

**RICHIE COLE SOLO
TRANSCRIPTION**

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downbeat

For Contemporary Musicians

**RICHIE
COLE**

Alto Energy

**JOHNNY
WINTER**

Guitar Slinger

**MIROSLAV
VITOUS**

Two Bass Hit

**MILTON
NASCIMENTO**

Bossa Nuevo

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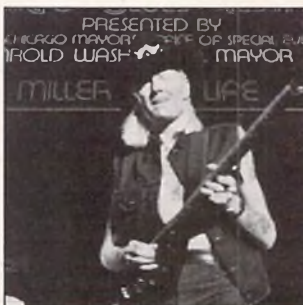


Miroslav Vitous

JEFF THIEBAUTH



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The Altology Of Richie Cole

by Michael Bloom



BRIAN McMILLEN

What's happening with *Alto Madness*?" echoes Richie Cole. "Listen—I've got this idea about getting Aaron Cop-

land, Pavarotti, Itzak Perlman, and myself together for a recording. I'm also getting ready to work with Manhattan Transfer on an all-jazz album. *Alto Madness* is ready for a change of direction, too. I want to do an album which will reach a lot of people, a mix of pop music and jazz. And then I'm planning to do a series of educational records. . . ."

As the instigator of *Alto Madness*, Cole's fertile imagination and penchant for experimentation often takes him beyond musical categories to where no musician has gone before. Since moving to the West Coast a few years ago—and changing record labels—the 36-year-old saxophonist has recorded with alto legends Art Pepper, Sonny Stitt, and John Handy; he's cut a hybrid c&w/jazz LP with Nashville tenor saxist Boots Randolph; he's played with singers, all-star aggregations, and big bands; and he's taken his special brand of bebop worldwide.

Cole's sound is the essence of bop, propelled by a sure sense of swing and impressive technique. He's studied the music and thoroughly absorbed it, through associations with Buddy Rich, Lionel Hampton, Phil Woods, and Eddie Jefferson. Stylistically, he cites Charlie Parker, Woods, Sonny Rollins, and Sal Nistico as major influences. Mixed in with his jazz is a rollicking sense of humor and a let's-not-take-ourselves-too-seriously philosophy.

At a given *Alto Madness* performance you may hear classic tunes such as *Jeannine*, *Relaxin' At Camarillo*, or *Boplicity*. And on the lighter side, he'll pull *Danny Boy* or *Peg O' My Heart* out of his hat, replete with improvised, humorous lyrics. Often he'll ask musicians in the house to join him for a spontaneous jam.

"I'm always looking for ways to enhance *Alto Madness*," says Richie. "But first of all, I'm here to play music. Straightahead, swinging jazz. I also like to talk to my audience and make them comfortable with what I'm playing." Indeed, his passionate sax statements, combined with his extrovert stage personality, make it possible for Cole to reach and hold the attention of a wide variety of listeners. He's a valuable Keeper Of The Flame and Jazz Missionary.

Since 1981 Cole has been ensconced with his wife and child





DARRYL PITT

THE REAL ALTO ANNIE: Richie Cole and daughter.

in the woods north of San Francisco; he affectionately refers to his homestead as "Alto Acres." The once-itinerant jazzman, who practically lived in his traveling van, seems to have found an ideal spot to rest and recuperate from his jazz travels. "I'd been traveling in this van and living in motels and hotels for years when one day it hit me: I've got to find a place of my own. Shortly after that I was playing the Russian River Jazz Festival, and found this place nearby. I love it here. I've got the redwoods and the river, and nobody bothers me. The drive from here to San Francisco is about the same distance as from Trenton to New York City."

The boy from Trenton, New Jersey (born February 29, 1948) started playing the alto sax while in grade school, taking his first formal lessons at age 10 and progressing through high school, polka, and American Legion bands until he began his apprenticeship, at age 15, with Phil Woods. (For the record, Cole's first appearance on a **down beat** cover was the September 21, 1967 issue, as a member of a Woods-led stage band. He's the kid with his finger in his ear.) After high school he was awarded a one-year **down beat** scholarship to the Berklee College of Music, which he attended for two-and-a-half years. After Berklee, Cole immediately enlisted with Buddy Rich's outfit, stayed a couple of years, and joined Lionel Hampton's big band for six months. After 1972 he went out on his own, and the Alto Madness legend was born.

Cole spent most of the '70s cruising from one gig to another aboard his ALTO-1 van. ("I've still got that van," says Cole. "It's got 180,000 miles on it and runs better than ever!") He made his first national impact during his five-year association with the late Eddie Jefferson. The veteran singer/showman and the young bebopper made a dynamic team, thrilling audiences and charming jazz critics nationwide, as well as recording several albums together. Following Jefferson's death in 1979, Cole toured as a single, often playing with local rhythm sections but most often working with a talent pool which included Bruce Forman, Jack Wilson, Dick Hindman, Scott Morris, Marshall Hawkins, Bobby Enriquez, and numerous others.

In the years since his last **db** interview (October '80) the jazz life has been good for Richie Cole. He's something of an international jazz celebrity (one example of his popularity overseas: last year he was voted the #1 alto player by the readers of Japan's *Swing Journal*, collecting over 18,000 votes).

His popularity in the U.S. and Europe continues to rise. And the altoist is a cornerstone of the Palo Alto record label, under the direction of his longtime friend and fan, Herb Wong.

Michael Bloom: You enjoy locking horns with other saxophonists, especially alto players, and in general do a lot of collaborating with other musicians and singers . . .

Richie Cole: My collaborations are concepts I have, things I'd like to do, and then it's just a matter of looking into the possibility of making them happen. That's how the album with Boots Randolph [*Yakety Madness*] came about. I'd been thinking about doing that since my days at Berklee. On the record with Art Pepper [*Richie Cole And . . .*], I had a good time. It's always good to play with someone whose music you're familiar with. That was the first and last time I played with him.

It was a real thrill to work with Sonny Stitt, one of my heroes. When I was 16, I used to go to the Village Gate, and I'd just sit there listening, in awe of the man. Then years later, there I was, playing with him in the same band, on a tour of Australia. We recorded an album [with John Handy as a third alto] for Palo Alto, sort of an "Alto Summit."

When you combine your music with somebody else's, an entirely new thing comes out. There ought to be more of that in the music business. I learn a lot from doing these projects, and plan on collaborating with as many people as I can. For instance, at this year's Monterey Jazz Festival, I'll have "Lock-jaw" Davis as a special guest with my band—Janis Siegel, too.

MB: You also play with a lot of different musicians when you tour as a single. What do you look for in a rhythm section?

RC: For what I do, I need a drummer and a bass player who are going to lay down the time and *swing!* Nothing fancy, just swing. The whole rhythm section should swing straightahead. That's Alto Madness music. Whatever else it might be, or might incorporate, it's straightahead, blowing jazz coming from a bebop corner of the world.

There's no one specific way to do this. That's why I enjoy playing with a lot of different sidemen around the world—I always learn new things, and never get stale. For instance, when I'm in New York, I'll use Jack Wilson on piano, Boots Malison or Ed Howard on bass, and Victor Jones on drums. Out west, I'll use Dick Hindman on piano, Marshall Hawkins or Paul Warburton on bass, and Colin Bailey or Dick Berk on drums.

MB: Alto Madness now features tenor and baritone saxes as well. Why have you added these horns?

RC: Therapy—I play them for therapy. I really enjoy playing them and like to incorporate them into what I do. But I don't always take them on the road with me—that's too much to carry around. I plan to keep playing the other saxophones . . . not the soprano, because I don't feel anything for it, but the tenor and baritone for sure.

I actually started playing the tenor 26 years ago, but when I went with Buddy Rich, I concentrated on the alto and sort of forgot about the tenor until a few years ago. I hadn't played the baritone at all until two years ago, when the Selmer company lent me one. Now they're both part of my sound. I play each one differently because each horn feels different. When I play the baritone, I try to play the melody as low on the horn as possible. I mean, if you want to play up high, then use a tenor or an alto!

MB: I understand you're doing saxophone clinics now, in connection with Selmer . . .

RC: That's right. Actually, I don't like the word "clinic." When you say clinic, people sometimes expect to get a certain thing, and I generally don't do what they expect. Because when you deal with a class of, say, 50 people, you've got 50 different points of view about music, about jazz. It's hard to do one thing that will reach them all.

When I do a clinic, I start things out by getting on-stage and blowing a tune or two, with my band or a band from the school, and then take questions from the class. That's how I do it: first play music; talk about it, give a little history; then have 'em ask

me questions. They can pick up the music basics and facts from books and other classes. A lot of clinicians will come in and write things on the blackboard, but that's not me. I tell my classes that there are 12 notes and everybody has to arrange them their own way.

If they want to know about the life of a jazz musician, what it's like being out on the road, how I got my start in music, who helped me in my development as a musician, I tell them what I know. I also talk about whatever they want to know about the saxophone itself—mouthpieces, specific setups, things like that.

MB: Humor plays a part in just about every Alto Madness performance. You seem to delight in making an audience laugh. Do you consider yourself an artist or an entertainer?

RC: I consider myself a jazz musician, more of an artist. If people see me as an entertainer, that makes me feel good, but I'm up there to play music. If the fact that I want to relate to my audience makes me an entertainer too, then so be it.

Personally, I appreciate people spending their hard-earned money to see me. I feel obliged to do the best I can, and acknowledge them. I've been very fortunate to be able to make a living playing jazz. I don't take it for granted. One of the reasons I've been successful is that I respect, and relate to, my audience. I try to make them comfortable with my music. I may talk to them and say something funny, but I'm there to play the saxophone with the best musicians possible. I just try to play the melody, then improvise and tell a story, whatever it happens to be at that time and place. It's not arpeggios up and down a scale, or high notes and low notes—it's a story you convey. Hopefully, people will relate to it.

MB: What about your current and future projects?

RC: *Dear Hearts And Gentle People* is the name of my next album on Palo Alto. I've got a quartet on this one—Dick Hindman, Colin Bailey, and Paul Warburton. Janis Siegel does a vocal on one track, *Bossa Nova Eyes*, singing my lyrics. She sang four-part harmony, overdubbing herself. It sounds great!

But now I don't plan to do any more recording for about a year. I'm getting ready to change the direction of Alto Madness again, and need time to work on my new concept. I want to do something that will reach a large audience, in a popular music style. But I want to do it with class, and with jazz. There won't be any selling out or playing something stupid to make some money. But I think good music can be made popular if it's directed in the right way.

Groups like Spyro Gyra, Manhattan Transfer, and George Benson are doing a good job of elevating the quality of pop music. These jazz musicians, besides playing their music, have given pop music a little class. I want to have Janis Siegel and Tim Hauser of the Manhattan Transfer as producers for this project—plus advice from a few other friends of mine who have their fingers on the pulse of contemporary music. I'll be writing some special material and maybe adapting some older tunes to this new concept of mine. It's still going to be Alto Madness. I'll be sneaking the jazz in on the people. They're going to like the music and not even realize that they're hearing improvised contemporary jazz.

Dick Hindman and I are going to start a company, and put out a series of educational records. It'll be our answer to Music Minus One—I'll call it "Alto Madness Minus Me" or something like that. One side of each record will have me playing with a rhythm section, and the other side will have the same tunes with my track removed, so students can play along. Along with the record will be a book with the lead sheets and transcriptions of my solos. It'll be aimed at music students, professional and amateur musicians.

MB: The years you've invested in your music, constantly being on the road, are now paying off. Did you plan your career, or did it just happen to work out this way?

RC: Well, I always had an idea that I'd do it this way. There wasn't much choice. I didn't want to play shows, and I'm not really a studio musician. I've been able to make it as a jazz musician because I've kept my other commitments to a

minimum. So I've been able to play exactly what I wanted to. It's been a learning experience just being associated with all the people I've met on my travels. And I *enjoy* being on the road.

Throughout my career, I've just gone straight ahead with what I believed in, with Alto Madness. That's how it was developed—by my being out there. db



BRIAN McMILLEN

RICHIE COLE'S EQUIPMENT

"I use the new Selmer Omega alto sax, which is made in the United States, with a Meyer 5M mouthpiece and a La Voz medium-hard reed," says Richie Cole. "I've also got my original horn—the 1958 Selmer Mark VI alto—which was recently rebuilt by the Sax Doctor, Emilio Lyons. I almost lost that horn, but Emilio saved it from the Valley of the Shadow of Death!"

"My tenor is a Selmer Mark VI, 1959 vintage, with a Dukof mouthpiece which was given to me by Boots Randolph. I use a Rico Royal #3 reed.

"My baritone sax is also a Selmer, with a Berg-Larsen mouthpiece and a Rico Royal #3 reed."

RICHIE COLE SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

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|---|--|

Miroslav Vitous is having a good day. The youthful Czech bassist is flitting around his kitchen like an oversized songbird, flapping his elbows and round shoulders fluidly as he pounds veal for schnitzel and talking nonstop as he stirs his homemade vegetable soup. He talks in a precision blur about the good things happening: the trout are beginning to bite on a lake that he fishes; he just passed papers on a house; Chick Corea just called to discuss a Trio Music tour with Roy Haynes; then Stanley Clarke called to talk about their duo bass tour of Australia and Asia.

Miroslav Vitous is having a good month.

He'll be moving into a large home in Boston's western suburbs. He's been seeing positive developments for the Jazz Department at New England Conservatory, where he has been on the faculty for five years and director for one. He has been participating in concerts as diverse as one can imagine: with folk fiddler Maria Rhines, with new NEC faculty member pianist Fred Hersch and saxophonist Jane Ira Bloom, with classical clarinetist Richard Stoltzman, conducting the Student Jazz Ensemble at NEC's Jordan Hall, as well as playing a pair of packed nights with Pat Metheny and Roy Haynes in a mobile trio setting at Ryle's in Cambridge, Metheny's 'tween-tours hometown haunt.

He has, moreover, recently performed a composition written especially for him by classical composer David Stock, accompanied by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Gunther Schuller. And he has much more contemporary chamber and orchestral music planned for the near future.

Miroslav Vitous is having, in fact, a good year.

Composing, he feels, is finally beginning to come together for him as never before, and he was putting the finishing touches on an original composition that marked his debut in classical chamber performance at the recent International Bass Convention in Chicago, with chamber players of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. His second year as director of NEC's Jazz Department finds him ironing out personal and political wrinkles toward the advancement of the program and the music, and hiring new people like percussionist Bob Moses and saxophonist George Garzone (a very hot tenor man who may be found gigging with his trio the Fringe or in Moses' band at the Willow in Somerville, MA). And 1984 is the year where Vitous has come to the fore as a major figure, playing all the heavy contemporary music, jazz and classical.

Miroslav Vitous has been having, after all, a good life.

A musical whiz kid in his native Czechoslovakia, Vitous studied violin at six, piano at seven, picked up bass and fell in

Miroslav Vitous

Both Sides Of The Bass

BY FRED BOUCHARD



JEFF THEBAUTH

love with it at 13, and was off to Prague Conservatory—an ancient and venerable institution even in Mozart's day—only a year later. In the meantime he was playing dixieland with trumpeter Jifi Jerinek (who played and sang a lot like Louis Armstrong) and blowing everything from bebop to standards, Oscar Peterson to Ornette Coleman, with his brother Alan on drums and pianist Jan Hammer.

In 1966 Vitous took first place on bass at the Friedrich Gulda International Competition, George Mraz coming in second. Jury members included J. J. Johnson and Cannonball Adderley, who

immediately offered the 19-year-old bassist a job. But Vitous opted for the \$1,000 prize and scholarship to Berklee College. Within a year he'd played with a Boston quartet of reedman Charlie Mariano, pianist Ray Santisi, and drummer Harvey Mason; at the Jazz Workshop with trombonist Bob Brookmeyer and vocalist Carol Sloane; then in quick succession the Clark Terry/Bob Brookmeyer quintet in Chicago (where Miles Davis hired him to sub for Ron Carter for a week), two years with Herbie Mann, some time with Stan Getz, and back with Mann.

By 1969 Vitous had initiated through recordings two relationships that were to prove long and fruitful: he made *Super Nova* with Wayne Shorter and *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs* with Chick Corea and Roy Haynes. These dates led respectively to his co-founding (with Shorter and Joe Zawinul) of Weather Report, possibly the most innovative jazz ensemble of the '70s, and to his sustaining a groove with Corea and Haynes that evolved to Trio Music, a band that's creating some of the most exciting collective improvisation of the '80s.

That same year, Vitous recorded the groundbreaking *Infinite Search* (on Embryo, later remixed as *Mountain In The Clouds* on Atlantic), an all-star quintet date which paved the way in the emerging role of bassist as composer/leader/virtuoso. "If Scott LaFaro had not died," remarked Vitous, "he'd have done it before me."

* * *

Standing just shy of two meters with his Shalo of frizzy hair, Miroslav Vitous looks much younger than his 37 years (born in Prague, 6 December 1947), and he obviously feels young. He keeps his life cooking on all burners, not only



GIUSEPPE G. PINO

playing bass, composing, and teaching, but also fixing Czech specialties for his friends and indulging in water sports—fishing, skating, and the championship level swimming that once had him touring with the Czech national swim team as often as he was out touring with the Prague Conservatory Orchestra.

Also keeping him busy is his role as head of the Jazz Department at the New England Conservatory, which he does with an easy pride and some real accomplishment. "It's been tough for the conservatory," says Vitous taking quick sips of a rich, amber Pilsener Urquell, "to find a person who can make the department work constructively: it's been a director a year for the past several years. I've been on the faculty for five years, and my first year as director has given me a much better feel for what's needed, and I can plan into '85 for admissions, gathering ensembles, curriculum. We have set up a four-track studio finally for the jazz department itself.

"I'm hoping to get to the point where we can have two hours of major instrument instruction every week. So far, students have so much paperwork and academic pressure that they don't have time to practice their instruments. It's all well and good to know theory and history, but when you come right down to it, it's how well you know your instrument that will get you the work you want. We need better balance between the two poles,"

continues the voluble bassist, "but of course, even though teachers agree, it will take time to implement."

The jazz faculty is small but potent: Jimmy Giuffre, Fred Hersch, George Russell, Pat Hollenbeck, William Tom McKinley, Vitous, and his new appointees. Jazz students number only 15 percent of the student body of 600. "Though it's easy for the Jazz Department to feel like a neglected stepchild," comments NEC president Larry Lesser, "the spirit of the department is in fact running rather high. They're coming off a good year; Pat Hollenbeck and the Medium Rare Big Band took top honors at the Notre Dame Jazz Festival. It's also harder these days to get into the department: today it enrolls only about one of three applicants. There's increasing evidence of contact between the departments, as well, developing a good symbiotic relationship between jazz and classical instrumentalists."

Though much of the groundwork for the conservatory's interdisciplinary understanding dates from the long tenures of Gunther Schuller (10 years president) and Ran Blake (Third Stream Department head), Vitous' personal magnetism has begun to play a substantial role in galvanizing disparate forces into harmony and unity. "The department missed collective thinking," explains Vitous, "not enough mutual contact. I made a point of getting in touch with the

whole faculty and talking freely with each one of them. With more ideas, we have more strength and impact, then we can go out and accomplish things collectively."

About Vitous, Lesser says: "For a guy who's had to feel his way as a nontraditional department head in a traditional school, Miroslav has done very well. It's been a learning experience for him, and he's making headway. Of course, he has such immediately recognizable artistic credentials and a sharp mind that he has managed to achieve a lot in a short time." For Lesser, a noted classical cellist, it's a learning experience, too: admittedly "shy about jazz, administrative exposure gives [him] a chance to catch up."

Vitous brings verve and great feeling to his playing on either level: he can "talk" to classical and jazz players on or off the bandstand. "I can be either a jazz or classical player," he says in his hurried, electrifying way, keeping in motion around the kitchen. "I have no stylistic or head problems with it: it's just music. More than half of my musical background is classical anyway. When I see classical players like Richard Stoltzman improvising on Monk tunes and Chick and Herbie reading Bartok, I see here a healthy interchange of ideas. What I have heard of Chick and Gary Burton is a little different: that's more like Chick scoring for strings what he might play on the piano.

"I feel like I'm part of this movement because I've already played so much classical music during the first part of my career: plenty of Vivaldi and Bach. My albums are neither classical nor jazz," says the first "jazz" bassist to play modern "classical" music in the concert hall. "They're simply original music all carefully thought out.

"What was Stravinsky? Not classical! What is Stevie Wonder? Not just pop! Originality comes first, pigeonholes later. Someday all the classifications and divisions will disappear, and we will have just—music! It is the business that hurts music by putting labels on it. Some original people survive the pressures of business and still manage to make original music."

* * *

When it comes to teaching the bass, Vitous is as freehanded as he is openminded. He feels that knowledge was meant to be passed on—as it was to him in Prague, by Frantisek Posta, first chair bassist with the Czech Philharmonic—unstintingly. He also has such an abundance of talent that there is no need to hoard it, protect it, or mete it out in miserly fashion. "I tell my students anything I know. There's no point in keeping it to yourself: let them run with it! You remember the old saying, which applies to love and music, too: 'Let it go! If it stays with you, it's yours. If it flies away, you never really had it anyway.'"



MIROSLAV VITOUS' EQUIPMENT

Miroslav Vitous plays a bass made by the Czechoslovakian craftsman Homolka. It is 120 years old. "I've never played a better bass in my life. Homolka made it normal thickness, then, for some reason, took it apart and added another inch to the width. I've had it since 1964. Every note is as even as a keyboard's—same volume, same feel. Not like some basses: one string, POW! another, bzzz. Perfectly balanced, perfect action. The tone is lighter rather than darker." This is one reason Vitous is able to achieve those singing, cello-like lines.

"My bow is a solo bow, about two inches longer than normal, so you can hold and sing a really long note." It was also made by an old Czech master craftsman.

Vitous keeps a Yamaha C-3 acoustic piano at home for composing. "Of all the pianos I have owned, this one seems the most perfectly balanced: the bottom, middle, and top have the same volume. No weak areas. It's over six feet, and gives a really great sound. The action is unbelievable! All C-3s are excellent, but this one is exceptional!"

Vitous' fretless electric bass was custom-made by Bill Merchant, who runs The Bass Shop Inc. in New York. "He took a Fender body from Japan, a neck from Japan, and the fingerboard from an acoustic bass and chopped it down. It's important that the fingerboard be ebony so it will sing. This is the Ferrari of electric basses. For 12 years I was playing on frets. I never had to look anyway because I know where the notes are. I said to myself: How dumb can you be?"

Vitous also plays a double-necked bass guitar built by Rex Bogue, who made a six- and 12-string guitar for John McLaughlin. He hooks it into a 360 System guitar synthesizer with six Oberheim modules, one for each string. "Each string has its own filter, volume, octave, and two oscillators. If I set it up right, I can have a big band! Incredible!"

"These days I write and play mostly on acoustic piano and bass, but I still keep my 88 Fender and String Ensemble and Mini-moog. You never know.

"Pickups? Barcus-Berry built into the bridge of the bass. Amps? Hafler. Ashley pre-amp. Juss speakers. Lexicon digital delay."

* * *

MIROSLAV VITOUS SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

MOUNTAIN IN THE CLOUDS—Atlantic 1622

MAJESTY MUSIC—Arista/Freedom 4099

MIROSLAV—Arista/Freedom 1040

FIRST MEETING—ECM 1-1145

MIROSLAV VITOUS GROUP—ECM 1-1185

with Jack DeJohnette and Terje Rypdal

TRIO—ECM 1-1125

TO BE CONTINUED—ECM 1-1192

with Chick Corea and Roy Haynes

NOW HE SINGS, NOW HE SOBS—Solid State 18039

TRIO MUSIC—ECM 2-1232

with Weather Report

WEATHER REPORT—Columbia 30661

I SING THE BODY ELECTRIC—Columbia 31352

SWEETNIGHTER—Columbia 32210

MYSTERIOUS TRAVELLER—Columbia 32494

with Wayne Shorter

SUPER NOVA—Blue Note 84332

MOTO GROSSO FEIO—Blue Note LA014-G

How does Vitous approach bass students?

"You have to know your instrument before you can play any kind of music, classical or jazz. So first I introduce the total instrument to the students and let them conquer it step by step. It took me 15 years before I felt comfortable with it, and plenty of practice!" (Vitous was woodshedding 10 hours a day when he first came to America: scales, patterns, tunes, jamming with records and friends.)

"Students need the basic knowledge. I ask them if they've ever seen a pianist try to take a hell of a hot solo without knowing where his notes were? They say, no. I say the bass is just like that: you have to know how to finger the scales, work out the phrasing. Some things sound good on bass, some don't. That goes for any instrument.

"I have a hard time communicating this, because it takes five years just to learn the fingerboard, to learn the right fingering and jumps, the right hand positions, to play cleanly, in-tune, with some kind of ability to make it all sing. [Vitous has the uncanny knack, earned over long years, of singing on the bass clean and clear in all registers, even violin range.] Then you decide: what kind of player do you want to be?

"Bowling is a problem in jazz, unfortunately. Because there's not enough education or technical knowledge, players find it hard to play in-tune or flexibly. You have to begin with classical bowing, as hard as it is, then you throw out about 90 percent of the bowings because they won't swing. You have to find different phrasing. You have to play more on top of the beat, because there's a delay with the bowing, and timing is difficult. Much quicker wrist action is needed, and you have to feel the whole instrument at once go—*pppoom!* If not, you're late. The only great bowers in jazz were, in my opinion, Slam Stewart and Paul Chambers. That's a touchy point, but that's how I feel.

"We usually start working on jazz pizzicato right away. It's so unusual in classical repertoire that there's little need to learn it. So classical players have a hard time with jazz because they have to use two or even three fingers. They have to develop length, speed, depth, warmth in a pizz sound—completely different style.

"Then there's phrasing. How many notes to play staccato? Legato? You have to work out certain patterns that will swing. You have to learn to break up phrases. Jazz phrasing is totally different from classical. And there's no book yet written on it. Eventually we'll have to work one out."

Desire, endurance, discipline, hard work: those are prime prerequisites for playing the bass. Vitous learned them through swimming, eventually on the '65-66 Czech Olympic swim team. "You

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MILTON NASCIMENTO

By Carol Cooper

For over a decade one of the most popular post-bossa Brazilian singer/composers, Nascimento finally arrives in the U.S. to demonstrate his particular brand of politically aware pan-ethnic pop to American audiences.

Creed Taylor is an astonishingly lucky, if not always judicious, man. Not only did he avail himself of pianist Eumir Deodato's broad spectrum of talents as arranger and composer soon after the young Brazilian's stateside arrival in 1967, but the CTI label boss took his word on the promise of a young black Brazilian talent who only that year had skyrocketed out of regional obscurity with an unprecedented number of original songs showcased that year in the First International Pop Song Fest in Rio.

As a result, the album *Courage* brought Milton Nascimento's voice to the American public for the first time, with much the same sort of arrangements that Deodato had given his festival pieces two years before. For this reason *Courage* is of some historical interest, even though producer Creed and engineer Rudy Van Gelder somehow managed to mix and master away much of the emotional urgency of Nascimento's voice behind their Americanized conception of *fin de siècle* bossa nova languor. Most successful was the cut *Vera Cruz*, which encapsulates the most unique and identifiable aspects of Milton's style: a harmonic melancholy that only tangentially refers to American blues conventions, and abrupt shifts in tempo and mode that link melody, chorus, vamp, and hook into a series of aural bridges of carefully modulated intensity.

Raised by adoptive white parents in the small town of Tres Pontas, in the state of Minas Gerais, Nascimento early on began to represent a very different sensibility in a Brazilian pop scene pervaded by cosmopolitan Cariocan performers and emotionally hyperbolic northeastern composers. Of the current quintet he now tours with, two—drummer Robertinho Silva and keyboardist Wagner Tiso—have been fundamental participants in Milton's sound for almost two decades. Tiso, who grew up on the same street, in the same town as Nascimento, shares a rather unorthodox stylistic formation, as Milton tells it.

"We even started playing music the same day," recalled the singer, "and our little group used to gather around the radio, which had very poor and sporadic reception in our part of the country, trying to learn the hot tunes coming out of the big city. We'd be listening to a bossa nova with complicated harmonies very different to what we were used to—one person trying to write down the words, another trying to get the melody—and it might be 15 days before we heard the song again to see if we got it right. But we'd rehearse the tunes anyway, and wherever we weren't sure of the notes, we'd invent something of our own which seemed to fit. Thus, when we finally got around to play-



ing the bigger cities, we were playing what we thought were standards, with entirely different harmonies and arrangements from the original, full of little regional touches. When we were embarrassed and wanted to get it right, people told us 'No, no, keep playing it your way.'"

This early encouragement only served to strengthen Nascimento's resolve to do things—as much as possible within Brazil's long-established system of selective patronage—his own way. Many of his lyrics explore themes of loneliness and alienation interrupted only by the astonishing good fortune of a true friendship, which is more or less the story of his career.

Nascimento arrived in Sao Paulo around 1965, just another anonymous bass player seeking work in an already glutted club scene. He was not yet a part of the supportive fraternity of neo-stars who jammed together in popular student bars before and just after the military coup. "The two years I struggled along in Sao Paulo was one of the most difficult periods of my life," he said. "There was little work and less money for an unknown, unconnected bass and guitar player back then, and even though I'd met and played with several artists who'd said they liked my compositions, when they went into the studio, they never recorded them. The only established star who showed an active interest in my songs was the singer Elis Regina. One day she invited me to demonstrate my



material, and when after about two hours I stopped playing, she asked: 'Aren't there any more?' The last song I played her, *Canção Do Sal Adosal*, was the one she chose to record."

Elis Regina, who was celebrated as the South American interpreter who reinvigorated the incestuous bossa nova scene by discovering new composers, was an integral part of the popular television show *Fino Da Bossa*. She broke the program's rigid, restrictive format and got Nascimento a singing spot on one of Brazil's most coveted musical showcases, much the way she had helped create national recognition of Gilberto Gil a little earlier. But the biggest break for the young *Minero* was yet to come.

"I'd become friends with Agostinho dos Santos, a singer who you may be familiar with as the voice on most of the songs from the film *Black Orpheus*. It was 1967," Nascimento recalled, "and Agostinho knew there would be an international music festival in Rio that year, and encouraged me to submit some songs. I refused because by then I'd been involved in similar festivals, and had hated the competitive atmosphere and egoism involved. So he pretended to accept my answer, and asked if I'd record three tunes for him to take to his producer for his next LP. I said fine; we made the tape over at a friend's house, and I didn't think of it again. As it turned out, he went ahead and submitted the tape to the festival instead, and I didn't find out till after it was all over that I had been the only composer allowed three entries. After that, of course, all the movers-and-shakers from Rio came down to find out who I was, eventually inviting me to Rio where I began recording."

That first Brazilian LP, known variously as *Travessia* or *Milton Nascimento*, was recorded with the Tamba Trio, since Deodato had already headed to the states, and as usual, Milton's natural regionalisms inspired an established band he already admired to new heights of post-bossa emotional nuance. Caught in the evolutionary whirl of Brazil's post-counter-coup ('68) artistic milieu, Nascimento developed a participatory interest in film, theater, and dance, composing subtle hymns to intellectual freedom and spiritual resistance for all three mediums. *Cravo E Canela*, which was included on

the 1977 U.S. release *Milton*, was inspired by an actress in Ruy Guerra's *The Gods And The Dead*, a film in which Milton played a small part as well as wrote the score.

The impact of Weather Report's dense electronic sound and cross-cultural experiments on *Milton* is apparent, and his subsequent collaboration on Wayne Shorter's *Native Dancer* and the multi-ethnic variety demonstrated on his following LP *Geraes* culminate in the effortless Pan-American plurality achieved on *Milton*.

"I met Wayne Shorter in 1974, when both I and Weather Report were doing shows in Rio," said Nascimento. "When their show ended, they came to mine; Wayne came backstage with his wife, Ana Maria, who introduced us. Wayne asked me right then if I wanted to record with him, and since I'd always been a fan of his, I said yes. But it was two years later when I finally got a phone call, asking if I could come right then! I said sure, and went to L.A. with Wagner Tiso and Robertinho Silva. From the very beginning it was work from the heart—a true collaboration. Everyone did everything together on *Native Dancer*, arrangements and all, with many of Wagner's ideas!"

* * * * *

It was the ease and pleasure of this "handshake" agreement with Shorter that ultimately prejudiced Nascimento against the cold, corporate procedures of his subsequent solo deal with A&M. After *Milton*, where he had the welcome participation of Herbie Hancock, Shorter, Airto, and many Brazilian luminaries, he found producers trying to steer his music more and more away from his own conceptions and aims. Having his ideas changed and manipulated by commercial interests was not on the agenda for an artist who, for example, in 1972 included two songs, *San Vicente* and *Dois Cruzes*, on the album *Clube Da Esquina* as a means of reaching out to politically aware artists in Spanish-speaking South America.

"You see," he explained, "We're always saying Brazil and the countries of Latin America are brothers, but it's a lie because most of their best literature is banned or untranslated here [in Portuguese-speaking Brazil], and we hear almost none of

their music, see little of their art. So I made an overture, and for some reason *San Vicente* caught on in those countries. Soon I was getting letters and records from musicians I'd never heard of: Argentinians, Chileans. Then the people themselves began arriving at my house in Rio, wanting to work with me."

And work they did. On *Geraes* the Chilean group Agua and the great protest singer Mercedes Sosa sang *Volver A Los 17*, a gorgeous ballad of love and allegorical transformation by Violeta Parra, in its original Spanish.

"The connection between the albums *Minas* and *Geraes* for me is like that of a fan, opening," Milton said of his work during the pivotal years of Brazil's official liberalization process, the *abertura*. "*Minas* was a more personal, internal landscape, while *Geraes* was more open, with a broader vision. There were a lot of folkloric adaptations of regional musics: the Indian influence of *Promessas Do Sol*, the *sertanejo* [backwoodsman] influence of *Cali Bento*, the black influence of *Circo Marimbondo*."

Circo Marimbondo also found a place of honor during Nascimento's recent U.S. debut show, its origins being a dance of skill and challenge the slaves would do to express various frustrations and resentments connected to their social "status." The rhythms, as Robertinho laid them down on the traps, translated into a modified circle samba, with Nico Assumpção slapping his bass, and Ricardo Silvera offering an occasional guitar embellishment out of Hendrix' acid blues book.

On signature tunes like *Saidas And Bandeiras*, *Fe Cega*, *Faca Amolhada*, *Ponta De Areia*, and *Maria, Maria*, which can be found as covers on innumerable American jazz releases, Wagner Tiso used banks of synths to color in all the missing shades of strings, brass, and woodwinds that they had used not three months before in a series of massive open air concerts held in Rio, Belo Horizonte, and Sao Paulo. Tiso had orchestrated and conducted that large ensemble, and was no less assured and exact in how to match Milton's evocative dips and falsetto glides with the orchestra under his fingertips. Wordless chants like *A Chamada* were nudged into the sublime by synthesized violas, oboes, and clarinets; the militant exhortations of *Saidas And Bandeiras* had just a hint of piccolo beneath the cellos and Robertinho's march-time *baião*-inflected drum-roll. In April these men had seen 800,000 people light matches when they took the stage, and during the song *Coração De Estudante* watched two human hearts take shape on the right and left sides of the crowd.



THE BOYS FROM BRAZIL: From left, Robertinho Silva, Nico Assumpção, Wagner Tiso, Ricardo Silvera, Milton Nascimento.

"In Brazil people are always asking why I prefer large concerts instead of a lot of smaller gigs. That is why. I want, and need, the people to hear and respond to my work," Milton confessed. "Intellectuals and critics there are always telling me that my work is too 'sophisticated' for the masses, that people don't understand the lyrical and musical references, that mine is a music for the elite. But that's a lie. These are the same people who'll go home and listen to the compositions of our national composer Heitor Villa-Lobos, and think that his symphonic and chamber adaptations of folkloric themes are of the elite, when it was the people—the Indians, workers, and peasants—that created those melodies, those words!

"The only way the people won't understand my music is if they can't hear it. So I prefer huge shows so that ticket prices can be low, or even free as they were in Belo Horizonte, so the people can come."

Foreigners always find it remarkable how artists who are stars in their own right in Brazil see no conflict of interest in performing virtually as sidemen on other musicians' records. Each member of Nascimento's band is pursuing a solo career, with well-received records of their own on the market. When George Duke asked Milton and Simone (the top female Brazilian artist of the time) to make *A Brazilian Love Affair* for CBS in 1980, there was no problem at all in attaining their services, plus the expert assistance of top Rio sessioneers. "I ran into George while he was attending a jazz festival in Rio, and we arranged to go into the studio together," Nascimento recalled. "It was very easy. We took some American and Brazilian musicians into Level Studios in Rio and did it. Duke invited Simone, and she sang my lyrics to one of Duke's melodies.

"I work well with many different musicians, as long as there is a sense of camaraderie, an affinity in what we want to express. The very process of collaboration actuates the values I want to express in my music—a kind of human interdependence, a shared responsibility for the governments that rule us and are supposed to serve us. I want to alert people not to stay at home thinking that they have no obligation to be aware of what is happening in the rest of the world.

"I am Brazilian, but I am also a citizen of the world. I did *Missa Dos Quilombos* in partnership with members of the revolutionary Catholic Church, those people who go among the Indians and peasants and help them struggle for their rights, thus those people have a lot in common with me. And from this sympathy of direction came an actual mass.

"Music is our language, the way we have of putting everything we are, everything we want to say to the world—thus this thing of 'star ego' can't exist. I can work with a Mercedes Sosa, a Wayne Shorter, or a Herbie Hancock because—I don't make this artificial separation between what is jazz, or pop, or ethnic, or classical—once we get together, we find always that the spirit, the fundamental cry, is the same.

"That is why I would love more than anything to work with Miles Davis one day. It would be the greatest gift music could give me."

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MILTON NASCIMENTO'S EQUIPMENT

"You'll have to ask my sound people Victor Correa and Ivo Barreto about the equipment," said Milton Nascimento. "There's too much for me to keep track of. The only thing I pay particular attention to is my guitar, which is usually an Ovation."

Victor and Ivo keep track of the following: bass amplification runs through a Roland preamp into a Phase Linear power amp; guitars into a Roland Jazz Chorus; the keyboard arsenal includes a Yamaha CP-70 electric grand piano and a Yamaha DX synthesizer, in addition to Oberheim OB-Xa and OB-8, all mixed via a 12 x 2 Yamaha PM-700; on-stage are a 32 x 8 Yamaha PM-2000 mixer, MXR (1/2-octave) graphic equalizers, JBL monitors, and Yamaha amps (400-watters); p.a. gear includes another Yamaha PM-2000 and one more PM-700, a few more Yamaha 400-watters, plus dbx digital delays and a 162 compressor, a VREI (1/2-octave) graphic equalizer, and a Roland RE-501 echo chamber.

MILTON NASCIMENTO SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

COURAGE—A&M 9-3019

CLUBE DA ESQUINA—EMI/Odeon
422901/02

CLUBE DA ESQUINA 2—EMI/Odeon
422832

MINAS—EMI/Odeon 82325

GERAES—EMI/Odeon 422806

MILTON—A&M 4611

JOURNEY TO DAWN—A&M 4719

TRAVESSIA—Som Livre 403 6152

SENTINELA—Ariola 201 610

CACADOR DE MIM—Ariola 201 632

MISSA DOS QUILOMBOS—Ariola 201 649

AMIMA—Ariola 210 909

AO VIVO—Ariola/Barclay 817 307-1

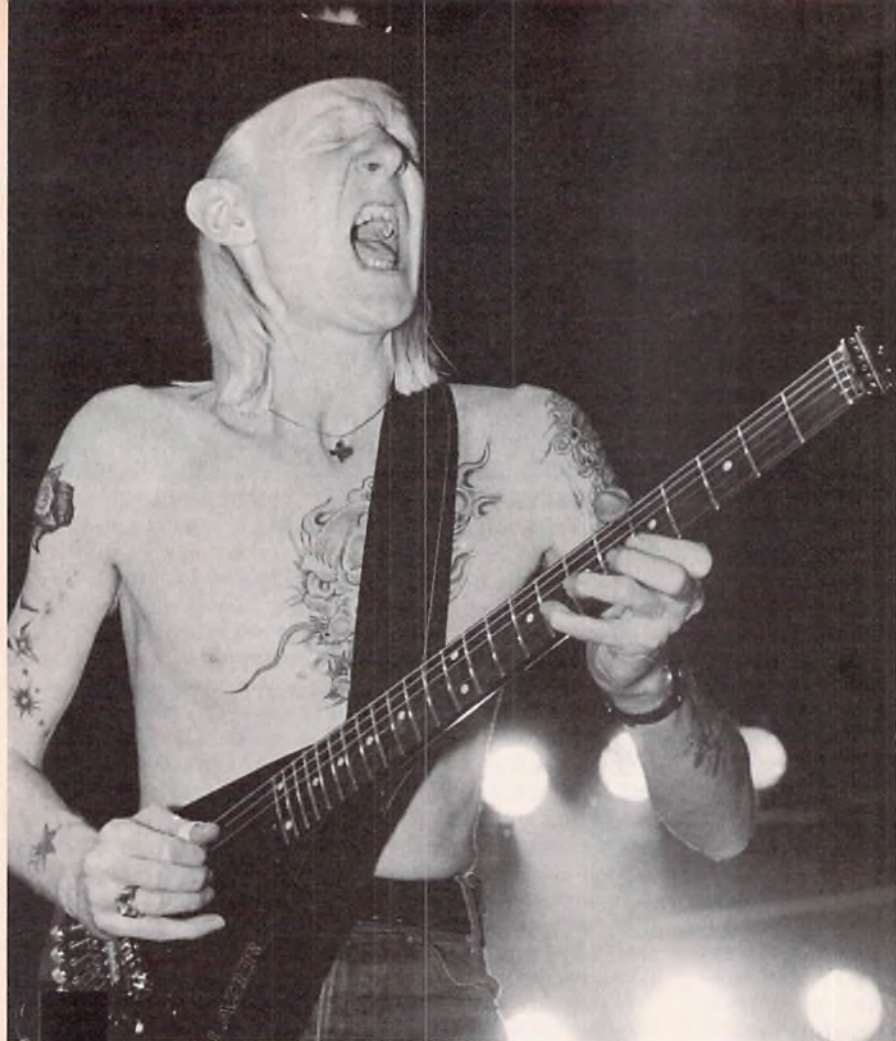
PAIXAO E FE—EMI/Odeon 422876

with Wayne Shorter

NATIVE DANCER—Columbia 33418

with George Duke

A BRAZILIAN LOVE AFFAIR—Epic 36483



PAUL NAIKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

Johnny Winter

Guitar Slinger

BY LARRY BIRNBAUM

In December of 1968, *Rolling Stone* magazine published a three-page article by Larry Sepulvado and John Burks entitled "Texas." About midway through their rambling survey of the "redneck hippie" scene, the authors devoted two-and-a-half paragraphs to a musician they introduced as "the hottest item outside of Janis Joplin. . . . If you can imagine a 130-pound cross-eyed albino bluesman with long fleecy hair playing some of the gutsiest fluid blues guitar you have ever heard," they went on, "then enter Johnny Winter."

That brief mention touched off what was then the costliest bidding war in the history of the recording industry. The tidal wave of publicity generated by Winter's "million dollar" contract with Columbia threatened to swamp his reputa-

tion as a genuine blues stylist, but the down-home authenticity of his first Columbia album, *Johnny Winter*, was enough to mollify even diehard purists.

Under the management of "spiritual producer" Steve Paul, Winter embarked on a nonstop round of ballroom and festival dates with his trio (drummer "Uncle" John Turner and bassist Tommy Shannon), which soon expanded to a quartet with the addition of Johnny's brother Edgar on keyboards and sax. But the blues craze of the late '60s had already peaked, and Winter, with a new band composed of former members of the McCoys (remember *Hang On, Sloopy?*), turned toward high-energy rock, performing material by Bob Dylan and the Rolling Stones in addition to his own originals and those of guitarist Rick

Derringer.

The pressures of constant touring took their toll, and Winter spent most of 1972 in a New Orleans hospital. He bounced back the following year with a fresh group of sidemen, recording his fifth and sixth albums for Columbia before switching to Steve Paul's newly formed Blue Sky subsidiary. Between 1974 and 1980 he recorded six LPs under his own name, and also produced and performed on four Muddy Waters albums for the label, three of which won Grammy awards. "That really helped me immensely," says Winter, "because it got me back into doing blues. I kind of rededicated myself to the blues after the Muddy Waters thing."

Reflecting his disenchantment with contemporary rock trends, Winter's last three Blue Sky albums took a retrospective turn, but were indifferently promoted and sold disappointingly. With no other major label deal in the offing, he signed with Chicago's Alligator Records, and earlier this year recorded *Guitar Slinger*—in many ways the best and, despite the absence of original material, most truly representative album of his career. Backed by members of Albert Collins' band, the Icebreakers, and by blues harpist Billy Branch, tenor man Gene "Daddy G" Barge, and the Mellow Fellows horns, Winter performs a set of rhythm & blues classics by the likes of Clifton Chenier, Lonnie Brooks, Earl King, Bobby Bland, and—inevitably—Muddy Waters.

Although vintage r&b has become popular once again, the 40-year-old Winter is no mere revivalist, but a first-generation Gulf Coast rock & roller who began his recording career in the late '50s. Despite his reputation as a Texas hippie bluesman, his musical roots are as deeply embedded in Louisiana and Mississippi as in his native state. Indeed, he grew up just 20 miles from the Louisiana border, and spent a good part of his childhood in the Mississippi Delta.

Winter's father was from Leland, Mississippi. A career army officer who graduated from the Virginia Military Institute, he was in Texas on official business when he met his wife-to-be. The new Mrs. Winter moved to Leland, but her husband was shipped overseas, so she returned to her hometown of Beaumont, Texas, where on February 23, 1944, she gave birth to John Dawson Winter III. "Daddy was pretty much in the army until I was almost two years old," says Johnny, "so he didn't even realize I was an albino until then. He had just seen pictures of me."

Johnny's grandfather had been a cotton broker in Leland. When World War II ended, Johnny's father took over the business but was unable to compete with the volume dealers who dominated the industry. Edgar was born when Johnny was three; a year or two later, the family

moved to Beaumont for good, but returned to Leland every summer. "I pretty much thought of myself as being from Mississippi till I was 11 or 12," says Johnny, "but I really don't remember being exposed to blues much when we lived there. Later on when we'd go back, though, it was easy to hear great blues."

* * *

Music came naturally to the two young brothers. "We sang regularly, because daddy loved to sing harmony. He sang in a barbershop quartet, sang in a church choir, so Edgar and I started singin' as soon as we were born, almost. And I started playin' clarinet when I was about five. Daddy played saxophone, and mostly what I was hearin' were his big band records—Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw. So I was in the school band, and clarinet was the lead instrument. I played clarinet until I was eight or nine, but I had to stop because my orthodontist told me that I had a bad overbite. And that was traumatic to me—I was sobbin' for days, man—and to get me off of feelin' sorry for myself about the clarinet, my father started showin' me chords on the banjo and ukulele."

Johnny and Edgar began performing as a duet in an Everly Brothers vein. "At first it was just me playin' ukulele and both of us singin'; then it was both of us playin' ukuleles and singin' harmony; then it was me playin' guitar and Edgar playin' ukulele; and finally it progressed to both of us playin' guitars and singin' together."

As the Winter Brothers, they won talent contests and appeared on local television shows, eventually traveling to New York to audition for Ted Mack's *Original Amateur Hour*. "We were just little kids—I couldn't have been more than 10 or 11—and we finally ended up going on at three or four in the morning. We were half asleep, but I still thought we were

great. I don't know why we didn't get it."

Johnny's switch from ukulele to guitar coincided with his first exposure to rock & roll. "I started hearin' Little Richard, Fats Domino, Carl Perkins, and the early Elvis Presley things, and that's what made me want to play guitar. Before that, ukulele was great, but like my father told me, 'The only two ukulele players I ever knew that did anything were Arthur Godfrey and Ukulele Ike, and I think you got a much better chance of makin' it with a guitar.'"

The fledgling guitarist batted on the sounds of rhythm & blues from high-powered radio stations like XERF, in Del Rio, Texas; KWKH, in Shreveport, Louisiana; and WLAC, in Nashville, Tennessee—and avidly collected the latest blues sides by mail order. Closer to home, cajun bluesman Clarence Garlow hosted his *Bon Ton Show* from the KJET studio in Beaumont. Johnny began telephoning Garlow with record requests, and soon was visiting the studio regularly.

At the age of 14, Winter organized his first band, Johnny and the Jammers. Edgar Winter was now playing piano, with Willard Chamberlain on tenor sax, David Holiday on drums, and Chicagoan Dennis Drugan on bass. At 15 Johnny competed as a solo act in a local talent show, the Johnny Melody Contest, and won first prize: some clothing, records, and an audition at Bill Hall's Gulf Coast Recording Studios in Beaumont. "I brought the band in," says Johnny, "and we played the two songs I had written, *School Day Blues* and *You Know I Love You*. We thought it would just be an audition, but Bill said, 'Great. We'll cut it right now.' We cut the whole thing in an hour or two, and it came out a month later on [Pappy Dailey's Houston-based] Dart Records. I think it was number eight in Beaumont, which was great for us—it meant that we got a lot of school gigs, and we even

started playin' club gigs. I'd tell my daddy, 'Don't worry, the drummer's daddy's gonna be there, and he's takin' real good care of us.' Well, our drummer's father was pretty much of a lush, and by the middle of the night, he didn't even know if we were there or not."

On nights when he was not performing with the Jammers, Johnny would hang out at blues clubs where Clarence Garlow was playing. Garlow had had a regional hit with *Bon Ton Roule* and had launched the career of his former sideman, Clifton Chenier. "He'd watch out for me in the clubs," says Winter, "and he'd let me sit in. He always enjoyed sayin', 'This man, I'm his idol. Everything he knows, I've done taught him.' And he'd go on for about a half-hour, and then he'd say, 'Here he is, ladies and gentlemen, the little Bon Ton!' And he'd bring me up and let me do two or three songs."

Age was no hindrance when Johnny made the rounds of local cabarets. "I had a fake ID, and by the time I was 16, I was as tall as I am now, and the white hair just threw people. But everybody knew me—I was playin' lots of clubs, and I had been on tv since I was a little kid. Beaumont was a wide-open town in those days, too. There were whorehouses for five dollars a throw; you could gamble; you could drink after hours. There was anything you wanted to do until I was about 16-and-a-half. Then this guy from Dallas, Tom James, came down and cleaned up everything—kicked our sheriff out of office, closed up all the whorehouses, and turned Beaumont into a terrible place to live. That's when everybody started goin' across the bridge to Louisiana."

Winter ventured to Beaumont's all-black Raven Club to see touring artists like Muddy Waters, B. B. King, Bobby Bland, and Junior Parker, and even sat in with B. B. one night. He also traveled to Huey Meaux's Pleasure Pura Ballroom shows in Port Arthur, Texas, to see Louisiana bluesmen like Guitar Junior (a.k.a. Lonnie Brooks), Lightnin' Slim, and Lazy Lester.

* * *

Despite the success of the Chuck Berry-ish *School Day Blues*, Bill Hall had not renewed Winter's contract. "I heard later that it was because I was an albino," says Johnny. "He thought I was too weird to sell records." But Winter continued to record at Hall's studio as a sideman on other artists' sessions, and—for producer Ken Ritter—under his own name. Ritter, the nephew of country singer Tex Ritter, had acquired the publishing rights to Sheb Wooley's *Purple People Eater* and invested the profits in a record label called KRCO. "I went to Ken and asked him how much it would cost to press a few hundred records," says Johnny, "and he figured out how much it would cost and charged me about twice that much."



PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

FATHER AND SONS: From left, Eric Clapton, blues patriarch Muddy Waters, and Johnny Winter.



PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

But we made money on both of the first two records, so after that he started payin' for it."

Winter's first KRCO single was a funky guitar instrumental called *Creepy*, which was backed with the ballad *Oh My Darling*. Next came *Hey Hey Hey Hey* backed with *One Night Of Love*. "That really shouldn't have come out," says Johnny. "We didn't know what we were doin' in the studio, and there wasn't any bass that you could hear at all on the record." After Ritter changed the name of his label to Frolic, Winter cut *Voodoo Twist*, a variation of Joey Dee's *Peppermint Twist*, and *Ease My Pain*, a Jimmy Reed-style blues. "That was the first real blues song that I recorded," he says. "I played guitar and dubbed in the harmonica on that one."

Ritter then took Winter to the Crowley, Louisiana, studio of producer Jay Miller, who had recorded Slim Harpo and other bayou bluesmen for Ernie Young's Excello label. "Slim Harpo had a hit with *Rainin' In My Heart*," Johnny recalls, "and after that Ken wanted to have harmonica on everything. So we went to Crowley, and he had bailed Lazy Lester out of jail, and Lazy played harp on *That's What Love Does*. And after that record, I started playin' with a group that had the number one record in the area—Diamond Jim Wheeler and the Coastliers—and I recorded on two or three records with them on Diamond Records."

The flip side of *That's What Love Does* had been *Shed So Many Tears*, a Guitar Slim-styled ballad recorded by Elton Anderson for Goldband Records. "I sat in with Elton a lot," says Johnny, "and he said that I reminded him of Guitar Slim, and so he wrote a tune for me, *Crying In My Heart*. It was really just a copy of some of the other Guitar Slim tunes."

The song, which Winter recorded under the pseudonym of Texas Guitar Slim, was first released on Diamond Records and then leased to Floyd Swallow's Jin label. "Right after that," recounts Winter, "I cut another record for Ken Ritter—a real novelty version of [Bo Diddley's] *Road Runner*, and the other side was *The Guy You Left Behind*—and he leased that to Todd Records in Tennessee. And he was unhappy that I made the Texas Guitar Slim record for Floyd, and got him to discontinue it after he'd sold a couple of thousand copies."

Winter had graduated from high school and was attending Lamar State College in Beaumont, but dropped out after a semester to pursue a full-time musical career. His old friend Dennis Drugan, the bass player from Johnny and the Jammers, had returned to Chicago; in 1963 Winter moved to the Windy City and joined Drugan's band, the Gents. Winter was playing Chicago's Rush Street entertainment strip, making more money than he ever had, but no one he talked to could tell him the where-

abouts of the blues legends he had hoped to meet. By the time he discovered Mike Bloomfield's Tuesday-night jam sessions at the Fickle Pickle, he had already decided to leave. "We could sneak in a little bit of blues where we were playin'," he says, "but they still wanted to hear mostly twist music, and after six or eight months, I really wanted to get back down south, because down there even the white people wanted to hear stuff like Ray Charles and Bobby Bland and James Brown. I guess I just got homesick."

Returning to Beaumont, he recorded a version of Johnny "Guitar" Watson's *Gangster Of Love* on Frolic; the flip side was *Eternally*, a pop-oriented original with a horn arrangement by Edgar Winter. Atlantic Records leased *Eternally*

from Ken Ritter, added studio echo, and backed it with a Winter composition called *You'll Be The Death Of Me*. "Eternally was a real big hit around Houston, Beaumont, and parts of Louisiana," says Johnny. "My price went way up, and I was doin' coliseum shows with the Everly Brothers and Jerry Lee Lewis."

In 1964 Winter moved to Atlanta and began touring the Deep South for promoter Johnny O'Leary, returning to Texas to cut his last single for Ritter, the Beatles-flavored *Gone For Bad* (which was leased to MGM). His regular band—known variously as the Crystaliers, It & Them, and the Black Plague—now consisted of brother Edgar, on keyboards and sax; Ikey Sweat, on bass; and Norman Samaha, on drums. After two-and-a-half years on the road, the exhausted musicians settled in Houston, where they spent 1967 in residence at the Act III club.

During this period, producer Roy Ames attempted to negotiate a deal for Winter with Don Robie's Duke Records, but Bill Hall, claiming to have bought Johnny's contract from Ken Ritter, threatened legal action. Robie backed off, but Huey Meaux agreed to record a Winter single for his own Pacemaker label. The resulting disc offered the strange pairing of *Leavin' Blues*, a slide guitar showpiece a la Muddy Waters, and *Birds Can't Row Boats*, a surrealistically worded exercise in psychedelic folk-rock. Meaux taped quite a bit of Winter material, but released only one other single (under the name of The Insight), this time coupling Charles Brown's *Please Come Home For Christmas*—with Johnny and Edgar crooning in choirboy harmony—and James Brown's *Out Of Sight*.

"After the Act III job folded," Winter relates, "I worked for a little while with Roy Head's group, the Traits, after Roy had left, and I made one record with them on Universal Records—*Tramp* and *Parchman Farm*. And I sang on both of those, even though the record is by the Traits. And after that I got together with Uncle John Turner and [Stevie Ray Vaughan's current bassist] Tommy Shannon. I'd known Uncle John since I was a kid—he was from Port Arthur and he played in bands—but he was always Johnny Mack Turner or Red, 'cause he had red hair. So I was playin' with the Traits, and Uncle John came back from Dallas with long hair and love beads, and he was really the person that convinced me that I should go into blues full time. He said, 'Man, you gotta start playin' to the hippies, 'cause they love what you do best.'"

Winter's income fell drastically when the trio began performing at Houston's Love Street Light Circus. For a while they commuted between Love Street and Austin's Vulcan Gas Company, until new

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JOHNNY WINTER'S EQUIPMENT

Johnny Winter plays a Lazer guitar through a Music Man amp.

JOHNNY WINTER SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

GUITAR SLINGER—Alligator 4735
 RAISIN' CAIN—Blue Sky 36343
 WHITE, HOT AND BLUE—Blue Sky 34575
 NOTHING BUT THE BLUES—Blue Sky 34813
 JOHNNY AND EDGAR WINTER TOGETHER—Blue Sky 34033
 CAPTURED LIVE—Blue Sky 33944
 JOHN DAWSON WINTER III—Blue Sky 33292
 SAINTS AND SINNERS—Columbia 32715
 STILL ALIVE AND WELL—Columbia 32188
 JOHNNY WINTER AND/LIVE—Columbia 33651
 JOHNNY WINTER AND—Columbia 30475
 SECOND WINTER—Columbia 9947
 JOHNNY WINTER—Columbia 9826
 THE PROGRESSIVE BLUES EXPERIMENT—Imperial 12431
 BEFORE THE STORM—Janus 2JLS 3056
 ABOUT BLUES—Janus 3008
 FIRST WINTER—Buddah 7513
 EARLY WINTER—Crazy Cajun 1009
 AUSTIN, TEXAS—United Artists UA-LA139-F
 READY FOR WINTER—Accord 7135
 THE JOHNNY WINTER STORY—GRT 10010

with Muddy Waters

HARD AGAIN—Blue Sky 34449
 I'M READY—Blue Sky 34928
 MUDDY "MISSISSIPPI" WATERS LIVE—Blue Sky 35712
 KING BEE—Blue Sky 37064

with Sonny Terry

WHOOPIN'—Alligator 4734

CANNONBALL ADDERLEY

WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED SOUL—Pablo Live 2308-238: *AZULE SERAPE*; *BIG P*; *ONE FOR DADDY-O*; *THE CHANT*; *WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE*; *CANNONBALL'S THEME*.

Personnel: Adderley, alto saxophone; Nat Adderley, cornet; Victor Feldman, piano; Sam Jones, bass; Louis Hayes, drums.

★★★★★

KNOW WHAT I MEAN—Fantasy Original Jazz Classics OJC-105: *WALTZ FOR DEBBY*; *GOODBYE*; *WHO CARES*; *VENICE*; *TOY*; *ELSA*; *NANCY (WITH THE LAUGHING FACE)*; *KNOW WHAT I MEAN*.

Personnel: Adderley, alto saxophone; Bill Evans, piano; Percy Heath, bass; Connie Kay, drums.

★★★★½

Bobby Haas, a tenor man from North Carolina, went to Florida to teach school in the '50s. He wandered into a jazz joint one night and asked to sit in. "Sure, man," the leader, also a school teacher, said. "What tune?" "*Perdido*." ("He counted it like this," Haas says and snaps his fingers uptempo. "That was two and four," he laughs, recalling Cannonball Adderley's virtuosity and his own circumstantial mortality.)

Today, Haas is still a teacher—a good one—and Adderley is remembered because he radiated the chief skill of a great teacher and artist—communication. He did it by engaging an audience verbally, visually, musically, and spiritually. Three of these magnetic qualities are present on *What Is This Thing Called Soul* (you can imagine the visual component), newly issued performances recorded at concerts in Paris, Gothenburg, and Stockholm in 1960.

The altoist's blistering facility and exuberance dominate the album, especially the hot tempos of *Thing Called Love* and Jimmy Heath's *Big P*, but brother Nat showed bright ideas and sure technique then, too (cleaner than today). Feldman, Jones, and Hayes kept the heat up, and the pianist foretold funk-to-come with his tune *The Chant*. As a working band playing state-of-the-art bop, with Cannonball's personality lifting everything, this quintet dealt strong traditions, echoed contemporary trends set by John Coltrane and Miles Davis, and projected its own influence on the future. Cannonball's swinging articulation (there's still no one like him) and charisma make this a valuable album.

The difference between *What Is* and the reissued 1962 studio session with Bill Evans and half of the Modern Jazz Quartet is the difference between extroversion and introspection. Adderley and Evans spent 1958 together in the Miles Davis Sextet. Both were established combo leaders in '62, but with vastly different temperaments of swing. This session leans more toward Evans' preference for ballad tempos. Adderley plays comfortably, melodically, and fluidly, igniting most characteristically on *Who Cares* and Evans' *Waltz For Debby*.

Evans is in a single-line mood. When he lays down chords (*Who Cares*, *Toy*, the modal title



track), they're inevitably intriguing ones, full of romantic nuance and agile motion. Heath and Kay support lightly and unobtrusively. The rating is more reserved because Adderley is necessarily more reserved. He communicated strongest as an extrovert, when you could feel him reaching for you. —owen cordle

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

BORN IN THE U.S.A.—Columbia 38653: *BORN IN THE U.S.A.*; *COVER ME*; *DARLINGTON COUNTY*; *WORKING ON THE HIGHWAY*; *DOWNBOUND TRAIN*; *I'M ON FIRE*; *NO SURRENDER*; *BOBBY JEAN*; *I'M GOIN' DOWN*; *GLORY DAYS*; *DANCING IN THE DARK*; *MY HOMETOWN*.

Personnel: Springsteen, vocals, guitar; Roy Bittan, piano, synthesizer, vocals; Clarence Clemons, saxophone, percussion, vocals; Max Weinberg, drums, vocals; Garry Tallent, bass, vocals; Steve Van Zandt, acoustic guitar, mandolin, vocals; Danny Federici, organ, glockenspiel, piano.

★★★★★

In *Nebraska*, his stark guitar-and-harmonica album of last year, Bruce Springsteen presented 10 tunes from the working class point of view, about struggling to stay alive in the age of Reaganomics. It was a bleak, dark, demoralizing album. In short, no fun.

On *Born In The U.S.A.* the Boss is reunited with the E Street Band, but it ain't exactly no party. The rousing, good-time spirit that Bruce and the E Streeters are noted for is mixed with some of the melancholy and moral outrage left-over from *Nebraska*. While the music is often upbeat and punchy, the tales of layoffs, love affairs gone bad, and lost youth strike an emotional chord, especially if you've been there.

Over the years Springsteen has been an eloquent spokesman for the average American male. His characters are ordinary Joes who work at the car wash, on the assembly line, on the road crew. They are real people with real

dreams, fears, and frustrations. But unlike the brash, alienated vagabonds and dream-chasers from *Born To Run*, his smash debut of nine years ago, his characters in *Born In The U.S.A.* are older and sadder. They have come to accept their lives and are now left to cope with harsh economic realities and broken dreams.

Springsteen does a lot of fond reminiscing in this album. In *No Surrender* he recalls his rebellious school days: "We busted out of class, had to get away from those fools/We learned more from a three-minute record than we ever learned in school"—a sentiment that anyone who grew up with rock & roll can relate to. In *Glory Days* he reflects on the high school star pitcher who now sits around crying in his beer about the days of yore and the high school heartthrob who could turn all the boys' heads, now divorced with a kid and very sad—"Time slips away and leaves you with nothing but boring stories of glory days."

Economic hardship rears its ugly head throughout much of *Born In The U.S.A.* In *My Hometown*, a poignant ballad with uncharacteristically gentle vocals, Springsteen speaks of the textile mill closing down: "Foreman says these jobs are going boys and they ain't coming back." In the Tom Petty-esque *Downbound Train* the character is not only laid off from his job at the lumber yard, but his girlfriend leaves him as well. The narrator in the title cut is a Viet Nam vet who has survived and come back to find no jobs and no breaks: "Nowhere to run, ain't nowhere to go."

More disappointment with working life is expressed in *Working On The Highway*, an insistently uptempo handclapper that borrows a riff from Eddie Cochran's bouncy *Summertime Blues*. Here the character is bored with his monotonous job of laying down blacktop, but he asserts: "Someday mister I'm gonna lead a better life than this." And in *Dancing In The Dark*, the synth-driven pop-rockers geared for radio play, the narrator confesses that he's tired and bored with himself: "You sit around getting older/There's a joke here somewhere and it's on me."

All this preoccupation with age will undoubtedly hit home with the baby boomers, who are now slouching towards middle age. But young fans of Scorpions and Judas Priest and other popular rock bands today won't know what to make of this album. The prose is much too literate and tinged with existentialism to stick with the pre-pubescent head-banging crowd.

Musically, *Born In The U.S.A.* is stripped down from the overly ambitious bombast and bravado of *Born To Run*. Bobby Jean and the title cut are the only orchestrated pieces, featuring those familiar glockenspiel accents of Danny Federici, while tunes like *No Surrender*, *I'm Goin' Down*, and *Darlington County* are bare-bones rockers propelled by Max Weinberg's steady Stones-like backbeat and Clarence Clemons' growling sax honking away in the tradition of King Curtis.

To jaded jazz ears this stuff might seem simplistic. But the appeal of Springsteen's music lies not in the harmonic or melodic content of his tunes. And it goes beyond the sheer gusto of the E Street Band. It's the passion in his anguished vocals, the power of his telling prose, and his unquestionable sincerity that has made Springsteen the phenomenon that he is.

—bill milkowski

MICHEL PETRUCCIANI

100 HEARTS—Concord Jazz GW-3001: *TURN AROUND; THREE FORGOTTEN MAGIC WORDS; SILENCE; ST. THOMAS; POT POURRI (SOME DAY MY PRINCE WILL COME, ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE, A CHILD IS BORN, VERY EARLY, POT POURRI TRANSITIONS); 100 HEARTS.*

Personnel: Petrucciani, piano.

★ ★ ★ ★

Leonard Feather hailed him as a "phenomenal master of the piano." Charles Lloyd proclaimed him an "avatar of the keyboard." Voters in the **down beat** Critics Poll selected him as this year's pianistic Talent Deserving Wider Recognition. Can the young Michel Petrucciani live up to (and survive) such accolades? *100 Hearts* suggests that by and large the young French pianist is bearing up quite well indeed.

If it's possible to fault Petrucciani's playing, it's only in that his considerable technique and expansive imagination sometimes lead him to pack too much into one piece, to journey down every possible improvisational byway, to sometimes play more than is necessary. But such exuberance is nonetheless fascinating to contemplate. Consider the approach Petrucciani takes to Ornette Coleman's *Turn Around*. He addresses this gutsy, side-slipping blues line with brittle excursions into inside and outside tonalities supported by a hefty walking bass line spiced with witty twists. Then, two-thirds of the way through the piece, Petrucciani abandons its driving premise in a flurry of fluttery arpeggios and fragments of bouncing stride figures. The walking line returns, peppered with galumphing bass figures and infused with such bluesy conviction that the pianist's digression is excusable.

Sonny Rollins' *St. Thomas* similarly bursts at the seams as Petrucciani scampers through a nonstop grab-bag of pianistic devices and

pounces into unexpected tonalities, again creating the impression that his powers of invention range too widely to be contained in one tune. It's difficult, though, not to share the pleasure Petrucciani takes in attempting to pack anything and just about everything into this keyboard showpiece.

In light of Petrucciani's active imagination, a piece like the aptly titled *Pot Pourri* should come as no surprise. Here, Petrucciani blends five different vehicles, but the result is by no

means a straightforward medley. Instead, it's a freely associative evocation of the *mood* of these pieces, with themes fragmented and extended, linked with rapid fire, Powellian lines, bits of blues funk, and countless transitional permutations of the Parker/Gillespie introduction to *All The Things You Are*. A flat-out showpiece, like Petrucciani's *St. Thomas* variations, it verges on the brink of flamboyancy, yet is saved by the aplomb with which Petrucciani ties the pieces together.

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RECORD REVIEWS

Less effusive offerings here include Charlie Haden's *Silence*, a moving exercise in subtle degrees of harmonic tension and repose, and *100 Hearts*, a lilting, pretty tune built on seesawing chordal figures. Toward the end of this piece, Petrucciani whistles off-key, presumably deliberately. The result, however cockeyed, somehow works. It could just be that once completely developed, Petrucciani's ability to imaginatively fuse divergent musical elements may be the principal virtue of this near—but not yet quite—master of the piano.

—jon balleras

PAUL MOTIAN

THE STORY OF MARYAM—Soul Note 1074: *9X9*; *5 MILES TO WRENTHAM*; *THE OWL OF CRANSTON*; *TRIESTE*; *LOOK TO THE BLACK WALL*; *THE STORY OF MARYAM*.

Personnel: Motian, drums; Jim Pepper, tenor, soprano saxophone; Joe Lovano, tenor saxophone; Bill Frisell, electric guitar; Ed Schuller, bass.

★ ★ ★

BARRY ALTSCHUL

IRINA—Soul Note 1065: *TAP-A-JACK*; *IRINA*; *DA BARON'S BLUES*; *SIPS*; *LE TANGO*; *JITTERBUG WALTZ*.

Personnel: Altschul, drums; Enrico Rava, trumpet, flugelhorn; John Surman, baritone, soprano saxophone; Mark Helias, bass.

★ ★ ★

ELVIN JONES

FOR JOHN—Palo Alto 8039-N: *NECESSARY EVIL*; *OCTOBER'S CHILD*; *HARMONIQUE*; *WHATEVER POSSESSED ME*; *FAMILIAR GROUND*; *WHY TRY TO CHANGE ME NOW*; *MINOR BLUES*; *BROTHER JOHN*.

Personnel: Jones, drums; Pat LaBarbera, tenor, soprano saxophone; Kenny Kirkland, piano; Reggie Workman, bass.

★ ★ ½

Three drummers, three distinct musical styles: from Elvin Jones, flat-out, low-slung swing in the Coltrane mode; from Barry Altschul, crisp, flexible free-bop, with the emphasis on clarity and counterpoint; from Paul Motian, anxious, swarming introspection with lots of activity and free tempo tension-and-release. Instinctively, my taste runs toward Jones and Altschul and away from Motian's gooey confessionalism, but the latter's gloomy concept album is the most consistently creative and cohesive of these three.

The Story Of Maryam explores childhood memories through a glass darkly: a carousel, a five-mile walk to school, an owl outside a sister's house, an aunt—all swirl through the music like images in a restless dream. A lot of the mood (and success) is attributable to the lambent electric guitar of Bill Frisell, whose playing might be described as Jimi Hendrix in slow motion. Working his second session with Motian (a queer, rockish ECM album came out

last year), Frisell cradles and echoes the saxophones of Jim Pepper and Joe Lovano with curling distortions and whines. Solo, he sings balefully (like pedal steel on the wonderfully symphonic *Owl Of Cranston*), clangs and chimes like campanile bells, or collapses into hysterical (Eugene) Chadbourne jelly (*9 X 9*). Inside this expanding guitar cocoon, Lovano and Pepper struggle toward flight with varying success. Lovano, strongest on the straight ballad, *Trieste*, where his sentimentality is simply revealed, flaps over the pads like a small, fast-moving bird—polite, intelligent, but perhaps too ready to fall back on familiar patterns. Pepper, the post-modernist, breaks field like a bat, with discontinuous fragments and wide vibrato, improvising with texture and melody, not harmony—more contemporary than Lovano, but a bit gruff for the prevailing mood. When Pepper's really on, as in *Look To The Black Wall*, even Motian's frippety thrashing isn't dark enough to support the saxophonist's frenzy. But out of all this hand-wringing comes, finally, clarity. Folksy and bittersweet, the title cut skips cheerily along in a fetching duple meter, resolving the tension of the journey. Maryam, who was Motian's aunt, must have been a lovely gal.

Not as luscious, though, as *Irina*, the woman for whom Barry Altschul named his album and wrote a sumptuous ballad. Altschul, whose sputtering precision has been instantly identifiable ever since his legendary work on Dave Holland's *Conference Of The Birds* album, has for several records now been consciously reinterpreting the jazz text. (Appropriately enough, his name means "Old School" in German.) What sheer delight is this lean and clean retelling of the cool, pianoless quartet story of Gerry Mulligan and Chet Baker. John Surman's throaty, hollow bari sound (downstairs, that is; up top, he's a screeching modernist) is indeed Mulliganesque, zig-zagging with Enrico Rava's butterscotch legato over Altschul's spirited ticks, tacks, and snickety-snacks. *Da Baron's Blues*, one of those can't-stop free-bop tunes, is the prize here, with the title portrait, *Irina*, a close second. You may miss Ray Anderson (who recorded the tune earlier with Altschul), but his gutsy trombone wouldn't have been right for the buffed punch of this style. Surman and Rava combine, on the other hand, for harmonium-like intervals and lines reminiscent of Mingus and Ellington. I love the hand-off from Rava's circus-happy squirt to Surman's slow, staccato hops on soprano, with Altschul lifting everyone into doubletime at just the right second. However, when the horn players daringly solo in tandem, improvising counterpoint on Mark Helias' *Le Tango*, their disparate styles collide. Nor does anyone seem inspired by Ray Anderson's riff, *Tap-A-Jack*, or the ridiculous resetting of *Jitterbug Waltz* into 4/4 time. High marks, though, for the care and conception throughout, and for *Irina* and *Da Baron's Blues*. I'll be playing this one often.

Likewise, there's nothing like the warm buzz of Elvin and Reggie Workman floating around the living room. Unfortunately, this hurriedly put together album is a bit too Trane-derived to hold interest for very long. Actually dedicated to saxophonist Pat LaBarbera's brother John (and not to Coltrane), the patented J. C. feels

are nevertheless there: in a *Giant Steps* footnote, complete with Elvin's 12-cylinders and all that implied energy (*Familiar Ground*); a spacious, spiritual three-against-four with sledgehammer sexual release every two bars (*October's Child*); two crying ballads with brushes (*Whatever Possessed Me*, by Tadd Dameron, and *Why Try To Change Me Now*, by Cy Coleman); and an actual Coltrane song, *Harmonique*, in which the master dignified tenor saxophone harmonics by including them gracefully in a melody. But *Harmonique* and Dameron's tune don't outweigh LaBarbera's generic writing and approach. He's got the tone and changes down, but not the urgency that compelled Trane to suddenly cram five notes instead of four into a beat, or long suspend rhythmic resolution. This is Coltrane by the book, with the edges squared off. Worse, Kenny Kirkland, one of my favorite pianists, sounds unprepared for date, fumbling and groping through the tunes. This record doesn't come anywhere near Elvin's last Palo Alto effort, where Terumasa Hino and that other Trane disciple, Dave Liebman, provided ensemble and solo interest throughout.

—paul de Barros

JAZZ MEMBERS BIG BAND

MAY DAY—SeaBreeze 2014: *LADY BIRD*; *MAY DAY*; *OTHER SUMMER*; *A PATCHWORK BLUE*; *HELLO YOUNG LOVERS*; *MAGUELITO*; *I'M GLAD THERE IS YOU*; *MONGOOSE JUICE*.

Personnel: Mark Curry, Steve Jensen, David Urban, Art Davis, Shabba Nur, trumpet; Scott Bentall, Larry McCabe, Jeff Lindberg, Doug Tidaback, Mike Young, trombone; Donald Crevie, french horn; Dan Anderson, tuba; Randy Salman, Tom Trinka, Ed Peterson, Brian Sanders, Brian Ripp, Ed Senechal, Larry Gionneschi, Barry Winograd, Brad Wheeler, reeds; John Campbell, piano; Dan DeLorenzo, bass; Joel Spencer, drums; Greg Walroth, Dan Anderson, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★

GUY FRICANO

JAZZ INSIDE OUT—Forever Jazz 0013: *MAPA SAMBA*; *THE TIME MACHINE*; *HECKLE & JYDE*; *WALKIN'*; *BODY AND SOUL*.

Personnel: Fricano, Boris Steffen, Nick Drozdoff, Dave Carpenter, Tom Merideth, Charlie Colgras, Mark Thompson, trumpet; Art Henderlong, Brian Jacob, Bob Skallup, Bill Chaloner, Murray Crewe, Jack Schmidt, Bob Speer, trombone; Mike Buckwalter, Jeff Tollfsen, John Catomer, Steve Hayworth, Glen Estrin, Beverly Manasse, french horn; Rich Copolongo, Joe Daley, John Komegay, Leo Kawczynski, Ken Kritzberg, Bob Frankich, Jim Massoth, Tony Vacca, Barry Winograd, reeds; John Redfield, piano; Eldsee Young, Scott Mason, bass; Chuck Christiansen, drums; Jeff Brown, Geraldo DeOliveira, percussion.

★ ★ ★

Chicago is a lot more of a musicians' town than

a lot of people probably realize. And in the last five or 10 years there has been a noticeable rise in serious big band activity, some of which is represented on these two albums.

By far the most finished and slickest of these groups is the Jazz Members Big Band. *May Day* is beautifully recorded and has a nice diversity of moods and tempos within a generally conventional big band framework. The ensembles are crisp and carefully shaped. The reeds have a particularly scintillating sparkle, whether it be the whispered whimsy of Tadd Dameron's *Lady Bird* or the sleek swing of *Mongoose Juice*. The arrangements are models of craftsmanship and intelligence (Woody Herman fans will recognize both the shadow and substance of *Four Brothers* flitting through *Mongoose*). The work of soloists John Campbell, Steve Jense, Brian Wheeler, and the others is nicely fitted to the material.

The band has nearly everything, in fact, except a mark of individuality. Some of the support ensembles behind the soloists are faceless and unswinging. On *Hello Young Lovers*, for instance, the band simply offers long, rather bland chords against Larry McCabe's trombone solo. There is predictability where there should be the unexpected; for example, one of the most annoying clichés shared by practically every big band since the '50s is the splashy drum fill dropped into every rest two beats or longer. Still, the band's strengths are so appealing that it would hardly be fair to hold against this crew what others have been getting away with for so long.

Two of the most intriguing tracks on the program are—oddly enough for a Basie-style swing band—ballads. *Other Summer* is an original by Jim Knapp with an oblique, impressionistic melody arranged in a rainbow of soft pastels. Knapp has also applied the same care and moods to *I'm Glad There Is You*, played at a tempo so leisurely it practically stands still. But it gives the long, foggy chords time to seep in and brings a noble but ambiguous intelligence to the Jimmy Dorsey standard. It's superb ensemble writing.

Guy Fricano is out in full battle array—30 pieces—on his *Jazz Inside Out*. Yet, as it turns out, this is anything but the button-down big band session produced by the Jazz Members. It's a galloping, full-throttle soloists' showcase where the charts are little more than lazy, nondescript bookends for the stormy, Rollins- and Coltrane-derived middles, which are often exciting and always contemporary in the best sense of that often suspect word.

Fricano is an imposing trumpet talent by any standards, with a remarkable range which never loses its fullness or body, even when it flies through ledger lines high above the staff. He has a ripping but disciplined attack that runs full speed from the opening cut up to the final seven-minute *Body And Soul*. He is joined by a fine lineup of guest players, including reedmen Rich Corpolongo and the wonderful Joe Daley, who's been on the Chicago scene a long, long time. The three of them lock into a smoking cycle of wild fours on *Ma-Pa Samba* that veer into a collective free-form ensemble at the climax.

Unfortunately, the recording is inclined to sound artificial, especially Chuck Chris-

tiansen's drums and the very swinging piano of John Redfield, which often sounds tinny.

—John McDonough

STEVE SMITH

ORION—Columbia FC 39375: *FUTURE PRIMITIVE*; *THANK YOU MR. EDISON*; *THE STRUT*; *ORION*; *BLADE*; *THE ADVENTURES OF HECTOR AND JOSE*; *SHADOWS PAST*; *BLUES TO BAPPE II*.

Personnel: Smith, drums, piano, percussion; Dave Wilczewski, tenor, alto, soprano saxophone; Eef Albers, electric guitar; Deon Brown, electric, acoustic guitar, guitar synthesizer, piano; Tim Landers, bass guitar, tenor bass guitar, Taurus pedals.

★ ★ ★ ½

Jazz-rock has fallen on hard times. What once seemed like a great idea—the collision of two musical worlds resulting in one helluva "fusion"—has too often disintegrated into predictability.

The trend of semi-stolid (stalled?) jazz musicians going in a commercial rock direction has been commonplace; but the reverse situation—one member of a million-dollar rock band going abstract—is much more intriguing.

Then again, Steve Smith's pre-Journey development was almost entirely jazz-oriented, so he's got the experience and the ability to

tackle more than just the big beat. *Orion* is potent jazz-rock throughout, and it does so from both perspectives. That is, Smith planned side one to capture a "rock" aspect of his band. *Vital Information*, and side two has more jazz subtleties. For those of us who use recorded music to reflect, or influence, the mood and energy swings of daily life, it makes sense to plan whole sides of music that are more or less compatible.

Side one of *Orion* is powerhouse jazz-rock, wire to wire, beginning dramatically with the mysterious intro to *Future Primitive*. This band has toured together, recorded together—indeed, Smith knows these guys from their college days, including Albers. The familiarity shows. So does awareness of the decade's best fusion—a hint of Tony Williams' *Lifetime* on *Future Primitive* (Albers soloing), a Jeff Beck feel to *The Strut* (a Brown solo). *Orion* may be the most dramatic cut on the side, but *Thank You Mr. Edison* is appreciated more with each listening, as Wilczewski's soprano begins to explore the composition.

Blade starts off side two with an ample supply of solo space, but *The Adventures Of Hector And Jose* begin to cover newer ground. There's an Abercrombie/Garbarek expressiveness here, then some excellent horn work from Wilczewski; Smith introduces his *Shadows Past* with solo drums, and his expressiveness evolves into one of the quintet's best works. Here, too, there are slight comparisons to an

Still ECM: Past and Present



ECM-1-1060

RALPH TOWNER *Solstice*

The music of Ralph Towner's 1975 recording *Solstice* unfolds like a story, from the first moment of the album when each of the players enters the music, one by one. Towner, heard here on guitar and piano, was like a sculptor, fitting seven of his compositions onto the musical personalities of saxophonist Jan Garbarek, bassist Eberhard Weber and drummer Jon Christensen. *Solstice* is still breaking new ground.

1976 German Grammy Award Winner.

ECM

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RECORD REVIEWS

ECM artist, Eberhard Weber, with strong head motifs and an icy, bold approach to tenor and guitar solos. The closing *Blues To Bappe II* (bop too?) sets a format for more individual blowing.

Overall, *Orion* is strong on sound, both for the band as a whole and its five soloists. Perhaps the only area that could be a bit stronger is the conceptual aspect, finding a unique purpose that could pervade the writing itself. Nevertheless, *Orion* is largely an impassioned effort, and a real credit to Steve Smith and his cohorts.

—robert henschen

ELLA FITZGERALD

THE HAROLD ARLEN SONGBOOK—Verve 817 526-1: *LET'S FALL IN LOVE; STORMY WEATHER; SING MY HEART; BETWEEN THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA; MY SHINING HOUR; HOORAY FOR LOVE; BLUES IN THE NIGHT; THIS TIME THE DREAM'S ON ME; THAT OLD BLACK MAGIC; I'VE GOT THE WORLD ON A STRING; LET'S TAKE A WALK AROUND THE BLOCK; ILL WIND; AC-CENT-TCHU-ATE THE POSITIVE; WHEN THE SUN COMES OUT; COME RAIN OR COME SHINE; AS LONG AS I LIVE; HAPPINESS IS A THING CALLED JOE; IT'S ONLY A PAPER MOON; THE MAN THAT GOT AWAY; ONE FOR MY BABY (AND ONE MORE FOR THE ROAD); IT WAS WRITTEN IN THE STARS; GET HAPPY; I GOTTA RIGHT TO SING THE BLUES; OUT OF THIS WORLD; DING-DONG! THE WITCH IS DEAD; OVER THE RAINBOW.*

Personnel: Fitzgerald, vocals; Billy May, arranger, conductor; various instrumentalists including Don Fagerquist, trumpet; Milt Bernhart, Dick Nash, trombone; Benny Carter, Ted Nash, alto saxophone; Plas Johnson, tenor saxophone; Larry Bunker, vibraphone; Paul Smith, piano; Al Hendrickson, John Collins, guitar; Joe Mondragon, bass; Alvin Stoller, drums.

★★★★★

NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT—Pablo 2312140: *A FOGGY DAY; NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT; BUT NOT FOR ME; LET'S CALL THE WHOLE THING OFF; HOW LONG HAS THIS BEEN GOING ON?; WHO CARES?; MEDLEY: I'VE GOT A CRUSH ON YOU, SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME, EMBRACEABLE YOU; THEY CAN'T TAKE THAT AWAY FROM ME.*

Personnel: Fitzgerald, vocals; Andre Previn, piano; Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, bass.

★★

Harold Arlen was the son of a cantor ("The most delicious improviser I ever heard," Arlen said of his father) and served his musical apprenticeship in a synagogue choir and as a dance band singer and orchestrator. Somehow, the combination helped to produce the most extraordinarily natural of American composers of popular song. Writer of harmonically sophisticated and melodically subtle music—with sinuous lines that ask of a singer almost as much as Hoagy Carmichael's tunes demand—it is not that Arlen was a "great primitive" in the manner of Irving Berlin. Rather, as Gary Shivers comments in his liner notes to *The Harold Arlen Songbook*, the "songs are... so essential to the fabric of American music... it seems they've always been with us, as though they were never written at all." In short,

they are *standards*, and in the Ella Fitzgerald of circa 1960 they found their standard interpreter.

Available for some time only on French Verve, *The Harold Arlen Songbook* has at last appeared on the domestic label and takes its place with Fitzgerald's other remarkable songbooks: Cole Porter, Rodgers and Hart, the Gershwins, Duke Ellington. If anything, the Arlen set is the most successful of this fine series. Only the Ellington sets approach it in terms of jazz feeling, and the Arlen volume benefits from modest arrangements by Billy May that offer a welcome contrast to the overwrought Nelson Riddle orchestrations that mar the Gershwin *Songbook*. Whereas Riddle's elaborate work bears too deeply the impress of late 1950s aesthetics, the May charts, although prepared only a year or two later, more happily suggest the flavor of Arlen's heyday, the decades of the '30s and '40s.

But of course the triumph of the Arlen *Songbook* is mainly Ella's. Not only warm jazz feeling, but a lyrical restraint characterize her work here, which is wholly sympathetic to Arlen's strong sentimentality but which nevertheless refuses to deliver his compositions as torch songs. *My Shining Hour*, for example, is especially vulnerable to the blandishments of the torchbearer. Fitzgerald, however, treats it as a lovingly measured anthem, breathing the melody's long lines with the kind of control for which vintage Sinatra is justly admired. *The Man That Got Away*—than which nothing can be more camp—is instead heard for the intensely moving claustrophobia of its dead-march cadence and ruthlessly limited melodic range. Ella reveals the song as an austere masterpiece.

Space permitting, I could cite example upon example of masterpiece performance: the complexly developed *Blues In The Night*, moving from world-weariness through the incremental anger of a woman scorned; *I've Got The World On A String*, masterly in its phrasing, dreamy without the least maundering; the woosily controlled tone poem of drunken regret that is *One For My Baby (And One More For The Road)*; the marvelously bizarre *Ding-Dong! The Witch Is Dead*, emerging apart from its Oz context as a precociously childlike celebration of the death of evil. In fact, the only thing even approaching a disappointment on these discs is *That Old Black Magic*, which, in a vulgarly upbeat incarnation, sorely misses its essential and delicious mystery.

It is a pity that almost the exact inverse of this ratio of satisfaction versus disappointment characterizes the newly recorded *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, pairing Ella and Andre Previn in an all-Gershwin program. It is true that *How Long Has This Been Going On?* purrs a lovingly consummated seduction here. However, with the additional exception of *But Not For Me*, delicately spun of contemplative regret, the rest of this album sags under the self-indulgent weight of ponderous tempos void of spontaneity and embroidered with the colorless threads of Previn's pleasant but dated piano. Those seeking the "standard" Fitzgerald for Gershwin should turn neither to this album nor to the Verve *Songbook*, but rather to the glowing Decca performances from the '60s

collected on *Ella Sings Gershwin* (MCA 215).

—alan axelrod

COUNT BASIE

88 BASIE STREET—Pablo 2310-901: *BLUE-SVILLE; 88 BASIE STREET; CONTRACTOR'S BLUES; THE BLUES MACHINE; KATY; SUNDAY AT THE SAVOY.*

Personnel: Basie, piano; Bob Summers, Dale Carley, Sonny Cohn, Frank Szabo, Jim Crawford, trumpet; Booty Wood, Grover Mitchell, Dennis Wilson, Bill Hughes, trombone; Eric Dixon, Danny Turner, Eric Schneider, Chris Woods, John Williams, Kenny Hing (cuts 3, 6), reeds; Joe Pass (3, 6), guitar; Cleveland Eaton, bass; Dennis Mackrel, drums.

★★★

COUNT ON THE COAST—Phontastic 7546: *MOTEN SWING; CUTE; SWEETIE CAKES; INDIAN SUMMER; JUMPIN' AT THE WOODSIDE; PLYMOUTH ROCK; FLIGHT OF THE FOO BIRD; LI'L DARLIN'; LOW LIFE; WHIRLY BIRD.*

Personnel: Basie, piano; Joe Newman, Thad Jones, Wendell Culley, Snooky Young, trumpet; Benny Powell, Henry Coaker, Al Grey, trombone; Frank Wess, Marshall Royal, Billy Mitchell, Frank Foster, Charlie Fawkes, reeds; Freddie Green, guitar; Eddie Jones, bass; Sonny Payne, drums.

★★★½

COUNT BASIE 1944—Circle 60: *ROCK A BYE BASIE; I COULDN'T SLEEP A WINK; BASIE BOOGIE; I'VE HAD THIS FEELING BEFORE; I FOUND A NEW BABY; RED BANK BOOGIE; SENT FOR YOU YESTERDAY; DO NOTHIN' TIL YOU HEAR FROM ME; DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU DREAM; SWING SHIFT.*

Personnel: unlisted, but including Basie, piano; Lester Young, Buddy Tate, Earl Warren, reeds; Harry Edison, trumpet; Rodney Richardson, bass; Green, guitar; Warren, Thelma Carpenter, Jimmy Rushing, vocals.

★★★½

THE BASIE SPECIAL—Everybody's 3004: *AIN'T BUT THE ONE; BANGS; KING PORTER STOMP; BLUE LOU; SWING SHIFT; BEAVER JUNCTION; KANSAS CITY STRIDE; IT'S SAND, MAN; BLUE ROOM JUMP; TAPS MILLER; LOVE JUMPED OUT; AVENUE C; I'M FER IT TOO; HARVARD BLUES; HIGH TIDE.*

Personnel: Basie, piano; Newman, Edison, Young, Al Killian, Ed Lewis, Emmett Berry, trumpet; Dickie Wells, Ted Donnelly, Eli Robinson, Louis Taylor, J. J. Johnson, George Mathews, trombone; Warren, Young, Tate, Preston Love, Rudy Rutherford, Jimmy Powell, Illinois Jacquet, Jack Washington, reeds; Green, guitar; Richardson, Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, Shadow Wilson, drums.

★★★★

Count Basie's valedictory LP, *88 Basie Street*, released shortly before his death, is a pleasant but rather thin outing leavened mainly by Basie's own piano work and a single small group cut (*Contractor's Blues*) in which Joe Pass demonstrates a capacity for straight-ahead swinging rarely heard on his solo LPs. But there is an inertia about the album as a whole that comes from a preponderance of ballad and slow blues tempos.

Of the four big band arrangements by Sam Nestico, only *Blues Machine*, with its nicely played sax section soli, has the snap and sizzle of good Basie. The title track is a pretty tune for the trombone section, but little else. As has become the custom in recent Basie LPs, a couple of small group sides are included too. Kenny Hing seems slightly out of register with the rhythm section on *Contractor's Blues*, which otherwise is far and away the centerpiece of the album. *Sunday* rambles on for nearly 13 minutes, too long for such a leisurely blues piece. Conspicuously missing throughout is Freddie Green, who was sick during the two days of the session.

It's amazing how little a-quarter-of-a-century changed the spirit of the Basie formula. *Count On The Coast* takes us back 25 years to 1958, and although the soloists are different, the animating idea is the same. It's a better LP, but not essentially a different one.

This was, in the shorthand of Basieologists, the "atomic period," when he recorded for Roulette and established many of the familiar standards of the later Basie era, some of which are heard here in the prime of their youth. The charts, like Nestico's today, are slick, simple, and brittle, with lots of flash in the brass and punch in the rhythm section. But the selection here is better paced and generally more interesting than the charts on the more recent Pablo set. Another difference is in hearing a younger Basie go stampeding through some lively stride choruses on *Flight Of The Foo Bird*.

Going back even further, the 1944 Basie collection is the most disappointing, perhaps because expectations are highest with Lester Young back in the band. But it doesn't deliver the goods. The selections are mostly dreary, commercial pieces. Three of the 10 numbers are vehicles for Earl Warren's dated crooning. Young-hunters will hear only a few bars of tenor salted away on two of the Warren cuts. Jimmy Rushing and Thelma Carpenter are fine in each of their single numbers.

There are generous helpings of Lester in a too-short and too-fast *I Found A New Baby*, but the tempo gets the upper hand. Young manages to get through it without sounding winded, but the nuances are squeezed out. A couple of other instrumentals are worthwhile, and if you're willing to take more than your share of drabness on an LP containing less than 15 minutes per side, you probably ought to get this. I'll pass, though.

In welcome contrast is *The Basie Special*, which catches the same band at roughly the same period. Here is an album of wall-to-wall big band energy and drive, which not only makes for marvelous listening (despite sound quality that lacks the brightness of the Circle transcriptions), but also gives us a few relatively obscure items from Basie's mid-'40s repertoire (*Blue Room Jump*, *Bangs*, and *Ain't But The One* are all new to me). This is not Hit Parade Basie, but the real thing. Recorded from 1944 and '45 broadcasts, there are long, stretch-out-and-relax solos from Buddy Tate, Joe Newman, Dickie Wells (at his whooping best on *Fer It Too*), Harry Edison, and Basie himself, who takes what may be his only recorded vocal on *Harvard Blues*.

—john mcdonough

JOHN ABERCROMBIE/ GEORGE MARSH

DRUM STRUM—1750 Arch 1804: *MY SCOTTISH HEART; MUCHACHA DORADA; UPON A TIME; IN THE WOODS; DEMI-SAISON; BABY LUCILLE; VINCENT; COUNT; CHUCK MAN RIVERS; CAMEL WALK.*

Personnel: Abercrombie, electric guitar, electric mandolin; Marsh, drums, thumb piano, Rototoms, conga.

★ ★ ★ ★

JOHN ABERCROMBIE/ JOHN SCOFIELD

SOLAR—Palo Alto 8031-N: *EVEN STEVEN; FOUR ON SIX; SING SONG; SMALL WONDER; I SHOULD CARE; IF YOU COULD SEE ME NOW.*

Personnel: Abercrombie, guitar, electric mandolin (cuts 3, 5); Scofield, guitar; George Mraz, (3, 5, 7), bass; Peter Donald (3, 5, 7), drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

On these two recent releases (both actually recorded in 1982), guitarist John Abercrombie is paired with kindred spirits of decidedly different sensibilities. George Marsh is a sensitive and poetic percussionist with organic, World Music tendencies. John Scofield is a lyrical legato guitarist who can play with the delicacy of Jim Hall, the inventiveness of Pat Martino, or the urbane bite of Otis Rush. An uncanny listener and selfless team player, Abercrombie is able to complement each partner well, highlighting the diversity of styles he enjoys playing.

His collaboration with Marsh is reminiscent of his long working relationship with Jack DeJohnette, an inspired coupling. Marsh and Abercrombie carry on in that great tradition with 10 pieces that run the gamut of dynamics and intensity. One one end of the spectrum is *Demi-Saison*, an Abercrombie composition that recalls his gentle, ethereal duets with acoustic guitarist Ralph Towner. Here Abercrombie doubles a haunting melodic figure on guitar and mandolin while Marsh supplies gentle counterpoint with brushes and cymbals. An extreme departure from that bittersweet ballad is the frenzied space romp, *Vincent*, where Abercrombie pulls out his MXR pitch transposer and Zeta Systems Poly Fuzz and flails away for eight minutes while Marsh bashes manically in the background. This piece recalls the edgy intensity that Pat Metheny recently achieved with *The Calling*, a wild Synclavier freak-out from his latest LP.

The reference to Metheny is no real digression. The two are contemporaries; both are extremely versatile players with great facility and finesse; both are resourceful soloists who favor crisp articulations and flowing lyricism in their well-crafted single-line passages; and both are great proponents of digital delay systems to affect that warm, haunting tone.

Marsh's World Music influences come to the surface on the latin-flavored *Muchacha Dorada*, the free-flowing *In The Woods* (where he lays down an organic groove on congas,

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RECORD REVIEWS

shekere, log drums, and assorted percussion), and the African-inspired *Baby Lucille* (where he switches from kalimba to brushes to sticks). The only piece on this experimental outing that sounds anything at all like Abercrombie's collaboration with Scofield is the quasi-bop piece *Count*, which begins with Marsh tapping out the classic ding-ding-a-ding riff on his cymbals and then gradually evolves into a rampaging punk-jazz aberration as Abercrombie cranks up the fuzz and pulls out all the stops.

The Abercrombie/Scofield collaboration,

Solar, is a more conventional affair, though not lacking in inventiveness or conviction. The title cut is a particularly adventurous interpretation of the Miles Davis classic. The two guitars play cat-and-mouse on some very spirited interplay, and the recognizable melody doesn't even appear until the final chorus. Abercrombie's *Even Steven* swings warmly, while their interpretation of Wes Montgomery's *Four On Six* swings more ferociously, propelled by the urgent rhythm of drummer Peter Donald and bassist George Mraz.

Donald and Mraz also appear on Scofield's *Small Wonder* and on a Bill Evans-inspired interpretation of the Tadd Dameron classic *If You Could See Me Now*. A bluesy duet on Sammy Cahn's *I Should Care* highlights the characteristic styles of these two fine guitarists. Scofield favors a sharper attack on the strings than Abercrombie, whose gentle picking technique gives him a more elegant sound. Abercrombie's fiery deftness on the fretboard and his tranquil ambiance is a nice complement to the gutsier, bent-string approach that Scofield sometimes slips into.

Even jazz guitar purists should enjoy *Solar*, a showcase for two like-minded musicians to interpret structured songs in a loose way.

—bill milkowski

CRITICS' CHOICE

Art Lange

NEW RELEASE: Fred Anderson, *The Missing Link* (Nessa). This criminally neglected, imposing Chicago tenor presence forges earthy anthems and ebullient improvisations aided by the enticing percussion team of Hamid Hank Drank and Adam Rudolph.

OLD FAVORITE: Stanley Turrentine, *That's Where It's At* (Blue Note). Waxed prior to his pop-jazz days, the original Mr. T goes for the Jug-ular with this soul-drenched tenor outing.

RARA AVIS: John MacLellan/John Burgess, *Pibroch, Vol. 1 & 2* (Waverley). The classical music of the bagpipes, *pibroch* is both elegaic and energetic; as performed by these two pipe masters, the effect is eerie and emotionally charged.

SCENE: A Texas triumvirate—Gatmouth Brown, Albert Collins, Johnny Copeland—providing blues guitar licks of gale force, at the three-day Chicago Blues Festival.

Charles Doherty

NEW RELEASE: Various Artists, *That's The Way I Feel Now (A Tribute To Thelonious Monk)* (A&M). A rollicking two-fer with heartfelt interpretations of 23 TM tunes, each unique, with only a couple of zircons among the score of jewels.

OLD FAVORITE: Michael Mantler, *The Jazz Composer's Orchestra* (JCOA). Mantler's honed his craft since this seminal recording, but an all-star orchestra of this stature may never be equaled.

RARA AVIS: Del Close/John Brent, *How To Speak Hip* (Mercury). Hey, there you go daddy-o, like you never picked up on this wiggy side, man? Take it from Geets and like play it cool, man. You dig? I'm hip. Later.

SCENE: The Ray Charles Show at the CES Publications party in Chitown. Brother Ray is one of the few that can afford to carry a duodevigintet, and baby, they were cookin', smokin', they're not jokin'.

Frank-John Hadley

NEW RELEASE: Tim Ware Group, *Shelter From The Norm* (Varrick). I want this mandolin-led California string quintet playing when I reach the gates of Heaven—or wherever. Elysian New Acoustic Music.

OLD FAVORITE: Count Basie and his Orchestra, *The Best Of . . .* (MCA). Let us always treasure the "head" arrangements.

RARA AVIS: Robert Wyatt, *Robert Wyatt* (Rough Trade). The ex-Soft Machine drummer's tremulous voice makes Billie Holiday's *Strange Fruit* and Chic's *At Last I'm Free* equally unsettling and riveting. Amazing covers.

SCENE: Barence Whitfield and the Savages at the Stone Church in Newmarket, NH. Tremendous r&b—Barence reminds me of Little Richard at the peak of his powers. Rave: *Bip Bop Bip*.

Howard Mandel

NEW RELEASE: Dusan Bogdanovic, *Early To Rise* (Palo Alto). Central European acoustic guitarist goes California gentle, staying crisp and provocative on originals played with James Newton, Charlie Haden, and percussionist Tony Jones.

OLD FAVORITE: Cecil Taylor, *Conquistador* (Blue Note). Bill Dixon floats dark trumpet, Jimmy Lyons adds mournful alto, bassists Grimes and Silva create miasma, drummer Cyrille lends definition—and pianist/composer Taylor accomplishes in two sidelong suites a fine balance between ensemble improvisation and expressive composition.

RARA AVIS: The Special AKA, *Nelson Mandela* (2-Tone/Chrysalis). Singer Stan Campbell leads a band of Brits in a catchy Afro-beat plea for the freedom of the South African anti-apartheid leader, since '62 serving Life + Five Years (!) for his political beliefs.

SCENE: Time and space dissolved when *The Link*, a video installation by Wendy Clarke w/ help from her film-maker mother Shirley, created an on-screen duet of Ornette blowing alto and trumpet at the World Trade Center downtown simultaneous with Denardo pounding electronic drums uptown at Harlem's State Office Building.

DON SEBESKY

FULL CYCLE—GNP Crescendo 2164: *NAIMA*; *DJANGO*; *INTREPID FOX*; *WALTZ FOR DEBBY*; *ALL BLUES*; *UN POCO LOCO*.

Personnel: Sebesky, piano, arrangements; Eddie Daniels, Alex Foster, Roger Rosenberg, reeds; Jon Faddis, Lew Soloff (cuts 1, 2, 6), Jim Bossy (3-5), trumpet, flugelhorn; Ed Byrne (1, 2, 6), Jim Pugh (3-5), trombone; Alan Ralph, trombone, baritone horn, tuba; Kenneth Sebesky, guitar; Jay Leonhart, bass; Jimmy Madison, drums; Sue Evans, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

Don Sebesky arranges colors as much as notes. He's a descendent of Duke Ellington and Gil Evans—an across-instrumental-lines arranger. His charts for CTI Records practically identified that label during its short life in the early 1970s.

Like his CTI work, these arrangements display great clarity. There are dissonances, but they are warm dissonances in the trombones, middle register brass, and reeds. They give bite and intrigue to the lushness. Some of the writing recalls Evans' early, mobile *Birth Of The Cool* articulation (e.g., *Waltz For Debby*); some is of the hanging garden variety (*All Blues* and parts of *Naima*).

Altogether, this is a brilliant example of the arranger's art. In the pastel voicings, notice how well Sebesky's electric piano (he uses it throughout, and electric bass is present at times, too) suits the tone of things. His solos on this instrument have a vibes-like ring, and Kenneth Sebesky's guitar often sounds like a harp in the ensemble.

The musicians are the cream of the New York studio crop playing as if their musical chairs are in jeopardy. From the intersecting reeds (flute, soprano saxophone, and bass clarinet is a frequent combination) on *Naima*, Daniels' tenor emerges, busy and a little hoarse. A flugelhorn soloist (Faddis?) on *Un Poco Loco* begins with a kiss and moves on to harder stuff. A bass clarinetist manages not to imitate the late Eric Dolphy on *All Blues*.

So it goes—soloist and chart, chart and arranger, arranger and jazz standard. If you're an arranger, get this record and cop those voicings; if you're a painter, translate those colors and lines; if you're a plain old jazz fan, just enjoy.

—owen cordle

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JOHN DELAFOSE

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Personnel: Delafosse, vocals, accordion; Tony Delafosse, rub-board; Charles Prudhomme, guitar; Joseph Prudhomme, bass; Geno Delafosse, drums.

★ ★ ½

STANLEY "BUCKWHEAT" DURAL

100% FORTIFIED ZYDECO—Black Top 1024: I NEED YOUR LOVIN' EVERYDAY; I'VE HAD TROUBLE WITH THE BLUES; JASPEROUX; SOMEBODY STOLE MY SLIDE; IN THE SUMMERTIME; TAKE ME TO THE MOUNTAIN TOP; BUCK'S NOUVELLE JOLE BLON; IS THERE SOMETHING INSIDE YOU?; ZYDECO TOUS PAS TOUS; I'M READY TO PLAY.

Personnel: Dural, accordion, keyboards, vocals; Selwyn Cooper, guitar; Lee Allen Zeno, bass; Nat Jollivette, drums, percussion; Elijah Cudges, rub-board, percussion; John Bell, tenor saxophone; Calvin Landry, trumpet.

★ ★ ★ ½

While some ethnic genres are obscure, self-contained, and fading, Cajun music is currently on a roll. Scores of Louisiana/East Texas dance halls draw steady crowds with Cajun bands, and radio airplay has expanded significantly of late. Reviewed here are two popular practitioners of zydeco, the black amalgam of traditional Cajun music, blues/soul/r&b, and a touch of country. Zydeco and white Cajun music overlap considerably; for quick reference zydeco is distinguished by a marked absence of fiddles, the frequent use of horns, blues-soul adaptations, heavier rhythm sections, and a percussion instrument known as the rub-board or *frattoir*. The accordion and guitar are instruments common to both racial styles.

John Delafosse represents the traditional side of zydeco. He plays a diatonic, button accordion, as opposed to the more complex chromatic piano model used by Buckwheat and Clifton Chenier, and is far more influenced by older Cajun styles than mainstream soul. A limited musician, Delafosse is curiously his band's only featured soloist, so raw energy is crucial to an effective performance. There's plenty on the album's first side, a live recording from the annual Festival Acadienne in Lafayette. Delafosse plays and sings (in Cajun French) with exuberance and obvious enjoyment; the repertoire includes waltzes, shuffles, and several uptempo two-steps which vamp repetitiously on one chord, without progression. Delafosse's teenage son Geno pushes hard on drums, accenting and propelling the band, and hitting off-beats with a striking Caribbean feel. Outstanding tunes include *Hippity Hop* and *Oh, Negress*. Side two, unfortunately, seems to be a classic case of freezing up in the

RECORD REVIEWS

studio. Delafosse shows no zest or involvement, Geno is likewise inhibited, and tedium soon sets in, relieved only by a snappy rendition of the upbeat title track.

Stanley "Buckwheat" Dural is an accordionist/funk keyboardist who's immersed in Southern soul/r&b. Some, in fact, discount his zydeco orientation as trendy opportunism. Regardless of categories, Dural is a solid player and exciting showman, and 100% Fortified Zydeco presents a well-paced cross section of his ample talent. The set ranges from the r&b

classic *I Need Your Lovin' Everyday* to a Chenier-influenced slow blues, the soul ballad *Take Me To The Mountain Top*, a pair of two-step blow-outs, and a unique re-working of Mungo Jerry's *In The Summertime*. The performances range from competent to inspired. Saxophonist John Bell is passionate but limited. Guitarist Selwyn Cooper is agile but nondynamic, and Dural's dexterous solos, here at least, fail to develop or climax. Nor is Buckwheat an especially pleasing or memorable singer. The mix lacks the vivid presence which

helped make Chenier's *Bogalusa Boogie* (Arhoolie 1076) a state-of-the-art zydeco classic. But crisp arrangements, excellent horn charts, and smart sequencing put the album across, not to mention Nat Jollivette's powerhouse drumming. *Summertime*, *Somebody Stole My Slide*, and a Hammond B-3 workout entitled *Jasperoux* are the best cuts. Both Dural and Delafosse's live sets are highly recommended, incidentally, and they're easy to catch along the Gulf Coast "Crawfish Circuit."

—ben sandriel

WAXING ON

The Electronic Underground

CARL STONE: *WOO LAE OAK* (Wizard 224)

★ ★ ★ ★

K. LEIMER: *IMPOSED ORDER* (Palace of Lights 17/2000) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½

PHILIP PERKINS: *KING OF THE WORLD* (Fun 1003) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½

MICHAEL McNAB: *COMPUTER MUSIC* (1750 Arch Records 1800) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½

MICHEL REDOLFI: *SONIC WATERS* (hot Art 2002) ★ ★ ★ ★

DON ROBERTSON: *SPRING* (DBR music) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½

AEOLIAH: *THE LIGHT OF TAO* (Celestial Octaves International 022) ★ ★ ★ ★

DARREN KEARNS: *OPTIMAL BEING* (Atmosphere 100) ★ ★ ★ ★

STEVE ROACH: *TRAVELER* (Domino 101) ★ ★ ★ ★

MICHAEL STEARNS: *LYRA SOUND CONSTELLATION* (Continuum Montage 1006) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½

TERRY RILEY: *SONGS FOR THE TEN VOICES OF THE TWO PROPHETS* (Kuckuck 067) ★ ★ ★ ★

Electronic music is exceptionally popular these days. A glance at the record charts reveals the rhythm machines and synthesizers from the likes of Duran Duran, Eurythmics, and Herbie Hancock dominating sales and the airwaves. But in America, "bubbling" far under the Hot 100 is a synthesized subculture with a different attitude. They aren't concerned with mass popularity, but instead are exploring a personal aesthetic, using synthesizers and tape machines to create a private world of sound.

As synthesizers and audio components become less expensive, more people are making music in their basements or private studios, and releasing the results on cassettes and small independent labels. There is no formal organization and many sub-groups, but there's a shared sensibility of exploration and the creation of a unique audio environment. These are the artists of the new electronic underground.

One fascinating aspect of this new underground has been the resurrection of the earliest techniques of electronic music. Tape

manipulating, or musique concrete, has gained fresh currency in the midst of now-familiar synthesizer sounds. Recording natural acoustic sounds, instrumental or environmental, these artists edit, loop, reverse, and otherwise shape the fabric of sound. It's a hands-on approach that brings the composer into intimate contact with his/her sonic material.

Utilizing these techniques, **Carl Stone's** *Woo Lae Oak* is an epic work in miniature. It is extraordinarily sophisticated in thought, yet archaic in execution. His instruments are a string and bottle that he rubs and blows respectively. These simple sounds are then modified by tape-loops, layering, and speed (pitch) changes into a haunting work that reveals a microscopic world of texture and distended melody. The rubbed string becomes a rapidly bowing violin section moving almost imperceptibly in pitch. The blown bottle becomes an ethereal woodwind section, sometimes with almost endless bass flute tones and at other times, shorter recorder-like fragments. Stone is so attuned that even the imperfect edits in his loops become part of the texture and rhythm of his piece. *Woo Lae Oak's* 55 minutes are an exquisite exercise in meditative listening.

K. Leimer creates similar sound mosaics, albeit with a greater dynamic range and rhythmic drive. He's been putting out records since 1979 on his Palace of Lights label, sort of a Windham Hill of electronic music. As a Brian Eno disciple, Leimer is also concerned with shaping sound via tape, but he also uses the synthesizer. *Imposed Order* alternates between a tropical hi-tech sound of pounding percussion-loop rhythms and zooming Doppler effects within atmospheric tone poems. A lone guitar chord, a whispering flute tone, a chorus of train whistles crying down an infinite tunnel—these are the fragments from which Leimer constructs his music. Leimer details each sonic adventure as carefully as Tolkien detailed his Middle Earth. There's an organic feel to Leimer's music, and a sense that living beings exist here, however alien.

Phillip Perkins is another tape-jockey whose previous album, *Neighborhood With A Sky* (Fun Records 1002), re-shaped natural and industrial sounds into layered audio environments, at once familiar and foreign. On *King Of The World* Perkins adds a modified Casio synthesizer, possibly a VL-Tone, to his editing-block instrument. It's a modest recording of gentle tone poems and program music. Environments are not re-constructed, but used as backdrops like *Childhood*, with a simple

melody threading through the sounds of a children's playground that echoes in the distance. Like the best of the new electronic underground, Perkins establishes a personalized sound-world. One can imagine him sitting in a dimly lit room with flickering tape meters, meticulously crafting this music. But despite the intimacy, and perhaps because of it, the single-line melodies played out against droning ostinato bass patterns become threadbare after a few listenings. And despite the advances of less expensive synthesizers, the Casio lacks the timbral richness needed to pull off an entire album.

While inexpensive synthesizers have come a long way, costly computer synthesizers have become the formidable orchestras of the future. Devices like the Synclavier and Fairlight CMI have an unmatched sonic capacity and harmonic complexity, yet few musicians have been able to tap their potential, and all too often the new underground is infiltrated by computerized freeloaders from academia. **Michael McNab** and **Michel Redolfi** are two artists who generate their music out of universities, McNab from Stanford and the French Redolfi from the University of California. They use the computer synthesizers like Stone, Leimer, and Perkins use tape, to re-shape found sound and make new sounds, but the advanced technology doesn't necessarily make the music more advanced.

McNab's *Computer Music* uses the massive computer music synthesizers of Stanford University to recreate the collage techniques of musique concrete, taking environments and crowd sounds and mixing them in a wash and whine of metallic synthesizer effects. On *Orbital View* he creates a celestial choir out of a single woman's voice. But it's all been done before, and much more vibrantly using simple tape manipulation techniques a la Jon Appleton, Edgar Varese, and Otto Luening.

Redolfi, like McNab, gets so lost in his technology that he forgets someone has to listen to it. His *Sonic Waters* is two discs, of which the first is "dry" recordings of Synclavier, flute, and treated harp. Both pieces are pleasant drifting soliloquies, with electronic and acoustic sounds skillfully merged and shifted like sands in a desert-like panorama. Disc two has these recordings played underwater and re-recorded on hydrophones, to simulate the effect of actually hearing this music while immersed. It reads better than it sounds, however. The music tries valiantly to penetrate the sound of hydrophones being pounded and dragged through gravel or it competes in vain

against the gurgling of someone's scuba gear.

But not all computer synthesists are trying to translate arcane theories into sound. **Don Robertson** also uses a Synclavier, and his newest recording, *Spring*, is a work of stunning beauty. Robertson was sort of a free-form r&r collagist in the '60s, as his 1969 recording, *Dawn* (Limelight 86067), will attest. But with the Synclavier his music has taken on heroic and majestic proportions. Shimmering melodies and crystalline, bell-like tones dance in counterpoint. Propulsive ostinato rhythms thrust through an Aurora Borealis of sound and color. And, unlike McNab, his texture pieces have a soul-searing power, with resonant bass drones that play on your body like a benign riptide. Robertson isn't above the some facile derring-do and Vangelis-like pomposity, but he's presented one of the best arguments for computer music that I've heard yet.

Robertson's gentle music and harmonious electronics arise from a New Age aesthetic. The New Age movement covers Transcendental Meditation, acupuncture, and EST as well as hot tubs and high technology. It seems incongruous that people seeking harmony and higher consciousness would gravitate towards synthesizers, but it shows how attuned we've become to electronic sounds. The New Age music movement is the most prolific subgroup of the electronic underground. These artists strive for consonance in their music with nary an abrasive sound or atonal chord to be heard.

Aeollah is typical of many of the New Age synthesists. On *The Light Of Tao* he fabricates warm, lush environments that wash through without concrete melodies or rhythms. His droning, gentle synthesizer phrases are fleshed out by exotic Eastern instruments as well as Donny Smith's deft electric guitar, transparent flute playing from Kip Setchko, and the Lyricon of Dallas Smith. He goes awry when he tries to prove his global consciousness with wretched sitar playing on *Mahavira*. And New Age rhetoric can run sickeningly thick, but fortunately, he doesn't sing.

New Age themes inform the music of **Darren Kearns**' debut, *Optimal Being*, as well, but science fiction and European space music are the mitigating influences. Side one's *Impressions Of The Natural Order* is a pristine excursion that rises above the waves/birds/crickets cliches of his backing tapes. His glissando-guitar suspends like a hang-glider drifting in the currents of the delicate piano and string-synthesizer interplay. Side two is less successful, as his high-speed scorched guitar playing gets buried in a mix of pedestrian drones and space whirs. Yet Kearns, recording on borrowed equipment and a simple four-track machine, plays music that elevates itself far above its basement origins.

Steve Roach is an artist whose music reveals a compositional depth that is uncharacteristic of most New Age music. Using layers of meticulously interlocked sequencer patterns, Roach's music is often like static latticework sculptures. The music doesn't change so much as the listener's perspective on the music alters. Different contours, angles, and hidden recesses are revealed with each sweep of a filter or the caress of a string synth

fragment. Like a multi-directional elevator, one is moved around and through *Worlds* and *Reflector*, rather than moving with them. But, as the title track of this album, *Traveler*, suggests, Roach will be your travel agent for an audio adventure. *Mysteries Continue* is a walk into the electronic jungles of Africa, with a tribal synthetic rhythm underscoring the dark, forboding whispers and concealed rustles. And the title track is a driving space epic that pays tribute to Roach's obvious influences, Klaus Schulze and Tangerine Dream, with a sequencer rhythm pummeling through uncharted regions of the mind's inner galaxies. So much electronic music is intrinsically introspective, but so little of it contains the self-discipline and sophistication of Steve Roach's *Traveler*.

In fact, many of the New Age synthesists like Aeollah and to a lesser degree, Kearns, have a facile quality. After all, it's fairly easy to play music where the key never changes, playing single lines or textures into a tape machine one part at a time. Synthesizers can unlock the creativity of the untrained musician, but there's a line between soothing music and compositional/conceptual immaturity.

Michael Stearns consistently breaks the mold of New Age artists, and his *Lyra Sound Constellation* is another thrust against the trends. The Lyra is an instrument designed by George Landry consisting of 156 wires, stretched 15 to 20 feet from floor to ceiling. Stearns isn't content merely playing this device. He took his performances, edited and layered the sounds, treated them electronically, and added some sparse synthesizer to give a stunningly sensual audio massage. The strings seem to resonate into the bowels of the earth, stretching infinitely in either direction. Overtones hover in the air like a descending motherhood and cluster into erotic groans.

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RECORD REVIEWS

There's an edge of danger to *Lyra* that I've only heard in the most harrowing forays of Stockhausen, the Art Ensemble Of Chicago, and Sun Ra. It taps into hidden psychic regions as Stearns orchestrates abstract sounds and patterns into crescendos of symphonic power. Like Carl Stone, Stearns has an acute understanding of his sonic materials.

Meditative, intense listening is the key to enter many of these recordings. And one of the original proponents of meditative music, as well as an unwitting inspiration to New Age musicians, is **Terry Riley**. His *In C* (Columbia 7178) is one of the signpost works of 20th century music; his *A Rainbow In Curved Air* (Columbia 7315) was a pioneering and influential work in tape-loop improvisation; and he helped engineer the currently fashionable "return to tonality" of the avant garde. So why is such a significant composer in the ranks of the electronic underground? Because he neglected to garner fame and notoriety, lifetime recording contracts, and Metropolitan Opera commissions like his contemporaries Steve Reich and Philip Glass. Instead he studied, not dabbled, but studied Indian classical singing for years with vocal master Pandit Pranath. He didn't go to New York, but stayed on his farm in

Northern California tuning his new Prophet 5 synthesizers to just intonation.

Songs For The Ten Voices Of The Two Prophets is his first new record in four years. It contains three long raga-like pieces that can be loosely linked to *A Rainbow In Curved Air*, except looping sequencer patterns have replaced the tape-loops and Riley's keyboard playing has become more florid, with twisting ornamental embroidery. And he sings. Riley has a gruff tenor voice that spirals up to the edge of his range and down into a guttural groan. His keyboard playing is now a reflection of his Indian singing style, with leaps and intricate tangents from the main theme. Lyrics like "Chinaman in Chinatown, enchanted with an ancient Chinese gown, sits down" can be hard to take. The best way to enter this music is through the keyboards. Riley can still spin those langorous cycles that made *A Rainbow* such entrancing listening. His vocals merge with the keyboards, echoing each other, giving his synthesized music the feel of well-worn leather when it works. But it often doesn't work. With most of Riley's past music, I feel a part of the composition, traveling on the same inward journey. With *Ten Songs* . . . I'm just watching the movie.

—john diliberto

NEW RELEASES

(Record Companies: For listing in the monthly New Releases column, send two copies of each new release to Art Lange, db, 222 W. Adams, Chicago, IL 60606.)

SAVOY JAZZ

Joe Williams, Chicago sessions from '51 and '53 by the ex-Basie vocalist, inc. his first recording of EVERYDAY I HAVE THE BLUES. **Pep-per Adams**, reissue of '57 quintet date feat. front line of bari and euphonium, PURE PEPPER. **Sun Ra**, reissued '61 somewhat mellow Arkestra tracks, WE ARE IN THE FUTURE. **Various Artists**, Phil Woods, Cecil Payne, Duke Jordan, Frank Socolow, Wendell Marshall, Art Taylor, live at the Five Spot circa '57, celebrating BIRD'S NIGHT. **Big Maybelle**, 14 sides cut '56-'59 w/ hard-charging vocals and big name backing, BIG MAYBELLE.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 40

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1 DIZZY GILLESPIE/MACHITO. *EX-UBERANTE* (from *AFRO-CUBAN JAZZ MOODS*, Pablo). Gillespie, trumpet. Rec. 1976.

Next time I see Diz I gotta ask him how he does that rising thing with alternate fingering. I gotta see it. I got nothing against stealin' somebody's licks. It helps me travel the same path, you dig? I would give Dizzy Gillespie 500 million stars for anything, but I wouldn't give that band shit. The electric bass and piano sound cheesy; it dominates the orchestra and ruins balance. This isn't Dizzy of his fire days, but it is definitely Mr. Birks.

2 LUIS GASCA. *SARA* (from *COLLAGE*, Fantasy). Gasca, trumpet, flugelhorn.

Accomplished, but lacks identity. Sounds like an L.A. studio band—it's competent. Hard to keep that Harmon mute in tune. That's anonymous airport muzak. The trumpeter made no mistakes, but I don't know who he was. No rating for creativity or originality. Could've been Marv Stamm, Lew Soloff.

3 FRED ANDERSON. *SAXOON* (from *ANOTHER PLACE*, Moers Music). Anderson, tenor saxophone; Billy Brimfield, trumpet.

Sounds like my contemporaries. It illustrates how hard it is to play free music. Without chord changes it's entirely up to your imagination and sense of direction. For the attempt, 500 stars, but less for basic neglect, like intonation. If the trumpeter had played that phrase one more time, I'd have thrown something at the record player! I know I'm guilty of these mistakes myself. Three stars. Did I hear Jack Walrath for a minute?

4 RUBY BRAFF. *ROYAL GARDEN BLUES* (from *DUO*, Chazz Jazz). Braff, cornet; Ralph Sutton, piano.

I really enjoyed that! 500 stars! That guy was the Miles Davis of his era! He played softly with great attack, wonderful use of bottom register. I'd say Red Allen. And the pianist's dynamics! I'm gonna get that record.

[Later] I'll take some of those stars back only because it's so recent. But Ruby Braff! Man! If I were going to play in that style, I'd sound like that. He's obviously absorbed Miles and Kenny Dorham.

5 WYNTON MARSALIS. *MELANCHOLIA, LATER* (from *THINK OF ONE*, Columbia). Marsalis, trumpet.

This guy played Harmon mute in better tune because he had a good ear and pulled the slide out about half-an-inch, 'cause Harmon tends to sharp. That was also very competent. Sounded like Wyn-

Lester Bowie

By FRED BOUCHARD

Doctor Bowie was up to some hip tricks: without blowing a note, he blew into Harvard U. like a summer storm, and captured minds and hearts. A hernia operation between his spring performance with the Art Ensemble Of Chicago at the Boston Globe Jazz Festival and his recent artist-in-residency at Harvard in its Learning From Performers series kept Bowie from playing, but he hung out creatively: lectured an Afro-American music class, led jams ("research" in lab smock) with eager students, caught a few bands (it was Boston Sackbut Week).

In keeping with AEC's motto "Ancient to the Future," we spun trumpeters old and new for his discriminating commentary. Bowie rated individuality highly and revealed his fascinating growth process of



playing through his predecessors. He was given no information about selections until "later." His previous Blindfold Test was in *db*, 5/17/79.

ton, but I hope not, because he's playing much better now. The hardest thing to do is develop identity. You have to go through everybody before you. I hope Wynton will continue to develop and not be scared of those boys at CBS making all those big claims. Don't be afraid to copy other people's styles and licks. There's nobody who has a voice of his own who's a fraidy cat, and that sounded a little like one. Wynton, to me, is a genius, but he has a long way to go, and he's the first to tell you. With Wynton's chops and my brains, I could've been one of the greatest.

I can't wait to hear him when he's 35! He'll be baad! Then he'll say, "This is Wynton Marsalis." But he's gotta live first. He don't drink; he don't smoke; he ain't had and lost a family. And that's the way he sounds. Guys ask me: How do you develop a sound? I tell them: Man, you got to live! You need joy! Tragedy! Feeling! Wynton's got all the trumpet practice he needs; he just needs some practice in life.

6 ART TATUM/ROY ELDRIDGE. *THIS CAN'T BE LOVE* (from *TATUM GROUP MASTERPIECES*, Pablo). Tatum, piano; Eldridge, trumpet.

That's Roy Eldridge. He also played Harmon mute correctly. My father was very proud when they put our picture together in the *New York Times*. Roy has his identity, his conception of tone, rhythm, phrasing. He came right through Louis and developed Little Jazz. You can't go

around anybody. You got to copy, do their shit, and keep going. Dizzy went through Roy. You want to play modern trumpet, you got to go through Miles, Don Cherry, and me.

7 HOT LIPS PAGE. *FEELIN' HIGH AND HAPPY* (from *FEELIN' HIGH AND HAPPY*, RCA). Page, trumpet, vocal. Rec. 1938.

Louis Prima or Louis Jordan? Whoever it was loved Louis Armstrong's phrasing, everything. I'd give that a star or two, as indicative of the Swing Era. Late '30s. That's a sound I automatically enjoy; makes me feel happy.

8 JOHN COLTRANE/DON CHERRY. *THE BLESSING* (from *THE AVANT GARDE*, Atlantic). Coltrane, soprano saxophone; Cherry, pocket trumpet; Ornette Coleman, composer.

That was Don Cherry, my daddy. I know that song, but it wasn't Ornette playing, was it? I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Don Cherry on behalf of myself and all the young moderns. Don Cherry is the father of modern trumpet—he gave Miles Davis 10 more years of life. He made the first meaningful solo without chord changes, but still with tempo. When you leave the tempo, you gotta go through me. Don and I did some great duets a few months ago with the Sun Ra All-Stars in Berlin. It was a great honor for me. First time I saw Don was with Sonny Rollins at a joint in St. Louis called Gino's in 1959. He's very kind, sweet, sensitive, and hip. Thanks again, Don. *db*

Marilyn Crispell

Whether solo, in her own groups, or with Anthony Braxton's quartet, the pianist adds new definition to spontaneously improvised music of high energy and refinement.

BY HOWARD MANDEL

"I'm not really interested in playing free jazz, *per se*," explains Marilyn Crispell, "I'm interested in playing against different rhythms that don't *have* to lock into a groove, that can move in and out. But I want that strong feeling. When I play, I think of a rhythmic pulse, if not a repetitive beat. And there's *always* harmony. It's just that some harmonies are more extended than others."

Rather than debate about just what "free" means in music today, let's understand that Crispell's work is often atonal, her ensembles dense and multi-directional, her concept exploratory and abstract. Whether she's developing a simple gesture—say, starting with the highest and lowest notes on the keyboard and propelling her hands, through complex and independent paths, towards the center—or investigating a ballad by Monk—dropping the melodic progression mid-chorus to elaborate on a particular figure with fervent variations—Crispell's creating on terms of her own.

She's steeped in and inspired by traditions of Western European classicism, African drumming, and American jazz, this soft-spoken woman in her 30s whose father was a piano tuner and who, herself, has become a festival attraction in Europe and a touring soloist in the states (with albums out on Black Saint, Cadence, FMP, and Leo Records). "I've been playing a lot of solo because I've been trying to define my ideas more," she says, and that quest has taken her from her home in Woodstock, NY to Hartford, CT's Real Art Ways, Manhattan's Dance Theatre Workshop, Ann Arbor, MI's Eclipse Jazz, and beyond. As a bandleader, she's recorded (with violinist Billy Bang, bassist Peter Kowald, and drummer John Betsch) during Berlin's Total Music Meeting, and appeared at



LONA FOOTE

the NYC Kool Jazz fest (with bassist Junie Booth and drummer Rashied Ali). Her summer '84 projects included playing in two operas—Anthony Davis' full-scale version of the life of Malcolm X (in Philadelphia's American Music Theater Festival) and Leo Smith's concert production ending the sixth annual New Music America fest. Of course, it's been a circuitous route.

"From the time I was very young, I had a feeling for abstract art of all kinds—poetry, drawing, and music," Crispell claims. She had childhood piano lessons, "always loved jazz when I heard it on the radio," and in 1968 entered the New England Conservatory as a composition major, "which I got out of because I felt my piano technique wasn't where I wanted it to be, and the composition schedule there was harrowing—I couldn't be very creative under those circumstances.

"At the time I was just doing classical music, but I had done improvisational music before. I made a living improvising on Hindemith, Brahms, Bartok, Bach, and fourth chords for modern dance classes. It had to be very simple—you couldn't clutter it up; I'd just use a theme and embellish a little bit on top of it. I got my sense of time together, more than I ever had studying classical piano.

"When I got out of school, I was married for about six years, and didn't play the piano; but when that broke up, I started getting creative again. Then I met somebody who introduced me to jazz; I've listened to pianists like Herbie Nichols, Monk, and Ellington of course, McCoy Tyner, Bill Evans, Paul Bley, and Lennie Tristano. One night I was listening to John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* over and over, and something happened—something changed in me, and I knew I had to learn to play this music. I

felt like Coltrane was there in the room with me, and I had asked him to show me the way to be able to do this. And I felt that he did. After that, a whole path opened up." Knowing she needed to learn the tradition, she studied rigorously for two years with Boston pianist Charles Benakis.

"Some of my other friends who played for dance classes were jazz musicians, and I'd say to them, 'If I was going to improvise, I'd do *this* kind of stuff, but nobody would ever listen—they'd think I was crazy. They'd say, 'No, you should go ahead and play.' It wasn't until somebody played me a Cecil Taylor record that I got the courage to play the fusion between classical and jazz that I heard in my head. I probably wouldn't have gone out on my own, or added drums to my music, without having heard Cecil. We're really very different, but some of our aesthetic sensibility is the same.

"Anyway, while I was still in Boston, someone told me about the Creative Music Studio. I met Karl Berger, and he said I should sit in on some workshops, so I went to CMS in summer of '77. Anthony Braxton heard me play, and asked me to be in his Creative Music Orchestra. And I met all the people I play with through Anthony and that band and CMS, except for Kalaparusha—one of my favorite saxophone players—whom I met at the Tin Palace.

"I met Cecil at CMS, too. I really wanted to play for him, but was too shy to ask him to listen, so when I saw him playing ping-pong, I went into a practice room right outside the ping-pong place, and started playing my heart out. When I came out, he was right there, and said, 'You can really play, you know?' I think Cecil is one of the major influences, innovators, and geniuses of the century; there's definitely a school that comes out of his music, and I definitely consider myself a part of it."

Yet Crispell's pianistics sound very little like Taylor's, once you're past the speed, mastery of the entire piano range, iconoclasm, and intense involvement—even to physical manifestations—that they share. "My playing gets even more romantic than what Cecil would do," she realizes. "I used to play clusters and things similar to what he does, but I've tried very hard to be true to what I want to do and not be a clone of him. What I hear is a very fast bebop, very fast time, or maybe a free feeling moving behind very fast lines, punched out rhythmically, not in clusters but in single notes. I'm working on giving them more rhythmic punch by playing with two fingers—I work with the shape of the phrase, as you

would playing a line with one hand, but I feel I can't get the power for what I hear with one hand. This came out of my playing a Wurlitzer spinet on which the notes stuck all the time.

"I don't really like to write music down anymore. I've come to the conclusion I'll get my ideas from playing. It's like spontaneous composition, and I remember what I do. The problem is, when you're playing with a group, you have to have concrete ideas to give them—it forces you to be a composer. But I always feel music loses something when it gets down on paper—'cause I'm a spontaneous and really free person, and I don't like to be tied down that way. That's partly what I like about working with Anthony [Braxton], because the structure is there, and it's a discipline that I fight against, but then have to bring creative things out of." Braxton's current foursome is completed by bassist John Lindberg and drummer Gerry Hemingway.

Crispell's desire to have steady rhythms to work against—"rather than drumming that's all points and space, when I'm playing points and space"—came from her contact with African drummers in Woodstock, and concerts with such timekeepers as Olatunji and Andrew Cyrille. "I've never heard an African musician who I thought was static, but I've heard a lot of jazz that I felt gets static, that wasn't pushing within the groove," she says. But Crispell acknowledges lapses of momentum in her own albums and is concerned about the quality of her communication not only on the bandstand, but also with her audience.

"I don't always know if people can hear my themes, especially in group pieces, because sometimes there are four different things going on at once. I'm trying to find more guidance points; when I toured Europe with my quartet, I found the piece that worked best was *ABC*, where everybody plays the same line, but in their own time, and then we all end together on cue.

"I feel like I'm in a transition period right now, trying to figure my music out. I don't believe in playing down to an audience, though, and I think if something's played with conviction, and is heard enough, you can build an audience for what you do. When I see people walk out while I'm playing, it affects me—I'm afraid I'm playing something that offends them, that they've gotten something negative out of what I'm doing, and I never think of myself attacking the audience, or being angry. I try to put out positive feeling. As long as I'm playing something that I feel is true to myself, then I can think, 'Well,

they're not ready to hear it.' But I still feel sad." Maybe she should remember the lyrics to another Coltrane classic, *My Favorite Things*. Marilyn Crispell may not want to play "free jazz per se," but what she does makes fans of that and other heartfelt, adventuresome music glad. db

Vince Giordano

Bucking the new and backing the old is right up this instrumentalist/bandleader's alley.

BY FRED BOUCHARD

When you go out to boogie, what do you dance? New wave? Jitterbug? Hard rock? Oldies? Just how old can you go? Swing Era? How about Roaring '20s music? I don't mean straw hat dixie, but the pop music before the Depression, from the sweet orchestras of Paul Whiteman and Jean Goldkette to the hot ensembles of Fletcher Henderson and Duke Ellington.

If you've not heard it—never mind danced to it—you're missing quite an experience. This is not rinky-dink nostalgia music, as my feet found out working on the manic two-beats at the Copley Plaza Hotel Ballroom, but an effective and infectious revival band unlike any in America. Cafe society has discovered Vince Giordano's Nighthawks, now maybe jazz fans can too. I flipped at the fresh, crisp sound of unusual instruments on practically prehistoric charts: it was like listening to digital cylinders.

Thick, black 78s and a wind-up Victrola were the media which drew Giordano as a kid in Brooklyn back in time to his strange musical niche. "My grandmother kept them in a closet, but I'd get them out when I was five and play Caruso and King Oliver. Barney Bigard's soprano solo on *Every Tub* drove me crazy! I went for the pop and jazz, both hot and sweet, started collecting records and antiques, listened hard to the jazz solos, especially Louis, Bix, and Duke."

Giordano is an accomplished multi-instrumentalist (as well as musicologist and leader), especially on the bass instruments. "I started on violin in the third grade, but couldn't stand the teacher and quit. But the urge to play came back



DONNA PAUL

strong, and in the seventh grade I tried out late for the band. The leader said, 'All I have left is the tuba.' Most of my 78s had tuba on them, so I said, 'I'll take it.' I got into it day and night: skipped lunches, played along with records, and got into a banjo band when I was 15."

Other instruments followed rapidly in Giordano's battery. The school band needed a string bass and asked him to double; he traded hours stripping furniture in an antique store for a banjo. "I heard *The Bix Beiderbecke Story*, and flipped over Adrian Rollini playing bass sax—I had to have that instrument! I met an old musician who sold me the blackened silver one he had in his closet since the '30s for \$90."

His musical life began to emerge, and really rolled along merrily once he got his driver's license. "I got to play with different bands around town. I worked with New Orleans clarinetist Tony Parenti and Smith St. Society; took arranging lessons with Bill Challis [who'd worked for Goldkette, Whiteman, Casa Loma, Artie Shaw]; then I joined the navy and played in the Show Band's Ed Sullivan gamut of acts on electric bass, tuba, banjo."

Giordano's passion for ancient jazz, of course, was hardly shared by his peers. "I was always trying for those early sounds, and was promptly rejected. I guess you could say my early life was like Fletcher Henderson's—a study in frustration. I feel like I'm trying to sell Model A Fords in a space-age world: there's a market out there, but you can't expect everybody to go for it." The society successes the Nighthawks have had of late have evolved out of six years playing steady at Red Blazer Too as a home base. They play for dancing, but true to the music:

PROFILE

rare verses are crooned; original charts and instruments are used. There's no faking; it's all worked out, very tight, bright, and on the money. They play to the audience ("Some nights we can't touch a ballad."), but just so far. "We don't do medleys; the arrangements are pat and made to fit on a 78 [two-to-four minutes long]."

Giordano has amassed an enormous book of tunes over the years, by sheer dint of digging. "On the road with the navy band and later Clyde McCoy, I'd never sleep late or hang out all day. Boom! I'd be down to the music stores, antique shops, union halls, picking up whatever music I could in the day or two I was in town. I'd advertise, buy up old band leaders' libraries, hunt through garages and attics. I'm still buying and looking. Some of the great music libraries are at colleges [Whiteman's at Williams, Casa Loma's at Northeastern, Shaw's at Boston U.], but what happened to the Goldkette book? Benny Moten's? Henderson's?"

The vast majority of the arrangements in Giordano's Nighthawk library are

"stock" arrangements you could buy in any music store and were identical all over the world: three brass, three saxes, four rhythm, and violin. "All the great bands adapted these freely. They'd clip on an intro, slot in solos. They couldn't afford arrangers, so they'd make the stocks their own, put their signature on them. We do the same. Andy Stein [reed/fiddle doubler] and Randy Sandke [trumpeter], Herb Gardner and Pete Socolow transcribe off the recordings bar-by-bar, then we brainstorm."

Giordano fiercely believes in recreating the original solos, which presented no stylistic problem for his original band, which included several soloists from the old years, like Clarence Hutchenreider, clarinetist with the Casa Loma Orchestra. But when the band started to travel out of Manhattan and cover its "territory," the old-timers demurred, and Giordano had to seek younger bloods, who didn't always cotton to the strictures. Yet Giordano explains his credo convincingly: "Most people who try to write in the '20s style sound worn, sloppy, miss chord changes, get the voic-

ings wrong, blow the ambiance. Most disappointing are solos not in the style. I really love jazz, but you have to have the right solo on the right chart. A Coltrane lick in the middle of *Sweet Sue* is like an ooga horn on a Corvette."

So some of the frustration continues for Giordano, trying to work beboppers and young cats into a historical idiom. "I need excellent readers, but most of their heads are not as far back as mine. Too much freedom on music like this ruins the credibility and tightness. The guys surely don't go home and put on old records and think dotted eighths." But Giordano is not all moldy fig, either, for some charts allow freedom—there is free noodling behind the vocalist, and small combo jams each set to limber up.

One fascinating aspect of the Nighthawks' live performances (there's one album so far on George Buck's G.H.B. label—*New Orleans Nighthawks*, GHB 98) is the plethora of period instruments, which give it some of the historical verisimilitude of a Baroque orchestra. There's the Stroh phonofiddle with its metal body unlike a violin's, a Victrola horn to project (no mic needed!), and a little trumpet to the ear (primitive monitor!). The drum kit is a real original: small sizes, made of wood, a Hawaiian scene handpainted on the bass drum. Giordano got into temple blocks from having played with legendary Ellington drummer Sonny Greer and pianist Brooks Kerr. Jim Lawyer plays tenor guitar, a four-string job tuned like a banjo, popular in the transitional years from banjo to guitar. The trombonists were skeptical when Giordano asked them to use a megaphone (a primitive amplification device used by Goldkette), but once they heard the warm, flugel-like quality it gave their solos, they now use it indiscriminately. As a final historic fillip, the tuba Giordano uses today is an old Morton he got from Bob Ysiguere, one-time bassist with Don Redman, who came out of New Orleans in 1914 and worked with Fletcher Henderson.

Finally, in this age of digital recording and compact discs, Giordano is becoming even more of a throwback: having cut his teeth on one-quarter-of-an-inch thick Columbia 78s and a Victrola, he's now made cylinders of Hal Roach recordings for Peter Dilge's Baldwin Harbor Press on Long Island. Yet, he does have some multimedia ideas, as well, for proselytizing to students about early jazz: "I'd like to get the kids into the history through slides, films, dancers, lectures, and live music. All the bands of this era were dance bands, and people still love to dance." db

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THEORY AND MUSICIANSHIP FOR THE CREATIVE JAZZ IMPROVISER

by michael longo



venues opened up in Dallas and Corpus Christi. "Things were gettin' better," says Johnny, "and finally there was a hippie place in Beaumont, and people in Beaumont loved us—and I knew when that happened that we were destined for fame. They never liked us in Beaumont, but people were faintin' and goin' nuts—they were flippin' out—and they never even cared before. But we still didn't have anybody to record us, so I decided to go to England."

Leaving his band behind, Winter flew to London, taking along his guitar and a tape the trio had recorded at the Vulcan Gas Company. Bill Josey and Rim Kelley had produced an album's worth of straight blues material there for the English Sonobeat label, which was intended for release on Liberty, Sonobeat's American affiliate. "We cut it," says Johnny, "but they didn't put it out. It was just like a live thing with no audience there, but I thought it was good enough for a demo." He had been supplied with a list of British contacts by Mike Leadbitter, the late co-editor of *Blues Unlimited* magazine, who had tracked Winter down in Houston in the belief that he was a black blues singer. "He had got the early Frolic records, and he said, 'Oh man, I paid a lot of money for your records, and now they're not worth anything.' That made me angry, but after that we became real good friends."

Winter met with similar initial skepticism in London, but after two hectic weeks managed to secure a modest financial commitment from Mike and Richard Vernon of Blue Horizon Records. Immediately on his return, however, the *Rolling Stone* article came out, and Winter was suddenly the most sought-after musician in America. Mercury Records flew him out to San Francisco, where he cut several demo tracks (one of which, a version of Robert Johnson's *When You Got A Good Friend*, was later purchased by Columbia) and performed at the Avalon Ballroom and the Fillmore West. At Steve Paul's

behest, he traveled to New York and dazzled industry and media representatives with a guest appearance at a "Super Session" concert at the Fillmore East. "After that," he says, "the figures started goin' up and up. And I signed with Columbia before I ever signed with Steve Paul. I talked to everybody myself and decided that Clive Davis was willin' to pretty much let me run the show, which is what I wanted."

Only after the *Johnny Winter* album was released did Imperial Records issue the Sonobeat session. Shortly thereafter Ken Ritter issued his Winter material—released and unreleased—on a GRT album. Huey Meaux and Roy Ames followed suit, selling their identical tapes to Buddah and Janus, respectively. Although they were dismissed by the critics of the day as "frankly commercial stuff," Winter's early recordings now stand as a testament to his youthful range and prowess, offering examples of blues, soul, rock, pop, and psychedelia far superior to many highly touted recent reissues by more obscure artists. Had he not become a celebrity, he would still have been a legend.

Johnny displays his gaudy new tattoos and space-age Lazer guitar on the cover of the *Guitar Slinger* LP and in a video recently shot at Deadwood Dave's Wild West Saloon in Chicago. He still tours with a hard-rocking trio (currently Jon Paris on bass and Moe Potts on drums), delighting his loyal fans—many too young to remember his debut—with hard-charging rock & roll favorites like *Johnny B. Goode* and *Jumpin' Jack Flash*. But as he demonstrated in a Chicago Blues Festival performance this year with the Legendary Blues Band, he remains, in Mike Leadbitter's words, "the best male white blues guitarist that ever was."

His most recently completed project is *Whoopin'*, an Alligator album for harmonica great Sonny Terry, which Winter produced and performed on. Says Johnny: "As long as I can do blues, I don't mind rock & roll, but I wouldn't do just rock & roll and no blues. I like rock & roll, too, but I love the blues more." db

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3. **Jazz, Pop/Rock, and Soul/R&B Musicians of the Year:** Vote for the artist who, in your opinion, has contributed most to jazz, pop/rock, and soul/r&b in 1984.
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, Albert Ayler, Count Basie, Sidney Bechet, Bix Beiderbecke, Art Blakey, 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, Stephane Grappelli, 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, Fats Navarro, King Oliver, Charlie Parker, Art Pepper, Bud Powell, Sun Ra, 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.

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VITOUS continued from page 20

learn how to pace yourself, keep going," said Vitous. "You have to drive yourself just as hard to start practicing long hours as you do to drag yourself out of bed before dawn to swim laps."

After 15 years, playing becomes second nature, maybe beyond nature. "Sometimes I wake up in the middle of the night and my fingers are walking up the headboard! I'm playing in my sleep. When you play as long as I have, and your mind is always on it and you concentrate, all I have to do now is work hard three or four hours a day, one month a year, to keep it up."

Keeping it up with the tall bassist, whose personality seems as wild and frizzy as his curls, means keeping things popping on all musical fronts. That can mean bowing sweet violin-range legato lines with his long bow as pretty as you please, or plucking deep, unpredictable pizzicato sweeps—intoning Monk changes with unearthly resonance beneath Stoltzman's quavery clarinet, or spinning out a little folk melody from the depths of his Czechoslovak soul as Pat Metheny pips tuned conga effects on his Synclavier strings and Roy Haynes chatters on his snare rims.

"Miroslav's dynamite!" enthuses Haynes. "He takes advantage of the complete instrument—the full range. Some of the youngsters play just the high fast things, but Miroslav covers the bass part of the bass, you know? The basement of the house, the *foundation*. It's a joy for a drummer to play with a bassist like that. We continue to grow and mellow out: it's a continuation of 18 years ago, and it has been *beautiful!*"

Vitous' colleague and fellow composer at New England Conservatory, William T. McKinley, regards him as a high-energy player with phenomenal ESP. "He hears everything that has to be played before it's played," says McKinley, who has been sketching out a *Bass Concerto* for Vitous for future performance with Boston's Musica Viva. "Miroslav always reads well, but when the chips are on the table, he can find something to improve on the printed notes.

"Wynton Marsalis can play Haydn, and he can play jazz," continues McKinley, "but Miroslav is the first musician of note who's playing *all* of the music of our own time, both classical and jazz. That's the true crossover, and he's setting the precedent. Many jazz players who can make a name for themselves playing the classical literature are banging their heads against the wall because there are so many straight classical players who can do it better. And there are many players of contemporary music who wish they had the same improvisational facility that jazz players have. Well, Miroslav has it all." db

ON THE BEAT continued from page 6

the results were hardly acclaimed by the critics . . . and rightfully so, as the arrangements were so un-Monkian as to sound positively MOR.)

But if Monk was perceived as an innovator, Oscar Peterson, on the other hand, was seen as a synthesis of the styles of Art Tatum, Count Basie, Teddy Wilson, and others, and as a result was allowed to develop and "refine" his own style amid these influences, even though he was never expected to alter or reforge his music in any basic, innovative way.

Similarly, consider the critical reaction to Keith Jarrett's music over the years. At the initial release of his solo piano albums, critics couldn't find enough positive adjectives to hang onto Jarrett's improvisations. They saw him as a touchstone in the evolution of the keyboard, and raved about his pan-stylistic, spontaneous creations. Over the past decade, however, critical acclaim for Jarrett's solo work has shrunk to the point where many (though not all) critics now see him as being redundant, revisiting the same material without significant development or change. Jarrett himself feels that his music *has* changed over the years, but his critics don't hear it that way.

The point is that critics heard something valuable in the early music of Monk and Jarrett, and yet they ultimately castigated them for *continuing* to create music in that fashion. But why? If it was valid once, isn't it still valid today? Isn't one of the criteria for great music its *timeless* quality?

More on this later.

db

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