbox"/> Toshiko Akiyoshi	24 <input type="checkbox"/> Slide Hampton
37 <input type="checkbox"/> Carla Bley	21 <input type="checkbox"/> Bob Brookmeyer
32 <input type="checkbox"/> Slide Hampton	14 <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Gibbs
31 <input type="checkbox"/> Sun Ra	13 <input type="checkbox"/> Rob McConnell
29 <input type="checkbox"/> Bob Brookmeyer	13 <input type="checkbox"/> Alexander von Schlippenbach

SOPRANO SAXOPHONE

132 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Lacy	32 <input type="checkbox"/> John Surman
106 <input type="checkbox"/> Wayne Shorter	29 <input type="checkbox"/> Evan Parker
57 <input type="checkbox"/> Bob Wilber	27 <input type="checkbox"/> Roscoe Mitchell
40 <input type="checkbox"/> Zoot Sims	24 <input type="checkbox"/> Ira Sullivan
37 <input type="checkbox"/> Sam Rivers	20 <input type="checkbox"/> Dave Liebman

ALTO SAXOPHONE

123 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phil Woods	43 <input type="checkbox"/> Arthur Blythe
95 <input type="checkbox"/> Art Pepper	40 <input type="checkbox"/> Richie Cole
60 <input type="checkbox"/> Arthur Blythe	33 <input type="checkbox"/> Oliver Lake
41 <input type="checkbox"/> Benny Carter	33 <input type="checkbox"/> Roscoe Mitchell
33 <input type="checkbox"/> Lee Konitz	22 <input type="checkbox"/> Benny Carter
31 <input type="checkbox"/> Anthony Braxton	19 <input type="checkbox"/> Julius Hemphill

BARITONE SAXOPHONE

163 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pepper Adams	49 <input type="checkbox"/> Henry Threadgill
97 <input type="checkbox"/> Gerry Mulligan	48 <input type="checkbox"/> John Surman
81 <input type="checkbox"/> Nick Brignola	36 <input type="checkbox"/> Hamiet Bluiett
52 <input type="checkbox"/> Hamiet Bluiett	33 <input type="checkbox"/> Nick Brignola
44 <input type="checkbox"/> Ronnie Cuber	29 <input type="checkbox"/> Ronnie Cuber

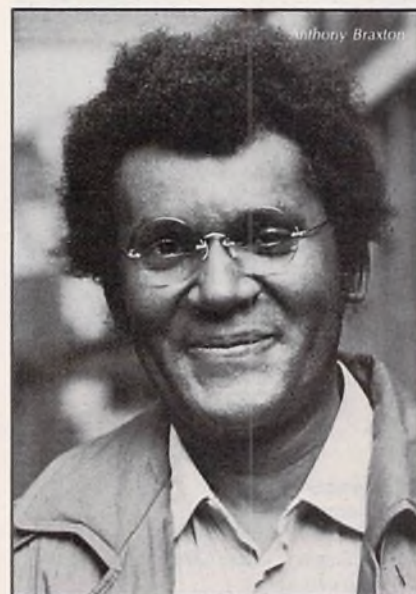


TENOR SAXOPHONE

85 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dexter Gordon	42 <input type="checkbox"/> Ricky Ford
79 <input type="checkbox"/> Sonny Rollins	41 <input type="checkbox"/> Chico Freeman
57 <input type="checkbox"/> Zoot Sims	41 <input type="checkbox"/> David Murray
48 <input type="checkbox"/> Johnny Griffin	35 <input type="checkbox"/> Von Freeman
29 <input type="checkbox"/> George Adams	17 <input type="checkbox"/> George Adams
29 <input type="checkbox"/> Archie Shepp	17 <input type="checkbox"/> John Gilmore

CLARINET

78 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anthony Braxton	36 <input type="checkbox"/> John Carter
50 <input type="checkbox"/> Buddy DeFranco	35 <input type="checkbox"/> Perry Robinson
46 <input type="checkbox"/> Bob Wilber	34 <input type="checkbox"/> Alvin Batiste
38 <input type="checkbox"/> Benny Goodman	24 <input type="checkbox"/> Kenny Davern
37 <input type="checkbox"/> Kenny Davern	23 <input type="checkbox"/> Art Pepper



FLUTE

85 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lew Tabackin	57 <input type="checkbox"/> James Newton
69 <input type="checkbox"/> Sam Rivers	17 <input type="checkbox"/> Frank Wess
68 <input type="checkbox"/> James Newton	16 <input type="checkbox"/> Henry Threadgill
54 <input type="checkbox"/> James Moody	14 <input type="checkbox"/> Joe Farrell
52 <input type="checkbox"/> Hubert Laws	13 <input type="checkbox"/> Lloyd McNeil
32 <input type="checkbox"/> Sam Most	13 <input type="checkbox"/> Ira Sullivan



PHOTO CREDIT:

Tom Copi: Wynton Marsalis, Michael Cuscuna
 László Fejaes: Aladar Pege
 John McDonough: John Hammond
 Jan Persson: Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen
 Darryl Pitt/Encore: Billy Bang, Anthony Braxton, Jimmy Knepper, Toots Thielemans, Sarah Vaughan, Phil Woods
 Steven Solder: Arthur Blythe
 James Lee Soffer: Toshiko Akiyoshi



Wynton Marsalis

TRUMPET

- | | |
|--|---|
| 109 <input type="checkbox"/> Dizzy Gillespie | 37 <input type="checkbox"/> Wynton Marsalis |
| 99 <input type="checkbox"/> Lester Bowie | 31 <input type="checkbox"/> Terumasa Hino |
| 61 <input type="checkbox"/> Freddie Hubbard | 30 <input type="checkbox"/> Leo Smith |
| 53 <input type="checkbox"/> Woody Shaw | 25 <input type="checkbox"/> Kenny Wheeler |
| 36 <input type="checkbox"/> Clark Terry | 19 <input type="checkbox"/> Baikida Carroll |
| 31 <input type="checkbox"/> Chet Baker | 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Jack Walrath |



Billy Bang

VIOLIN

- | | |
|---|---|
| 156 <input type="checkbox"/> Stephane Grappelli | 63 <input type="checkbox"/> Billy Bang |
| 90 <input type="checkbox"/> Leroy Jenkins | 40 <input type="checkbox"/> Didier Lockwood |
| 31 <input type="checkbox"/> Jean-Luc Ponty | 34 <input type="checkbox"/> John Blake |
| 30 <input type="checkbox"/> Michal Urbaniak | 22 <input type="checkbox"/> Ramsey Ameen |
| 21 <input type="checkbox"/> Didier Lockwood | 20 <input type="checkbox"/> L. Subramaniam |
| 21 <input type="checkbox"/> L. Shankar | 20 <input type="checkbox"/> Claude Williams |

GUITAR

- | | |
|---|---|
| 84 <input type="checkbox"/> Joe Pass | 36 <input type="checkbox"/> James "Blood" Ulmer |
| 73 <input type="checkbox"/> Jim Hall | 34 <input type="checkbox"/> John Scofield |
| 49 <input type="checkbox"/> Kenny Burrell | 22 <input type="checkbox"/> Phillip Catherine |
| 31 <input type="checkbox"/> James "Blood" Ulmer | 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Ed Bickert |
| 26 <input type="checkbox"/> Derek Bailey | 15 <input type="checkbox"/> Doug Raney |

ACOUSTIC BASS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 48 <input type="checkbox"/> Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen | 32 <input type="checkbox"/> Aladar Pege |
| 40 <input type="checkbox"/> Ron Carter | 30 <input type="checkbox"/> Cecil McBee |
| 34 <input type="checkbox"/> Ray Brown | 24 <input type="checkbox"/> Dave Friesen |
| 33 <input type="checkbox"/> Charlie Haden | 19 <input type="checkbox"/> Fred Hopkins |
| 29 <input type="checkbox"/> Dave Holland | 19 <input type="checkbox"/> Brian Torff |



Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen

ACOUSTIC PIANO

- | | |
|--|---|
| 88 <input type="checkbox"/> Cecil Taylor | 30 <input type="checkbox"/> Anthony Davis |
| 53 <input type="checkbox"/> McCoy Tyner | 25 <input type="checkbox"/> Joanne Brackeen |
| 45 <input type="checkbox"/> Tommy Flanagan | 23 <input type="checkbox"/> John Hicks |
| 42 <input type="checkbox"/> Oscar Peterson | 21 <input type="checkbox"/> Martial Solal |
| 39 <input type="checkbox"/> Bill Evans | 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Ran Blake |

ELECTRIC PIANO

- | | |
|--|--|
| 101 <input type="checkbox"/> Joe Zawinul | 27 <input type="checkbox"/> Kenny Barron |
| 79 <input type="checkbox"/> Chick Corea | 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Paul Bley |
| 71 <input type="checkbox"/> Herbie Hancock | 13 <input type="checkbox"/> Sun Ra |
| 21 <input type="checkbox"/> Sun Ra | 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Stanley Cowell |
| 13 <input type="checkbox"/> Paul Bley | 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Lyle Mays |
| 13 <input type="checkbox"/> Stanley Cowell | |

TROMBONE

- | | |
|---|---|
| 86 <input type="checkbox"/> Jimmy Knepper | 84 <input type="checkbox"/> Ray Anderson |
| 85 <input type="checkbox"/> Albert Mangelsdorff | 32 <input type="checkbox"/> George Lewis |
| 67 <input type="checkbox"/> George Lewis | 22 <input type="checkbox"/> Jimmy Knepper |
| 45 <input type="checkbox"/> Bob Brookmeyer | 20 <input type="checkbox"/> Steve Turre |
| 43 <input type="checkbox"/> Roswell Rudd | 19 <input type="checkbox"/> Paul Rutherford |



Jimmy Knepper

ORGAN

- | | |
|---|--|
| 102 <input type="checkbox"/> Jimmy Smith | 36 <input type="checkbox"/> Amina Claudine Myers |
| 70 <input type="checkbox"/> Sun Ra | 31 <input type="checkbox"/> Sonny Phillips |
| 40 <input type="checkbox"/> Shirley Scott | 20 <input type="checkbox"/> Clare Fischer |
| 28 <input type="checkbox"/> Count Basie | 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Jack McDuff |
| 19 <input type="checkbox"/> Charles Earland | 13 <input type="checkbox"/> Carla Bley |

SYNTHESIZER

- | | |
|--|--|
| 121 <input type="checkbox"/> Joe Zawinul | 18 <input type="checkbox"/> George Lewis |
| 65 <input type="checkbox"/> Sun Ra | 16 <input type="checkbox"/> Lyle Mays |
| 29 <input type="checkbox"/> Herbie Hancock | 13 <input type="checkbox"/> George Duke |
| 24 <input type="checkbox"/> Chick Corea | 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Wolfgang Dauner |
| 19 <input type="checkbox"/> George Duke | 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Richard Teitelbaum |



Aladar Pege

ELECTRIC BASS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 131 <input type="checkbox"/> Jaco Pastorius | 23 <input type="checkbox"/> Jamaaladeen Tacuma |
| 91 <input type="checkbox"/> Steve Swallow | 17 <input type="checkbox"/> Miroslav Vitous |
| 43 <input type="checkbox"/> Stanley Clarke | 14 <input type="checkbox"/> Steve Swallow |
| 22 <input type="checkbox"/> Bob Cranshaw | 13 <input type="checkbox"/> Eberhard Weber |
| 19 <input type="checkbox"/> Miroslav Vitous | 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Anthony Jackson |
| 19 <input type="checkbox"/> Eberhard Weber | 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Ron Carter |

DRUMS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 104 <input type="checkbox"/> Max Roach | 31 <input type="checkbox"/> Billy Hart |
| 73 <input type="checkbox"/> Elvin Jones | 25 <input type="checkbox"/> Steve McCall |
| 67 <input type="checkbox"/> Jack DeJohnette | 23 <input type="checkbox"/> Jack DeJohnette |
| 50 <input type="checkbox"/> Art Blakey | 23 <input type="checkbox"/> Ronald Shannon Jackson |
| 30 <input type="checkbox"/> Billy Higgins | 19 <input type="checkbox"/> Famoudou Don Moye |

VIBES

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 127 Milt Jackson | 65 Jay Hoggard |
| 106 Bobby Hutcherson | 37 Dave Friedman |
| 79 Gary Burton | 32 Karl Berger |
| 41 Lionel Hampton | 28 Walt Dickerson |
| 34 Red Norvo | 20 Bobby Naughton |

PERCUSSION

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 92 Airto Moreira | 20 Nana Vasconcelos |
| 72 Famoudou Don Moye | 17 Guilherme Franco |
| 70 Nana Vasconcelos | 17 Collin Walcott |
| 28 Guilherme Franco | 14 Jerome Cooper |
| 15 Collin Walcott | 14 Paulinho da Costa |
| 14 Dom Um Romao | 14 Warren Smith |

MISCELLANEOUS INSTRUMENT

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 114 Toots Thielemans (harmonica) | 29 Abdul Wadud (cello) |
| 47 Abdul Wadud (cello) | 16 Joe Daley (tuba) |
| 37 Howard Johnson (tuba) | 14 David Grisman (Mandolin) |
| 30 Anthony Braxton (bass clarinet, soprano, contrabass saxophone) | 12 David Darling (cello) |
| 30 David Grisman (mandolin) | 11 John Clark (french horn) |



Toots Thielemans

MALE SINGER

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 101 Joe Williams | 40 Mark Murphy |
| 73 Mel Torme | 28 Joe Lee Wilson |
| 58 Al Jarreau | 25 Johnny Hartman |
| 41 Ray Charles | 14 Bob Dorough |
| 32 Johnny Hartman | |

FEMALE SINGER

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 137 Sarah Vaughan | 29 Carol Sloane |
| 104 Betty Carter | 27 Sheila Jordan |
| 54 Carmen McRae | 27 Jeanne Lee |
| 44 Sheila Jordan | 27 Helen Merrill |
| 43 Ella Fitzgerald | 15 Karin Krog |



Sarah Vaughan

VOCAL GROUP

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 105 Manhattan Transfer | 53 Hendricks Family |
| 54 Singers Unlimited | 23 Bug Alley |
| 49 Jackie Cain/Roy Kral | 10 Hi-Lo's |
| 26 Hi-Lo's | 8 Rare Silk |
| 10 Steely Dan | 7 Pretenders |

SOUL/R&B ARTISTS

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 96 Stevie Wonder | 13 Otis Rush |
| 46 Ray Charles | 11 Clifton Chenier |
| 36 B. B. King | 10 Aretha Franklin |
| 25 Muddy Waters | 10 Fenton Robinson |
| 19 James Brown | 10 Son Seals |

THE CRITICS

Following is a list of critics who voted in db's 29th annual International Critics Poll. Sixty-five critics voted this year, distributing nine points among up to three choices (no more than five points per choice) in each of two categories: Established Talent and Talent Deserving Wider Recognition . Selections in the Hall of Fame and the

various record categories received single points for each vote. The participants were:

- Jon Balleras: db contributor.
 Joachim Berendt: Author *The Jazz Book*, editor *Jazz Calendar*.
 Larry Birnbaum: db, *Chicago Reader*.
 Fred Bouchard: Contributor—db, *Jazz Times*, *Swing Journal*, etc.
 Michael Bourne: Jazz producer and critic, WFJU-FM (Bloomington, IN).
 W. A. Brower: Writer/researcher/photographer.
 Chris Colombi: db Cleveland correspondent, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*.
 Carol Comer: db Kansas City correspondent, executive director Woman's Jazz Fest.
 Willis Conover: International music broadcaster.
 Tom Copi: Jazz photographer and correspondent.
 Francis Davis: Contributor—db, *Cadence*, *Audio*, *WUHY-FM* (Philadelphia).
 Jerry DeMuth: Contributor—db, *Jazz Forum*, *Contemporary Keyboard*.
 R. Bruce Dold: db, *Illinois Entertainer*, board member Jazz Institute of Chicago.
 Charles Doherty: db Associate Editor, drummer Tin Pan Alley.
 Jose Duarte: Board Member International Federation of Jazz.
 Lofton Emanari: Critic, artist, WBEZ-FM (Chicago), WHPK-FM, JIC.
 Leonard Feather: Author *The Passion For Jazz*.
 Mitchell Feldman: Critic—*Atlanta Constitution*, *Jazz Times*, etc., Music Program Coordinator for Atlanta Dept. of Cultural Affairs.
 Sam Freedman: db contributor.
 Lars Gabel: db contributor.
 Elaine Guregian: db contributor.
 Bob Henschen: Contributor—db, *Modern Recording*, music editor *New Times Weekly*.
 W. Patrick Hinely: Work/Play Agency.
 John Howard: Jazz journalist—db, *Jazz Forum*, *Jazz Podium*, etc.
 Randi Hultin: db Norway correspondent, *Jazz Forum*, *Jazz Journal*, etc.
 Lee Jenke: db East Coast bureau chief, American correspondent *Jazz Journal*.
 Burt Korall: Columnist *International Musician*.
 Art Lange: db Associate Editor.
 Gene Lees: Critic, author *How To Write Lyrics*.
 John Litweller: Contributor to distinguished publications.
 Lars Lystedt: db, *Orkester-Journalen* (Sweden).
 Terry Martin: Jazz Institute of Chicago archives.
 John McDonough: db contributor.
 Mark Miller: db Toronto correspondent, *Jazz Forum*, *Toronto Globe And Mail*.
 Arthur Moorhead: db contributor.
 Dan Morgenstern: Director, Institute of Jazz Studies (Rutgers).
 Frankie Nemko-Graham: db contributor.
 Herb Nolan: *Up Beat* Editor.
 Jon Pareles: Contributor—*Village Voice*, *Rolling Stone*.
 Brian Priestley: db Great Britain correspondent, *Jazz Journal*, *Time Out*.
 Doug Ramsey: *Texas Monthly*, *Jazz Times*, etc.
 Roger Riggins: Writer/critic/poet.
 Jerome Reese: Critic *Jazz Hot* (Paris).
 Robert Rusch: Editor *Cadence*.
 Chris Sheridan: Contributor—db, *Jazz Times*, *Jazz Journal*, etc.
 Bill Shoemaker: db, *Coda*.
 Jack Sohmer: Musician/teacher/writer.
 Chip Stern: Editor *International Musician And Recording World*, *Village Voice*.
 Zan Stewart: Contributor—db, *Jazz Life*, *LA Times*, etc.
 Richard Sudhalter: Critic/cometist/historian.
 Andrew Sussman: db, *Fanfare*.
 Frank Tesot: Editor *Jazz Magazine* (Paris).
 Elliot Tiegel: Free lance writer, db contributor.
 Cliff Tlader: Contributor—db, *Musician*, *Coda*.
 Robin Tolleson: Contributor—db, *Modern Drummer*, *BAM*, etc.

continued on page 61

PETER

WEATHER REPORTER'S



VERY OAKLAND

There is an intense and youthful voraciousness about Peter Erskine that both exasperates and inspires. He seems to relish his every waking moment and he eagerly approaches his every activity with the same vigor he applies to his drumming.

He is, in a way, a walking bundle of contradictions. His manner is at once rambunctious and reserved; he is inquisitive and omniscient; he is impetuous and sensitively introspective; he takes life seriously, but not himself, and his gregarious confidence is tempered by an inherent shyness. He is anxiously quick with a joke and cautiously apologetic if his joke should offend. His ego is lessened by his comic sense of self-deprecation and a genuine interest and admiration for others.

It's the first hot day of spring in Los Angeles, and Erskine has found a suburban watering hole at the end of a five-mile

walk. He is studiously reading the sports page while enthusiastically gulping light beer. Impressed with the pitching accomplishments of the Dodgers' Fernando Valenzuela, Erskine recalls some thoughts of his childhood desires to be a baseball player.

"I was a catcher for a while, and I really dug it when I'd throw off my mask to catch a foul ball while the crowd was yelling 'Catch it! Catch it!' I guess I always had a little of this show biz thing going for me. But then I got hit in the head with a line-drive, and I developed a bit of ball shyness."

Baseball's loss is the jazz world's gain: at 27, Peter Erskine is one of the most impressive drumming talents in a music he jokingly refers to as "high-energy, crossover jazz fusion." But Erskine's current activities and considerable past belie any such restrictive categorization. A veteran of both Stan Kenton's and Maynard Ferguson's big bands, the versatile Erskine joined Weather Report in 1978, becoming the sixth drummer in the band's relatively brief history. He currently holds the record for longevity.

When he's not on the road or in the studio with Weather Report, Erskine busies himself in a variety of musical settings. He is active in both New York and Los Angeles recording studios and is frequently seen in LA nightclubs working pickup bebop gigs or stretching to the outside with such players as Buell Neidlinger and Marty Krystall. Occasionally he will sub in a rehearsal big band or play a movie or television soundtrack, and he is currently preparing to make his first album as a leader. It seems that Erskine has packed a

lifetime of experience into a comparatively few years.

Born near Atlantic City, New Jersey, Erskine's initial introduction to music came from his father, a former bassist who turned to psychiatry as a career. "Early on I would hear a lot of music around the house," Erskine says, explaining that both his parents were big fans of music. "My dad made me up a little drum set when I was about three years old, with a tom-tom and a little sizzle cymbal made with paper clips," he recalls. "There would always be music playing and my sister used to say, 'Come on, Peter. Play it this way.' I remember that I used to say, 'I'll play it the way I want to.' That's a good attitude for a drummer to have, basically. You've got to be open-minded, but other than that you really have to want to sit in the driver's seat."

Erskine's precocious attitude was accompanied by an obvious aptitude for music. He began formally studying drums at the age of five with Johnny Civera, a local drummer

ERSKINE

SUNNY OUTLOOK

BY A. JAMES LISKA

who had worked with Patti Page and Billy May. "Johnny was a very good drummer and a marvelously talented and patient teacher. At one point I suffered some embarrassment because he never stressed the rudimental side of drumming. He let me slip on that while he encouraged me just to play and to play jazz."

Though Erskine's rudimental facility might not have developed in the normal fashion, his flair for jazz was becoming apparent, and it was being encouraged and nurtured by his teacher who exposed him to Art Blakey, Max Roach, and Buddy Rich. "Johnny gave me the *Rich Versus Roach* album and we used to just sit and check out the two guys," Erskine says. "On the fast tempos, Buddy was cutting the tempos and Max couldn't keep up on that. But then there was that whole way Max was approaching the music that was totally tonal and melodic, with all sorts of space."

While the young drummer's talent was being developed by his teacher, Erskine's father was helping develop his son's taste by bringing home records of various jazz artists. Meanwhile, his mother was seeing to it that her son's blossoming talent and taste would have some place to go.

"Johnny mentioned to my mother that it was too bad that I wasn't older because there was this terrific summer music camp in the Midwest that Stan Kenton had started. My mother took it upon herself and sent a telegram to the camp under my teacher's name, telling them that there was this terrific little kid drummer in New Jersey. The camp called my teacher, and he had no idea what was going on, but he was pretty cool and played along. They tentatively accepted me on my teacher's recommendation, and that summer we drove out to Bloomington, Indiana for the camp. When we got there they were surprised that I was only seven years old, but they listened to me and decided, on the basis that my folks had driven all that way, to let me stay."

The minimum age for the Kenton camps was 14; by the time Erskine reached the minimum age, he had already stopped going. During those sessions, he gained considerable practical experience under the tutelage of Kenton and Oliver Nelson and had studied drums with Dee Barton, Alan Dawson, Charlie Perry, and Ed Soph. He also picked up enough trumpet from Marv Stamm and Donald Byrd to make it as a trumpeter in his hometown's school band.

In the meantime, he had developed an interest in classical music and was spending part of his summers attending classical music camps. "I went to study with George Gaber at a classical music camp when I was 11," Erskine says, adding that Gaber became his main teacher from that point on, though he also studied xylophone with Billy Dorn on the East Coast. "Gaber used to tell me that drumming is made up of single strokes, double strokes, and flams. The 26 rudiments are good, formal variations to be used as exercises. They are not an end-all to anything. I don't regret that I didn't have a heavier approach to drumming at all. I think my first teacher did right by bringing records and charts from shows that I could play along with."

If Erskine's delving into the realm of classical music expanded his musical horizons, it posed an array of new problems for the burgeoning talent.

"I went to the Kenton camp that year in Redlands, California, after having just been at the classical music camp

where everything was sight reading. During the auditions I read everything very exact," he says. The experience had the camp personnel holding their heads and wondering what had happened to the drumming prodigy. "All of a sudden, from always having been in the number one band, I was like in the number 39 band. It was a big shock, but God bless Stan. He knew I had some serious problems with interpretative playing and with time-keeping, and he knew that I was at the crossroads, musically. He really started to work with me and put me on the right track, showing me what drumming was all about."

As Erskine approached high school and the possibility of marching band loomed before him, Gaber suggested he go to Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, where the focus was music and nobody marched. The suggestion was taken, and at the age of 14 Erskine enrolled in the Academy, immediately securing top places in the orchestra, percussion ensemble, and jazz band. Erskine's high school career at Interlochen lasted three years. At 17 he had had enough and was anxious to move on.

"I had to go for a hearing and explain why I wanted to graduate in three years. I saw no reason to stick around Interlochen, and I was anxious to go to college at Indiana University. I told them I was eager to leave to go ahead and get my doctorate."

Erskine's college career lasted only one year, leaving him a few credits shy of realizing his doctoral ambitions. At the age of 18, he left Indiana and climbed aboard Stan Kenton's band bus. His first gig with Kenton, oddly enough, was at Interlochen. Though Erskine didn't get any college credits with Kenton, he picked up an education he had begun 11 years earlier with the band leader.

"I really didn't learn about good time-keeping until I was on the road with Kenton's band. I got most of the hot dog stuff out of my system and really got down to the business of drumming," he says.

Three years later though, Erskine left Kenton and returned to Bloomington for a formal education. "It was a bad time," Erskine says of his transitory period. "My parents were getting a divorce, and I felt the family was breaking up a bit. That was hard to deal with long distance, and I really wanted to be in one place for a while. I was also tired from the road and tired of playing.

"I never practiced at Indiana. I got heavily into musicology and theory, and I was busy writing little piano sonatas to learn about the form. And everybody at Indiana hated me. Maybe they didn't really hate me, but like everybody was practicing and wanting a gig, and I had just left a gig and I wasn't practicing, you know?" Within a year's time Erskine was called back to work.

"Maynard Ferguson called up and said that he needed a drummer," Erskine recalls. "I turned it down because my impression of Maynard's band was that it was a little bit of a circus. When I was with Kenton, we had played opposite Maynard's band. Kenton's band was kind of bravura—loud, but impressive as a conceptual whole. Maynard's band was loud and only impressive with all the soloing sidemen. It just wasn't the kind of thing I wanted to do."



VENTIL OAKLAND

"Then they told me they just needed a drummer for a summer tour. It was going to end a couple of days before registration, so I said, 'Why not?' I got out there and the rhythm section was just delightful. Gordon Johnson was on bass and Biff Hannon on piano, and I had such a great time playing with those guys. Also, I hadn't been playing at Indiana, and it was great to be out playing in front of people again. "The band was good, much lighter than Kenton's—sleeker and more pop-oriented. It was a good, healthy showing-your-oats kind of thing, and Maynard was terrific. He was one of the greatest bosses and I had a great time. I really loved that band."

What was supposed to be a three-month tour turned into a two-year stay, during which time Erskine recorded three albums and experienced two turning points in his career.

"The first was meeting Steve Khan, the guitarist," Erskine recalls. "When we were recording we had to use a click track, which none of us had used before. We were having all kinds of trouble with the click and Steve, the seasoned studio pro who was going to guide us through, came over to me while we were listening to a lousy playback. He put his arm around me and said, 'Hey, the click is your friend.' Steve helped me turn it into a positive thing, playing with it as opposed to against it."

The second turning point came later when Erskine met Jaco Pastorius, an event that would eventually lead to Erskine's joining Weather Report. "Ron Tooley, a trumpet player on Maynard's band, had worked with Jaco in Florida and invited him to come hear the band. He told Jaco he ought to check out the drummer," Erskine says. "I'd been listening to Jaco's album and, of course, I'd been listening to Weather Report. I was in high school when their first album came out, and each one had been a kind of revelation."

"Anyway, Jaco came down to one of our gigs and I didn't know it. After a set—I was feeling real playful because the band was sounding good and it was just one of those real hot nights in a jazz club—I went up to Ron. He was standing there talking to somebody, and he had his trumpet under his arm, with the mouthpiece facing the back. I went up and blew in it. He turned around and said, 'Hey, Pete. I want you to meet Jaco Pastorius.'

"I looked up and there's this guy with a Phillies baseball cap, real long hair, clear-framed glasses that looked like Army-issue, and a striped shirt with a button-down collar. The top button was buttoned. It just didn't look anything like the guy on the album cover, you know, so I just looked up at him and said, 'No shit.'"

Despite the awkward introduction, Jaco was impressed enough with Erskine to tell his Weather Report cohorts about his find, and he promised Erskine that he would call.

"I didn't think much of it, I guess," says Erskine. "I was on the road with Maynard and one day Jaco called. He told me the band was working on *Mr. Gone* and that I should come out and audition. There was only one day I could do it, and we were in Wichita, Kansas, where it was snowing. I figured it was dumb to spend the day in a studio, and I decided it

wasn't the right time. I didn't want to quit my job with Maynard as I really didn't have enough confidence."

When a second call came from Pastorius a few weeks later, Erskine had mustered the confidence he needed to make the move. "I figured this time, screw it. I quit Maynard and said I've got to go for it. It was a chance I couldn't pass up." Erskine's first day with Weather Report was a day characterized by the band's nonchalance and Erskine's anxiety.

"I got to the studio real early that first day, and they all showed up hours late. I had a new drum set, and I wanted to make sure the drums sounded cool. After that, I walked all over Hollywood burning off energy. The rest of the band finally got there, and they were all pretty cool. Joe Zawinul started messing around with his keyboards, and then Jaco ran out to get some beer or something. By that point I just wanted to play, and when Joe started playing, I just ran over to the drums and started with him. I was pretty fearless at that point and I just charged in."

Rehearsals and the finishing work on *Mr. Gone* proceeded nicely, but Erskine remained in the dark about his future with Weather Report. When he asked Zawinul if he could tell his friends, his future boss told him not to get too excited, but that he would be going to Japan with the band. "The Japan tour was real exciting," Erskine says, "but when we got back we got down to the real nails and started learning about the music. I got over the initial euphoria."

If some of the euphoric edge has worn off in the almost three years Erskine has been with Weather Report, there remains a great deal of excitement. "They're the best musicians I have ever met," says Erskine, almost reverently. "They are masters, each of them. Zawinul is one of the heaviest musicians and people I've ever been lucky enough to know. The whole experience is provocative and always challenging. You can't play the obvious and you're always trying to come up with something new. The key is to always be improvising, to be playing something creatively. But there's no fear about getting into a continuum, an ostinato, a groove."

Erskine says that his driver's seat situation with Weather Report is not unlike any other job—make the rhythm section happen: "There always has to be a forward motion. The pulse is always moving ahead with some good measure of consistency. The key elements are to have a good downbeat, a good upbeat, and a really swinging backbeat. And the main thing is to not think about it too hard. You just have to keep your ears wide open and let it flow naturally. Of course, you don't want to distract from what's going on around you."

An early distraction for Erskine was the tenuous position drummers have traditionally been in with Weather Report. "I used to wonder what it was they didn't like about the other drummers," Erskine says, adding that his fears of being replaced are gone.

"The defenses have disappeared, and we can all talk to each other. We can say this or that and nobody gets uptight. Joe really admires strength and openness in a musician. He's a strong person himself, but he doesn't tell us what to play.

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GEORGE

BY LEE UNDERWOOD

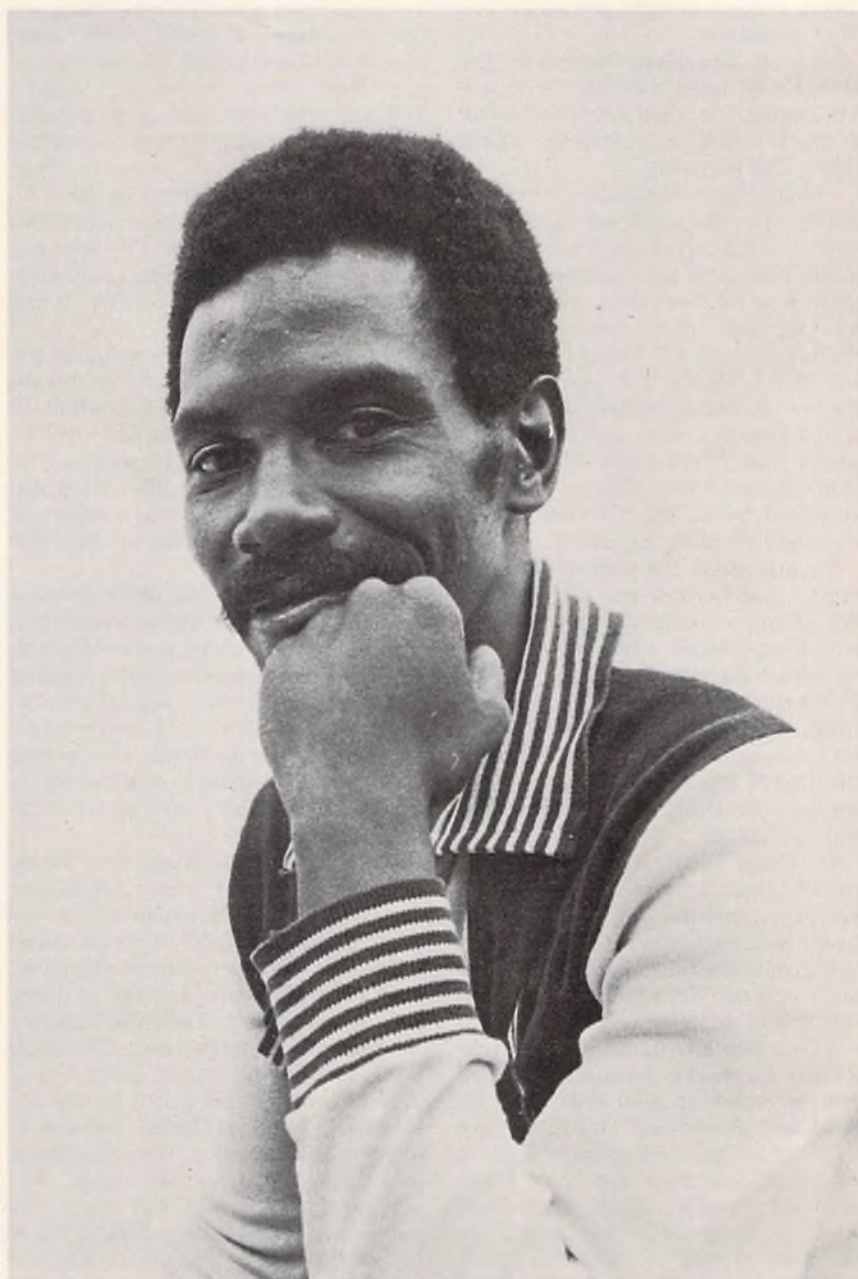
CABLES

With his creative abilities nourished and encouraged in a warm family environment, the composer/pianist was freed to fuse his classical and jazz backgrounds into an ingenious, personal style.

At the very beginning, George Cables was fortunate indeed. Unlike the cold, tyrannical, narcissistic, rigid, frighteningly repressed mother portrayed by Mary Tyler Moore in *Ordinary People*, George's mother, a school teacher, is a warm, open, emotionally generous woman who in her own soul felt music deeply enough to play the piano herself. It was she who served as George's initial inspiration.

"She'd play classical music, like the *Moonlight Sonata*, popular songs and hymns," said George. "I'd watch her play, and when I was four or five, I'd reach up and try to play myself. My mother encouraged and helped me, and I started taking lessons in nursery school."

Instead of crippling and stunting his creative abilities through indifference or "helpful" criticism, she nourished his talents, helped them bloom, and gave unstintingly of herself. "When I attended Mannes College of Music on a partial scholarship between the ages of 19 and 21, I practiced in my basement from 12 midnight to six a.m. The sound ran from the basement up the vents directly to my mother's bedroom. But she let me keep on working. She gave me a lot of freedom, time, and encouragement, which is something I'll al-



VERIL OWLAND

ways be grateful for, and which is why I dedicated my debut solo album, *Cables Vision*, to her."

Featuring trumpeter Freddie Hubbard, vibist Bobby Hutcherson, tenor saxophonist Ernie Watts, bassist Tony Dumas, drummer Peter Erskine, and percussionist Vince Charles, *Cables*

Vision has received almost unanimous critical and popular applause. Cables composed four of the six tunes, played acoustic piano on all but one cut, and successfully combined the best elements of traditional bebop energy, funk sensuality, lyrical melodic invention, spirited rhythmic interplay, intelligent

improvisational freedom, and compositional structure. He and his creators avoid the clichés of bop, fusion, and the avant garde, while advancing the melodic and harmonic aspects of mainstream jazz. While *Morning Song* showcases Cables on electric piano and creates a gentle, lyrical mood, *Byrdlike* (Hubbard's composition) dips into the essence of the bebop school, directly alluding to the Parker/Gillespie originators of the late '40s and early '50s. In a sense, *Cables' Vision* is a composite history of jazz from bebop to the present, completely natural in light of *Cables' personal evolution*.

Born in Brooklyn, November 14, 1944, he attended the High School of Performing Arts, then Mannes College of Music, studying classical music, theory, and harmony.

"I came from classical music into jazz in the '60s, and felt like I was playing catch-up. I suddenly found myself with guys who had been listening to jazz all their lives, guys who'd say, 'Oh, yeah, man, I was listening to Bird when I was 13.' When I turned 18 and could legally get into clubs, a whole new world opened up. I started going to the Five Spot and listening to people like Thelonious Monk, Mal Waldron, and Mose Allison. I became fascinated by all the different things you could do with this music.

"I really liked the idea of freedom. That's what hooked me on jazz: the idea of improvising, of personal freedom of expression. I remember asking my friend Ricardo Ray, 'How do you improvise?' He said, 'Well, you have a chord, and you just play over it.' That was the best explanation anybody could have given me, because it was simple, and clearly revealed that basic principle to me."

As George pursued his studies, he realized that "a classical background doesn't automatically do more for you than a jazz background. What it does do is give you a view of another kind of music you can draw from. It broadens your frame of reference. Here I was watching Thelonious Monk improvising and expressing himself, but I was also remembering how Bach and his sons, and Beethoven and Liszt and those other great composers used to improvise, too. So I had both. I had European classical music, and I had American classical music, which we call jazz. It has its roots in black America, but has gone on and been developed by both black and white Americans, and exported all over the world, just as European classical music was. Jazz is America's contribution to world art."

In 1964, at the age of 19, George formed the Jazz Samaritans with saxophonist Steve Grossman, bassist Clint

Houston, and drummer Billy Cobham. "When I developed confidence with the Samaritans, I got my first long-term gig, in 1969 with Art Blakey, then with Sonny Rollins. I was still learning. It was like going to graduate school. I was really digging into the music, feeling it, watching Art's or Sonny's face light up when I'd get into it.

"I didn't hear Bud Powell or Art Tatum until later. My major influences in the '60s were Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner, Wynton Kelly, Buddy Montgomery, Oscar Peterson and, later, Chick Corea. I learned a lot from Herbie, a great artist. I'd take things off his records so I could study what chords he used, what he improvised over them, how he handled certain musical problems, and why he handled them that way. I'd take something like *Dolphin Dance*, learn it, thoroughly understand the principles he employed, then I'd take it another step forward. As an exercise, I'd write my own piece based on those principles. I'd do the same with McCoy Tyner, that's the way I'd learn."

Cables played with saxophonist Joe Henderson from 1969-71, appearing on *If You're Not A Part Of The Solution*, *In Pursuit Of Blackness*, and *Black Is The Color*. After leaving Henderson he teamed up with Freddie Hubbard, playing acoustic piano and a variety of electronic instruments for the next five years.

"I got into that thing about being a 'keyboard' player. Along with acoustic piano, I played electric piano, clavinet, string ensemble, synthesizer. I enjoyed using different colors, began composing a lot of material, and began developing my own style, finally discovering that the way I express myself the best is on the piano. The piano is my long-time friend.

"See, in the '50s, things were much simpler. Everybody knew what jazz was, and everybody listened to it. By 1970, things were much more complex. In the '60s the music started changing. Rock & roll grew up, and the industry grew up around it. Then the industry started controlling the music. They saw what people liked and bought, and they recorded it and put it on the air. Meanwhile, the jazz artists refused to relate to the audience. They would get into themselves, in effect saying, 'I'm playing art, and you better dig it.' So the younger generation liked rock & roll, the media was selling it, and the jazz artists were playing music at the people instead of for them.

"So there I was, coming up in the middle of all this, watching everything change. You know you've got to grow; things cannot stay the same. You've got to change. You've got to add things. But what? I began to question. I felt a little unsure. I didn't want to play rock &

roll, but the industry wasn't supporting jazz. Here I was, trying to develop my concept and style, but I was kind of 'in between.'

"I believed in jazz principles, in tradition, in jazz music as an art. But I also believed that music comes from people and is for people. An art isn't something isolated and elitist, something for a separate class of so-called 'hip' people. Music is for all people, because it comes from all people, and expresses the feelings of all people. It seems to me that music can be artistic and uncompromising, and be commercially successful. That's what I tried to do with *Cables Vision*.

"I've explored a lot of different types of music along the way, but every artist has the right to search, to explore, to try different things. Like Freddie Hubbard practices eight hours a day. He's struggled on gigs that starve you to death. He's lived with Eric Dolphy, and worked with Art Blakey and Max Roach. He's a great player and a great writer. Because he's so great, people expect a tremendous amount from him. Then, if he plays something, or says something they don't like, they put him down. That's not right.

"Every time I hear Freddie Hubbard, I am always re-convinced that he's the one. It used to be Louis Armstrong. Then it was Dizzy. Then it was Miles. Today it's Freddie, without a doubt. And he's always growing, not just playing more notes or getting more complicated, but growing as an artist and as a human being. He's down to

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GEORGE CABLES SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

CABLES VISION—Contemporary 14001

with Joe Henderson

IF YOU'RE NOT PART OF THE SOLUTION—
Milestone 9028

IN PURSUIT OF BLACKNESS—Milestone
9034

BLACK IS THE COLOR—Milestone 9040

with Freddie Hubbard

KEEP YOUR SOUL TOGETHER—CTI 6036

HIGH ENERGY—Columbia C-33048

LIQUID LOVE—Columbia PC 33556

WINDJAMMER—Columbia PC 34166

with Bobby Hutcherson

WAITING—Blue Note BN-LA 615-G

KNUCKLEBEAN—Blue Note BN-LA 789-H

HIGHWAY ONE—Columbia JC 35550

CONCEPTION: THE GIFT OF LOVE—Colum-
bia JC 35814

UN POCO LOCO—Columbia FC 36402

with Art Pepper

THE TRIP—Contemporary S7638

NO LIMIT—Contemporary 7639

THE VILLAGE VANGUARD SESSIONS:
THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY—Con-
temporary 7642, 7643, 7644

with Dexter Gordon

SOPHISTICATED GIANT—Columbia JC
34989

MANHATTAN SYMPHONIE—Columbia JC
35608

GREAT ENCOUNTERS—Columbia JC 35978

earth, and plays straight from the heart. He's contributed a tremendous amount to the music, and I learned a lot from him. He gave me a chance to compose, to stretch, to develop my style, and to try out a lot.

"With Freddie, I traveled all over the world and saw what I could see. I had gone 'up on the mountain,' and I came back. When I came back, I came back to the acoustic piano."

Cables joined Dexter Gordon's group in 1977 and played with him for two years, recording *Sophisticated Giant*, *Manhattan Symphonie*, and *Great Encounters*.

"Dexter gave me a lot of room. When I joined him, I was still nervous about playing solo piano, but when we'd play ballads, the whole band would stop, and I'd play on, unaccompanied. That way, I developed confidence, and now I've been thinking more in terms of solo and trio music.

"But that was the most dramatic change for me over the last 10 years—coming back to the acoustic piano, and playing more solos. I keep finding out more and more what the piano can do. In turn, I use the piano to find myself. I not only explore the instrument, I explore myself through the instrument."

Since moving from New York to sunny LA in 1971, George has developed lasting relationships not only with Hubbard and Gordon, but also with alto saxophonist Art Pepper, and with that contemporary giant of the vibraphone and marimba, Bobby Hutcherson. Having played in such a wide variety of sophisticated and demanding contexts, it is no wonder that Cables has looked closely at the questions of musical discipline and musical freedom.

"In a sense," he said, "freedom can be an illusion, because freedom is not just playing anything you want. Freedom is real, but it's tied in with structure. Like Charlie Parker was free. He played within the structures, but he was free.

"In the '60s, they had so-called 'free' music. A lot of those people played anything and everything, but you never got that feeling of exhilaration, because they had no framework, no background, nothing to play against, nothing used as a reference point or a contrast.

"For me, yes, I like to play for myself, but I also like to communicate. I mean, listen to Bobby Hutcherson. In any context, he can play free. He has an inner sense of organization, and that sense of form and direction and organization enables him to do both: play for himself, and get it across. And, man, you not only trip on what he's playing, you trip on watching *him* trip! That's because he's disciplined. Discipline comes first. Then you can be truly free.



VERYL OAKLAND

Once you understand the rules, then you can break them, because you know why and how you're breaking them. When you're disciplined, you have artistic license. Without knowledge and discipline, freedom isn't really freedom."

With the release of *Cables Vision*, George felt the spotlight of center stage for the first time. For the most part, he enjoyed the reaction. Noted *L.A. Times* critic Leonard Feather gave the album five stars, included it on his list of the 10 Best Jazz Albums of 1980, and in a performance review of Cables' own group, *Cables' Car*, said George has "developed into one of the most astonishing pianists in jazz today." *Record Review* critic Scott Yanow referred to Cables' "ingenious" compositions, and Zan Stewart of the *L.A. Weekly* hailed him as "an unusually gifted composer/pianist."

However, other writers have been less enthusiastic. *down beat* critic Sam Freedman gave the LP three-and-a-half stars, and said the album reinforced the image of Cables as a "virtuoso sideman." He criticized him stylistically, saying "Like Hubbard, Cables has wandered through styles proficiently without getting a fix on his own direction." He took Cables to task for not taking

enough solos, and concluded that "Cables is an empathetic sideman, but a reticent leader: everybody's best friend who doesn't dare losing buddies by asserting himself." (*db*, February '81.)

The question of critical responsibility is one which involves every performing musician. In Cables' view, "It's every writer's prerogative to have his own impression and his own opinion, but he should also realize that he has to be especially careful to make sure his own preconceptions don't cloud his perception of what he is attempting to describe and evaluate." For example *Cables Vision* "was not intended to be 'The George Cables Show.' Music to me is not about being the soloist, the featured instrumentalist, the star."

Cables feels that he explained his musical concept "when I wrote about Miles Davis' band in the liner notes: 'The whole band was part of it. Miles was the guiding light . . . and each member responded to that light while clearly remaining his own man, free to express his own individuality. This made a most important impression on me and defined my musical values and direction. In music, the whole can be greater than the sum of its parts . . . This

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RECORD REVIEWS

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

ART PEPPER

WINTER MOON—Galaxy GXY-5140: *OUR SONG; HERE'S THAT RAINY DAY; THAT'S LOVE; WINTER MOON; WHEN THE SUN COMES OUT; BLUES IN THE NIGHT; THE PRISONER (LOVE THEME FROM "EYES OF LAURA MARS")*.

Personnel: Pepper, alto saxophone, clarinet (cut 6); Stanley Cowell, piano; Howard Roberts, guitar; Cecil McBee, bass; Carl Burnett, drums; unidentified string section.

★★★★ ½

FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE VILLAGE

VANGUARD—Contemporary 7643: *LAS CUEVAS DE MARIO; BUT BEAUTIFUL; CARAVAN; LABYRINTH*.

Personnel: Pepper, alto, tenor saxophone (cut 3); George Cables, piano; George Mraz, bass; Elvin Jones, drums.

★★★★ ½

SO IN LOVE—Artists House AH 9412:

STRAIGHT NO CHASER; BLUES FOR BLANCHE; SO IN LOVE; DIANE; STARDUST.

Personnel: Pepper, alto saxophone; Hank Jones, piano (cuts 1,4); Ron Carter, bass (1,4); Al Foster, drums (1,4); George Cables, piano (2,3,5); Charlie Haden, bass (2,3,5); Billy Higgins, drums (2,3,5).

★★★★

OMEGA ALPHA—Blue Note LT-1064:

SURF RIDE; BODY AND SOUL; TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT; SUMMERTIME; FASCINATING RHYTHM; BEGIN THE BEGUINE; WEBB CITY.

Personnel: Pepper, alto saxophone; Carl Perkins, piano; Ben Tucker, bass; Chuck Flores, drums.

★★★★★

Notwithstanding his chaotic lifestyle, Pepper has been a musician of remarkable consistency. As he relates in his picaresque autobiography, *Straight Life*, he recorded some of his finest sessions in a narcotic stupor, without benefit of rehearsal, using cobwebbed instruments held together by rubber bands. Yet through all of his travails, his playing has retained a sublime delicacy of nuance and phrasing, as well as a supreme, if subconscious, sense of logical development.

In the light of his celebrated comeback, the near-unanimous raves that greeted Pepper's early albums have given way to more exacting critiques. In fairness, however, his blowing has been of such uniformly high quality, then and now, that his "best" and "worst" performances are distinguishable mainly by the compatibility of his accompaniment. Although it is charged with passion, his art is essentially one of subtlety and refinement, reflecting the influence of his first model, Lester Young. Even his boldest recent ventures into Coltranesque expressionism are marked by discipline and



GILL SMITHERMAN

restraint, the very traits most lacking in his personal history. New listeners who expect fire-breathing flamboyance from this scarred and tattooed warrior are apt to be disappointed, but Pepper's bright and biting intonation, endless inventiveness, and unflagging good taste grow more compelling with every successive hearing.

Art's latest release, *Winter Moon*, features a full complement of strings plus guitarist Howard Roberts, in addition to the usual rhythm trio. The combo, including Galaxy regulars Cecil McBee and Stanley Cowell, provides firm but understated support, which cannot be said for the often obtrusive fiddles. Still, as string productions go, this one is a success; the dreamy charts of Bill Holman and Jimmy Bond enhance the altoist's accessibility at not too great a cost to his bittersweet purity.

On atmospheric crooners like Hoagy Carmichael's *Winter Moon* or Pepper's *Our Song*, the arrangements more-or-less tastefully underscore the cool soul of Art's horn, although the effect is slightly ludicrous on a straightahead blues like *That's Love*. The funk coda on *The Prisoner* is about as close as he has come to commercial mode music, but such "experimental" forays pale beside his gorgeous ballad interpretations. *Blues In The Night*, however shopworn, is an effective vehicle for Pepper's rich and distinctive clarinet work; no doubt his voice would be as instantly recognizable even on a harmonica.

Those who are drawn to Pepper with strings will surely appreciate him all the better without them. *Friday Night At The Village Vanguard*, the midpoint in the

Contemporary trilogy, is an excellent example of his current (1977) style, combining Trane-ish influences with the eely post-Parker fluency that has been his hallmark. *Las Cuevas De Mario*, a 1950 original, is a strikingly modern vamp tune in 5/4 time, enlivened by the squawking tones that had already begun to appear, albeit more sparingly, in his pre-Coltrane recordings. *But Beautiful*, widely associated with Billie Holiday, is given a poignant reading, with exemplary assistance from George Cables and especially George Mraz, whose incandescent bass suits Pepper to a T.

A hard-driving *Caravan* receives the full modal treatment, with Art blowing a ferocious tenor over the final vamp. For a player whose forte has always been the ability to breeze through the most torturous changes, such attenuated progressions are less than ideal, but Pepper's raw verve and Elvin Jones' galloping rhythms prove irresistible. With *Thursday Night's* eulogies out of the way, *Friday Night* is a celebration, and if one can hazard to extrapolate, *Saturday* may be the topper.

The warmth of a club setting necessarily fades in the studio, and *So In Love*, a solid and representative Pepper session, is predictably less emotional than the Vanguard sets. The glossy Artists House package includes an exhaustive discography, and the beautifully recorded pressing features two top-flight ensembles: Hank Jones, Ron Carter, and Al Foster versus Cables, Charlie Haden, and Billy Higgins.

The battle of the rhythm sections is really no contest, as each is sympathetically excellent. Two tracks are particularly outstand-

ing: *So In Love*, with an energized Cables trio, where Art bops propulsively through the Cole Porter standard to an arresting "outside" conclusion; and *Diane*, a classic Pepper ballad which Jones and company bathe in rich candlelight. Pepper's melodic flair and harmonic resourcefulness allow him to exploit each tune to the fullest. Armed with a uniquely incisive tone, he is one of the most formidable of improvisers, and also one of the most poetic.

Omega Alpha comprises material originally recorded in 1957 for Imperial Records but issued instead as audiophile reels on Omegatape, then reissued on a mono disc by Onyx. This Blue Note release is the first U.S. stereo LP, and the fidelity is markedly superior to other Pepper sides of the period. But the real surprise here is the presence of the late and brilliant pianist Carl Perkins, who is not only a perfect foil to Pepper but frequently outshines him.

Pepper's own playing is hardly uninspired, but the West Coast rhythm section of Perkins, bassist Ben Tucker, and drummer Chuck Flores meshes so closely with the leader's approach that the whole is far greater than the sum of the parts. Rather than merely setting the backdrop, they seem to anticipate Pepper's every turn, matching him step for step with bouncy elan. Perkins' crisp touch amplifies the sweet timbres of the alto in the same sprightly boppish vein. Telepathic in accompaniment, the pianist is a radiant post-Powell soloist, deft and swinging, with an uncanny light soulfulness as individualistic as Art's own. With Pepper's re-emergence, Perkins' death a year after this session, at the age of 30, is all the more keenly felt.

From the breathless momentum of *Surf Ride* through the marvelous versions of *Summertime* and *Fascinatin' Rhythm* to the stunning impact of *Webb City*, Pepper and crew scarcely miss a trick. This is vintage Art, sans raucous modal inflections, and once more the saxophonist demonstrates his unquestionable ascendancy over his phlegmatic California contemporaries. Pepper has shown that he can more than hold his own among New York's finest; the question now is whether they can keep up with him.

—Larry Birnbaum

BILL EVANS

YOU MUST BELIEVE IN SPRING—

Warner Brothers HS 3504: *B MINOR WALTZ* (FOR ELLAINE); *YOU MUST BELIEVE IN SPRING*; *GARY'S THEME*; *WE WILL MEET AGAIN* (FOR HARRY); *THE PEACOCK*; *SOMETIME AGO*; *THEME FROM M*A*S*H*.
Personnel: Evans, piano; Eddie Gomez, bass; Eliot Zigmund, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

Recorded in the fall of 1977, shortly before Eddie Gomez and Eliot Zigmund left Bill Evans' trio, this posthumous release attests to the continuity and clarity of Evans' musical means and ends.

Indeed, much of the trio's work looks backwards to those vintage Riverside sessions, *Moonbeams* and *Sunday At The*

Village Vanguard, both impressionistic collections of haunting mood pieces. For example, here Evans' own *B Minor Waltz* simply floats along, interspersed with melodic motifs straight from *Moonbeams*. In the work of lesser players, such deliberate self-quotation lapses easily into self-parody; in the work of a musician of Evans' stature, the melodic permutations of his earlier work simply re-affirm the continuity of his craft and his commitment to it.

You Must Believe In Spring, *We Will Meet Again*, and *Sometime Ago* similarly present Evans as a consummate impressionist: light, thoughtfully voiced iridescent chords, and wide, sweeping melodies. His playing on Jimmy Rowles' *The Peacock* evidences Evans' darker moods. A languid essay in melancholy, this piece's dissonant melodic leaps and brooding harmonies remind us of Evans' pensive side and of the depth of his feeling and vision.

Finally, Evans takes on the unlikely *Theme From M*A*S*H*. Done in latin with ominous double bass rumbles and gradually thickening piano voicings, this performance, at once playful and frightening, well summarizes the range of Evans' musical thought and feeling.

—Jon Balleras

ROCKET 88

ROCKET 88—Atlantic SD 19293: *ROCKET 88*; *WAITING FOR THE CALL*; *ST. LOUIS BLUES*; *ROLL 'EM PETE*; *SWINDON SWING*; *ROADHOUSE BOOGIE*; *TALKING ABOUT LOUISE*.

Personnel: Colin Smith, trumpet; John Picard, trombone; Hal "Cornbread" Singer, Don Weller, tenor saxophone; Bob Hall, piano; George Green, Ian Stewart, piano (cut 5); Alexis Korner, guitar, vocals (4,7); Jack Bruce, acoustic bass, vocal (2); Charlie Watts, drums.

★ ★ ★

Rock fans may flock to this tempting all-star session of British rockers, but the roots of *Rocket 88* reach further back than Cream or the Stones . . . even beyond the Blues-breakers era. It's New Orleans and it's swing and it's genuine boogie woogie in a traditional sense that today's so-called "boogie freak" never dreamed of.

A loose assemblage of U.K. jazz and rock stalwarts, *Rocket 88* has no permanent lineup and gigs less than regularly. This particular session from a noisy nightclub in Germany does in fact unite members of the now-defunct Cream (Jack Bruce) and the Rolling Stones (Charlie Watts) in an impressive rhythm section. Veteran Alexis Korner, who nurtured many a budding superstar in his early '60s group Blues Incorporated (including both Bruce and Watts) is also in the pits for this one.

The music herein may have nothing to do with the British Invasion, but when three Pete Johnson classics are covered you know some feeling's got to be there. In fact, that's one very distinguishing aspect of the European rock scene: they've always been more directly in touch with American blues roots than most of our native born. Even if *Rocket*

88 delivers a rather straight reading of an antiquated blues style, there's definitely a spirit here akin to early rock & roll.

But basically, those who grab this album looking for rock's cheap electric thrills are going to be surprised and possibly disappointed. *Rocket 88* is a largely acoustic free-for-all that roars more like the '20s than the '80s. Tunes like *Roadhouse Boogie* and *St. Louis Blues* sound a bit "out of it" now, perhaps, though they don't lack for their own brand of spontaneity. Originals by Bruce and Korner might pass for contemporary blues, but 90 percent of the playing time is devoted to jammin' and swingin' with an emphasis on muskrat ramblin' brass and reeds.

It's certainly interesting, though not quite stimulating, to hear big time money-making rock stars get down and slap bass or play traps on music their peers may disdain. Call it something of a brief history lesson amid all that mega-corporate marketing. It's pretty doubtful that *Rocket 88*'s muffled-engineering, or spunky reworking of such often-recorded material, will earn them any place in infamy. But then, these guys obviously got together just to have a good time . . . and you can feel that in the grooves. —bob henschen

RALPH TOWNER

SOLO CONCERT—ECM-1-1173: *SPIRIT LAKE*; *RALPH'S PIANO WALTZ*; *TRAIN OF THOUGHT*; *ZOETROPE*; *NARDIS*; *CHELSEA COURTYARD*; *TIMELESS*.

Personnel: Towner, 6-, 12-string acoustic guitars.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

DAVID DARLING

JOURNAL OCTOBER—ECM-1-1161: *SLOW RETURN*; *BELLS AND GONGS*; *FAR AWAY LIGHTS*; *SOLO CELLO*; *MINOR BLUE*; *CLOUDS*; *SOLO CELLO*; *SOLO CELLO AND VOICE*; *JOURNAL OCTOBER, STUTTGART*.

Personnel: Darling, acoustic cello, 8-string solid body electric cello, voice, bells, gongs, tympani.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

Much like a boxer in the ring, the solo instrumentalist on-stage is constantly endangered with potential humiliation or heroism. Both Towner and Darling here carry their own weight and endure through even the strictest of obstacles: lack of a supporting rhythm section or the variety of assisting musicians.

Comprising excerpts from live recorded dates in Zurich and Munich during the autumn of '79, Towner's *Solo Concert* is most impressive and again demonstrates that one needn't be electric to be electrifying. *Spirit Lake* opens on 12-string with a short series of vibrant, chordal harmonics interchanged with free linear inventions in the major mode. Two fluid themes unfold in a quasi-rondo form, which the guitarist delicately embellishes, while he keenly dovetails a drone with one of his strings, producing a blissful tambura effect. Towner demonstrates equally remarkable chops on the nylon string classical guitar (*Ralph's*

Piano Waltz). However it is his 12-string offerings that are most impressive here. The Oregonian has been epic in conquering numerous technical barriers on the cumbersome axe, and by virtue of its extended range and Towner's brilliant musicality, a near-orchestral dimension is achieved. A good example is *Timeless*, where the guitarist has taken the John Abercrombie tune and handled it with bejeweled sensitivity. The infectious ostinato is aptly muted, almost staccato throughout. Laced between choruses are stunning successions of legato-laden chordal inventions that outline the thematic harmony—building up transcendent and heartfelt patterns.

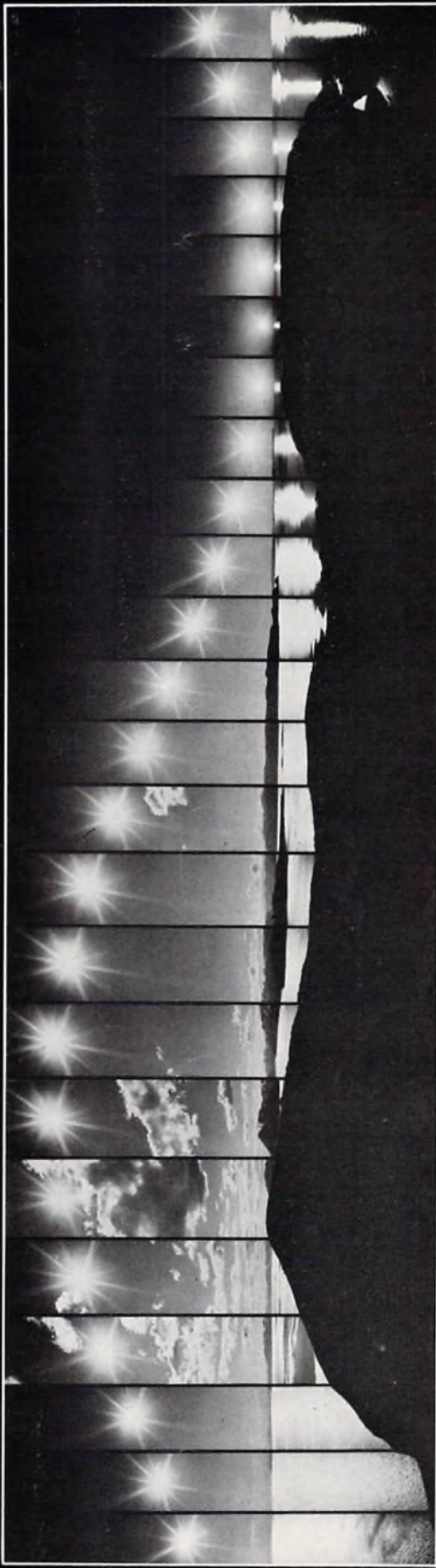
Special credit should be given to recording engineer Martin Weiland for the exceptional sonic quality of this live set. Audience applause and clamors are audible only between tracks, and even the most delicate musical passages are heard with a crystalline clarity and ultra-spaciousness—a perfect mesh of studio-produced accuracy and concert hall excitement.

David Darling is the extraordinary cellist who has contributed to prior recorded efforts of Ralph Towner and Glen Moore, as well as recently gigging with former members of Double Image. *Journal* October is Darling's first solo venture and represents an alluring diversity of musical texture, tonality, and sonority. Yet on the whole this amalgam is not discordant; *Journal* for the most part achieves a convincing and fluid musical logic. Although subtitled "Solo Cello," multiple tracking is rampant throughout the set, and creates occasional illusions of complete string sections. Voice and percussion, plus echo and assorted electronic effects are also judiciously employed as ornaments.

Slow Return is cast in three sections. The first features a lush, multi-layering of tonally conceived cello explorations. A lyrical edge is obvious here, but no clear-cut melody can be discerned. The second, noticeably weak, is a prolonged *martelé* excursion (a rapidly bowed staccato) predominantly on a single note. This passage begs for syncopation—ala Bela Bartok—however the cellist's continuous dynamic shifts seem to save it from a mild monotony. The staccato remains through the concluding section, which underpins a subtle, airy return to the initial material.



Far Away Lights is the most moving track on the disc; a grieving and dramatic threnody that seems to spark haunting visions of the Jewish Holocaust. In this bracing lamentation, Darling's depth and breadth of tone approaches Casals' or Rostropovich's, though his vibrato in the extreme high register is a shade overindulgent. The two strictly *Solo Cello* offerings on both sides one and two demonstrate near-immaculate technique, inventive authority, and striking sensitivity to instrumental nuance.

What prevents a five star rating of this LP is the long-windedness of a few isolated passages and compositions: a droning, arpeggiated pizzicato in the chamber-like *Clouds* seems to linger indefinitely, as does the tediously relaxed *Stuttgart*—the latter otherwise quite imaginative in its atonal interlacing of voice and electric cello filtered through echoplex and other assorted devices. Yet these are minor misgivings within an admirable first attempt—which I hope is the first of many. —stephen mamula



JACO PASTORIUS
WORD OF MOUTH

On Warner Bros. Records & Cassettes.



RAN BLAKE

THIRD STREAM TODAY—Golden Crest NEC-116: *SISTER TEE*; *MISTERIOSO*; *PIREAS AND ROMIOSYNI*; *ARLINE*; *BREAKTHRU*; *THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE IN MY LIFE*; *ANN STREET*; *WENDE*.

Personnel: Blake, piano; Marty Ehrlich, soprano, alto saxophone, clarinet, flute (cuts 2, 4); Michael Moore, alto saxophone, clarinet, flute (4); Bruce Henderson, alto, baritone saxophone (3, 4); Matthew Rosenblum, alto saxophone (8); Sam Matthews (3), Billy Thompson (4), Ricky Ford (5), tenor saxophone; Daryl Lowery, tenor saxophone, clarinet, flute (4); Eric Thomas (3, 4), Cynthia Dibble (8), clarinet; Youssef Rakha (2), Chris Pasin (4), Spencer MacLeish (4), Nelson Bogart (4), Bob Merrill (4), Phil Mell (8), trumpet; Nick Orovich (4), Fred Parcels (4), Norman McWilliams (4), Bill Mederis (4), John Bewlie (8), Dan Walker (8), trombone; Carol Suhalter, flute (8); Roland Van Liew, horn (8); Emmet McDonald (4), Mark Tetreault (8), tuba; John West (1), Maritza Leal (2), Rebekah Buchman Zak (4), Fred Hersch (7), piano; Hubert Powell, organ (6); Harvey Rosario (2), Dick Sarpola (4), electric, acoustic bass; Akira Tana, drums (4); Edwin Pabon (2), Robert Pabon (2), Cleve Pozar (2), Jeff Klein (8), Sara Tenney (8), Marc Seidenberg (8), percussion; Steve Peisch, Andrew Jones, violin (7); David Ellis, Domingo Sanchez, cello (4); Eleni Odoni (3), Natalie Carter (6), Laurie Monohan (7), Holy Trinity Church of God In Christ Choir (6), vocals.

★ ★ ★ ★

FILM NOIR—Arista/Novus AN 3019: *SPIRAL STAIRCASE*; *EVE*; *GARDEN OF DELIGHT*; *KEY LARGO*; *PINKY*; *STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE*; *TOUCH OF EVIL*; *LE BOUCHER*; *THE PAWNBROKER*; *DOKTOR MABUSE*; *BLUE GARDENIA*.

Personnel: Blake, piano; Hankus Netsky, oboe; Paul Meyers, electric guitar, electric bass; Jon Hazilla, George Schuller, drums; John Heiss, flute; Daryl Lowery, tenor, alto, soprano saxophone; Ed Jackson, alto saxophone; Ted Curson, Chris Pasin, Spencer MacLeish, Ingrid Monson, Frank London, trumpet; Norman McWilliams, trombone; Pat Hollenbeck, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

As a movement, '50s-style Third Stream music was foredoomed by the basic incompatibility of jazz improvisation, where time is paramount, and the highly structured, abstract nature of serialism, the predominant classical music of the period. Since then, however, avant garde classical music has opened up considerably, accepting a variety of influences from other genres, including jazz. At the same time, jazz composers such as Anthony Braxton, Sam Rivers, Steve Lacy, James Newton, and Ran Blake have widened their horizons to incorporate some of the unusual sounds and special insights that have been emanating from the classical world.

Blake, a jazz pianist and professor at the New England Conservatory of Music, has

progressed a considerable distance along the road toward a quasi-classical style since the mid-'70s compositions performed on *Third Stream Today*. Back then, he was slowly exploring his way outward from jazz: in *Arline*, for instance, he transforms jazz elements into a grotesque parody of burlesque music; and *Wende*, although still one of his best compositions, veers back and forth between the delicate, evocative jazz of a Collin Walcott and a post-serial pointillism. *La Boucher*, from the recent *Film Noir*, on the other hand, is indistinguishable from contemporary classical music with its atonal chords, mysterious bass rumblings, and long silences between disjointed utterances.

Of course, this is an extreme example. While Blake's piano part in *Garden Of Delight*, for example, goes through harmonic progressions that lie outside the scope of most jazz, Ted Curson's trumpet playing stays within those boundaries, even if it sometimes approaches "free" jazz. And the remaining pieces on *Film Noir*—including three other Blake originals and music by Benny Carter, Alfred Newman, Alex North, and Quincy Jones—are easily identifiable as jazz.

That's about the only label, however, that can be applied to all of them. Based either on scores for or Blake's reaction to a series of films with dark and often violent themes, these compositions are as individualized as the movies which inspired them. In a brazenly sensual rendition of the theme from Newman's *Pinky*, for instance, the mode wavers subtly between Major and minor keys, with flutist John Heiss fluttering above the moody rhythm section like a bird struggling to fly out of a closed room. In the next cut, Alex North's *Streetcar Named Desire*, a rhythmic guitar-and-percussion figure on one note—like the sound of a train—symbolizes sexual energy. By contrasting this theme with the bluesy, late-night feeling of his piano and Daryl Lowery's alto saxophone, Blake illuminates the sadness of North's music—and Tennessee Williams' play.

Other highpoints on this mostly fine album include the calculated madness of the scattershot trumpet and keyboard parts on *A Touch Of Evil*, the swinging takeoff on Quincy Jones' music for *The Pawnbroker*, and an atmospheric version of Benny Carter's *Key Largo* which showcases bassist Paul Meyers' incredible chops. Blake's own *Spiral Staircase*, however, sounds like anonymous background music.

Among the more interesting cuts on *Third Stream Today* are pianist John West's frenetic improvisations on Blake's *Sister Tee* theme, a steamy salsa version of the Thelonious Monk's *Misterioso*, recomposed by Youssef Rakha, and Blake's snappy collaboration with tenor saxophonist Ricky Ford on *Breakthru*. In the latter piece, recorded in 1973, Ford showed the promise which has since blossomed into one of the more substantial talents on the contemporary jazz scene.

Mention must be made of *Pireas And Romiosyni*, a flirtation with Greek music based in part on Manos Hadjidakis' *Never*

On *Sunday* and Mikis Theodorakis' *Romiosyni*. In addition to Eleni Odoni's sultry, evocative singing, this track features a wonderful, teasing solo by Bruce Henderson on alto sax and outstanding ensemble work by Henderson, tenor saxophonist Sam Matthews, and clarinetist Eric Thomas. In this piece, *Third Stream* assumes another guise as a union of East and West.

Overall, though, *Third Stream Today* lacks focus and continuity since it contains several different kinds of music recorded at different times. Moreover, Hubert Powell's *There's Been A Change In My Life*, a pseudo-gospel number performed by the Holy Trinity Church of God In Christ, is too harsh and too long. But, if one can tolerate the rather poor sound quality on this disc, it offers some rewarding moments, especially in *Wende*. Except for guests John Heiss and Ted Curson on *Film Noir*, all of the musicians on both albums are or were associated with Blake's Third Stream department at the New England Conservatory. On the whole, they demonstrate a high level of proficiency, though none of them is as original a performer as Blake himself.

—joel rothstein

RAY ANDERSON

HARRISBURG HALF LIFE—Moers Music 01074: *HARRISBURG HALF LIFE*; *IF I EVER HAD A HOME, IT WAS A SLIDE* (TROMBONE); *ECARICO*; *SOJOURN OF THE SQUARES*; *PORTRAIT OF WILLIE VARGAS*. **Personnel:** Anderson, trombone; Allan Jaffe, guitar; Mark Dresser, bass; Gerry Hemingway, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

**CHARDONNENS/
FRANCIOLI/MALFATTI**

HUMANIMAL—hat Hut Eight (1R08): *SIDE A*; *SIDE B*. **Personnel:** Jerry Chardonnens, drums, percussion; Leon Francioli, bass, piano; Radu Malfatti, trombone, accessories.

★ ★ ★ ★

These two discs affirm the trombone's renewed lease on life since the automaton role of empty virtuosity that dates from bebop days. For both Ray Anderson and Radu Malfatti, abundant technique is not flaunted for its own sake. Each man's virtuosity transcends mere pyrotechnics while backing off from set styles. A preference for varied compositional structures and improvisational stances stand as the common bond between 28-year-old, Chicago-born Anderson and the maverick British-based Malfatti.

Recorded June 1980, *Harrisburg Half Life* represents the first LP as leader for a player associated with Anthony Braxton's quartet and the Barry Altschul trio (documented on recent Sackville and Moers Music releases), and plants Ray Anderson's flag within the parameters of updated tradition. There is nothing about *Harrisburg's* conception to suggest staidness, however. Five appealingly eclectic Anderson originals afford mostly

successful vehicles for his instrumental panache within the context of a sympathetic group. The title song, a minor key Near Eastern (Harrisburg, PA?) drag, intriguingly unites old with new. The opening brings Ellington to mind—Juan Tizol and *Caravan* the obvious parallels—as a lovely guitar/arco bass unison counterpoints Anderson's chanting ostinato figure which is "cooed" rather than played. This drawing legato theme gives way to a pounding episode reminiscent of Braxton's free-bop vamps. Spikey solos by the leader and Jaffe's guitar follow, mostly played simultaneously, pinned to the head by Hemingway's elastic drumming. The album's closer, *Portrait Of Willie Vargas*, gives the nod to Carla Bley and salsa as it recasts latin material from Altschul's album *Brahma* (specifically, *Con Alma de Noche*). Trombone and guitar solos wax hot, and the improvised group interplay of the introduction is a delight.

If *I Ever Had A Home* is an extended ballad (over nine minutes) that showboats Anderson's supple, at turns plaintive and gutsy, tone. The performance shapes up as an homage to masters of 'bones past—Lawrence Brown, Dicky Wells, et al. Anderson whispers, shouts, cajoles, and swaggers—speaks through fleet single-note runs and opulent glissandi—all within a controlled expressive framework. On "boneified" style alone, this is the performance to win over skeptics. Meanwhile, Jaffe's bottleneck guitar contributes to the loony textures in *Sojourn Of The Squares*. Shades of New Orleans via Charles Mingus (*Jelly Roll*) are summoned up when Dresser's slapstick bass-backbeat shuffle announces a gritty, rock-em, sock-em Anderson/Dresser duet joined by buoyant parade drumming. In short order Jaffe dusts his broom for a colorful solo that touches base with Elmore James and Charlie Christian.

Recorded live at Willisau, Switzerland in September 1979, *Humanimal* originates from a trombonist regrettably seldom heard on this side of the Atlantic. Radu Malfatti's credentials include Chris McGregor's Brotherhood of Breath and numerous playing situations documented on the Ogun label. Although bandmates Chardonnens and Francioli receive equal billing, Malfatti's "trombone and accessories" are the lead voice on a recording which invites comparison to Ray Anderson's effort.

Alongside Anderson's charmingly ordered compositions, Malfatti and company's uninterrupted performance (43:35) traverses wild country indeed. The trio functions minus the insistent harmonic placemark (guitar) of Anderson's quartet; Francioli's piano makes but a brief appearance. Their music sounds predominantly improvised (composer credit is shared), with few if any preset chordal strictures. Rather, the trio marches through diverse musical episodes or sequences of events much in the manner of the Art Ensemble of Chicago, though using not so broad a coloristic field.

From the outset Malfatti establishes his approach. He begins *Humanimal* with rapid-tongue distorted effects and vocaliza-

tion sounding uncannily like a Daffy Duck locution. Contrasts are lent by the sensitive backgrounds of Chardonnens' trap drums and Francioli's percussive bass. When after a few minutes Malfatti cuts loose with a virile, full-throated attack, he's all over the horn and the music starts to swing in more conventional terms. Supplemented by Malfatti's many soundmaking accessories, the trombone displays speech-like qualities. Frequently resembling natural and animal (humanimal?) sounds, its tones howl thick as a sirocco or pipe thin like a sucked straw. The performance's seductive unfolding evokes rich resemblances: tribal rhythms, blues, latin beat, a dash of *musique concrete*, and even a bass/drums boogie on *Side B* culminating in a friendly farewell samba.

To sum up, both discs are fine contemporary workouts for a neglected lead instrument. Each packs individual wit, fire, and imagination by the tankful. Thankful, who could ask for anything more?

—peter kostakis

TETE MONTOLIU

LUNCH IN L.A.—Contemporary 14004:

AIREGIN; BLUES BEFORE LUNCH; I WANT TO TALK ABOUT YOU; PUT YOUR LITTLE FOOT RIGHT OUT; BLUES AFTER LUNCH; SOPHISTICATED LADY.

Personnel: Montoliu, piano; Chick Corea, piano (cut 4).

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I WANNA TALK ABOUT YOU—

SteepleChase SCS 1137: *NEXUS, PLEXUS, SEXUS; BLUES FOR WIM AND MAXINE; SCANDIA SKIES; JO VULL QUE M'ACARICIS (CARESS ME); I WANNA TALK ABOUT YOU.*

Personnel: Montoliu, piano; George Mraz, bass; Al Foster, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

Tete Montoliu, the blind Catalan pianist from Barcelona, stands as the premier jazz pianist to emerge from Europe in our generation. Montoliu has it all going for him in spades. He has the impeccable technique of the classically trained musician, tempered with a plentiful blues feel that naturally seeped in early rather than was consciously venerated-on late. He logged intensive experience with unique saxophonists Don Byas (an early teacher), Ben Webster, Dexter Gordon, Archie Shepp, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, and Anthony Braxton, all of whom left some mark on his deeply lyrical consciousness. He possesses consummate grace and taste in selecting varied, compelling programs, including real-McCoy original blues and soul-stirring love songs. Montoliu has, above all, the flair and independence of a true individual voice, his Catalanian culture providing not only a wealth of unusual folk and popular material that lends itself admirably to bluesy improvisation, but a chiaroscuro (burnt sienna, as I perceive it) cast to his style. And, in recent years, Montoliu has finally had the exposure—thanks to producers Nils Winther of SteepleChase, J. Berendt of MPS, and Wim Wigt of Timeless—to capture the interna-

tional audience he richly deserves.

Montoliu always played beautifully for the hornmen whom he backed throughout Europe, it is true, but his real forte is holding the lead voice, with or without rhythm. His lyrical intensity comes over most emphatically on the dozen or so albums we have had in the last seven years, and these two are no exceptions. Each has a bop classic (Rollins' *Airegin* and Dorham's *Skies*), an original song (the fervent *Jo Vull* and the fortified fantasia *After*), an original blues (the modal *Maxine* and the *Tristanoid Before*), and both culminate in 12-minute versions of Billy Eckstine's *Talk*. Foster and Mraz barrel along brightly on the SteepleChase's side one, kicking Tete along—way up, rock slow, or light waltz. They cool out on side two, where the comforting boom and slapped brushes put Tete in a heady after-hours mood, heard in his big rolling tremolos and uncannily brilliant treble rambles. Mraz solos with customary intelligence and special fervor. Both sides show jazz vernacular through a unique filter that is pure Tete.

Lunch would earn five forks if only for the landmark duo between Tete and Chick Corea—a manic, not-so-Hispanic free-for-all buffet on Larry Spier's rare but tasty tidbit that Miles Davis nibbled 25 years ago. A blow-by-blow account would take more print than a Borg/Nastase tennis set, but this elegant, risky encounter shows more fun and empathy between the two pianists in 10 minutes than other duos do in four sides. Stand back for the coda. The L.A. date is Montoliu's first domestically released recording. He seems enchanted with the land of his musical idols, judging from this record and accounts of his tour. Far from his beloved Barcelona, the Catalanian has cut what is probably his least nationalistic album. Even the originals are blues that start with echoes of Spain in dark, erratic chords but resolve to walking and stomping that move them at least to Mid-Atlantic. Let's hope that if Tete spends much time here, absence will make his heart grow fonder, and keep his mind's eye on what made him truly unique in jazz: his Catalanian roots.

—fred bouchard

KRYSTALL KLEAR & THE BUELLS

READY FOR THE '90s—K2B2 2069: 1

GOR's BLUES; LIKE LATIN/SYNAPSE; MODERN GIZZ; P.O.; CECIL.

Personnel: Marty Krystall, tenor saxophone; Buell Neidlinger, bass; Warren Gale, trumpet; Billy Higgins, drums; Cecil Taylor, piano (cut 4); Dennis Charles, drums (4).

★ ★ ★

This debut recording by Krystall Klear and the Buells came as quite a surprise to me. I must admit I didn't know just what to expect, since my first exposure to their music was in person several years ago when Krystall and Neidlinger were performing sporadically around Los Angeles. They were, to put it mildly, very avant garde in

those days. Therefore, I imagined that they must be almost off the planet by now—especially with that cryptic title: *Ready For The '90s*.

What emerges, however, is a thoroughly engaging program with a consistently high level of musicianship. Krystall and Neidlinger have been musical compadres for many years now, and their musical familiarity is evident throughout. Neither of these musicians has enjoyed the exposure that their talents and dedication to jazz deserve. Neidlinger's credits are many and varied, having backed Coleman Hawkins and Johnny Hodges in their later days. Cecil Taylor (who is featured on one track of this album) in his earliest ones, in addition to such major pop artists as Barbra Streisand, The Temptations, and Dolly Parton. It is obvious, though, from *Ready For The '90s*, that Neidlinger's (and indeed Krystall's) first love is jazz. There are elements of hard bop, the blues, free form, and even a touch of latin.

P.O. stands out as the oldest cut, written by Neidlinger and recorded in 1961 "to give Cecil Taylor an opportunity to play the 12-bar blues." Although there are hints of that form, the piece, nevertheless, is more typical of Taylor's accepted style of pianistics. The recording quality, by the way, isn't too good, with the piano being somewhat under-recorded. Of the remaining four cuts Krystall shines (pardon the pun) predominantly. On the opening *I GOR's BLUES*, trumpeter Warren Gale and Krystall weave in and out of each other—sometimes clashing—and then take off on their own trips. Gale's tone is pure and clear, and his control of the instrument is marvelous. However, anyone looking for lots of warmth and mellowness won't find too much here; the sounds are angular, stabbing, and often quite harsh.

The quasi-latin feel in *Like Latin/Synapse* (actually two compositions of Krystall's in a medley) is an unusual feature for this type of group. The operative word is "like," for the pulse barely resembles a latin beat. However, even that minute nod to South American rhythms has Krystall reminiscent of the calypsoish Sonny Rollins. Krystall's drive and attack are not unlike Sonny's, and the younger man seems to be taking those formative tenor explorations even one step further. Neidlinger provides a steady, walking bass line, remaining highly sensitive to Krystall's meanderings along the way. Meanwhile, Gale has much of importance to say. His full, open style makes good use of the space provided by the composer. His flow of musical ideas is endless and always interesting, and his interplay with Krystall is a good example of two minds with a single thought, their separate improvisations often coming miraculously into unison.

The old Dizzy Gillespie standard *Night In Tunisia* has been resurrected here as *Modern Gizz*, almost nine minutes of exploring inside, outside, and all around this familiar theme. Everyone takes a solo, and Billy Higgins exemplifies his highly imaginative, ingenious drumming style. He and Neidlinger provide a constant cushion upon which the two horns buoy themselves. Gale gives the impression of being a Gillespie-disciple—displaying more of the master's spirit than individual technique or style.

The final track, *Cecil* (named by composer Neidlinger for his frequent collaborator

Chick Corea Three Quartets

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Taylor), opens with bass lines offsetting some outlandish tenor/trumpet configurations, and Higgins using the entire spectrum of his drum set. Although what comes out is quite cacophonous, there's a definite sense of direction apparent. Each instrumentalist is playing with each other, giving the effect of a five-way conversation: each voice striving to be heard, but not at the expense of another's.

Though this album may not be everybody's cup of avant garde tea, it's far more exciting than most of the tried-and-true jazz of the 1980s so far. Krystall Klear and the Buells offer a perfect opportunity to join in some navigations into uncharted territory.

—frankie nemko-graham

HELEN HUMES

SONGS I LIKE TO SING!—Contemporary Records S 7582: *If I Could Be With You; Don't Worry 'Bout Me; Mean To Me; Every Now And Then; I Want A Roof Over My Head; St. Louis Blues; You're Driving Me Crazy; My Old Flame; Million Dollar Secret; Love Me Or Leave Me; Imagination; Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone.*

Personnel: Humes, vocals; Al Porcino, Ray Triscari, Stu Williamson, Jack Sheldon, trumpet; Harry Betts, Bob Fitzpatrick, trombone; Art Pepper, alto saxophone, clarinet; Ben Webster, Teddy Edwards, tenor saxophone; Bill Hood, baritone saxophone; Andre Previn, piano; Barney Kessel, guitar; Leroy Vinnegar, bass; Shelly Manne, drums; (cuts 1, 4, 8, 11)—Joseph Stepansky, James Getzoff, violin; Alvin Dinkin, viola; Elanor Slatkin, cello.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL—Classic Jazz 120: *They Raided The Joint; That Old Feeling; Ooo Baba Leba; For Now And So Long; Let The Good Times Roll; He May Be Your Man; Million Dollar Secret; My Handy Man; Guess Who's In Town; Prisoner Of Love.*

Personnel: Humes, vocals; Milt Buckner, organ, piano; Jay McShann, piano; Arnett Cobb, tenor saxophone; Candy Johnson, tenor saxophone (cuts 5, 10); Clarence Brown, guitar (3, 6, 9); Al Casey, guitar (1, 2, 5, 7, 10); Roland Lobbigeois, bass; Paul Gunther, drums; Michael Silva, drums (5, 10).

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

AND THE MUSE ALL-STARS—Muse MR 5217: *I'm Gonna Move To The Outskirts Of Town; These Foolish Things; Woe Is Me; I've Got A Crush On You; Body And Soul; My Old Flame; Loud Talking Woman.*

Personnel: Humes, vocals; Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson, alto saxophone, vocals; Arnett Cobb, Buddy Tate, tenor, baritone saxophone; Gerald Wiggins, piano; Ronnie Cole, drums; Lyle Atkinson (cuts 1, 3, 6, 7); George Duvivier (2, 4, 5), bass.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

JIMMY RUSHING

MR. FIVE BY FIVE—Columbia Records CS 36419: *Arkansas Blues; Muddy Water; Everybody Loves My Baby; Shipwrecked Blues; Deed I Do; Mr. Five By Five; June Night; Gulf Coast Blues; There'll Be Some Changes Made; Trix Ain't Walkin' No More; Brussels Blues; Am I Blue; Say You Don't Mean It; It's A Sin To Tell A Lie; When You're Smiling; Downhearted Blues; I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me; One Evening; Jimmy's Blues; Somebody Stole My Gal; I Cried For You; Now That I Need You; I'm Gonna Move To The Outskirts Of Town; My Melancholy Baby; Blues In The Dark; Russian Lullaby; Trouble In Mind; I'm Comin' Virginia; Why Oh Why; Are You Ready.*

Personnel: Rushing, vocals; various instrumental groups including Buck Clayton, Emmett Berry, Bernie Glow, Doc Cheatham, trumpet; Dickie Wells, Bennie Morton, Vic Dickenson, Urbie Green, Frank Rehak, trombone; Buster Bailey, Benny Goodman, clarinet; Coleman Hawkins, Buddy Tate, Earle Warren, Paul Desmond, Ben Webster, saxophones; Claude Hopkins, Ray Bryant, Nat Pierce, Dave Brubeck, piano; Sir Charles Thompson, organ; Everett Barksdale, Skeeter Best, Danny Barker, guitar; Walter Page, Gene Ramey, Milt Hinton, Gene Wright, bass; Jo Jones, Osie Johnson, Joe Morello, drums; Helen Humes, vocals.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

Helen Humes and Jimmy Rushing shared more than vocalists' chairs with the Count Basie Band of 1938-42; they also had in common an elegant sense of articulation, lucid enunciation, an energetic jubilation in uptempo numbers, and an exquisite sense of timing and nuance in ballads. Humes, of course, continues to share her mastery with audiences, and these three albums date from 1959, 1973, and 1979 respectively; Rushing, unfortunately, died in 1969, and the Columbia set reissues his various recordings for that label, but fails to give any session dates.

Of the three Humes albums, it comes as no surprise that the oldest is the best. Recorded at age 46, the Humes voice was naturally fresher sounding, clearer, and with more of a ringing quality. Moreover, she appears to have solidified her style over the last two decades, in that she took greater risks of phrasing and invention in 1959 than she did in 1979 (the opening number on the Contemporary album, a two-tempoed version of *If I Could Be With You*, is a startling example of that, as she comes remarkably close to Ella territory). As the years have progressed, she has tended to stick closer to the original melodies, allowing subtle inflections to add variety to her interpretations.

The Contemporary album also enjoys jaunty charts by the fine, long-lost arranger Marty Paich, and some nicely bitten-off solo choruses by Art Pepper and Ben Webster. The material is first-rate and—except for a shocking, rousing, race car tempo for St.

Louis Blues—the entire album swings with considerable ardor.

The Classic Jazz disc was recorded in Paris with some extremely sympathetic personnel: McShann's rollicking stride enlivens the remake of Humes' first big hit *Ooo Baba Leba*; Buckner's organ backings are unobstreperous, and his tasty, Waller-like piano accompaniment to the bawdy *My Handy Man* and *Million Dollar Secret* is totally apt; Cobb's tenor solos translate as pure feeling. Humes seems in her element here; the program of mostly uptempo blues and stomps suits her to a T, and she is even able to incorporate some immaculately blue phrasing into *That Old Feeling*.

The most recent of the three, from Muse, finds Humes collaborating with three saxophonists from the Southwest—Vinson, Cobb, and Tate—and each adds spice, grit, and soul to the proceedings. There are a few ill-conceived numbers here—notably *Woe Is Me*, a one-joke novelty calypso with no vocal interest, and an uncomfortably slow-paced *These Foolish Things*—but these are redeemed by sensitive accounts of *Body And Soul* and *My Old Flame* in the ballad department, and a sizzling *Loud Talking Woman*, with robust solos from all horns.

The Jimmy Rushing anthology is well-stocked with Basie alumni, and their presence is an important aspect of this set's comfortable feel. Rushing knew these players well, and reacted with characteristic vitality and ebullience. He liked nothing better than to sail effortlessly in front of a big band with all the stops pulled out: hear the excitement he elicits from *Brussels Blues*, with Benny Goodman's Orchestra, and the compatible phrasings with Buster Bailey's wailing clarinet, Dickie Wells' sly trombone bickerings, and Hawks' rambunctiousness on any number of cuts. And yet, there is equal electricity in his intimate performances with Brubeck's quartet featuring Paul Desmond's martini-toned alto.

Rushing's unique, fruity tone and brilliant, trumpet-like attack are well in evidence here. His power was spellbinding and his enthusiasm was contagious; he could make the most stale stock blues lyrics sound like poetry. As these sets reveal, both he and Helen Humes were accomplished in a variety of vocal styles outside of the blues shouting which made their initial reputations, and yet their four duets on the Columbia anthology are steeped in the blues. Their banter and asides between lines sound spontaneous and natural, and the feeling comes through. Feeling is what these four recordings are all about. —art lange

CHET BAKER

DAYBREAK—SteepleChase 1142: *For Minors Only; Daybreak; Broken Wing; Down.*

Personnel: Baker, trumpet, vocal (cut 2); Doug Raney, guitar; Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, bass.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Scat singers use the language of "oolya koo, wow, shwee-bam!" Chet Baker, in the title

song, sings "da deedle deedee," which is already a clue that cleverness and showy expression are beside the point for him. Real melody, all melody is his gift, in that quiet, flat tenor voice—try to imagine him playing this improvisation on trumpet—and his singing adds welcome dimensions of warmth and sweetness to an already intimate art. *Daybreak* is a fine, curiously neglected song, and composer Hoagy Carmichael might have sung it rather like Baker himself, theme revisions and all. But then Baker's long *Daybreak* trumpet solo is of the same high quality, featuring two separated choruses of particularly excellent improvisation. This concert album is certainly as rewarding as *The Touch Of Your Lips*, the previous SteepleChase by this trio, and *Daybreak* is their finest exhibit.

Baker doesn't swing, he plays softly in, always, his middle register. His thin tone disregards the very thought of expression, and his art depends on the lyric inspiration of the moment. In Miles Davis' 1951 blues *Down*, every Baker chorus at least begins with a 30-year-old Davis phrase, but the acid attack and timing are absent, and Baker's solo is more like a ballad—"down" is a mood to the composer and signifies feathers to Baker. Is this music precious, a fragile remnant of a period that jazz fashion long ago abandoned? On the contrary, in *Down*, Jimmy Heath's *Minors*, and even something

as unpromising as *Wing*, Baker strikes attractive phrases that lead him into developing lovely passages of melody. He's always inclined to Miles-ish abstraction of melody, yet at times of particular personal intensity his phrase shapes become twisted and knotted, and strong, heated double-time often emerges. Thus there's nothing "cool" or detached about his second *Minors* solo, while in the waltz *Wing* his style is consistent and decisively original. Disregard the idea of blues and bravura that the hard bop decades have led us to expect from trumpeters: Baker's soft bop can also be an intense music in its way, and his technique, like Davis', is equal to the demands of his fertile imagination.

What a sign of the '80s that it's not remarkable to hear a bop LP with this instrumentation. The final several choruses of *Down* find the lyric, flowing trumpet and the bright, more broken guitar in improvised duet. Harmonically and rhythmically Raney is more sophisticated than Baker, but both are impulsive and romantic: hear the *Wing* contrast of Baker's waltzing and Raney's rhythmically fluent, sunny solo that follows. Pedersen's solos are a bit fast and slick in this context, but he and Raney make appropriately light, uncomplicated accompaniments throughout the program, an ideally sensitive setting for Baker's fragile sound and intimate style. —john litweiler

CLARE FISCHER

THE STATE OF HIS ART—Revelation 26: *THE DUKE; SOME DAY MY PRINCE WILL COME; WOODY 'N YOU; FREE IMPROVISATION; BASIC BLUES; PROTO-BLUES; PHYRGIAN BLUES; OUT-OF-TEMPO BLUES.*

Personnel: Fischer, piano.
★ ★ ★ ½

SALSA PICANTE—Discovery DS-817: *BACH; MOHNING; GUARABE; DESCARIGA-YEMA YA; COSMIC FLIGHT; INQUIETACAO; MINOR SIGNS.*

Personnel: Fischer, Rhodes electric piano, Yamaha Ex-42 organ; Rick Zunigar, guitar; David Acuna, flute; David Troncoso, electric bass; Pete Riso, drums; Alex Acuna, Idefonso (Poncho) Sanchez, percussion.
★ ★ ★ ½

Clare Fisher is best known as having been a member of the vocal quartet the Hi-Lo's and a composer/arranger for Dizzy Gillespie and others. But for the past 15 years or so he also has frequently recorded for various small labels as a pianist/leader, with roots in the style of Bill Evans (both are the same age).

That influence is apparent on *The State Of His Art*, recorded at Fischer's Studio City, California home back in May 1973 and only recently released. But Fischer is not as laid

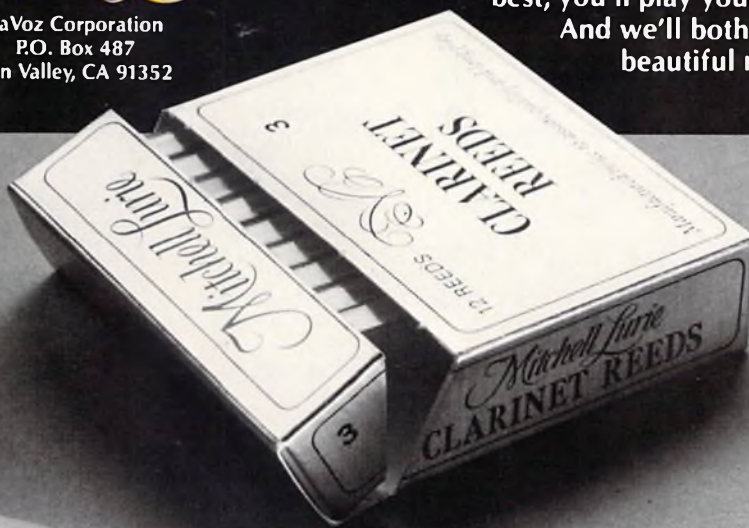
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RECORD REVIEWS

back, intellectual, or emotionally cool, as Evans often was. He is both more traditional—bluesy and rhythmic—and more complex. Fischer is fond of complicated left and right hand lines that envelop each other. Yet a warmth and lyricism permeate his playing.

Here Fischer displays his approach to the blues—ranging from a slow, pensive *Some Day My Prince Will Come* (with an interpolation of Noel Coward's *I'll See You Again* in a similar mood) to his abstract original *Free Improvisation* and the string of four blues originals that fill all of side two. A relaxed, yet personally involved air runs through all eight cuts which are similar in approach but never sound the same.

Basic Blues and *Phrygian Blues* evolve into funky, rocking sections, sounding a little like an out-of-sync Keith Jarrett. However there also are soft sections that sound like a bluesy Evans—particularly on the latter, where Fischer's touch is so delicate and clean that his left hand chords shine through his right hand arpeggios. Almost all of *Out-Of-Tempo Blues* is played in an extremely slow, almost dreamy tempo.

Fischer's original *The Duke*—which illustrates his debt to Ellington as pianist and composer (Fischer, it should be noted, arranged Gillespie's *Portrait Of Duke Ellington* album)—is filled with his quick, clear, contrapuntal lines. On Gillespie's standard *Woody 'n You* he makes his swing stand out by framing it with complex interlocking left and right hand lines that create real tension. Tightly knit playing in both hands also characterizes parts of *Free Improvisation*, with the notes sometimes clashing in jarring, wild dissonance, counterbalancing delicate abstract lines. After two such dissonant clashes, Fischer's fingers suddenly tumble down to the bottom of the keyboard for a deep, resonant conclusion.

The State Of His Art should be especially welcomed by piano lovers who are seeking an approach that cannot be easily compared to all the other solo performers out there. Although not an album of stunning originality, it nicely displays another dimension in the possibilities of solo jazz piano.

Salsa, recorded in January 1978, features Fischer experimenting with electronic keyboards, and any interest this album generates is more for its technical than musical accomplishments. Fischer was attracted to the Rhodes and Yamaha instruments by their sustaining quality—a quality, he complains in his liner notes, which is absent in acoustic pianos. He also mentions “detuning oscillators and coupling manuals to fatten and broaden the sound” of both instruments.

The Rhodes here is more resonant than usual, and both keyboards do have a sound that is fatter than normal, but it is flabby rather than firm fat. The sound is not rich, and the Ex-42 organ also reveals some of that thin, buzzy, skating rink quality. Further, despite the size of the group, Fischer's approach is less orchestral than is his approach on the solo album. Neither Zunigar nor Acuna add much—in ensemble or solo—and there is less tension, less ebb and flow, less use of dynamics, and fewer complex contrapuntal lines in Fischer's

playing. And the range of moods is narrower, the original compositions less striking, than on *The State Of His Art*.

Only on the 10-minute *Guarabe* does Fischer really exploit his two keyboards for musical excitement; lines are punctuated by brass-like chordal blasts from the organ, and then toward the end he piles up layers of sounds using both electric keyboards—a running bass line, punchy chords, a rollicking middle-register line, and a quick upper register single note line—reminiscent of the way in which Gil Evans often arranges.

The attraction of this album lies more with the possibilities Fischer indicates in his use of the Rhodes and Yamaha electric keyboards than in the total accomplishment. Still, given Fischer's special talents as a pianist and arranger, this is enough to make future efforts on these instruments worth anticipating.

—jerry de muth

BUCK HILL

SCOPE—SteepleChase SCS 1123: *SCOPE; BALLAD REPEATER; LITTLE BOSSA; BEAST BEAUTIFUL; THE SAD ONES; FUNK DUMPLIN'*.

Personnel: Hill, tenor saxophone; Kenny Barron, piano; Buster Williams, bass; Billy Hart, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

BENNIE WALLACE

THE FREE WILL—Enja 3063: *THE FREE WILL; SOPHISTICATED LADY; STAR EYES; BACK DOOR BEAUTY; WALTER; PASLON*.

Personnel: Wallace, tenor saxophone; Tommy Flanagan, piano; Eddie Gomez, bass; Dannie Richmond, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

It's refreshing to come across a pair of tenor players who don't tie themselves into knots trying to singlehandedly grasp the essence of Coltrane. Buck Hill and Bennie Wallace aren't advancing the art of tenor into the 21st century by any means, but they're both blowing fresh ideas our way.

Hill, the 52-year-old postman from Washington, DC is an indefatigable fireball with a sound derived from Coleman Hawkins and the rhythmic explosiveness of a Johnny Griffin. His playing is especially flamboyant—sometimes humorously extroverted as he lunges from the bottom registers of his horn to the top almost as flexibly as Dolphy—while the shell of Rollins' '60s sound is thrown in for the sake of conviction (why do younger players give so little attention to the Newk these days?). Scope is his second record for the Danish SteepleChase label and like his first (*This Is Buck Hill*) it's a testament to just how well-rounded this man's abilities are. He leads, he writes, and more importantly, he burns.

Few musicians of any age can negotiate fast tempos as well as Hill. Playing a wind instrument is an athletic experience to begin with, and Hill's simply amazing as he catapults in and around the crack rhythm section of Barron, Williams, and Hart. His harmonic concept is thoroughly hard bop in convention, and his ideas flow beyond the

point of apparent exhaustion. The sound may not be as full as it once was (lacks some bottom), but the agility with which he assaults this challenging set of originals is astounding. His ballad playing is not quite on par with his uptempo work, however; sentimentalism is not really his bag (*Ballad Repeater* is, by far, the least successful track on the LP). Clearly, hot playing is his forte.

Barron's playing here is clearly rooted in a neo-Hancock vein, and his fluidly swinging probings are just right for the tunes Buck has written (he could use space a little more effectively, however). Hart's cymbal work is primo, and Williams' bass is solid. This rhythm section is strongly reminiscent of the classic Hancock/Carter/Williams combination.

Aside from the two standards on the first side, Bennie Wallace fashions his originals from tried-and-true bop jewels. He gives us *Back Door Beauty* (which is *Stella By Starlight* in 3/4), *Walter* (*Giant Steps*), and *Donna Lee* disguised as *Paslon*.

Like Hill, Wallace is well-versed in the sounds and styles of the past, openly acknowledging the crusty, elusive sound of Rollins' *Bridge* period during the head of his blues *Free Will*. His improvisations are wonderfully bizarre, carving disjunct, angular intervals into the framework of essentially straightahead changes. In fact, one of the strangely pleasant contrasts in this record are the eclectic, unpredictable wanderings of Wallace against the strict bebop chord sequences he's chosen and the no-frills, to-the-point support of the rhythm section.

Throughout, Flanagan is full of vigor, yet never coming across as an over-imposing accompanist. His solos are joyous, as always, and he fares much better on the *Giant Steps* changes here than with Coltrane. Richmond is atypically subdued, for the most part, yet he meshes well with Gomez' bass. Wallace is the star however, and although he occasionally gets carried away with his own profundity, his concept is vastly different than what most of his peers are occupying themselves with, far from anything trendy. And of course, he swings.

The George Colemans and Johnny Griffins of the world are too old and too experienced to have to worry about the new-kid-on-the-block syndrome anymore. Nevertheless, both of these albums are sure to invoke some raised eyebrows in opposing corners.

—arthur moorhead

JANE IRA BLOOM

SECOND WIND—Outline OTL-138: *E.J.*; *TEN YEARS AFTER THE RAINBOW*; *MRS. S.*; *SHAN DARA*; *JACKSON POLLOCK*; *HANNIFIN*.

Personnel: Bloom, soprano, alto saxophone (cuts 3, 6); Kent McLagan, bass; Frank Bennett, drums (1-3); Larry Karush, piano (1, 2, 6); Dave Friedman, vibes (4, 5).

★ ★ ★ ★

Jane Ira Bloom's debut on disc—stunningly intimate pairings of her soprano sax with Kent McLagan's bass, entitled *We Are*—showed her fine facility, and lyric focus on

that somewhat elusive instrument. It also showed her flair for composition; the name of her private label provides a clue to her linear charts and their effortless exploration. Here the Newton, MA native (NYC via Yale) stretches out a little, varies her formats, portions out additional blowing space, controlled yet joyous, to other thoughtful colleagues as well, either needling vibraphonist Friedman or spare pianist Karush. After a refreshing first breath, Bloom gets her second wind.

Indeed, this album seems as natural an extension of the first as exhale follows inhale. Again the firm groundwork of McLagan anchors each track, but Frank Bennett adds kit colors. We hear more of Bloom's spacious, dynamic soprano, but the last track on each side shows her pearly, rounded, yet "straighter" alto. The selections, too, pick up where *We Are* left off: again we hear outside blues over a bass vamp (*E.J.*), an uptempo bop-rooted tune by the bassist (*Mrs. S.*), and extensions on a classic ballad (*Ten Years After The Rainbow*). Side Two, however, moves us a little more outside with two exquisitely poised and lightning lines in unison with vibes, dedicated respectively to an Eastern restaurant in LA and America's best-known post-war painter, one who, like Bloom, relieves his lines of mass and gravity and atomizes them through space. Interplay and spontaneous composition (no edges between the written note and the mutual inspiration) carry the day. *Hannifin* wheels like a hawk over fens, winged beauty hovering over a drone.

Bloom took as much care with clear production, quality vinyl, and attractive packaging as she did with her music, and the result is a provocative follow-up to an impressive first outing. We shall be hearing much more from her, and the listening should be delectable.

—fred bouchard

JESSICA WILLIAMS

ORGONOMIC MUSIC—Clean Cuts CC 703; *THE WEAPON OF TRUTH*; *KRIESELWELLE*; *UP THE ENTHOPY SLOPE*; *EXPERIMENT XX*; *LONGING*; *DEAR LORD*; *THE DEMISE OF ARMORED MAN*; *TO THE CHILDREN OF THE FUTURE*.

Personnel: Williams, piano; Eddie Henderson, trumpet, flugelhorn; Jim Grantham, tenor saxophone; Richard Saunders, Kim Stone, bass; Dave Tucker, drums; Henry Robinette, guitar (cuts 4, 8).

★ ★ ★ ★

Jessica Williams' music pulses with nervous energy. Her arrangements and compositions (all here are hers, except Coltrane's *Dear Lord* and bassist Stone's *Krieselwelle*) cut across modern jazz history and reveal a healthy eclecticism. Her improvisations dart and swirl, catch a quick relaxing breath, and tear off in unexplored directions. This quality, though it is brilliantly executed, is a bit unsettling.

Orgonomic Music, recorded in San Francisco in 1979, is the 33-year-old Baltimorean's (and Peabody graduate's) fourth album. She debuted in 1976 with the home-

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town Adelphi recording *The Portal Of Antrim* (AD 5003), which introduced her spontaneous compositional technique on acoustic piano and her grooving contemporary electronic keyboards in a trio setting. The solo explorations continued in 1977 on the virtuoso-styled double *Portraits* (Adelphi AD 5005). In 1980, Clean Cuts released *Rivers Of Memory* (CC 701), a more probing, far-ranging update of the trio fusion begun on her first album.

The strongest aspect of this latest release is Williams' ensemble writing. Like Horace Silver, she maintains the rhythmic structure and patterns of each composition throughout its solo choruses, imparting thematic continuity to the total performance. Her tunes revolve around strong bass currents, another unifying trait of her writing. The ostinato line played by both bassists on *Weapon Of Truth* becomes an integral part of the modal melody voiced by trumpet and tenor. There are good idiomatic solos all around—the leader's Tynerish vortex, Henderson's flaring bop phrases, Grantham's whiplashing Trane-cries, and a shadow-boxing drums workout around the steady bass line.

The spiritual shadows of Charles Mingus and Ornette Coleman appear on *Up The Entropy Slope* and *Experiment XX*, not only in the thematic unity of the performances, but also in the melodies themselves. *Up* is an askew bop line in a Mingus vein, again with burning-fuse solos by Williams (fleet single lines), Henderson (quick turns and odd landings), and Grantham (shades of Joe Henderson).

Experiment XX is more complex. An Ornette-like, laid-back bluesy theme alternates with a furious, tumbling tag in the melody. Henderson squeezes out of the ensemble for a Don Cherry-ish splatter. Other soloists enter over a rising rhythm section fray until a climactic collective counterpoint/commentary erupts—well crafted and well played. The horns appear on two other tracks, *The Demise Of Armored Man*, a Monk-mysterioso structure characterized by dynamic swells in the ensemble, and *To The Children Of The Future*, a slowly-mounting, foreboding piece of poly-rhythmic, pedal-point architecture.

Krieselwelle, a feature for Stone's Jaco-inspired electric bass, and *Dear Lord* are trio cuts and reveal at greater length the pianist's improvisational thinking. The Trane tune bounces off in several directions, with alternately lounging phrases, rushing linear torrents, and a swinging block chord chorus that kneads and molds the floating time feeling in the bass and drums. *Longing*, a solo piano track, descends in treble raindrops to a bass roar, flows into lapping rubato waves, and crashes with Tyner eddies and chords before quietly evaporating.

Williams has absorbed her influences particularly well and has mastered the tools of her trades. She possesses a feeling for creative logic and resourcefulness (exemplified by her sidemen's trenchant expressiveness, especially Henderson's melic magic). The rating reflects the present power of her music and the potential for it to become more focused and original. —owen cordle

WAXING

01.....

Ladies' Holiday

- ERNESTINE ANDERSON: *SUNSHINE*** (Concord Jazz CJ-109) ★ ★ ½
SHIRLEY HORN: *A LAZY AFTERNOON* (SteepleChase SCS-1111) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½
MORGANA KING: *HIGHER GROUND* (Muse MR 5224) ★ ★ ½
SUSANNAH McCORKLE: *THE SONGS OF JOHNNY MERCER* (Inner City IC 1101) ★ ★ ★ ★
MEREDITH: *LOST IN HIS ARMS* (Spring Inc. SPR 1980) ★ ★ ★ ★
HELEN MERRILL: *CHASIN' THE BIRD* (Inner City IC 1080) ★ ★ ★ ½
ANITA O'DAY: *IN BERLIN* (Pausa 7092) ★ ★ ★ ½
BOBBI ROGERS: *TOMMY WOLF CAN REALLY HANG YOU UP THE MOST* (Focus 337) ★ ★ ★ ★
CYBILL SHEPHERD: *MAD ABOUT THE BOY* (Inner City IC 1097) ★ ★ ½
CAROL SLOANE: *CAROL SINGS* (Progressive 7047) ★ ★ ★ ½

Ever since November 27, 1933, when an 18-year-old girl named Billie Holiday waxed a record titled *Your Mother's Son-In-Law* with Benny Goodman's Orchestra, the jazz world has been dominated by female vocalists. By any measuring stick, the women have it over the men in terms of importance, influence, and number when it comes to anything which might be labeled "jazz vocal." And, even after nearly 50 years, Billie Holiday is still the zenith—in terms of phrasing, emotion, and style. Her influence permeates every singer who attempts a standard tune and shows no sign of waning with the passage of time. Indeed, all the women dealt with below have been touched by Lady Day's vocal wand.

In the history of jazz there have been a number of other influential vocalists, most noticeably Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughan, the former considered the grand duchess of swing and scat, the latter remaining the paradigm of "chops." Certainly there have been other vocalists over the years whose influence has been felt—Anita O'Day, Lee Wiley, Mildred Bailey, Dinah Washington and, more recently, Betty Carter and Sheila Jordan, to name a few—but none have approached the status of the Big Three of jazz singers, Billie, Ella, and Sarah.

The 10 women below have several things in common. They all deal, mainly, in standard tunes, all have, primarily, the usual piano/bass/drums accompaniment, and all deal in a straight-ahead, uncluttered format which, for the most part, hugs the melody

line. They all possess clear, strong voices and they are just a handful of the enormous body of talented female vocalists working everywhere from Carnegie Hall to Harry's Bar and Grill. They are dealt with here alphabetically and are considered on two levels other than vocal prowess—taste in tune selection and accompaniment.

Ernestine Anderson's *Sunshine* is on-key, middle-of-the-road stuff. Ernestine is a convincing, bluesy vocalist who works best in a rip-roaring, pressure-cooker tempo, which she does on such numbers as the opener, *Love*, but seems to turn thin and limpid on the ballads. Part of the problem with this album is the fourth-rate selection of material. For whatever reason—popular appeal?—the songs range from over-done standards (*Summertime*, *God Bless The Child*) to utter banality (*You Are My Sunshine*, *Sunny*). The only time there is any imagination in programming is the choice of Fats Domino's classic *I'm Walkin'*, but it's given an overblown treatment that doesn't show a particular understanding of the genre.

Ernestine's voice stands out and she has a nice, Carmen McRae-ish way of bending notes, but this is a pretty boring affair. The only life comes in Monty Alexander's spritely and effective piano fills, well-supported by Ray Brown's bass and Jeff Hamilton's drums. Alexander is certainly one of our strongest, most tasteful pianists, but isn't enough to elevate this album out of its doldrums.

Shirley Horn comes up aces in all categories on *A Lazy Afternoon*. Her sere, jazz-inflected voice has a delicious purr, her choice of tunes is exemplary, and the spare accompaniment of her own piano, with Buster Williams and Billy Hart, is exquisite. Horn, called "one of the most distinctively exciting singing discoveries in years" in these pages in 1964, has apparently been a well-kept secret ever since.

Her dusty, tumbleweed voice is not an emotional one, but it is one that seems to know, and can express, heartbreak. Her reading of *Why Did I Choose You* is touching and serene, and her workout of the title tune is appropriately humid and sticky, taken at the tempo of a caterpillar crawl. Horn works best in ballad-tempo, but her upbeat numbers are solid and display an excellent, jazzman's (pardon the expression) use of tempo. This album only flags during a 10-minute Jobim instrumental; Horn's piano, so effective as accompaniment, cannot sustain the piece in spite of firm support from the gentlemen, notably Williams. A fine, fine jazz album that will well fill an hour of any afternoon.

Morgana King is a seasoned veteran who, while reaching for *Higher Ground* here, keeps hitting bottom. Her voice is as thick as lemon custard, but she is a highly mannered vocalist and can frequently become over-cloying. She has a predilection for squeezing words and purring in an upper-range, little-girl squeak and dotting her performances with operatic slurs which can, at times, become pretentious, as on *You Can't Hide Love*. She shows some nice, imaginative touches here, such as making *You're Driving Me Crazy* a long, slow ballad, but, for the

most part, this is an album of vocal tricks and conceits. The case is not aided by the electronic piano's poppy background, despite some excellent space for the guitar talent of Jack Wilkins.

This album is best when straight up and leaning toward refined cocktail music, as on *Teach Me Tonight*, and at it's worst when Morgana is scat singing through *What Is This Thing Called Love* in a manner that recalls Zero Mostel as Tevye more than anything else. This one is mainly for King devotees.

It is hard not to love a lyricist who can write. "I dig Modigliani/ Jolson doing Swanee/ Several Maharani are my intimates, too/ I played with Montovani/ And that's a lot of strings to get through/ But anyone can see/ My new celebrity is you" and, before the song is out, include Lee Trevino, Jerry Lewis, Ed McMahon, Annie Ross, Damon Runyon, and a bevy of others. That lyricist is Johnny Mercer and Susannah McCorkle's *The Songs Of Johnny Mercer* includes some 15 Mercer classics, composed with the likes of Kern, Arlen, and Carmichael.

McCorkle is a big-voiced, unpretentious vocalist who stands flat-footed and belts these gems. She knows very well how to put across a lyric, she has a nice kick to her voice, and she seems to be quite confident. She has occasional pitch lapses and, at times, a little too much Billie Holiday in her voice, but she overcomes these with solid singing, accented by sexy slurs and an attractive upper-range tremelo. Her support here, made up of some of Britain's best mainstream talents including Susannah's husband, pianist Keith Ingham, and trumpeter Digby Fairweather (this album was recorded in London where McCorkle expatriated for awhile) is tasty and swinging. And the songs? From ballads (*Skylark*) to finger-poppers (*At The Jazz Band Ball*) to novelties (*Arthur Murray Taught Me Dancing In A Hurry*) to torch songs (*One For My Baby*) and on and on, Johnny Mercer stands tall and firm as one of the finest of all the popular lyric writers.

Meredith's *Lost In His Arms* is a treat and a surprise. An unknown singer with no last name on an unknown label with no address, this LP is a delight. "I wish some day/ I could find my way/ To the land where the good songs go," sings Meredith, doing Jerome Kern's pretty and neglected *Land Where The Good Songs Go*. She has found the way. This album is like a box of miniature french bon-bons: lovely, unadorned versions of some 15 pop pearls, ranging from *Never-Never Land* to the beautiful Irving Berlin ballad which serves as the title song. Meredith's voice is husky and sultry; there's an intimacy about it, as if she's whispering in your ear. She displays some weakness when she tries to creep into the upper ranges, but her flannel vocal chords carry her very well throughout, especially on the ballads. For the majority of this pretty, little album, she serves herself well with simple piano accompaniment. There is no improvisation here, the tunes are delivered purely and freshly, not one being more than three minutes long. I gather from the liner notes that Meredith can be found frequenting cocktail lounges in Boston and Nantucket. One would be well advised to seek out this charming, unpretentious album, which is on the Spring Inc. record label.

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Helen Merrill's *Chasin' The Bird* sounds, by the liner notes, much more ambitious than it actually is—an album of Gershwin songs. Two of the original melodies (*Embraceable You* and *I Got Rhythm*) are sung by Helen while Pepper Adams simultaneously plays Charlie Parker's lines on the same tunes (*Quasimodo*, *Chasin' The Bird*, respectively). It's a nice idea and one that works with moderate success. Fortunately, the other half-dozen cuts on the album are done straight. Helen Merrill has for a long time been one of our best pop/jazz chanteuses, her voice is frosty and she frequently hits notes just to the left of the bullseye for good effect. Here she's joined by some stellar talents—Adams' baritone, with its aggressive muscle, is the perfect foil for Helen's vocals, and the basic rhythm team of Dick Katz, Mel Lewis, and Rufus Reid is extraordinary. However, there is too much solo room on this album. The project works best when Helen is given the chance to stretch her larynx, as she does on *I Loves You Porgy*. The idea of the vocalist as just another soloist in the group is a useful, time-worn theory, but this date seems to be too self-conscious of that notion; at times it's only cluttered. This is a good Helen Merrill album, but not a great one (like her classic *Something Special* session). But there's really nothing wrong with that.

Anita O'Day unwittingly became one of the most influential of all vocalists in the '50s. Her work with Gene Krupa and Stan Kenton led to a dozen white singers emulating her back-of-the-throat, purring phrasing and stair-step delivery. Well, O'Day is still around and still as prodigious a talent as ever. She is a true jazz singer, she alters the melody to her liking, making the word "love," as in *Let's Fall In . . .*, a five-syllable expression, or singing *Soon It's Gonna Ra-a-ya-yain*. The only problem I have with Anita O'Day, and it's evident in this 1970 concert recording, is that she is an emotionally distancing singer. She has a stack of mannerisms—like an echo effect that is similar to putting your fingers in your ears and pressing in and out—that tend to be used somewhat haphazardly. One gets the impression that she's just marching through these tunes, almost ignoring the lyrics and meaning of each tune. She seems to have her mind somewhere else, as her voice goes through the motions. When this happens she has a tendency to lay her vocal tricks on a little too thickly. Unfortunately, her case here isn't helped by an out-of-tune piano and slightly clunky rhythm section.

At times, however, O'Day is just right. Like when she takes a lousy tune, *On A Clear Day*, and scats the living daylight out of it. Her unique, legato, chromatic scat seems to be more influenced by Slam Stewart than Ella Fitzgerald, and the dismissal of the lyrics diffuses the impression that she's just walking through the tune. Anita O'Day should be required listening for all coming vocalizers, but I would direct them to her superb output for Verve in the late '50s before I'd steer them to this live session.

Bobbi Rogers is a registered nurse, Tommy Wolf is a neglected American composer, and Mort Fega is an influential disc

jockey with his own record label. The result is *Tommy Wolf Can Really Hang You Up The Most* (guess what his best-known song is?), a bright pop album. The whole project is like a cool breeze—strong (though modest) vocals, pleasant tunes (though frequently hampered by ridiculous lyrics), and a steady accompaniment. The album will appeal to those who like dry martinis and Noel Coward, it is a pleasant affair that won't rattle any rafters—very refined, very tasteful. Wolf's compositions are a little wiry and take a couple of listenings to become engaging (particularly the ballads; the novelty songs are pedantic list songs, like *You Smell So Good* and *It's Nice Weather For Ducks*). The label is Focus (P.O. Box 17311, West Hartford, CT 06117) and if clear pop singing is your cup of tea, this is for you.

I wish Cybill Shepherd's *Mad About The Boy* came in a plain brown wrapper. One cannot help raise an eyebrow at this album of standards by the actress-cum-model. For this is, vocally, a mildly diverting album. Cybill's vocals are quite plain, her phrasing is mediocre, but she sings with an actress' conviction, and she has good taste in tunes. She would be an acceptable "girl singer" in a third-rate big band or a cocktail lounge. Not disagreeable, just very, very bland. But this album has thrown the vocalist a very powerful left hook and a knockout punch.

The hook is thrown by Oscar Neves' arrangements. They are not good, they are excellent. Which leads us to Stan Getz, the knock-out. Except for one tune, Stan Getz is featured—co-featured—on the whole album. And he is stunning! His obbligati, his solos—every note he plays—are gorgeous. This is Getz at the very peak of his swinging form. So, whereas Cybill Shepherd might have made a pleasant vocal album with a saloon trio, she is swamped by her sparkling surroundings. She produced the album, and she had the good taste to hire everybody, but she's the one who suffers. This is a one or two star vocal album, but a five-star Stan Getz excursion. I'm *Mad About The Boy*, but quite lukewarm about the girl.

Carol Sloane is a singer's singer, which means, simply, that despite critical excellence, she doesn't work much. Her vocals are buoyant, and her voice is velvet-lined, with a nice, pillowed bottom. She was originally cast in an Ella Fitzgerald-mold, and a lot of *La Ella* is still present in her phrasing, but Carol has come into her own very nicely. This album teams her, wisely, with her long-time accompanist, Jimmy Rowles. Rowles is the singer's pianist. His fills are imaginative and his backgrounds are inspiring. He is also an intriguing composer, with no less than four of his tunes getting a workout here.

Carol has a laid-back, casual vocal style that bounces at the fast tempos and drags attractively at the ballads. Frank Wess is added here for some pointed tenor and flute work, and Norris Turney does a guest turn on his own *Checkered Hat*. This is a fine, easy-to-swallow date that is only lacking in one thing: fire. At times the players just sound too relaxed, too comfortable. Carol Sloane can pack a wallop if she wants to, but there is a certain spark missing on this

Progressive album. But a Carol Sloane album suffering from malaise is better than a hundred other albums shining from too much spit and polish.

As this was being written, another dozen or so albums of the same ilk were released. The female singer is indefatigable and, apparently, there is a demand for them. One thought does cross my mind, however: If women, over the years, were encouraged more to play instruments in the jazz world, how many vocalists would have expressed themselves with trumpets, saxophones, drums, et al?

—lee jeske

19 ★ NEW ★ 81 RELEASES

VERVE

Charlie Parker, vol. 8 of "The Genius" series, reissued in impeccable Japanese pressing, SWEDISH SCHNAPPS. **Billy Holiday**, classic '50s sides with vice-Prez Quinichette's tenor, Sweets Edison, others, also via Japan, LADY SINGS THE BLUES.

DISCOVERY

Clare Fischer, sensitive '75 solo piano recorded in Germany, ALONE TOGETHER. **Ernie Andrews**, soulful baritone voice accompanied by Red Holloway, Sweets Edison, Buddy Collette, and Kenny Burrell, FROM THE HEART. **Lorez Alexandria**, tasteful vocals backed by the Mike Wofford quartet, THE SONGS OF JOHNNY MERCER.

GALAXY

Art Pepper/John Klemmer/Harold Land/Johnny Griffin/Joe Farrell, in separate tracks re-invigorating aspects of the bebop songbook, 5 BIRDS AND A MONK.

INNER CITY

Jonah Jones, two '54 sessions, one w/ Sidney Bechet's soprano sax, JONAH'S WAIL. **J. J. Johnson/Al Cohn**, more '54 music, a blowing session originally under Henri Renaud's leadership, NEW YORK SESSIONS, VOL. 2. **Willie "The Lion" Smith**, solo stride from '49 and '50, plus four cuts with trumpeter Buck Clayton's quartet, WILLIE "THE LION" SMITH. **Gerry Mulligan**, '54 Paris concert with Brookmeyer's trombone in pianoless quartet, mostly unreleased in U.S., GERRY MULLIGAN. **James Moody**, tenorist's '49 outings with Max Roach's groups and his own orchestra, IN THE BEGINNING. **Jimmy Witherspoon**, baritone's blues and ballads backed by a bunch of Basie-ites, from a Paris '61 OLYMPIA CONCERT.

ELEKTRA

John Klemmer, saxophonist evokes mellow moods via expanded arrangements, inc. some vocals, HUSH. **Lee Ritenour**, West Coast studio guitarist offers a "pop-oriented message," RIT.

MCA

Five two-fer reissues from the Impulse catalog. **Keith Jarrett**, '70s sessions with his

Dewey Redman, Charlie Haden, Paul Motian quartet, GREAT MOMENTS WITH. **McCoy Tyner**, early-'60s trio and quintet sides, GREAT MOMENTS WITH. **Sonny Rollins**, material from '65-66 sessions, including *East Broadway Run Down* w/ Freddie Hubbard, Jimmy Garrison, Elvin Jones, GREAT MOMENTS WITH. **Charles Mingus**, selections of solo piano and extended ensemble, plus the entire *Black Saint And The Sinner Lady*, GREAT MOMENTS WITH. **B. B. King**, the boss and Lucille sing the blues from '66-68 dates, GREAT MOMENTS WITH.

SACKVILLE

Jay McShann, Bird's first bandleader in a piano/bass duet of barrelhouse standards and originals, TUXEDO JUNCTION. **Sammy Price**, pianist plays KC-style solo stride and songs, SWEET SUBSTITUTE. **Wray Downes**, Canadian pianist in trio (Ed Bickert's guitar, Dave Young's bass) with boppish tinge, AU PRIVAVE. **Peter Moeller/Randy Hutton**, new music guitar and percussion with a satiric edge, from Onari Productions, RINGSIDE MAISIE.

PABLO

Clark Terry, wails on a Jan. '81 date with Cleanhead Vinson and Harmonica George Smith among others, YES, THE BLUES. **John Coltrane**, two sidelong saxophone explorations, with the classic quartet, caught live during a '62 European tour, BYE BYE BLACKBIRD. **Lester Young**, another chapter in the DC club date from '56, PRES, VOL. 3. **Art Tatum**, examples from the more obscure corners of the pianist's repertoire, SOLO MASTERPIECES, VOL. 11.

BLACK SAINT/SOUL NOTE

Bill Dixon, iconoclastic composer/trumpeter/pianist, w/ septet and a sidelong suite dedicated to Cecil Taylor, IN ITALY. **Colson Unity Troupe**, quintet features the reeds of Wallace McMillan and the outside vocalizing of Iqua Colson, via Chicago's AACM, NO RESERVATION.

INDEPENDENTS

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John Adams, San Francisco composer's music for piano, and seven solo strings, from 1750 Arch Records, SHAKER LOOPS/PHRYGIAN GATES. **Takehisa Kosugi**, solo violin improvisations, from Bellows Records, KOSUGI. **John Okas/James Hogan**, saxophone and guitar duets, from Akashic Records, MUSIC. **Greg Goodman/Henry Kaiser/Toshinori Kondo/Evan Parker/Rova Saxophone Quartet**, a free improvisation by all involved, from Metalanguage Records, THE METALANGUAGE FESTIVAL OF IMPROVISED MUSIC, 1980. **Derek Bailey/Christine Jeffrey**, timbral vocal explorations with like-minded guitar counterpoint, also from Metalanguage, VIEWS FROM SIX WINDOWS.

Alberta Hunter, vocals from the original 1934 London sessions, DRG Records, THE LEGENDARY. **Andrew Cyrille**, longtime percussionist compatriot of Cecil Taylor goes the solo route, from Ictus Records, THE LOOP. **David Moss**, more solo percussion via both real-time and overdubbing, CP Records, TERRAIN. **Various Artists**, two anthologies of Jamaican reggae, the first classic cuts from '68-70, the second current groups, THE "KING" KONG COMPILATION and TAXI.

Roy Roman, trumpeter leads big band, from Roman Empire Records, LIVE AT TRUDY'S 320. **Beaver Harris**, the 360° Music Experience with old and new sounds, from Cadence Jazz Records, LIVE AT NYON. **Hugh Brodie**, tenor takes the bebop trail with his band Impulse, also from Cadence Jazz, LIVE & COOKING AT THE WILD OAT. **Joe Dioro**, six- and 12-string guitars in trio and quartets, from Zdenek Records, BONITA. **Jack Gilfooy**, drummer leads an Afro/jazz quintet, from Naptown Jazz records, NAPTOWN JAZZ.

Nancy Wilson, vocalist recorded live, with trio including two Cannonball-alumni, on ASI Records, AT MY BEST. **Andrea Baker**, sings bop standards and pop chestnuts with tenorist Steve Wilkerson's hot backing, from Skyline Records, ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE. **Plunky And The Oneness Of Juju**, saxophonist Plunky Nkabinde leads jazz/funk entourage, from Black Fire Records, MAKE A CHANGE. **Prince Nico Mbarga**, raps African pop/jazz and high-life, direct from Togo via Rounder Records, SWEET MOTHER. **Roomful Of Blues**, Rhode Island nonet, past collaborators w/ Fats Domino, Big Joe Turner, Professor Longhair and others, from Blue Flame Records, HOT LITTLE MAMA.

Jethro Burns, hot-potato bebop/bluegrass mandolin, plus comedy, from Flying Fish Records, LIVE. **Doug Dillard/John Hartford/Rodney Dillard**, good-time bluegrass/folk/c&w, also from Flying Fish, PERMANENT WAVE. **David Hammond**, Belfast-born Irish folksinger, backed by fiddle, harmonium, and Irish pipes, from Greenhays/Sruthan (Flying Fish) Records, THE SINGER'S HOUSE. **Ourray**, hot c&w-rock from the Midwest beer-bar circuit, on Taxi Records, MOTOR DREAM.

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Blindfold Test: STEVE SWALLOW

BY FRED BOUCHARD

MONK MONTGOMERY MAY have been the first to play it, but Steve Swallow has pioneered the electric bass into the modern vernacular.

Swallow admits he had avoided the electric bass out of snobbery, but deigned to try one out at a NAMM convention. He knew right

away he "was in deep trouble" when his six-hour shed passed like 10 minutes.

Forty last fall, Swallow has been out front on bass for over half his years, joining Paul Bley in 1960, and breaking ground consistently thereafter with Jimmy Giuffre, George Russell, Art Farmer, and Stan Getz. He has enjoyed an especially long and fruitful collaboration with Gary

Burton, who championed Swallow's numerous compositions. His premiere lead date (*Home*, ECM) revives a neglected fusion-jazz setting of poems.

A listener with big ears, Swallow demonstrated that he would have been equally comfortable discussing the music of Satie, John Harbison, or Beethoven. This is Swallow's first Blindfold Test.



ZEN REINHARDT

1. WEATHER REPORT. *THREE CLOWNS and BARBARY COAST* (from *BLACK MARKET*, Columbia). Personnel as follows.

Five stars! We've begun well. Wayne Shorter with *Weather Report*. He's my favorite jazz composer (whatever that is), and this [*Three Clowns*] is one of his strongest pieces, a beautiful haunting melody. Wayne not only composes before the fact, he composes as he plays, so the writing and playing are inseparable. Joe Zawinul is cunning as usual with synthesizer; I don't know anyone who can make those instruments sound as warm, or get greater range and flexibility. I always take this tune on tape with me on the road. In Wayne's hands, I don't mind the sound of the Lyricon.

This was Jaco's [Pastorius] premiere with the band; Alfonso [Johnson] is on some tracks. He makes a dramatic entrance with one of his stock-in-trade grooves, one he'd perhaps been comfortable playing in Miami. He's made a great difference in the band, and I like him on the new one [*Night Creeper*] best of all.

2. JIMMY GIUFFRE/MODERN JAZZ QUARTET. *FUN* (from *THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET AT MUSIC INN*, Atlantic). Rec. 1956. Giuffre, clarinet, composer.

That was from Music Inn, in Lenox, Massachusetts. The jazz school running then, late '50s to early '60s, had a strong influence on the direction of the music, especially during the last summer when Ornette Coleman and Don Cherry came in as students and blew away several faculty members, including Jimmy Giuffre and George Russell. I went as a listener to many concerts there, including the only time I ever heard Billie Holiday. That left a deep impression on me; as I think about it now I can conjure up the exact feel. It was a year or two after this that I began to play in Jimmy Giuffre's trio with Paul Bley.

One of the strongest lessons I learned from Jimmy was that if you are a composer writing for improvisers, then it's not just a matter of writing a graceful melody or finding a graceful harmony, it's more a matter of finding a field of possibilities for the improviser. This is an excellent piece of writing; Jimmy has never written anything less than excellent. This points the way for

improvising technique to have a positive effect on composing technique.

3. DUKE ELLINGTON ORCHESTRA. *JACK THE BEAR* (from *AT HIS VERY BEST*, RCA). Rec. March 1940. Jimmy Blanton, bass.

Five stars, without hesitation. That's Jimmy Blanton with Duke Ellington. Is that *Pitter Patter Panther*? That's Tricky Sam Nanton on trombone, isn't it? My chronology's rusty. That was magnificent bass playing! You can really hear Oscar Pettiford in Blanton, or vice versa. Ellington had an unflinching sense of whom to hire; Wellman Braud was great, too. Imagine how Blanton might have sounded today.

I love the sound of the gut string. Regrettably everyone plays steel now; Charlie Haden was one of the last holdouts. I was a gut player myself, and there's a special warmth to the timbre that I miss. You had to keep the action higher though, and the trend has been to lower action to gain greater facility with more legato articulation. Gut string required a slight but critical difference in technique, one which produced a different vocabulary and phrasing, just as in guitars.

4. MIKE NOCK. *EMOTIVATIONS* (from *ALMANAC*, IAI). Nock, piano; Eddie Marshall, drums; Cecil McBee, bass.

Perhaps that was Joanne Brackeen or another post-McCoy pianist. That track made me uneasy; the pianist as leader failed to communicate to the drummer what the rhythmic complexion was to be, a subtle and difficult task. It was not helped by the mix, which exaggerated the hi-hat. I'll take another stab—Andrew Hill?

[Later] Mike, eh? I can generally pick him out of a crowd, we've worked together so much. Like Andrew, Mike's music falls between the cracks: it's hard to fit into a historical/critical niche. It's the fate of them (and Elmo Hope and Herbie Nichols) to be mystery pianists who've never found their audience. They seem to share a fondness for dark intervallic relationships, a somber world view. Yet it's saloon music, and most saloon owners prefer musicians with an optimistic world view, so that patrons come back. Even though his music has references to multi-tonality and out harmonics, Mike is

a staunch bebopper, in sound and spirit. I like that, and hope to maintain it in my own playing. This date was just a little nervous, so four stars.

5. DAVE MCKENNA/SCOTT HAMILTON/JAKE HANNA. *IF DREAMS COME TRUE* (from *NO BASS HIT*, Concord Jazz).

Hmm, sounds like Don Byas and Slam Stewart . . . wait a minute! There's no bass player! I hate to admit this as a bassist, but this record is better without one. The pianist is really in charge here, and accomplishes what most bassists would like to achieve: perfect synchronization of bassline with melody. It's like patting your head and rubbing your tummy at the same time!

6. CHARLES MINGUS. *THE CHILL OF DEATH* (from *LET MY CHILDREN HEAR MUSIC*, Columbia).

Mingus. Five stars. Jazz and poetry has had a brief, proud history. Mingus was, among many things, a proto-beatnik. Imagine if he'd been encouraged more often—by opportunities for performance and by a responsive critical community—to write such large adventurous pieces. Too late now.

7. SONNY STITT. *SOON* (from *SONNY'S BACK!*, Muse). Stitt, tenor saxophone; Barry Harris, piano; George Duvivier, bass; Leroy Williams, drums.

There's the relaxation of all the guys belonging to the same generation and persuasion. You get that built-in cohesion and flow of ideas. There's no ground broken, but that's understood. Four stars.

8. MILES DAVIS. *DR. JEKYLL* (from *MILESTONES*, Columbia). Personnel as follows.

Five stars! That's Jackie McLean's tune. Miles, with Trane and Cannonball, Red Garland, Paul Chambers, and Philly Joe. This great band was in existence when I was desperately trying to learn bass quickly, and Paul Chambers was my main source. I'm struck by the fact that Miles' phraseology did not change though the context did, from Red's to Herbie's harmonies, and Philly Joe's to Tony's time concept. Arco or pizz, I just hear Paul, and that's enough for me. db

Profile:

Avery Sharpe

BY JOHN HOWARD

In speaking of his current bassist, Avery Sharpe, McCoy Tyner has said: "I need a bassist who is not only rhythmically sensitive but also harmonically so, basically in the manner of Jimmy Garrison, but a little more adventurous than Jimmy. As I change and move around, the bass player must be able to follow my ideas. Avery is almost percussive and helps a lot in building up the tension and creating intensity. He can be rhythmic and melodic, too. All of these elements are very important to make the music broader in spectrum. I use various approaches and try to be unglued as much as I can."

Tyner concluded with: "I think the key for Avery's swift changes is his magnificent musical background. He started on electric bass, but he always had an inborn feeling for acoustic bass. Reggie Workman had a lot to do with pushing him into the acoustic direction."

Avery Sharpe was born in Georgia on August 23, 1954, and began his early musical training on piano at the age of eight. He started on electric bass at 16 while playing gospel music in the Church of God in Christ. During his high school and early college years his musical performances included rhythm & blues, funk, big band jazz, symphonic orchestral, and backing singers and church choirs. At the University of Massachusetts, he obtained his B.A. in economics, and continued his studies toward a Master's of Music degree.

"While at school I was exposed to such greats as Reggie Workman, Max Roach, Archie Shepp, Fred Tillis, Horace Boyer. Reggie Workman took me under his wings after he heard me on electric bass. He thought he had found something in me he could bring out. At the end of my freshman semester I tried the acoustic, bought myself a bass, and started from scratch. I studied with Reggie extensively for about one year. All this time I listened intensively to Max Roach and Archie Shepp, and got a chance to play in their groups. But the main source in helping me to develop my skills remains Reggie Workman. When I first saw him play I



TOM COPI

was completely knocked out. I was thrilled by his left hand pizzicato, the whole mastery he added to the instrument. I wanted to play like him so badly. He was consistent and steady like a rock. What I do rhythmically with McCoy now is because of Reggie who was playing around rhythms."

Jimmy Garrison was another influence on Sharpe's bass playing. The whole era of Coltrane was to have a great impact which would later lead to the job with McCoy Tyner:

"When I first heard McCoy I was knocked out by him as far as concept of music is concerned. I wanted to go in this direction and tried to write like McCoy. Another influence on my early bass playing was Ron Carter. I lost a lot of his approach because consequently you get in your own bag, develop onto your own. I did a lot of note bending like him though, trying to sound melodic, but I'm over it by now. Paul Chambers influenced me a lot, too.

"I think I have a very basic approach to my instrument and the music," Avery continued. "I don't try to sound like somebody else. But certainly I'm mainly a percussive player because of the different rhythms I would hear during church services. The reason why I sound so percussive is that I'm a frustrated drummer. This stems from my earlier years playing electric with funk groups. The rhythms between you and the drummer had to be tight. Garrison and Elvin Jones had a lot going on in this direction. I like that

concept of being the drummer myself. John Coltrane was never satisfied with other bass players after Garrison left—he wanted percussive-type bass players.

"Through gospel music I was exposed to improvisation early. Church service for me meant jazz. It was always different, no song was the same, no person sang the same thing. I had to be able to adjust to different singers, different settings. Sometimes they sang in only one key, and when you had your instrument set into a certain way, you sometimes had to bend a note to match whatever they were doing. It was unstructured.

"Archie Shepp had a lot to do with my expansion as far as improvisation was concerned. I worked with him in '79 and '80 and went to Europe with his 30-piece band. Afterwards we toured with smaller groups."

While on the big band tour with Shepp, Avery met Art Blakey who came to hear that band. Art said he'd like to have Sharpe be his next bass player. After Dennis Irwin left Blakey, Sharpe was called into the Messenger service. While working with Blakey, McCoy Tyner first heard Sharpe and was impressed. Sharpe remembered the changes in bass players between Blakey's Messengers and McCoy Tyner's group, and laughed: "When Charles Fambrough left McCoy I joined him, and Fambrough went to Art. It was kind of a trade off. Art is a hell of an institution!"

When asked about his future plans, Avery said: "I want to continue to try to grow under the wings of McCoy because I'm learning a great deal conceptually. To hear the music he is playing and to have the chance to play it with the master certainly helps my own growth. As far as concepts are concerned, it's an aspect of music to really work on, and later I want to develop my own concept in the tradition of McCoy. This is my long-term goal.

"In addition to my current work with McCoy, I have a group that I put together with other members of McCoy's group: Ronnie Burrage on drums, and John Blake, a violin virtuoso. The interplay allows us free flow in any musical direction we desire. The keyboard player is Clyde Criner, who is going for his PhD at the University of Massachusetts."

Sharpe has his own record coming out on a small label out of Albany (NY), Sound Merchant. It's a trio recording called *Clouds* featuring Avery on acoustic and electric basses, Clyde Criner on keyboards, and Royal Hartigan on drums. This summer Sharpe will be returning to Europe, this time with McCoy Tyner, and then on to Japan. db

Errol Parker

BY LEE JESKE

Doggedly persistent has to be the best way to describe Errol Parker. On the days that he is not practicing the piano or rehearsing The Errol Parker Experience (Errol, Byard Lancaster, Monty Waters, Michael Carvin), he can be found traveling to record stores to drop off one of his self-produced albums, taping flyers for his next concert to lamp posts and telephone poles throughout Manhattan, or knocking on the doors of radio stations to get his music played. Few months go by without Max Gordon of the Village Vanguard or George Wein of the Kool Jazz Festival receiving calls from the pianist trying to book himself. Errol Parker may be a one-man public relations, booking, production, and management office, but he is also a highly original pianist, composer, and bandleader.

"It's hard," he said, "because you have to persuade people that it's a good bet to give you a gig. There are not too many places I can play. You are typecast as what you are, which is good, because you make your mark in a certain direction."

Parker's music is rhythmic and infectious, a throw-back, he likes to think, to his Algerian roots. Born Ralph Schecroun in Oren, Algeria, he travelled to Paris in the late '40s as a student of sculpture at Beaux-Arts. His mother had played piano, and Ralph had heard some jazz in Algeria, but it was not his intention to play the piano in France. However, as he put it, "the music had a stronger appeal." He spent the '50s gigging around Paris, including jobs with such luminaries as Django Reinhardt, James Moody, and Don Byas. His style was an off-shoot of Erroll Garner's, so when he was able to finally record under his own name, he was re-christened Errol Parker, for the pianist and Charlie Parker. In 1963, he found himself with a hit record *Lorre* (pronounced "lore," not a tribute to the great character actor, but Errol spelled backwards.) He also found himself in an automobile accident.

"Right after I recorded the hit record, I had a very bad car accident which irreversibly damaged my right shoulder. So I was becoming popular playing a certain trio style of piano, and then I couldn't perform that style. The record came out in 1964—I had gigs, I had the Antibes Jazz Festival, I had lots of things coming up, but I couldn't play. It was a very depressing period. I had several operations, which didn't work. Finally, after three years of not really



DARRYL PITTECORE

knowing what to do, I started to think more positively, and I decided to try a new technique which was suited better to my needs. After I began doing that, things went alright.

"In March of 1967, Duke Ellington was on tour in Europe and he organized a recording date of local musicians, the results to be brought to Billy Strayhorn, who was in the hospital. Duke heard me and he wanted me on the date; he also wanted to publish two of my tunes. So I'm probably one of the very few composers who are not associated with Strayhorn or Duke Ellington at Tempo Music. I told Duke that I intended to come to New York the next year; it gave me more self-confidence, you know.

"In the last part of 1967, I stopped playing in public completely—to concentrate on some new directions, because I knew I would face competition in New York, and I had to be prepared. I practiced with my tape recorder, and I went into different things that I wanted to explore—harmonically bitonal things, like the stuff I'm doing now. I had taken a big step, stylistically. I knew I could not be another Barry Harris—I had to be something different—and I got immediate response."

Errol began his stay in New York by performing at La Boheme, a now-defunct club, on Broadway and 69th Street. He played opposite whatever attraction was booked that week—Booker Ervin or Howard McGhee, for example. The job lasted two months, and by the time it ended Errol Parker was being top-billed in the club's newspaper ads. After La Boheme came the Top Of The Gate, but things suddenly became more difficult.

"The jazz situation became worse," said Parker in his East Side loft. "It was not that good to begin with, but it became worse and worse, and I had less and less calls. I took a few rhythm & blues gigs which was a very interesting experience for me. It was part of my awakening to the Afro-American envi-

ronment in New York, so it kind of brought me back to my own roots."

The early '70s were spent gigging here and there—Meet The Composer jobs, the New York Jazz Museum—but it was during this time that Errol developed his primary musical theory.

"It was a crucial thing for me to get in direct contact with rhythm & blues. I got interested in structured rhythm as opposed to loose rhythm. You take two standard tunes—like *Oleo*, Sonny Rollins, and *Donna Lee*, Charlie Parker—these two tunes have nothing in common, but the rhythm and the tempo are the same. In rhythm & blues you realize that rhythm is peculiar to one tune—it's structured rhythm. This notion of structured rhythm brought me right back to North Africa, and I saw a thing to work on and a thing I was good at. I went right away into developing that type of thing, and I tried to fuse it with the bitonal things that I discovered along the line."

Since that time, Errol has been working when he can. He doesn't seem to be discouraged by the sparsity of jobs—he produces his records on Sahara Records (there are 10 of them at this point, all available from Sahara: 509 E. 72nd St., New York, NY 10021), and tries to book himself wherever he can.

"I understood that my goal should be to document my music as much as I could as it evolved. To have it documented and keep digging into the music, developing the music. As long as it's documented, then it becomes part of history. I knew it was a long-range goal, but it was the best I could do. In Paris, with my new bag, I would have been taken for an eccentric. Even here I was taken for an eccentric for many years. Anything that you do that is different, you are going to be taken for an eccentric, someone who is a lunatic, someone who has delusions. You see, that's the way it is. It takes a long time for the media to catch up with you."

db

Lee Underwood: db West Coast bureau chief.
Luis Villas-Boas: Festival Producer (Cascas Jazz, Portugal).
Ron Welburn: Institute of Jazz Studies, *Jazz Times*, *Rockingchair*.
David Wild: db, *Coda*, author/pianist/discographer.
Russell Woessner: db Philadelphia correspondent, WXPB-FM (Philadelphia).
Herb Wong: *Jazz Times*, KJAZ-FM (San Francisco).
Shoichi Yui: Jazz critic (Japan).
Ralf Zabor: Grand Feeny of Nofinia.
Dieter Zimmerle: Editor *Jazz Podium*, producer Seud-deutsch Rundfunk.
Michael Zwerin: Journalist, *International Herald Tribune* (Paris).

MORE RESULTS

Hall of Fame: Jo Jones—6; Kenny Clarke—5; Stephane Grappelli—5; Horace Silver—5; Jimmy Blanton—4; Johnny Dods—4; Lionel Hampton—4; Oscar Peterson—4; Eubie Blake—3; Harry Carney—3; Gil Evans—3; J. J. Johnson—3; Sun Ra—3; Betty Carter—2; Tadd Dameron—2; Elvin Jones—2; Professor Longhair—2; Lee Morgan—2; Oliver Nelson—2; Oscar Pettiford—2; Sam Rivers—2; Billy Taylor—2; Mary Lou Williams—2; Teddy Wilson—2.

Record of the Year: Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin, *Farewell To Mingus*, Jam—3; Anthony Braxton/Max Roach, *One-In-Two, Two-In-One*, hat Hut—3; Betty Carter, *The Audience With . . .*, Bet/Car—3; Jack DeJohnette, *Special Edition*, ECM—3; Woody Herman, *Concord Jam*, Concord—3; Count Basie, *Kansas City Shout*, Pablo—2; Bob Brookmeyer/Mel Lewis, *Jazz Orchestra*, Gryphon—2; Ornette Coleman, *Soapsuds*, *Soapsuds*, Artists House—2; Bill Evans, *You Must Believe In Spring*, Warner Brothers—2; Joseph Jarman/Don Moye, *Black Paladins*, Black Saint—2; Steve Kuhn, *Playground*, ECM—2; Phil Woods, *Live*, Clean Cuts—2.

Reissue of the Year: Miles Davis, *Directions*, Columbia—3; Earl Hines, *Giants Of Jazz*, Time-Life—3; Bud Powell, *Portrait Of Thelonious*, Columbia—3; Lester Young, *Evening Of A Basie-ite*, Columbia—3; Red Allen, *Giants Of Jazz*, Time-Life—2; Clifford Brown, *Paris Collection*, Inner City—2; Duke Ellington, *Complete 1939-40*, Columbia (France)—2; Joe Henderson, *Foresight*, Milestone—2; Boyd Raeburn, *Jewells*, Savoy—2; Jimmy Rushing, *Mr. 5 x 5*, Columbia—2.

Record Label: Inner City—4; Blue Note—2; Columbia—2; Contemporary—2.

Record Producer: Carl Jefferson—2; Don Schlitten—2.

Big Band, Established: Mel Lewis—35; Gil Evans—28; Gerry Mulligan—13; Globe Unity—12; Buddy Rich—11; Capp/Pierce—8; Widespread Depression Orchestra—6.

Big Band, TDWR: Baird Hersey/Year of the Ear—17; Savoy Sultans—16; Clark Terry—15; Maiden Voyage—12; Akiyoshi/Tabackin—10; Eddie Palmieri—9; Herb Pomeroy—9; Bill Berry—8; Louie Bellson—7; Bob Florence—7; Full Faith and Credit—7; Mel Lewis—7; Widespread Depression Orchestra—7; Leslie Drayton—6; Sahib Sarbib—6; United Jazz and Rock Ensemble—6; Marshall Vente—6.

Jazz Group, Established: Jack DeJohnette—24; Old And New Dreams—15; World Saxophone Quartet—13; Mingus Dynasty—12; Red Rodney/Ira Sullivan—12; Cecil Taylor—12; Dexter Gordon—11; Heath Brothers—10; Cedar Walton—9; Elvin Jones—8; L.A. 4—7; Oscar Peterson—6.

Jazz Group, TDWR: Henry Threadgill—9; Heath Brothers—8; James "Blood" Ulmer—8; Adams/Pullen—7; Johnny Griffin—7; Ronald Shannon Jackson—7; Arthur Blythe—6; Billy Harper—6; Art Pepper—6; Woody Shaw—6.

Composer, Established: Ornette Coleman—20; Horace Silver—20; Bob Brookmeyer—18;

Roscoe Mitchell—16; Anthony Braxton—14; David Axelrod—10; Julius Hemphill—10; Thad Jones—10; David Murray—10; McCoy Tyner—10; Henry Threadgill—9; Gary Burton—8; Bill Evans—8; Gerry Mulligan—8; Duke Jordan—7; Sun Ra—7; Chick Corea—6; Anthony Davis—6.

Composer, TDWR: Bob Brookmeyer—9; Roscoe Mitchell—9; George Russell—9; Woody Shaw—9; John Surman—9; Carla Bley—8; David Dallwitz—8; Michael Gibbs—8; Slide Hampton—8; Ronald Shannon Jackson—8; James Newton—8; Sun Ra—8; Dave Burrell—7; Jim McNeely—7; George Gruntz—6; Julius Hemphill—6; Gerry Mulligan—6; David Murray—6; Peter Sprague—6; Henry Threadgill—6.

Arranger, Established: Thad Jones—25; George Russell—17; Muhai Richard Abrams—13; Joe Zawinul—11; Al Cohn—7; Gerry Mulligan—7; Anthony Braxton—6; Sy Johnson—6.

Arranger, TDWR: Carla Bley—12; Bill Holman—11; George Russell—10; Bob Wilber—9; Heiner Stadler—8; Jack Walrath—7; Sy Johnson—7; Quincy Jones—7; Wade Marcus—7; Sun Ra—7; George Gruntz—6; Julius Hemphill—6; Gerry Mulligan—6; Nat Pierce—6.

Soprano Saxophone, Established: Dave Liebman—34; Jan Garbarek—15; Joseph Jarman—14; John Surman—11; Joe Farrell—10; Roscoe Mitchell—9; Ira Sullivan—9; Jimmy Heath—8; Charlie Mariano—8; Kenny Davern—7; Sonny Rollins—7.

Soprano Saxophone, TDWR: Jan Garbarek—17; Archie Shepp—17; Jane Ira Bloom—16; Julius Hemphill—16; Jim Galloway—15; Steve Potts—12; Joe Farrell—10; Charles Brackeen—9; Zoot Sims—9; Vinny Golia—8; Joseph Jarman—8; Charlie Mariano—8; Wayne Shorter—8; Joe McPhee—6; Sadao Watanabe—6.

Alto Saxophone, Established: Ornette Coleman—29; Sonny Stitt—23; Roscoe Mitchell—19; Richie Cole—17; Jimmy Lyons—12; Marshall Allen—8; Julius Hemphill—8; Jackie McLean—8; Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson—8.

Alto Saxophone, TDWR: Lee Konitz—18; Jimmy Lyons—17; Byard Lancaster—14; Sadao Watanabe—13; Bunky Green—11; Zbigniew Namyslovski—11; Elton Dean—10; Ira Sullivan—10; Bob Wilber—10; Anne Patterson—8; Art Pepper—8; Dick Johnson—7; Steve Potts—7; Henry Threadgill—7; Bobby Watson—7; Keshavan Maslak—6; Charles McPherson—6.

Tenor Saxophone, Established: Lew Tabackin—22; Sam Rivers—21; Stan Getz—19; Arnett Cobb—17; Chico Freeman—14; Dewey Redman—14; Al Cohn—10; George Coleman—10; Billy Harper—10; John Gilmore—9; Warne Marsh—8; Clifford Jordan—6; David Murray—6.

Tenor Saxophone, TDWR: Buck Hill—16; Joe McPhee—14; Lew Tabackin—12; Al Cohn—11; Scott Hamilton—11; Warne Marsh—11; Ira Sullivan—11; Arnett Cobb—9; Dave Schmitter—9; Bennie Wallace—9; George Coleman—8; Zoot Sims—8; Buddy Tate—7; Fred Anderson—6; Bob Berg—6; Dave Liebman—6; Heinz Sauer—6.

Baritone Saxophone, Established: John Surman—24; Henry Threadgill—17; Pat Patrick—8; Cecil Payne—6.

Baritone Saxophone, TDWR: Wallace McMillan—21; Vinny Golia—20; Howard Johnson—16; Pat Patrick—16; Cecil Payne—14; Mario Rivera—8; John Purcell—8; Peter Brotzmann—6.

Clarinet, Established: John Carter—36; Jimmy Giuffre—27; Perry Robinson—26; Eddie Daniels—24; Tony Scott—14; Russell Procope—8; Alvin Batiste—7; Woody Herman—6.

Clarinet, TDWR: Eddie Daniels—12; Kalaparusha Maurice McIntyre—12; Theo Jorgensmann—10; Douglas Ewart—9; Dick Johnson—9; Bob Wilber—9; Chuck Hedges—8; Johnny Mince—7; Hamiet Bluiett—6.

Flute, Established: Jeremy Steig—15; Frank Wess—15; Henry Threadgill—13; Bud Shank—10; Yusef Lateef—7; Ira Sullivan—7; Joe Farrell—6.

Flute, TDWR: Sam Rivers—12; Lew Tabackin—12; Jimmy Heath—8; Wallace



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RESULTS continued from page 61

McMillan—8; James Moody—8; Sam Most—8; Eddie Daniels—7; Chico Freeman—7; Jiri Stivin—7; Paul Horn—6; Oliver Lake—6; Jeremy Steig—6.

Trumpet, Established: Don Cherry—29; Kenny Wheeler—23; Art Farmer—14; Tom Harrell—12; Ruby Braff—9; Leo Smith—9; Miles Davis—8; Red Rodney—8; Ira Sullivan—8; Randy Brecker—6; Doc Cheatham—6.

Trumpet, TDWR: Warren Vache—20; Ira Sullivan—17; Tom Harrell—17; Olu Dara—13; Bobby Shew—13; Butch Morris—12; Charles Sullivan—12; Ahmed Abdullah—9; Paile Mikkeborg—9; Chris Albert—8; Bill Hardman—8; Stacy Rowles—8; Bobby Bradford—7; Roy Eldridge—7; Steve Huffsteter—7.

Trombone, Established: J. J. Johnson—40; Bill Watrous—33; Curtis Fuller—30; Slide Hampton—22; Vic Dickenson—19; Carl Fontana—17; Al Grey—10; Julian Priester—7.

Trombone, TDWR: Eje Thelin—18; Joe Bowie—14; Craig Harris—14; Gunter Christmann—12; Carl Fontana—10; Curtis Fuller—10; Roswell Rudd—10; Eddie Bert—8; Melba Liston—8; Al Grey—7; Slide Hampton—7; Phil Wilson—7; Albert Mangelsdorff—6; Janice Robinson—6; Britt Woodman—6.

Violin, Established: John Blake—15; Claude Williams—13; Billy Bang—10; L. Subramaniam—9.

Violin, TDWR: Leroy Jenkins—17; Eric Golub—13; Michal Urbaniak—13; Svend Asmussen—10; Joe Kennedy—9; Mark O'Connor—7; Noel Pointer—7.

Acoustic Piano, Established: Dave McKenna—32; Hank Jones—22; Don Pullen—20; Jimmy Rowles—19; Cedar Walton—16; Joanne Brackeen—14; Barry Harris—11; Dick Wellstood—11; Tete Montoliu—10; Martial Solal—10; Andrew Hill—9; Muhal Richard Abrams—8; Earl Hines—8; Herbie Hancock—7; Keith Jarrett—7; Roger Kellaway—7; Count Basie—6; Anthony Davis—6; Bob Degen—6; Steve Kuhn—6.

Acoustic Piano, TDWR: George Cables—17; Tete Montoliu—13; John Coates Jr.—11; Duke Jordan—11; Michael Renzi—11; Hilton Ruiz—11; Keith Jarrett—10; Don Pullen—10; Roland Hanna—9; Stanley Cowell—8; Ronnie Mathews—8; Kenny Barron—7; Dollar Brand—7; Al Haig—7; Jimmy Rowles—7; Horace Silver—7; John Hicks—6; Steve Kuhn—6; Jessica Williams—6.

Electric Piano, Established: Cedar Walton—12; Kenny Barron—10; George Cables—9; Dave Grusin—8; Ahmad Jamal—6.

Electric Piano, TDWR: Richard Beirach—10; Cedar Walton—10; Dave Grusin—8; Joe Sample—8; Jasper Van't Hof—7.

Organ, Established: Jimmy McGriff—16; Jack McDuff—10; Clare Fischer—9; Amina Claudine Myers—8; Eddy Louiss—7; Joe Zawinul—7; Carla Bley—6.

Organ, TDWR: Dick Hyman—12; Shirley Scott—10; Jasper Van't Hof—9; Mickey Tucker—7; Charles Earland—6; Richard Tee—6.

Synthesizer, Established: Richard Teitelbaum—15; Brian Eno—10; George Lewis—10; Mike Nock—9; Stevie Wonder—6.

Synthesizer, TDWR: Brian Eno—10; Herbie Hancock—9; Andy La Verne—8; Denny Zeitlin—8; Bernie Worrell—7; Muhal Richard Abrams—6.

Guitar, Established: Tal Farlow—22; John Abercrombie—21; Herb Ellis—17; John McLaughlin—11; Egberto Gismonti—11; Pat Metheny—11; Jimmy Raney—11; Larry Coryell—9; Ralph Towner—9; George Benson—7; Ted Dunbar—6.

Guitar, TDWR: Michael Gregory Jackson—12; Marty Grosz—11; John Abercrombie—10; Bruce Forman—10; Jimmy Raney—10; Rune Gustafsson—10; Eugene Chadbourne—9; Cal Collins—9; Lorne Lofsky—8; Peter Sprague—8; Bern Nix—7; Monette Sudler—7.

Acoustic Bass, Established: Cecil McBee—20; Eddie Gomez—18; Fred Hopkins—12; Buster

Williams—12; Malachi Favors—9; Red Mitchell—7; Dave Friesen—6; John Heard—6; Gary Peacock—6.

Acoustic Bass, TDWR: Dave Holland—16; George Mraz—13; Malachi Favors—11; Bob Magnussen—11; Johnny Dyan—10; Ray Drummond—10; Mike Richmond—9; Cameron Brown—8; George Duvivier—8; Charlie Haden—8; Buster Williams—8; J. F. Jenny Clark—6; Milt Hinton—6; Henri Texier—6.

Electric Bass, Established: Abe Laboriel—12; Jamaaladeen Tacuma—10.

Electric Bass, TDWR: Bunny Brunel—8; Bob Cranshaw—8; Bootsie Collins—8; Abe Laboriel—8; Bernard Edwards—7.

Drums, Established: Buddy Rich—22; Ed Blackwell—18; Steve McCall—18; Tony Williams—14; Danny Richmond—13; Roy Haynes—9; Al Foster—8; Steve Gadd—8; Mel Lewis—8; Andrew Cyrille—7; John Marshall—7.

Drums, TDWR: Ed Blackwell—17; Peter Erskine—16; Dannie Richmond—15; Alan Dawson—12; Billy Higgins—12; Max Roach—11; Thurman Barker—9; Wilbur Campbell—8; Bob Moses—8; Jerome Cooper—8; Al Foster—6; Ralph Humphrey—6.

Vibes, Established: Walt Dickerson—27; Jay Hoggard—17; David Friedman—13; Karl Berger—12; Terry Gibbs—11; Cal Tjader—11; Victor Feldman—7; Gunter Hampel—6.

Vibes, TDWR: David Samuels—19; Cal Tjader—17; Wolfgang Schluter—13; Mike Mainieri—12; Johnny Lytle—10; Warren Chiasson—9; Don DeMicheal—9; Lionel Hampton—9; Tom van der Geld—9; Gary Burton—8; Walt Dickerson—7; Dave Pike—7; Red Norvo—7; Gunter Hampel—6; Bobby Hutcherson—6; Fred Raulston—6.

Percussion, Established: Mongo Santamaría—12; Manolo Badrena—6; Ray Barretto—6; Milford Graves—6; Ray Mantilla—6; Kenny Nash—6.

Percussion, TDWR: Famoudou Don Moye—12; Kahil El Zabar—12; Dom Um Romao—10; Paul Lovens—7; Paul Lytton—7.

Misc. Instrument, Established: Paul McCandless (oboe, english horn)—23; Bob Stewart (tuba)—20; Roscoe Mitchell (bass saxophone)—17; David Murray (bass clarinet)—14; Collin Walcott (sitar)—13; John Clark (french horn)—7; Rich Matteson (tuba)—7.

Misc. Instrument, TDWR: Sugar Blue (harmonic)—10; Jimmy Giuffrè (bass clarinet, bass flute)—9; Paul Berliner (mbira, kudu horn)—8; David Baker (cello)—7; Anthony Braxton (various reeds)—7; Clifton Chenier (accordion)—7; David Eyges (cello)—6.

Male Singer, Established: Mark Murphy—24; Jon Hendricks—18; Frank Sinatra—12; Joe Lee Wilson—12; Jay McShann—11; Chet Baker—9; Milton Nascimento—9; Leon Thomas—9; Tom Waits—9; Stevie Wonder—9; Eddie Vinson—7.

Male Singer, TDWR: Michael Franks—13; Al Jarreau—13; Leon Thomas—13; Bobby McFerrin—12; Milton Nascimento—9; Eddie Vinson—8; George Benson—7; Bill Henderson—7.

Female Singer, Established: Anita O'Day—20; Helen Humes—15; Jeanne Lee—13; Sheila Jordan—10; Carol Sloane—7.

Female Singers, TDWR: Susannah McCorkle—14; Amina Claudine Myers—14; Ernestine Anderson—12; Urszula Dudziak—11; Anita O'Day—11; Lorez Alexander—8; Betty Carter—8; Helen Humes—8; Carmen McRae—8; Judy Roberts—7; Carrie Smith—7; Iqua Colson—6; Blossom Dearie—6; Regina Ellis—6; Lorraine Feather—6; Lauren Newton—6; Annette Peacock—6; June Tyson—6.

Vocal Group, Established: Persuasions—9; 14 Karat Soul—8; Earth, Wind & Fire—6; Hendricks Family—6; Talking Heads—6.

Soul/R&B Artists, Established: Earth, Wind & Fire—14; Talking Heads—9; Marvin Gaye—8; James "Blood" Ulmer—8; Aretha Franklin—6; Joe Turner—6.

Soul/R&B Artists, TDWR: Albert Collins—9; Defunkt—9; Muddy Waters—8; Earth, Wind & Fire—7; Lonnie Brooks—6. db

to get on the list that would have him called very often.

After the shows, "I did anything that came along—club dates, backing singers at Basin Street or the Copacabana, the hotels, anything. I don't need to make a lot of money, I'm not a high liver." But jobs were hard to come by. At this time, Thad Jones and Mel Lewis were in the early years of their Monday nights at the Village Vanguard. The deal was simple—come down after your high-priced recording sessions and television gigs, have some fun, and make 20 bucks.

"I went down there for the \$20," says Knepper. "When they first started they had about 10 arrangements, and every Monday they played those 10 arrangements. Over and over again. I finally got fired after seven years. I was the section leader and I didn't consider my

JIMMY KNEPPER'S EQUIPMENT

"The trombone I play is a gold-plated Bach 36 with a slightly bigger bell. It's a Mount Vernon, about 30 years old, I guess. I use a Bach six-and-a-half AL mouthpiece. I also have another Bach 36, an old Conn 4H, which I don't play at all, a Conn bass trombone, a Conn baritone horn, and a Conn valve trombone."

job to be a babysitter. Thad said, 'You're not taking care of the trombones,' and fired me. By that time it was kind of depressing playing the same music. A few of the arrangements I like, but there are very few things, other than Duke Ellington's, that you can play more than four times and still get a kick out of every time."

Knepper spent the '70s gigging with anybody who'd ask him—Gil Evans, Lee Konitz, George Gruntz—and collecting rent on the building he owns in Staten Island. Despite critical acclaim, he is still not in demand because of his inability to push himself on people.

Ironically, the only steady jazz gig he's had since Thad and Mel was with the Mingus Dynasty, a unit which he is typically unenthusiastic about.

"Mingus is dead," he announced, "and Mingus' music cannot be played because Mingus is dead. We can play arrangements of Mingus' tunes, but that's as far as it goes. We can try to get the spirit of what Mingus would want, but it's not Mingus' music without Mingus. You play 30 seconds of Mingus' tune, and then it becomes the music of whoever's soloing. Mingus' music is something that Mingus played. Now they aren't making enough money to hire me, they've cut the band down to a quintet.

"When I was with Mingus, I'd get very depressed and say, 'Jesus, I'm stuck with this guy. I want to play jazz and I'm stuck with him the rest of my life.' Then I escaped and started working with Tony Scott, and I'd come back to Mingus. And I wasn't a big name or

down beat 46th annual readers poll

HALL OF FAME (see rules) _____

JAZZ MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR _____

ROCK/BLUES MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR _____

TRUMPET _____

TROMBONE _____

FLUTE _____

CLARINET _____

SOPRANO SAX _____

ALTO SAX _____

TENOR SAX _____

BARITONE SAX _____

ACOUSTIC PIANO _____

ELECTRIC PIANO _____

ORGAN _____

SYNTHESIZER _____

GUITAR _____

ACOUSTIC BASS _____

ELECTRIC BASS _____

DRUMS _____

PERCUSSION _____

VIBES _____

VIOLIN _____

MISC. INSTRUMENT _____

ARRANGER _____

COMPOSER _____

MALE SINGER _____

FEMALE SINGER _____

VOCAL GROUP _____

BIG JAZZ BAND _____

JAZZ GROUP (2 to 10 PIECES) _____

ROCK/BLUES GROUP _____

JAZZ ALBUM OF THE YEAR _____

ROCK/BLUES ALBUM OF THE YEAR _____

Your Signature _____

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

GROUP AWARDS

BALLOTS MUST BE POSTMARKED BEFORE MIDNIGHT, SEPTEMBER 1, 1981.
MAIL TO down beat/RPB, 222 W. Adams St., Chicago, IL 60606

instructions

Vote for your favorite musicians in **down beat's** annual Readers Poll. **The Poll** for 46 years.

Your favorites want your support. Vote! You need not vote in every category. Cut out the ballot, fill in your choices, sign it and mail to **down beat/RPB, 222 W. Adams St., Chicago, IL 60606.**

VOTING RULES:

1. Vote once only. Ballots must be postmarked before midnight September 1.

2. Use official ballot only. Please type or print.

3. **Jazzman and Rock/Blues Musician of the year:** Vote for the artist who, in your opinion, has contributed most to jazz/rock/blues in 1981.

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, Bill Evans, Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Goodman, Dexter Gordon, 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, Thelonious 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 flugelhorn, 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 45s or EPs. 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.



here's your ballot

**SELECTED
JIMMY KNEPPER
DISCOGRAPHY**

as a leader

CUNNINGBIRD—SteepleChase SCS-1061.
IN L.A.—Inner City IC 6047.
IDOL OF THE FLIES—Bethlehem BCP-6031
THE PEPPER/KNEPPER QUINTET* (with Pepper Adams)—Metrojazz MCM 1004
TELL ME—Daybreak D-001

with Charles Mingus

TIAJUANA MOODS—Quintessence Jazz QJ 25251
MINGUS AH UM—Columbia CS 8171
THE CLOWN—Atlantic SD 1260
BLUES & ROOTS—Atlantic SD 1305
OH YEAH—Atlantic SD 1377
TONIGHT AT NOON—Atlantic SD 1416
NOSTALGIA IN TIMES SQUARE—Columbia JG 35717

PASSIONS OF A MAN—Atlantic SD3-600
ME, MYSELF AN EYE—Atlantic SD 8803
MINGUS REVISITED—Limelight LM 82015
SOMETHING LIKE A BIRD—Atlantic SD 8805

with Mingus Dynasty

CHAIR IN THE SKY—Elektra 6E-248
LIVE AT MONTREUX—Atlantic SD 16031

**with Thad Jones/
Mel Lewis**

POTPOURRI—Philadelphia Internationa KZ 33152

THAD JONES/MEL LEWIS—Blue Note BN-LA 393 H2

SUITE FOR POPS—A&M SP-701

with Don Friedman

HOT KNEPPER AND PEPPER—Progressive 7036

anything, even now, it was very depressing to think that I'm linked with this guy for the rest of my life. And now I feel the same way. When they have "I Remember Mingus" retrospectives in 1999, I'll be there as the last surviving member."

During the Mingus Dynasty tours, Knepper had taken to remarking to journalists how he'd made more money playing Mingus' music in the year after he died than in all the years he played with him. And he used to tell audiences that they were listening to a "necrophiliac band."

In spite of Jimmy Knepper's cynical, hardboiled world-view, he plays with a remarkable amount of tenderness. His solos (he'll admit to liking two—The Explorer, with Tony Scott, and Devil Woman, with Mingus) are pure and almost devoid of the trombonists' stock-in-trade bag of tricks—triple-tonguing, plunger growls, etc. He explains his solo technique with clarity: "I play sequences, I play together. One of the things I kind of deplore is playing what I think of as filler material. I think a lot of musicians play nothing but filler material. What I've tried to do—it's the only way I can play and it's the simplest technique in the world, it's a compositional technique—is play something and then imitate it. You might imitate it again or make a variation and then go off into something else. But it's not recommended for compositional purposes that you play a sequence more than three times.

In fact, twice is enough. Three times is a little shaky and four times—forget it, it's just boring, or it's not the best thing you can do. You should be able to say, 'Oh, you see this one, the next phrase is an imitation, the next phrase does this, and then the next one is a wrap-up of that. Then there's something else.' And the whole solo is like that. Anyway, that's the way I play."

He plays divinely. Fortunately, he has been getting some well-deserved dates as a leader, so his natural, relaxed style can be more easily studied. Jimmy Knepper in L.A. (Inner City) and Cunningbird (SteepleChase—and, incidentally, nominated for a Grammy

Award) are lovely albums.

Jimmy Knepper is determined to come out of his shell and display his talents to better advantage. He says, "I found out that just to have the opportunity to play, you've got to be a star. So it's something I can thank Mingus for, that I was on the records in the late '50s, and my name is all over the world. Not very big, but enough so that I can get the opportunity to play. Now, I'm going to have to get on that stardom kick. A star in a low-priced field. And that'll just give me the opportunity to go to Holland or San Francisco and play with a local rhythm section. I'll be tickled to death." db

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BIG CITY BEAT

NEW YORK

continued from page 12

been gigging around the Apple. Altoist/composer Palermo lists his influences as Thad Jones, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, and Cannonball Adderley. Together again . . . the **Duke Ellington Society** brought 25-year Ellington veteran, clarinetist Jimmy Hamilton, north for its annual Spring affair. Hamilton, a resident of St. Croix since retiring from the Ellington orchestra in 1968, brought his licorice stick to New York for the first time in 13 years, joining fellow clarinetists Norris Turney, Bob Wilber, Haywood Henry, and Johnny Mince in a salute to Russell Procope and Barney Bigard . . . the **West End Cafe** has been the home of swinging jazz for years. The spot on Broadway and 114th Street presents *nightly* jazz featuring such swing-era greats as John Jones, Sonny Greer, Franc Williams, George Kelly, Harold Ashby, Benny Waters, and others and charges *nothing* at the door. A modest

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KANSAS CITY

Lose one, win two: the Crown Center Hotel discontinued its afternoon live jazz policy at the **Signboard Lounge** ("to take a new approach" and provide background music that won't interfere with conversation), but indicated the jazz-oriented evening policy would continue . . . the **Frank Smith Trio** moved into the recently re-opened Phillips House Hotel for nightly jazz (dark Sun.) . . . dumping the disco, the popular Plaza-area bar/beanery **O's** at the Point instituted a jazz policy Thurs. through Sat. featuring the **Stan Kessler Quartet** . . . the KC Parks and Recreation Department's free **Music In The Parks** series offers the Gary Burton Quartet (7/26), the Glenn Miller Orchestra (8/9), the Heath Brothers (8/16), and Herbie Mann (8/23). Info/locations (816) 921-1212 . . .

PETER ERSKINE SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

with Weather Report
NIGHT PASSAGE—Columbia JC 36793
8:30—Columbia PC2 36030
MR. GONE—Columbia JC 35358
HAVANA JAM I—Columbia PC2 36053
HAVANA JAM II—Columbia PC2 36180
with Maynard Ferguson
CARNIVAL—Columbia 35480
NEW VINTAGE—Columbia 34971
CONQUISTADOR—Columbia 34457
with Stan Kenton
FIRE, FURY AND FUN—Creative World ST 1073
KENTON PLAYS CHICAGO—Creative World ST 1072

7.5 ON THE HIGHER SCALE—Creative World ST 1070
BIRTHDAY IN BRITAIN—Creative World ST 1065
NATIONAL ANTHEMS OF THE WORLD—Creative World ST 1060
with Joni Mitchell
MINGUS—Asylum SE-505
with George Cables
CABLES VISION—Contemporary 14001
with Joe Farrell
SONIC TEXT—Contemporary 14002
with Joe Henderson
RELAXIN' AT CAMARILLO—Contemporary 14006

"He likes to foster a certain conceptual orientation, but he's most proud and pleased when we come up with something of our own.

"That's true with any band, whether it be Kenton or Duke Ellington. You take advantage of a certain intrinsic talent, but they also have to play in your thing."

Erskine's activities outside of Weather Report are many and varied. He has recently recorded with Michael Mainieri, and he is looking forward to working with Mainieri, Michael Brecker, Eddie Gomez, and Don Grolnick in a group called Steps. Around Los Angeles, he keeps busy playing with George Cables, Freddie Hubbard, Joe Farrell, and Bob Magnusson, among others. It seems that whatever the future might hold, Erskine is ready. His versatility is not chameleon-like though. In every playing situation he likes to project as much of himself as possible.

"I don't like to sound too anonymous, so I'm not one of those studio players who can just walk in and play in any bag. The kinds of things I play are things that I am familiar with. I grew up listening to bebop, rock & roll, and funk, and while they're all different, they're all part of me. One of the reasons some of the older studio cats get all uptight is because they're not familiar with all the stuff they're trying to play. It's just not part of them. I'm careful to play the music in which I can most sound like me.

"Musically everybody has to grow and if, eventually, we (Weather Report) all get into other things, then we'll all be the better for it. I don't worry about it. As long as I can keep playing the drums, I won't worry. And if nobody will play with me, I'll just sit at home and go crazy." **db**

PETER ERSKINE'S EQUIPMENT

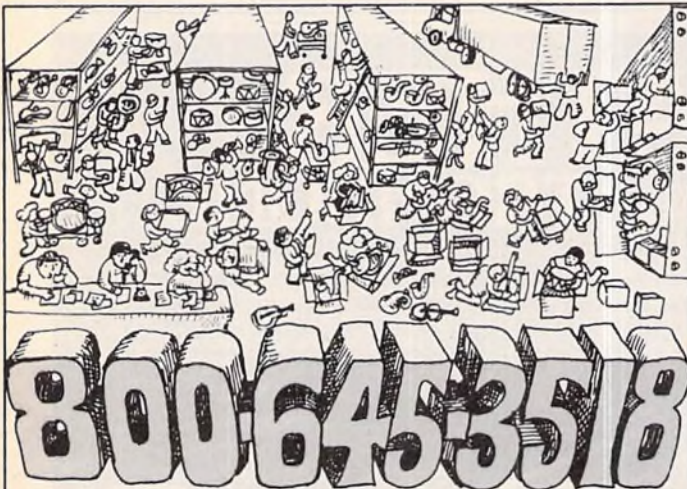
Peter Erskine uses Yamaha drums and hardware exclusively. His set varies slightly, depending on the playing situation. With Weather Report he uses a 14 x 18 bass drum, two mounted tom-toms measuring 10 x 10 and 10 x 13, and a 16 x 16 floor tom.

For most recording work and club playing, he uses the 14 x 18 bass drum, with three mounted tom-toms measuring 8 x 10, 8 x 12, and 9 x 13, and a 14 x 14 floor tom. Occasionally he will use a 14 x 22 bass drum for, as he puts it, "the funky stuff."

He always uses a Soistman 6 1/2 x 14 wood snare drum. His drums are outfitted with Remo Ambassador heads. With Weather Report he uses Remo Pinstripe heads on the tom-toms. His bass drums have Ambassador heads on both sides.

Erskine uses Avedis Zildjian cymbals, and with Weather Report he uses 14-inch New Beat hi-hat cymbals, a 22-inch deep ride, 15- and 16-inch swishes, a 15-inch splash, and an 18-inch crash-ride. For other playing situations he uses either a 20- or 18-inch medium ride, a 15-inch crash, 13- or 14-inch hi-hat cymbals, and a 20-inch flat ride. He also uses Zildjian gongs.

He uses Yamaha 14A woodtip sticks, occasionally switching to Regal Tip 5A sticks for some recording work.



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record [Cables Vision] is an example of just such a group effort.'

"In Vision, my presence was there as a composer. It was there as a performer. It was there in the total concept of what was happening. It was there as a band leader. Some musicians make an album under their own name and think me-me-me. Well, I think music-music-music. My personal ego isn't first. The music is first. That's why I selected these particular musicians to play my music, and in that way make it our music. Music on a printed page isn't music. Music is what the musicians breathe into it. That's when the music lives. I chose Freddie, Bobby, Ernie, and the others because they have strong personalities and could breathe their livingness into the things we played. My concept was not that of 'leader and sidemen' or 'soloist and backup musicians,' but one of interaction, of interplay.

"A painting doesn't have only one color or only one line. An Indian rug doesn't have only one thread. In painting, in weaving—and in music—everything is intertwined, conceived, and directed by the painter, the weaver, or the composer. In my music we start with my concept, and then play as a team, making things happen together."

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CITY JAZZLINES

BOSTON: Jazzline (617) 262-1300
CHICAGO: Jazz Institute of Chicago Hotline (312) 666-1881
CINCINNATI: WNOP-AM (740) jazz sunrise to sunset (606) 581-7100
CLEVELAND: Jazz Society (216) 752-0155
DALLAS: Jazz Society (214) 744-2267
DENVER: KADX-FM (105.1) all jazz radio (303) 534-1051
DETROIT: Jazz Center (313) 962-4124; WJZZ-FM (105.9) all jazz radio
LAS VEGAS: Jazz Society (702) 734-8556
LOS ANGELES: KKG-FM (105.1) all jazz radio; Hotline (213) 475-6491
MIAMI: Jazz Hot Line (305) 382-3938
MILWAUKEE: WUWM-FM (90) all jazz radio; Jazzline (414) 964-3690
MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL: Music Dateline (612) 546-2022; Twin Cities Jazz Society (612) 292-3222
MONTREAL/OTTAWA: Jazz Line (613) 232-7755
NEW YORK: Jazzline (212) 423-0488
PHILADELPHIA: Jazz Society (215) 328-1619
PHOENIX: Hotline (602) 255-7100
SAN FRANCISCO: KJAZ-FM (92.7) all jazz radio; KPEN-FM (97.7) all jazz radio; Jazz Line (415) 521-9336; Jazz Foundation (415) 540-6345
WASHINGTON, DC: WPFW-FM (89.3) all jazz radio (202) 783-3100; Trad Line (202) 532-8723