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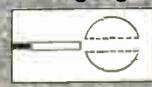
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—Steve Smith

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Tim Schneckloth's Ad Lib, "Bloomfield Revisited" (db, Jan. '84), nailed the essence of Bloom the way Bloom nailed the essence of our musical fantasies.

Thank you for the revisit.

Gary Sarachan

St. Louis

The right B

Congratulations on your fine Pro Session by Emilio Lyons and Fred Bouchard ("Rappin' With The Sax Doctor," db, Dec. '83). Many of us who deal with Emilio on a regular basis (at his store, Rayburn Music, in Boston) know him to be all the fine things you so accurately describe.

More important, though, is that Emilio is a very fine and warm human being, and it is that which we most appreciate.

Thomas G. Dumas
Director of Music

Public Schools
Waltham, MA

I have been a subscriber to **down beat** for many years, and have enjoyed reading your articles, interviews, etc. In all those years I have never written to you to express my appreciation of your fine publication, but after reading the Pro Session, "Rappin' With The Sax Doctor" by Emilio Lyons and Fred Bouchard (db, Dec. '83), I wanted to convey my thanks and tell you how much I enjoyed this article. I am a part-time saxophone player and derived a great deal from this article. I hope you choose to make this a regular column in your magazine as I am sure that many readers and saxophone players such as myself will look forward to future issues.

Robert E. Graham

Indianapolis, IN

Look for future raps with the Sax Doctor answering readers' problems in upcoming db's.
—Ed.

Bass line

I enjoyed reading the article on Sphere in the Jan. '84 db. However, in the section that deals with the band's equipment, Buster Williams is quoted as saying, "My bass is a Hawks Panormo. Panormo was an Italian who went to England during

the war and made some basses for a company named Hawks." I would like to correct his information. Vincenzo Panormo moved to England in 1790 and died there in 1813. The Hawkes company later had copies of his basses made in England, France, and Germany.
Dale Schmidt Atlanta, GA

Prez Postscript

To all of you who so kindly expressed an interest in my Lester Young book after seeing my letter in the Aug. '83, **db**: thank you very much.

My book, *Lester Young*, is finished and at the publisher (G.K. Hall, 70 Lincoln St., Boston, MA 02111 USA). It will be a small hardcover, reasonably priced, and out early this year. It consists of about one-fourth biography, with some original research; one-fourth discographical listing, with a fair amount of new information (this is a listing of titles and a few issues, not a full discography which would give all issues and all personnel); and one-half musical analysis, which is all new. Some of the analysis is fairly technical, but most will be accessible to non-

musicians.

Even though the book is finished, I always appreciate any new biographic or discographic info, or private tapes that you can share with me. I will gladly reciprocate. Thanks again.

PS: This news just came in—my accompanying book of Prez solos, transcribed by myself, will be published by Studio P/R-Columbia (Hialeah, FL) at the end of 1984.

Lewis Porter Tufts University
Asst. Professor of Music Medford, MA

Believe it or rock

In Paul de Barros' article on Tony Williams (**db**, Nov. '83), he calls Williams' *Believe It* album "crisp, straightahead rock." Well, let me tell you something Paul. When my rock-oriented friends hear the album, they call it jazz. When my jazz-oriented friends hear the album, some call it fusion, some just say, "Oh wow, man." When I hear the album, I hear *good music*, featuring the white-hot lead guitar of Allan Holdsworth and some of Tony's most inventive and creative playing. And I have heard most of his

work with Miles. I have been listening to *Believe It* for a long time, and still enjoy it. As a matter of fact, if "straightahead rock" sounded that good, I would buy more of it. But what is "straightahead rock" anyway?

Greg Turner

Bowling Green, KY

Back on track

Thank you very much for your recent return to the listing of track titles and personnel in your record reviews (**db**, Jan. '84). This information, listed clearly and precisely, is invaluable to us record-buying freaks, and is one of the main features that has kept your magazine great over the many years I have subscribed to it.

One little kick: please don't let your coverage of blues dwindle to nothing. How about an article on one of the overlooked masters, John Littlejohn?
Bo Petroff Springfield, OH

Don't get the blues, Bo. Check out the Roomful Of Blues feature, the Duke Robillard Profile, the Son Seals Caught, and the blues Waxing On, all in this issue.—Ed.

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DONNA PAUL

East meets West at JazzFest Berlin

BERLIN—Artistic director George Gruntz created a truly international scene at the recent JazzFest Berlin here, attracting a diverse group of jazz stars from around the world. A special treat at the annual four-day affair was the daily dose of contemporary Indian sounds from the likes of tablaist Zakir Hussain and altoist Kadri Gopainath, who teamed with John Handy for an intriguing East West saxophone exchange.

Some of the artists who packed the acoustically perfect Philharmonie Hall (home of the Berlin Philharmonic) were the Max Roach Quartet (featuring trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater) alone and teamed with a Swedish string quartet, the Modern Jazz Quartet, the David Murray Octet, Cecil Taylor, and the Gunter Hampel All-Stars, in addition to such avant gardists as the Sommer/Waver

Duo from Germany and American synthesist Richard Teitelbaum.

Also on the program was a gospel music day at the Kaiser-Wilhelm Church in the center of the city. The Barrett Sisters, Bessie Griffin, and Robert and Bobby McFerrin rocked the audience off their seats.

The hottest day of the fest had fans searching for tickets outside the Philharmonie, and with good reason. On-stage for two SRO shows were Miles Davis band, the Master Srinvas Group (from India), and a grand finale by the Sun Ra All-Stars, featuring (pictured from left) Philly Joe Jones, Archie Shepp, Lester Bowie, Don Cherry, Clifford Jarvis, John Gilmore, Sun Ra, and Marshall Allen, in addition to (non-pictured) Arkestral guests, percussionist Don Moye and bassist Richard Davis.

—donna paul

ASCAP honors Ellington

NEW YORK—As part of ASCAP's 70th anniversary celebration, the ASCAP Foundation and Meer The Composer Inc. have commissioned three new compositions in the fields of concert, gospel, and jazz music, all honoring Duke Ellington. These works will be performed by Lukas Foss and the Brooklyn Philharmonic on March 15 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and on March 16 at the Cooper Union in Manhattan.

Kevin Hanlon was selected to compose the concert music, Howard McCrary the gospel piece, and Horace Silver—designated by committee members Omette Coleman, Billy Taylor, and Grover Washington Jr.—will create a jazz

work for the occasion.

Also highlighted during the celebratory performances will be the world premiere of a Coleman composition in tribute to Duke, and excerpts from *Queenie Pie*, a concert piece written by Ellington but never before played publicly.

And in another Ducal development, Bob Thiele, president of Doctor Jazz Records, has announced that his label will be releasing two Ellington LPs yearly, resulting from a deal he struck with Mercer Ellington, Duke's son. The masters offered in the upcoming series will all be previously unreleased performances by both Duke's big bands and various small combos. —jeff levenson

Music to flow at NO World's Fair

NEW ORLEANS—Though "Rivers" is the theme of the Louisiana World Expo (a.k.a. the New Orleans World's Fair, to be held here 5/12-11/11/84), the accent will be on musical entertainment, over 50,000 hours worth on 22 stages, covering the whole spectrum from rock to pop, classical to comedy, ballet to bluegrass, and, of course, jazz, the music born here.

The fair's version of the Preservation Hall theme will be Reunion Hall, a stately pavilion done up in an old New Orleans dance hall motif. The hall will accommodate all manner of live music, dancing, a wide variety of local cuisine, a large commercial area, and several bars. Pete Fountain (pictured) who serenaded at the hall's groundbreaking, will be a frequent featured performer there.

The premier entertainment venue will be the International Amphitheatre, a 12-story covered, outdoor facility with 5,500 reserved seats. The International Jazz Festival Weekend 5/25-27 will bring together top jazz performers to inaugurate the facility.

The jazz weekend will consist of five concerts in three evening and two afternoon performances daily. All-star acts scheduled include Count Basie, Lionel Hampton, Maynard Ferguson, Buddy Rich, Woody Herman, Billy Taylor, Dizzy Gillespie, Al Hirt, Wynton Marsalis, Pete Fountain, Paquito D'Rivera, Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, Freddie Hubbard, Mel Tormé, Sarah Vaughan, George Shearing, Chris Barber, the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, the Olympia Jazz Band, Ellis Marsalis and the Marsalis Family Band, and the Dirty Dozen.

The ongoing dance and classical music series at the Amphitheatre will feature the international performances of the New Orleans Symphony Orchestra, conducted



by Philippe Entremont. In a series of three performances, one will feature violinist Isaac Stern, with a choreographed fireworks and laser show. Another will feature the Beethoven *Triple Concerto* performed by pianist Entremont, cellist Leonard Rose, and violinist Shomo Mintz. A special premier performance by the Tokyo Ballet will feature principal dancer Yuriko Kimura.

Also appearing in the classical concert series are the Alvin Nikolais Dance Company; the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Charles Dutoit; violinist Yehudi Menuhin; the Washington National Symphony, conducted by Maxim Shostakovich; the World Youth Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Eduardo Mata; Itzhak Perman; the London Philharmonic, conducted by Klaus Tennstedt; the Stuttgart Ballet; the Vienna Boys Choir; and the Boston Pops, conducted by John Williams.

The Louisiana World Exposition officially opens May 12 on an 82-acre site fronting the Mississippi River here. It is expected to draw over 11 million visitors during the course of its six-month run. For more information, call (504) 525-3247. —joel simpson



BEANTOWN BLAST: Renowned tubaist Howard Johnson (winner of the '83 db Critics Poll Miscellaneous Instrument category) demonstrates advanced techniques before an SRO audience at Berklee College of Music's acclaimed Visiting Artist Series in Boston recently. Other series performers included trumpeter (and Berklee alum) Bill Berry, vocalist Betty Carter, and alto saxist Paquito D'Rivera.

NEWS

Big bands blast from the past

LOS ANGELES—The big band scene, long described as moribund by most observers, took on another contender recently when Artie Shaw left his California home to rehearse, in Boston, an orchestra that will carry his name.

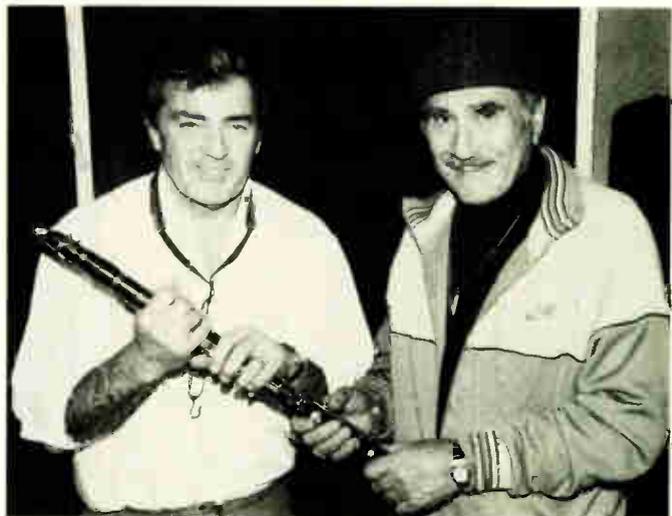
Dick Johnson, clarinetist and multi-reedman who has been leading his own combo locally, will front the orchestra. Shaw, who gave up playing in 1954 and has not been involved with the music world since then, is in control of the new band, rehearsing it and using music mainly from his old library. New material by Johnson and others will also be used. (Johnson is pictured at left with Shaw on the right.)

Before leaving to take charge, Shaw said, "I had very mixed feelings about a band going out under my name while I'm still around, but I heard Dick on some of his Concord Jazz albums and decided that if it was to be done, he was the logical man to head it up. He's a superb musician."

Johnson, 57, is a veteran former sideman with many name bands, among them Buddy Morrow, Buddy Rich, Neal Hefti, and Benny Goodman. His combo, known as Swing Shift, may be featured in "band-within-a-band" numbers along lines comparable to Shaw's old Gramercy 5. The personnel of the new Shaw band includes Johnson's son Gary on drums and Joe Cohn, son of tenor saxophonist Al Cohn, on guitar. (The orchestra debuted in December at the re-opening of the newly refurbished Glen Island Casino in New Rochelle, NY, a famous venue for big bands during the Swing Era.)

Booking agent Willard Alexander, who talked Shaw into working on the project after several years of gentle persuasion, said, "The response has been terrific; we expect to keep this orchestra working continuously. We already have offers of bookings as far off as next June."

Because vocals played a sub-



DOMINA PAUL

stantial role in the early Shaw orchestras, a female singer was expected to be hired to revive some of the old songs associated with Helen Forrest.

Coincidentally, during the same week Shaw departed to get his band under way, rehearsals began in Hollywood with an orchestra bearing the name of Harry James,

whose band disassembled after his death last July 5. Most of them were reunited as Pee-Wee Monte, James' longtime manager, arranged for the band to be fronted by Joe Graves, who recreated many of James' best-known trumpet solos in a Time-Life record series a few years ago.

—leonard feather

potpourri

The Jazz World Society is ready to publish its third edition of the **Jazz Festivals International Directory**, giving comprehensive who's, when's, and where's of fests from 4/84-12/85; there is no fee for a festival listing; complete particulars are needed by 2/25, and the release date is 3/15; details at (201) 939-0836 . . . the 12th annual **New York Brass Conference** is scheduled for 3/16-18 at the Roosevelt Hotel in the Big Apple; there will be tributes to Maynard Ferguson and Urbie Green; the Tito Puente Latin Brass Concert kicks things off; there'll be a Woody Herman Alumni Reunion; and \$25,000 in brass instruments and accessories will be raffled; plus other concerts, clinics, conferences, and exhibits; details from NYBC, 315 W. 53rd, NYC 10019 . . . in other brass action, the **International Trumpet Guild** has established two memorial scholarships to help students attend ITG conferences—one in the name of Renold Schilke, former principal trumpet with the Chicago Symphony and a well-known instrument designer, and the other named for Clifton Plog, former big band trombonist and renowned teacher; parties interested in mak-

ing a tax-deductible contribution to either should contact Bryan Goff, ITG Treasurer, School of Music, Florida St. U., Tallahassee, FL 32306 . . . back home in Indiana, the Audio-Visual Center at Indiana U. (Bloomington IN 47405) recently released **After Hours With Art Hodes**, five video cassettes catching the blues 'n' boogie pianist w/ guests Wingy Manone, Little Brother Montgomery, Kenny Davern, and a pair of jam sessions; for rent or purchase info contact the Center at (812) 335-8087 . . . in other vid news, the J.D. Calato Manufacturing Co. Inc. is now offering to loan the instructional **Jestick Rhythm Course** to dealers and schools at no charge; the five-minute videotape teaches the basics on playing the Jestick, a unique clave/guiro/tambourine hybrid instrument; details at (716) 285-3546 . . . the "deebee"-award-winning **Northern Illinois University Jazz Ensemble** was featured in a one-hour tv special on Chicago's PBS outlet, WTTW; *One Year In The Life Of . . . The Greatest College Jazz Band In America* follows the '80-81 ensemble from auditions to rehearsals to concerts, including a clinic with Marvin Stamm, a performance at

the women's prison in Dwight, IL, and a drum battle between NIU's Vern Spivak and Louie Bellson at a club date; Dizzy Gillespie narrates; pester your local PBS outlet to pick it up for rebroadcast . . . and "deebee"-award-winning flugelhorn/trumpeter **Andrew Gravis** (who also copped Berklee College of Music's Art Farmer Jazz Masters Award when enrolled there) has joined Buddy Rich's new band, frequently found backing Frank Sinatra these days (Buddy's in fine fettle, by the way, well-recovered from his '83 heart surgery) . . . up New Haven way, the Yale U. School of Music awarded one of five Certificates of Merit to **Steinway & Sons**, the noted piano manufacturer, for its outstanding contributions to musical life in America . . . in the heartland, former **db** Publisher **Charles Suber** was recently appointed Assoc. Director of the Arts, Entertainment and Media Management Programs at Chicago's Columbia College, stepping down from his current post as President of the Music Industry Manufacturers Association . . . the **National Endowment for the Arts** has initiated a test program to explore how state and local public support for the arts in the U.S. can be substantially increased; grants from the new Locals Test Program are aimed at generating more local tax dollars through a matching process that

allows local governments greater authority over the expenditure of new funds; a total of \$2 million in the first 11 grants are expected to produce \$12 million in new local tax dollars over the next three years in 46 cities and counties around the states . . . the premier issue of **Tellus**, "The Audio Magazine," is a cassette gazette featuring audio art, poetry, drama, comedy, music of primitive peoples, new bands, and excerpts from archival tapes; **Tellus I** is available at a one-time non-subscription cost of \$6; subscriptions to the bimonthly are \$30 a year; write 'em at 143 Ludlow St. #14, NYC 10002 . . . dancing your beat? then check out the **Dance Music Report** (210 E. 90th St., NYC 10028), a bi-monthly with the latest from the 12-inch set . . . and the **Music Book Society** (a branch of the North American Book Clubs Inc., 51 Washington St., Dover, NH 03820) has expanded to include more books about jazz (though the emphasis on classical music remains); each book the club offers is at least 30 percent off the publisher's price; you can dial 'em gratis at 1-800-343-9444 . . . on the silver screen **Rhapsody Films** is a new distribution company specializing in jazz and blues flicks for all U.S. markets including theatrical, non-theatrical, tv, and video cassette; they have dozens of titles on file; call 'em at (212) 243-0152 . . .

NARAS MVP'S, West Coast Division

LOS ANGELES—The local chapter of NARAS (National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences) here held its annual awards luncheon at the Castaways in Burbank recently to honor member artists voted "Most Valuable" for their 1983 efforts in the studios. Arrangers Patrick Williams, Gene Page, Henry Mancini, and Bill Holman each directed an all-star ensemble through their respective material, and wisecracks were issued by Mistress of Ceremonies, Joan Rivers.

Among those coming away with gold plaques were Jerry Hey (trumpet), Bill Watrous (bass trombone), Bill Reichenbach (tenor

trombone), Jim Self (tuba), Ernie Watts (saxophones), Ray Pizzi (double reeds), Nathan East (overall bass winner), Chuck Berghoffer (acoustic bass), Abraham Laboriel (electric bass), Tim May (guitar), Paulinho da Costa (hand percussion), Victor Feldman (mallet percussion), Jeff Porcaro (drums), Dorothy Ashby (harp), Michael Boddicker (synthesizer), and Clare Fischer (organ).

NARAS also presented emeritus awards to Tommy Tedesco, Gayle Lavont Butler, and Chuck Domanico, and a special Governor's Award was presented posthumously to arranger Don Costa.

—zan stewart

big city beat

BOSTON

The **Willow Jazz Club** (Somerville) has the Mitch Forman Trio 3/9-10 and the Jimmy Mosher Quartet 3/30-1 . . . Stephane Grappelli and the Quintet of the Hot Club plays the **Copley Plaza Ballroom** 4/27 . . .

CHICAGO

The Jeff Lorber Fusion blasts into the **Park West** 3/14; (312) 929-5959 . . . **Rick's Cafe** debuts Dave Frishberg 2/28-3/10, (312) 943-9200 . . . the **Bloom School of Jazz** opens its spring enrollment 2/25; (312) 280-8298 charts your course . . . and the world's longest-lived blues bar changes locations after 35 years; an update on **Theresa's** soon . . . meanwhile, **Blues For Theresa**, a video gleaned from Ms. Needham's all-star benefit at B.L.U.E.S. At The Earl, is available for broadcast from Eye & Ear Teleproductions, (312) 337-5050 . . .

CINCINNATI

The locally based **Blue Wisp Big Band** has won the highly coveted Post/Corbett award for '83 in the category of performing artist . . . veteran jazz drummer Dee Felice has opened **Dee's Place** on Covington's Mainstrasse, featuring New Orleans cuisine and jazz nightly . . .

CLEVELAND

The **Cleveland Orchestra** reports that the Kool Jazz Festival '83 was so successful at the orch.'s summer home, Blossom Music Center, that it will be back, even bigger

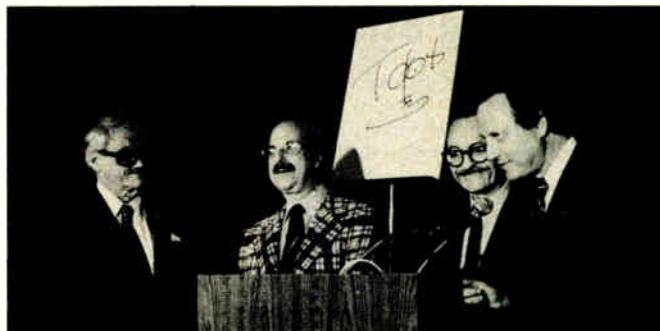
and better, in a four-day schedule in July or early Aug.; local jazz artists are mounting an effort to have more of their ranks included in the fest, as is the practice in other cities . . .

DETROIT

Eclipse Jazz (Ann Arbor) heats things up this winter with a number of activities: the Dewey Redman Quartet concertizes and clinicizes in Mar. (date t.b.a.) and the David Grisman Quartet does the same 4/7; jazz improv workshops, led by David Swain, are every Mon. evening; David Chertok's History Of Jazz On Film is skedded for 3/20; and the History Of Jazz Lecture Series runs weekly with raps by **db**er David Wild (on John Coltrane & Ornette Coleman) 2/28, Theodore Grenier (Charles Mingus & Rahsaan Roland Kirk) 3/6, Michael G. Nastos (AACM—the Avant Garde, Modern Development) 3/13, David Chertok (Jazz On Film—Part II) 3/20, Jim Dulzo (Detroit Jazz Artists) 3/27, and Chinyere Neale (Women In Jazz) 4/3; all in and around the U. MI campus; (313) 763-5924 for details on all . . .

LONDON

Cultural exchanges sometimes thrive despite international tension; Britain's Arts Council brings the Russian **Ganelin Trio** (Vyacheslav Ganelin, piano; Vladimir Chekasin, sax; Vladimir Tarasov, drums; and all double) further west than Berlin for the first time; their U.K. tour opens 3/7 at Bloomsbury Theatre . . .



JOHN BRIGHT

NARAS MVP'S, EAST COAST DIVISION: The New York Chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (in cooperation with BMI, 3M, Nimbus Nine, and RCA Studios) recently presented Most Valuable Player awards to NY session players, recognizing their contributions to the international recording scene. Emceed by Gerry Mulligan, the MVP's included: Howard Johnson (tuba), David Sanborn (alto sax), Michael Brecker (tenor sax), Ronnie Cuber (baritone sax), Dick Hyman (acoustic piano), Richard Tee (electric piano), Ron Carter (acoustic bass), Marcus Miller (electric bass), Steve Gadd (drums), Ralph MacDonald (hand percussion), and Toots Thielemans (harmonica). Following the ceremony there was a special tribute to Toots, including the presentation of **db** Critics and Readers Poll award plaques to him and Pepper Adams. Pictured at the presentation are (from left) Toots, Ira Gitler, Pepper, and Dan Morgenstern.

LOS ANGELES

COMA (California Outside Music Assn.) is a new outfit of musicians performing, producing, or promoting non-mainstream sounds (e.g. ethnic, contemporary classical, avant garde, free, or new jazz) via concerts, newsletters, airplay, and the release of a sampler LP; contact the Long Beach group at (213) 420-2662 . . . the **Date Room** is our newest jazz house on the west side (2965 S. Sepulveda, Westwood), with music up to six nights a week; upcoming artists include Morgana King, Jack McDuff; (213) 487-8017 . . . **At My Place** in Santa Monica has big banders Leslie Drayton 2/19 and Ladd McIntosh 2/26 and the stompin' r&b horns of Billy Vera, 3/2-4; (213) 451-8597 . . . **Hop Singh's** (Marina del Rey) has Flora Purim & Airta, 2/27-28 . . . Howard Rumsey continues with the favorites in his Redondo Beach's **Concerts By The Sea**; on tap are Eloise and Debra Laws 2/23-26 and Tierra 3/1-4; (213) 379-4998 . . . Miles Davis is set to wail 2/25 at the **Beverly Theatre** which is becoming L.A.'s best posh house for jazz; (213) 274-9106 . . .

NEW ORLEANS

The **Blue Room** at the Fairmont Hotel has B.B. King through 2/25, Billy Eckstine 2/27-3/13, and Lionel Hampton 3/14-27; reservations suggested. (504) 529-4744 . . . the **Jazz And Heritage Foundation** brings homeboy Wynton Marsalis and his quintet to the

refurbished Orpheum Theater 2/24; (504) 522-4786 . . .

NEW YORK

The **Village West** offers the rare, extended booking of the Ron Carter/Jim Hall Duo through 3/4; (212) 691-2791 . . . Ahmad Jamal settles in at the **Blue Note** 3/6-11 . . . **Lush Life's** new management team of Todd Barkan (formerly of SF's Keystone Korner) and Steve Getz (formerly of NY's Fat Tuesday's) has booked the guitar team of Laurodo Almeida and Charlie Byrd into the revitalized nite spot 3/13-18 . . . pianist Anthony Davis wraps up the **Different Perspectives** series at the Carnegie Recital Hall on 4/7 . . . **Daybreak Express Records**, boasting a jazz mail-order catalog with 470 labels and over 75,000 records, opened a retail outlet in Brooklyn; (212) 499-0487 . . .

OTTAWA

The clock goes back about 60 years on 3/8 at the **SAW Gallery** (55 Byward Market), when they present an evening of silent avant garde movies, with live musical accompaniment improvised by the members of the Bill Smith Ensemble from Toronto . . .

WASHINGTON, DC

Blues Alley has Hubert Laws 2/21-26, Jean Carn 3/6-11, Gerry Mulligan 3/20-25, and Stan Getz 3/27-4/1, plus every Mon. a Jazz Spotlight on the area's finest locals; (202) 337-4141 . . .

Left Bank to establish Jazzeum

BALTIMORE—The Left Bank Jazz Society, a nonprofit organization that has been presenting live, cabaret-style concerts on Sunday afternoons featuring internationally known recording artists since August 8, 1964, has begun raising funds to establish the Jazzeum, a jazz museum and performing arts center that will be dedicated to Baltimore jazz greats, including Chick Webb, Billie Holiday, Gary Bartz, Eubie Blake, and many others. The Jazzeum will also become the permanent home of the LBJs and the site of its future concerts.

Presently the LBJs holds its weekly concerts at the Famous Ballroom (1717 N. Charles St.) in an aging dance hall where Tommy Dorsey and other big band leaders once reigned supreme. Over the years the LBJs-sponsored concerts have gained popularity with musicians because of the free-form, no-holds-barred format that encourages improvisation while challenging the physical stamina and creative abilities of

artists who must play three demanding sets before the same audience during an evening.

Bringing the Jazzeum to fruition will require the LBJs to move around the corner to a magnificent old theater known as the 5 West, which will be completely renovated so that the laidback cabaret format can be maintained. The kitchen will also be kept so people can get fried chicken, spare ribs, greens, and potato salad to go with the LBJs' bring-your-own-bottle policy.

Funding for the Jazzeum project requires that the LBJs raise approximately \$250,000 from its supporters which will be matched by the Baltimore city government through an Urban Development Action Grant. Major contributors are being asked to defray the costs of specified portions of the project as tax write-offs, and these contributors will have components of the Jazzeum dedicated to them, such as the Billie Holiday School of Jazz, the Chick Webb Jazz Lounge, the Gary Bartz Jazz Li-



FREDERICK I. DOUGLASS

brary, the Eubie Blake Performing Arts Center, or the LBJs Offices and Headquarters.

During its '84 concert season the LBJs will be presenting Dexter Gordon, Sun Ra, Horace Silver, Freddie Hubbard, and other leading artists. Of course, there will always be an element of suspense and surprise to all Society concerts, because you never know who might walk in the door and

start jamming. Unplanned jam sessions over the years have teamed Dizzy Gillespie in a terrific trumpet tournament with Jon Faddis and Hugh Masakela; Dexter Gordon in a sizzling saxophone sortie with Johnny Griffin (pictured above, Dex at right, bassist unidentified); and a torrid tenor tangle between James Moody and Sonny Stitt.

—frederick i. douglass



MICHAEL BARILEY

BLUES IN THE NIGHT: The musical revue starring Della Reese (pictured) and nominated for a 1982 Tony for Best Musical, tours the country this spring, having kicked off its wanderings with a three-day run in New Orleans recently. Glorifying in the classic '30s repertoire with a blues tilt, the show received raves and standing ovations during its first touring season. The program includes such infrequently heard gems as *Ida Cox'* Wild Women Don't Have The Blues and *Andy Razaf's* Kitchen Man, as well as a spate of Bessie Smith originals and Arlen, Strayhorn, Mercer, etc. perennials. The lightly plotted production also puts pianist/musical director Clem Moorman on-stage for two vocal numbers. Choreography by Mercedes Ellington (Duke's granddaughter). Tour schedule: Rochester, NY, 2/21-22; Schenectady, NY, 2/23; Kingston, NY, 2/24; New Bedford, MA, 2/25; Buffalo, NY, 2/27-28; New Haven, CT, 3/2-3; Providence, RI, 3/4; Texarkana, TX, 3/13; Little Rock, AR, 3/14; Orange, TX, 3/16; Corpus Christi, TX, 3/17; Austin, 3/18-19; San Antonio, 3/20; Abilene, TX, 3/22; Dallas, 3/23-25; Corsicana, TX, 3/26; McAllen, TX, 3/28; Jackson, MS, 3/30; Baton Rouge, LA, 3/31; Colorado Springs, 4/1.

final bar



POPSIE

Marshall Brown, trombonist with Ruby Braff, Pee Wee Russell, and Lee Konitz, yet best known for organizing and leading the Newport Youth Band in the '50s and '60s which featured some talented teenagers who have since become well-known jazzmen (among them Eddie Gomez, Ronnie Cuber, Jimmy

Owens, and Mike Abene), died Dec. 13 in NYC at age 62.

Nat Shapiro, former *down beat* editor, died Dec. 15 in New York City of a heart attack. He was 61. He produced hundreds of LPs, some by artists he also managed, including Michel Legrand, Mahalia Jackson, and Lena Horne. He penned the six-volume *Popular Music* that was a definitive reference series for many years.

Jimmy Nolan, longtime lead guitarist for Johnny Otis and especially James Brown, died Dec. 18 in Atlanta of a heart attack. He was 47. Nolan was credited with inventing the modern soul/funk style of guitar playing, and appeared on dozens of best-selling LPs.

Russell (Big Chief) Moore, trombonist with bands ranging from Louis Armstrong to Lester Lanin, died Dec. 15 in Nyack, NY at age 70.

Preston Jackson, New Orleans-style trombonist who recorded with Benny Young, Erskine Tate, and Johnny Dodds, toured with Louis Armstrong and Jimmy Noone, and led his own band from the '40s through the late '60s, died Nov. 12 in Blytheville, AR of heart failure at age 81.

CAN YOU DISCOUNT

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF TRUST?

On August 19, at the Elk Grove Village, Illinois, store of Karnes Music, Jim

Kleeman, the company's executive vice president, and George Hove, the coordinator of music education for School District 46, talked with *down beat* about how and why their relationship – and friendship – have spanned 25 years.

The conversation lasted the afternoon, covering everything from their joint recruiting efforts to build one of the most successful band and orchestra programs in the nation, to the teamwork they employed five years ago to save that program from elimination. The day served to remind us there's no way to put a price on the value of the face-to-face relationship between the school service dealer and the music director.

There's just no way to put a discount on 25 years of trust.

GEORGE HOVE "Our department decided to go with Jim in '58, and we've been happy every since. Depending on who the school district has to deal with, it sure can add or

detract from the program."

down beat "So what makes Jim a good music retailer?"

GH "Honesty is one of the big factors in our choice, because I can't deal with the parents and give them the wrong story. We can't recommend somebody that's going to come back to haunt us later on."

JIM KLEEMAN "We do have a responsibility to produce. If we don't, we won't be back next year."

GH "Having a complete local dealer like Karnes helps my teachers an awful lot because it doesn't take away from their teaching time. With my type of supervision, I put myself in the place of the teacher – what's good for them is good for the whole program, the whole district. The teacher has to have every available good source to keep it going. Good merchandise and good service when you need it – that's the important thing."

JK "Each of our guys has a territory and he sees that director once a week – more often if necessary. If there's a panic, that's when 'more often' is necessary."

GH "With the type of schedule and number of students that most of our teachers have, they haven't got time to mess around wondering if a kid's got an A-string for his violin. If we don't have these things – whether they're something as little as decent clarinet reeds or as large as loaner instruments for a vandalized bandroom – we get on the phone to Karnes and we've got them."

db "It sounds like you never miss, Jim..."

JK "As long as human beings are involved, anybody can make a mistake. What you do about it when you have a problem – that's what's important."

The editors and publisher of *down beat* magazine ask you to support the school service dealer in your area, because the support you provide will be returned many times over.

JK "You just have to have a rapport and share a certain amount of trust, that's all."

GH "Can't make it otherwise."



JIM KLEEMAN AND GEORGE HOVE.

down beat
For Contemporary Musicians

Lester Bowie at a Village Gate salsa-meets-jazz dance as Ray Barretto's guest soloist? Despite all Bowie's bravura and Barretto's assimilationist ways, the billing seemed unlikely. Would the prince of post-modernist trumpet-with-a-punch-line blow steamy spirals of seductive song over the firm clavé of the congero's conjunto to satisfy the fast-moving, tough-looking crowd?

Why not? The Art Ensemble Of Chicago's motto, "Ancient To The Future," is meant to be all-encompassing; both as a member of that five-man collective and as a leader on his own, Bowie has flirted with Spanish, Caribbean, and Latin American themes. He's acknowledged his respect, employed the distinctive qualities of their rhythm and harmonies, and cut through their clichés to make his satirical points.

Perhaps that last possibility gave the Gate's emcee, a New Jersey dj, pause. His rap showed no recognition of Bowie's

past, but the white laboratory coat, Bowie's garb for serious research, reminded the dj not of Jonas Salk, Christian Barnard, or even Groucho Marx cast as a quack veterinarian, but of Dr. Frankenstein—and he feared Barretto was in for some monstrous taunt.

Actually, Bowie stepped skittishly before the ensemble. He tried a couple long tones, then started snorting through his horn, stabbed staccato at the beat, tore up melodic constraints like a thing unleashed. Then like Frankenstein (the Doctor, that is), he took elements from several sources and grafted them into an at first ungainly but ultimately appealing creation. The Monday night regulars, usually staunch defenders of tradition, didn't blink—they kept dancing. And by the time Bowie ended his solo, concluding an openly lyrical gesture with a hoarse gurgle, Barretto's sidemen were grinning their approval, too.

Bowie's most faithful fans knew he'd bring it off. As he says,

lester bowie



TOM COPI



LAUREN DEUTSCH

TWO DIMENSIONS OF DR. BOWIE: At left, cookin' with the Art Ensemble Of Chicago (from left) Roscoe Mitchell, Famoudou Don Moye, Bowie, Joseph Jarman, Malachi Favors Magoustous; at right, researchin' Roots To The Source, with Malachi.

without false modesty. "Nobody alive can listen to any one thing I play and come to any judgment anywhere near close to me. You can't look at any one thing I do. In fact, you can't look at a single aspect of *nothin'*—that's where people mess up. You gotta approach life lookin' at the whole thing. I'm liable to do anything in music that runs through my mind: I'll play *anything*, you dig? All's fair in love and war, and music's both."

* * * * *

In the musicians' war to survive, work, and be heard, Bowie's love of what he's doing, buoyed by his quick wit, family background, and pursuit of alternatives, has been the strength contributing to his steady success. Raised in St. Louis from a lineage of brass players, oldest of the school bandmaster's three sons, Bowie early on discovered the pleasures attending his chosen role.

"To me, band was the hippest part of school," he's said. "I

***"To me, band
was the
hippest part
of school."***

used to cut classes all day to hang out in the practice room, because the girls would be down there, kissin' and stuff. The practice room was a whole way of life. I've always been in the band—all my life—so I don't mind being in the band." Must be where he belongs.

Now 42, Bowie was a union professional by age 15. He found music helped his popularity, earned him "a little extra bread," and allowed him to hang out in night clubs—but he assumed he'd have to study something leading to "a serious goal in life."

"Fortunately, I never got into it," he laughed, relishing his rambling Brooklyn home, complete with wraparound front porch, garage, and backyard garden, just minutes from Manhattan. He's got office space and a music room, a dark room for his wife Deborah, and a comfortable kitchen where he likes to gather with his kids and colleagues.

"I was about 20 when I decided all I'd do was play music. That's all I can do, that's all I been doin', and I'll just continue, if that's what I want to do." By keepin' on, Bowie has seen the world, recorded a couple dozen albums with some of the most adventurous musicians of the past two decades, and secured his high position with critics and enthusiasts alike by crafting a unique, flexible, and immediately identifiable style. He's kept quite busy. In 1983 alone he toured with *Roots To The Source*, his band comprising his ex-wife Fontella Bass, her gospel singing mother Martha and brother David Peaston, alongside his old friends drummer Philip Wilson and Chicago-based reedman Ari Brown; made gigs with the Art Ensemble, still wild after 17 years; and developed, with trumpeter Malachi Thompson, the nascent Brass Fantasy from the core of the New York Hot Trumpet Repertory Company. Bowie's second release on ECM, *All The Magic!*, is a two-disc affair, one featuring the pan-generic Roots, the other (*The One And Only*) a solo LP in which he concentrates on the phonemes that constitute his personal musical language.

o m . d .

MAGICAL DIMENSIONS

BY HOWARD MANDEL

“Some people call us a jazz band, and I suppose we are a very crude form of a jazz band, but we’re not trying to be a jazz band,” says singer and tenor saxophonist Greg Piccolo of Roomful Of Blues. “We never did try to be a jazz band, and we’re not really trying to be a Chicago blues band. We’re a dance band, and as far as we’re concerned, it’s all the same. We’re just trying to play what we play, and if we don’t fit into any one category, we apologize.”

In fact, Roomful Of Blues can be rather neatly classified as a jump band, a throwback to the formative years of rhythm & blues. “Jump” appears to have been a funkier synonym for swing, and “jump blues” were blues set to jitterbug rhythms. Count Basie’s band, with blues singer Jimmy Rushing, set the pace, followed by Jay McShann’s band, with Walter Brown; Cootie Williams’ band, with Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson; Lucky Millinder’s band, with Wynonie Harris; and a host of lesser-knowns. “We looked at it as being rock & roll for big band,” explains drummer John Rossi. “It wasn’t like a regular big band style; it was all simple tunes done with a real heavy beat. Not elaborately arranged—it was all simple arrangements—but it was done with 16 pieces. Then they condensed it to a smaller band—still with horns—and that’s how the r&b thing started coming around.”

Founded in Westerly, Rhode Island, in 1968 by pianist Al Copley and vocalist/guitarist Duke Robillard, Roomful Of Blues was originally a schoolboy band modeled after Paul Butterfield’s Chicago-style electric combo. Saxophonist Piccolo joined in 1970, and over the next couple of years, the group—inspired by Louis Jordan’s and Buddy Johnson’s old records, and by Eddie Vinson’s performance at the Ann Arbor Blues Festival—found its ultimate wind-driven direction, adding Rich Lataille on alto and tenor saxophones and Doug James on baritone, as well as drummer Rossi and bassist Preston Hubbard. Tales of the band’s prowess, on its own and in accompaniment to established blues artists, spread nationwide, although Roomful had yet to record and seldom ventured outside of New England.

Songwriter-turned-producer Doc Pomus (who has penned hits for Elvis Presley and Del Shannon, among others) caught the group in performance at New York City’s Bottom Line and arranged a deal with Island Records. Only after the first, eponymous Roomful Of Blues LP was released in 1977 did the band begin to tour in earnest, commencing with a sentimental swing through the deep South to Texas. Their stop in New Orleans, where they opened for Professor Longhair at Tipitina’s, made a deep impression that was reflected in Roomful’s 1979 album, *Let’s Have A Party*, on Antilles.



D. SHIGLEY

JUMP & JIVE with Roomful Of Blues

BY LARRY BIRNBAUM

Shortly afterward, Robillard and Hubbard departed, and the band was reorganized under Piccolo’s leadership, with Ronnie Earl (he dropped the surname Horvath two years ago) replacing Robillard on guitar and bassist Jimmy Wimpfheimer taking Hubbard’s place. The horn section was rounded out to five pieces with the addition of Danny Motta on trumpet and Swing Era veteran Porky Cohen on trombone.

Roomful came out bolder and brassier than ever on their third LP, *Hot Little*

Mama, recorded in 1980 for the group’s own Blue Flame label. In 1981 Bob Enos replaced Motta in the trumpet chair; the following year the band garnered an ’83 Grammy nomination when they backed their longtime favorite on the album *Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson & Roomful Of Blues*, for Muse. Then Preston Hubbard returned, and in 1983 the group cut *Big Joe Turner & Roomful Of Blues* (an ’84 Grammy nominee), also for Muse, with Doc Pomus again producing. Roomful’s latest release is the Room-Tone sin-

gle, *Please Don't Leave*, a *Billboard* Pop Pick. They have also recorded a new LP at the Cars' Synchro Sound studio in Boston.

* * * Roomful Of Blues is now on the road almost constantly, performing some 225 nights a year. Their high-energy approach to r&b has prompted comparisons to such rival revivalists as the Blasters, Nighthawks, Stray Cats, and Fabulous Thunderbirds (T-Birds' drummer, Rhode Islander Fran Christina, played in the original, hornless Roomful), and they have been winning support from younger new wave fans, for whom their spiritedly antique sound is a novelty. Among their biggest fans, however, are older musicians, who can truly appreciate their uncanny authenticity. Besides Eddie Vinson and Joe Turner, they have played with Muddy Waters, B. B. King, Bobby Bland, Little Milton, Fats Domino, Roy Brown, Arnett Cobb, Chuck Willis, Otis Rush, Helen Humes, Koko Taylor, and Etta James. In what was perhaps the ultimate accolade, Count Basie invited them to open for his own orchestra at the Newport Jazz Festival, and pronounced them "the hottest white blues band I've ever heard."

Piccolo tells the story of the ex-Jimmie Lunceford trumpeter Gene Redd who came to see Roomful at the Bottom Line. "He called his wife up from the club and let her listen over the phone, and she started to cry." Another time the band hired Red Prysock—the brother of vocalist Arthur Prysock and once the lead tenor saxist in Tiny Bradshaw's band—to play with them on a club date. "He blew his ass off," says Piccolo, "and after that night he said, 'I haven't played like that in 20 years.'" Still, Piccolo insists, "We don't look at ourselves as a nostalgia band. It's not nostalgic to us; it's just the way we play. We learned how to play by listening to that music, and that's the way we play today. It's not 1955 to us—it's right now. If some fad-hopper like David Bowie puts Stevie Ray Vaughan on a record, or Joe Jackson makes an album of Louis Jordan's greatest hits, that's even more of a confirmation that that's what's happening."

"It's never been a black and white thing, either," says James. "It's never been, 'You're a white band; we're a black band.' It's 'If you can play, you can play.' All the blues guys come down to hear us if they have the night off. They come and sit in, which is really nice. We've never had any problems getting along with anybody. We've always had a great time."

Ardent record collectors, the bandmembers have thoroughly absorbed influences ranging from Duke Ellington to Ike Turner's Kings Of Rhythm, including such seminal r&b figures as T-Bone Walker, Roy Milton, Johnny Otis, Chuck Willis, Earl Bostic, Guitar Slim, and the Nat King Cole Trio. "We don't overdo

the old blues hits," says James. "The only one we ever did was *Stormy Monday*. We do a lot of obscure tunes, and we put our own arrangements to a lot of things."

"The thing that's been nice for us lately," adds Piccolo, "is that people don't expect a blues band to have just a harmonica and guitars—they don't flip out because of the horns—and they're starting to actually recognize the music."

Roomful's proficiency is such that they can adapt themselves to the style of almost any blues singer. After playing only a couple of Massachusetts gigs with Eddie Vinson, they went into the studio and in four hours laid down Cleanhead's finest latter-day session, an appropriately swing-flavored set that spotlights the blues shouter's superb, bop-inflected alto sax. "We just went in and did it with no planning at all," Piccolo says. "We didn't know what we were gonna do; we just went in and played. Everything was live, and it all went so smooth. We didn't do more than two takes of any song."

Their rollicking session with Big Joe Turner (which featured Dr. John playing piano on one track) went almost as quickly, if not quite as smoothly. "If Doc Pomus hadn't been there," says Rossi, "we would have had Joe Turner's greatest hits, and that's what we're trying to move away from."

"Of all the people we've worked with, Joe was the hardest to back up," Piccolo seconds, "because you never know how many verses he's gonna sing. He didn't have his teeth in, but once you get used to that, it's great. He was really putting out—he passed out at the end of the session. He had a diabetic attack and had to be taken to the hospital."

In live performance, even more so than on wax, Roomful captures the spirit of golden-age r&b with a fidelity seldom matched by modern reunions of first-generation players. "When you put a bunch of great guys together, they're only together for X number of gigs," says Piccolo, "but we're a working band, and we work together all the time. We're almost an extinct animal; there aren't too many real bands around. It's next to

impossible to keep nine people on the road and pay the expenses without being really super-popular."

* * * Although the band stresses tight ensemble work, each of its members is an accomplished musician in his own right. Greg Piccolo is a convincing vocalist with a singing style all his own; his grainy, honking tenor solos suggest those of his idol, Illinois Jacquet, but he maintains that he most closely resembles Buddy Johnson's old tenor player, Purvis Henson. "I had a sax when I was a kid," he says, "but I really didn't start playing until I joined Roomful. I started hearing records that got me interested in playing the sax again, just the old tunes with heavy tenor sax solos. The tone is important to me—it's not how many notes you play; it's what the notes are. And no matter what any guy who plays a million notes says, I know it's harder to be simple than anything. If you can pull that off, you don't have to do anything else."

Al Copley was 16 years old when he and Robillard organized the band. Classically trained on piano as a child, he later attended the Berklee College of Music in Boston, but picked up his house-rocking boogie woogie technique by studying the records of Albert Ammons and Pete Johnson. Saxophonist Rich Lataille, also a Westerly native, had played in high school groups with Piccolo and Copley before joining Roomful. His liting, smooth-toned alto work reflects the influence of Johnny Hodges and Benny Carter.

Doug "Mr. Low" James was born in Turlock, California, near Modesto. He dropped out of high school and made his way to New York, then "just wandered up to Rhode Island and heard these guys and completely flipped out. I was just noodling around on flute and harmonica, but they said, 'Can you play baritone?' and I said, 'Sure.' So they gave me a horn and said, 'Play this,' and that's how I learned how to play." James' darkly shaded blues-bop approach is reminiscent of Leo Parker. "My favorite guys," he says, citing Arnett Cobb and Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, "are in-between swing and bop."

Drummer John Rossi and bassist Preston Hubbard were playing together in the Hamilton/Bates Blue Flames—coled by Providence-born tenor sax prodigy Scott Hamilton and guitarist Fred Bates—when they defected to Roomful. Rossi, a decade older than most of his mates, had been a drummer during the original rock & roll era ("I wasn't old enough to grow sideburns," he says, "so I used to paint 'em on."), but quit playing after the British Invasion. "Me and Preston used to work together on a day job," Rossi relates. "I was a truck driver at the time, and we started talking and became good friends. He starts naming off the

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 61

ROOMFUL OF BLUES SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

ROOMFUL OF BLUES—Island 9474
LET'S HAVE A PARTY—Antilles 7071
HOT LITTLE MAMA—Blue Flame 1001
with Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson
EDDIE "CLEANHEAD" VINSON & ROOMFUL OF
BLUES—Muse 5282
with Big Joe Turner
BIG JOE TURNER & ROOMFUL OF BLUES—Muse
5293

RONNIE EARL

SMOKIN'—Black Top 1023

ROOMFUL OF BLUES HORNS

with the Fabulous Thunderbirds
BUTT ROCKIN'—Chrysalis 1319
with the Legendary Blues Band
RED, HOT 'N' BLUE—Rounder 2035
with J. B. Hutto
SLIPPIN' AND SLIDIN'—Varrick 006
with John Mooney
TELEPHONE KING—Blind Pig 1383



JOE ROSEN

ROOMFUL OF BLUES' EQUIPMENT

PICTURED FROM LEFT:

John Rossi: "I use Slingerland Radio King drums—they were made around 1945-1950, and they've lasted! I play hard. I like a powerhouse sound, and, well, things do break. The accessories, the stands, are newer—they have to be replaced now and then. The bass drum is 24-inch—it still has the original calf skin on the pedal side, though I have replaced the calf skin on the front with a plastic head so I could paint a logo on it. The floor tom is 16 x 16, and the rack tom 9 x 13. I'm currently using a Rogers 7 x 14 snare which does have a good sound, although I would like to get another Slingerland. I've got nothing against new kits—they make great drums today—but there is no getting away from the fact that I'm hard on drums, and these Radio Kings can take it. I use Remo heads—they give me a good sound. Foot pedal is a heavy duty Sonor—the best. Cymbals? Zildjian, nothing but Zildjian. I've played Zildjians all my life—like fine wine, they improve with age. Currently my kit has a 24-inch heavy ride, 19- and 20-inch crashes, 22-inch ride and crash-sizzle, and a 15-inch hi-hat which dates from the '40s. Sticks are Regal Tips—a 5B for my right hand, and a 2S in the left. The kit can be an engineer's nightmare, for instance, the bass drum, having no hole in the front head, has to be miked from the pedal side. They are hard to record, although I am very happy with the drum sound at Boston's Synchro Sound studio. We are recording our new album there, and the engineer, Wally, has gotten the best drum sound I've yet heard. I get my equipment from Charlie Donnelly in Newington, CT; he has a great stock and really understands the needs of drummers."

Preston Hubbard: "I use a Kay acoustic bass. I've had it for four years. It is a good instrument for the road; it stands up to drastic changes in temperature and also to rock & roll! In the act I spin it around a good bit, and climb on it now and then when the mood takes me. It hasn't busted yet! I use Thomastonic Spiracore strings and a Helpinstill pickup—it is a prototype, in fact, the prototype. I was the first in the world to use one—I helped Charlie Helpinstill modify it. I told Tony Garnier [of the Robert Gordon band] about it, and now he uses one. Lee Rocker of the Stray Cats also uses one, but I don't think I can take credit for that! As far as I know, we are the only three people using them. It is good, very good, louder than my electric in fact. The electric is a 1965 Fender Jazz Bass—Fender is the only electric as far as I am concerned. It has a great sound and great feel to play. I use Fender medium gauge flat-wound strings; they give a good deep sound, a hard-driving bottom to the bang. I don't use a pick. My amp is 200 Series Peavey—the best sounding amp I ever heard for a string bass. I use Peavey Black Widow cabinets, a 15-inch speaker in each. In large clubs I use two, angled toward each other in a flattened V shape. In concert halls and auditoriums I like to use four in stacks of two, in the V shape again. For p.a. amplification I use a direct box—it gives a much cleaner sound than miking the cabinet."

Rich Lataille: "My tenor sax is a Selmer Mark VI, a late '60s model; the mouthpiece is an Arben 9-star, though I'm thinking of switching to an Otto Link, probably a 9-star. Reeds are Rico regular, 3½. The alto sax is a Balanced-Action Selmer with a high F key—it gives the horn a fuller sound. These were made before the Mark VI. Mouthpiece is an open ARB 9, and I use Rico regular 2½. I

used to play Conn saxes—they have a mellower sound—but I switched to Selmer because they have a bright sound that I like, and I like their action, too."

Al Copley: "The days of carrying my own piano around are happily long gone! The promoter has to provide one. My favorite is, of course, a Steinway grand. Our rider specifies an acoustic piano; there really is no electric piano that comes anywhere close to sounding like a real piano—you can't play a boogie woogie on them. Over the years I've tried all sorts of amplification, and have now settled on an amp from Charlie Helpinstill. It gives clarity and volume—Roomful is a band with a big sound—the Helpinstill is the only thing that will cut."

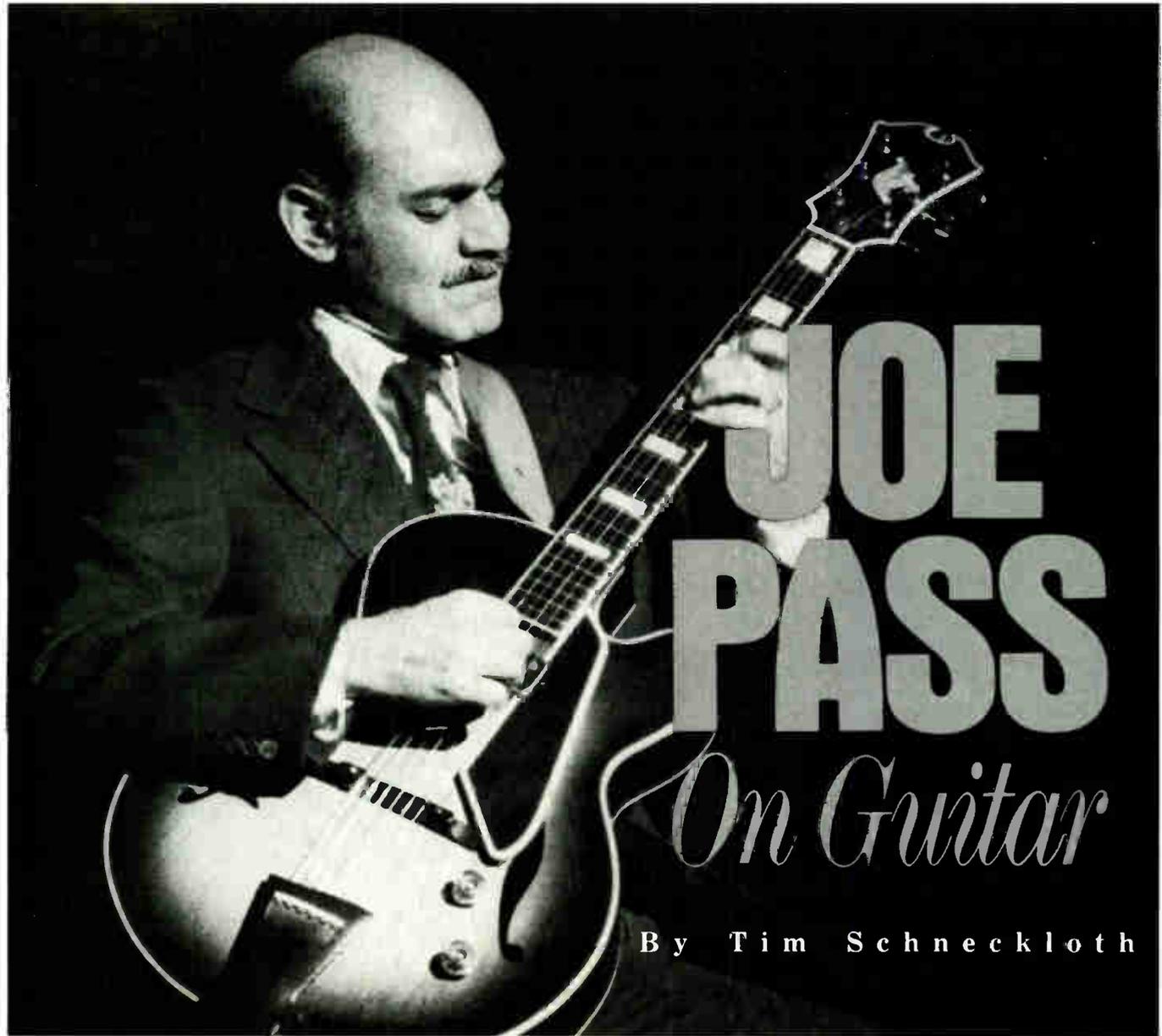
Bob Enos: "I've played a variety of horns, and like Benge the best. Now I have a large-bore Benge trumpet; that is what you hear on the album we did with Big Joe. It has a big sound. Mouthpiece is a Tottle. Been using it since I was 16 or 17. Like Porky, I use a rubber plunger, though mine is smaller, and a Harmon mute for use at home."

Doug James: "Right now I'm using a Yanagisawa low A baritone sax—this is what I played on the two Muse albums—but I'm getting tired of using a low A; the sound of the middle register tends to be a little stuffy. I'm going to get a Selmer Mark VI with a B♭—Selmer's have got that sound. Mouthpiece is a Meyers #10, with Rico Royal 3½ reeds. As far as mics go, an Electro-Voice RE20 gives me the best sound."

Porky Cohen: "I use a King 3B trombone; I've had it about six years. Before that I had another King, wore it out eventually, and got this one. The mouthpiece is a 7C Bach. I have a straight mute; at the moment the only time I use it is on *Big Boss Man*, an instrumental workout on the Jimmy Reed tune that I do with Greg Piccolo. I use a rubber plunger, the standard plunger sold for unblocking drains. They are not so easy to come by these days—hardware stores tend to stock all plastic ones. When you do find a rubber one today, you have to buy 'he handle too!"

Ronnie Earl: "I have several guitars, but the two I mainly use with Roomful are a 1958 maple-neck Fender Stratocaster and a 1961 Fender Telecaster. Both are completely standard—I'm not into modifying my guitars. I also have a 1963 Stratocaster and a Gibson ES5 hollow-body, which I used on the *Cleanhead* album. For home use I have a National steel guitar. I use a Fender Super Reverb amp—in a real big place I like to use two together. I like Fender stuff; it epitomizes what I look for in a sound. Roomful is a band that calls for a wide variety of sounds—the T-Bone sound, the jump band stylings, rock & roll, and what is really the 1984 sound of our new material, plus all the shadings in-between. Fender guitars can give me any of those sounds—they have a real versatility. As far as strings go, I use 11-, 13-, 17-, 32-, 42-, and 52-gauge progression. We are on the road so much I tend to use whatever brand I can get, but I do prefer G.H.S. I like a relatively high action, and when I'm using a pick, I like a medium one."

Greg Piccolo: "I use a Selmer Mark VI tenor sax, with an Otto Link 9-star mouthpiece, and Rico regular 3½ reeds. I'm a Selmer man, what can I say—I just love the feel of a Selmer. For my vocal mic, I use a Shure SM58."



JOE PASS

On Guitar

By Tim Schneckloth

TOM COPI

There are few human experiences as satisfying as acts of immediate spontaneous creation. And when these acts are generally recognized as good art, the satisfaction runs very deep. In psycho-babble they might call it "self-actualization"—an expression from within that comes out in a tangible, moving way. Anybody who can play some form of improvised music has an idea of what this is all about.

We pay a price for our satisfactions, though. And often it seems like the deepest satisfactions are the most costly. Everybody has heard about the agonies creative artists go through in getting to wherever they want to be, and technical mastery of the art is only part of it. It also has to do with integrating the self with the art, making the expression into something that rings true from start to finish.

It's not something everybody can do. It takes a particular kind of vision and determination to get there. And when the obstacles are formidable (and often self-created), the whole process gets rougher. You have to face it every day and do with it what you can.

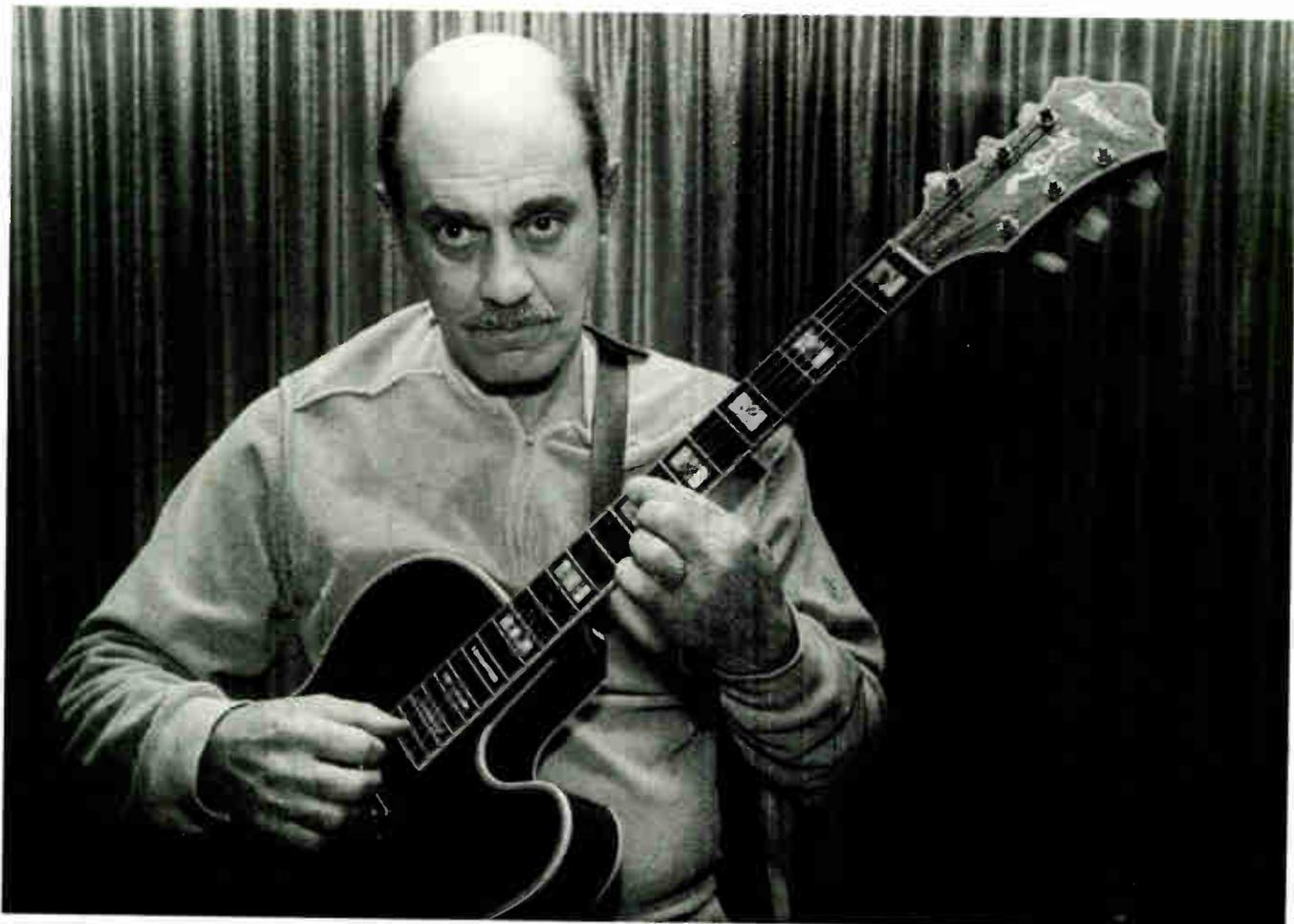
Joe Pass got through it. He has faced down a lot of obstacles, including drug dependence, necessary hack work, and the "terror" (as he has called it) involved in putting your creative self on the line—in front of an audience, all alone, with no support except for artistry and skill. "You learn to do it just by doing it—there's no other way," he says. "And the more you do

it, the more you find out how it works. But it's not easy."

When Pass is playing an extended solo engagement, he reminds one of an athlete preparing for competition. He gets up at a certain hour and follows a routine of sorts, making a determined effort to ensure that his creative powers will be at their peak when he takes the stage. "When you're performing solo, you have to conserve your energy," he says during a morning conversation toward the tail end of a two-week solo gig. "Before you go on-stage, you have to have a period of time when you're not playing at all—you're resting. You can't run around, eat, drink, carry on, and then go play. You have to save that energy; it's the same energy you use in walking and talking. You keep your mental facilities for playing."

Since he's generally recognized as the foremost practitioner of solo jazz guitar, Pass has had to consider in depth what's going on creatively when he plays, if for no other reason than the fact that people ask him about it. "You reach a point where it's like driving a car or something. You take a tune, and you know the melody in your head. From all your practice of scales and things, you automatically know where the intervals are—your hand knows. You know the changes, you know the alternatives, and there's an unlimited number of possible substitutions. Then you go into the basic changes and just play. And if you're having a good day, it'll come out right.

"You focus on it without really thinking about it. You can't say, 'I'm gonna put *this* here and *that* there,' because it automati-



LAUREN DEUTSCH

JOE PASS SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

VIRTUOSO #4—Pablo 2640 102
 VIRTUOSO #3—Pablo 2310 805
 VIRTUOSO #2—Pablo 2310 784
 VIRTUOSO—Pablo 2310 708
 PORTRAITS OF ELLINGTON—Pablo 2310 716
 MONTREUX '77—Pablo 2308 212
 LOVES GERSHWIN—Pablo 2312 133
 I REMEMBER CHARLIE PARKER—Pablo 2312 109
 EXIMIOUS—Pablo 2310 877
 MONTREUX '75—Pablo 2310 752
 LIVE AT DONTÉ'S—Pablo 2620 114
 COMPLETE "CATCH ME" SESSIONS—Blue Note LT-01053
 FOR DJANGG—Pacific Jazz '0132
 GUITAR INTERLUDES—Discovery 776
 INTERCONTINENTAL—Pausa 7043
 JOY SPRING—Blue Note LT-01163
 SIMPLICITY—Pacific Jazz 10186

with Nells-Henning Ørsted Pedersen
 CHOPS—Pablo 2310 830
 NORTHEA NIGHTS—Pablo 2308 811
 DIGITAL 3 AT MONTREUX—Pablo 2308 223

with Jimray Rowles
 CHECKMATE—Pablo 2310 865

with Paulinho da Costa

TUDO BEM!—Pablo 2310 824

with Toots Thielemans

LIVE IN NETHERLANDS—Pablo 2308 233

with Ella Fitzgerald

AGAIN—Pablo 2310 772
 TAKE LOVE EASY—Pablo 2310 702
 SINGS THE JOBIM SONGBOOK—Pablo 2630 20*

with Oscar Peterson

GIANTS—Pablo 2310 796
 THE PARIS CONCERT—Pablo 2620 112
 PORGY & BESS—Pablo 2310 779
 TRIO—Pablo 2310 701
 NIGHT CHILD—Pablo 2312 108
 AT SALLE PLEYEL—Pablo 2625 705
 THE LONDON CONCERT—Pablo 2620 111

with Count Basie

KANSAS CITY FIVE—Pablo 2312 126
 KANSAS CITY SIX—Pablo 2310 871

with Herb Ellis

TWO FOR THE ROAD—Pablo 2310 714
 JAZZ/CONCORD—Concord 1
 SEVEN COME ELEVEN—Concord 2

with Milt Jackson

ALL TOO SOON—Pablo 2312 117
 QUADRANT—Pablo 2310 837
 BIG 3—Pablo 2310 757

JOE PASS' EQUIPMENT

Joe Pass plays a specially made Ibanez archtop prototype. "The people at Ibanez asked me what I wanted in a guitar. I told them I wanted a light guitar, a 25½-inch neck, flat in the back, with a single, simple pickup. We worked on it about a year-and-a-half. It has a nice sustaining quality."

For amplification Pass uses the latest version of the Polytone Mini-Brute—100 watts, one speaker. "It has a warm, fat sound," Pass says. "I put the volume on 2, 2½, very rarely on 3."

"The only reason I use an amp is because you can't get the acoustic sound on-stage and be heard. If I could, I'd play acoustic instead of amplified, because that's the way I think the guitar sounds best."

cally stops the flow of whatever you're trying to play.

"Basically, I'll go on-stage and just start playing. Something I'll play will remind me of a tune, and I'll go into it. Sometimes I'll say 'No, that doesn't feel right,' but I'll get through it anyway. See, I don't pick out a set; I don't go out with a set program. I will try to vary the tempos—a couple of ballads, an uptempo, a mid-tempo. And I'll try to vary the keys. A lot of guitar players will stick to keys like E, A, and D. Now, those are nice guitar keys. But if you play more than two tunes in them, you start to lose something, because they have a lot of open strings and you get that droning sound. Pretty soon, they all sound the same. You have these big, fat-sounding chords that sound great to you, but they don't have any energy after a while. So I'll play one tune in those keys and move up the neck to a brighter key like E^b or B^b. If you're going to play solo, it's important to change keys to change the texture of the sound."

Like Armstrong, Beiderbecke, and many other great jazz soloists, Pass believes in a melodic soloing concept—the spontaneous creation of a counter-melody, as opposed to running licks and bits of scales over appropriate chords. "The better players, I would say, are the ones who can make other melodies out of what they have. If you're real scale-oriented, and you're running a lot of arpeggios and things, you're not necessarily being melodic—you're just running scales and arpeggios. The great soloists took tunes we know and shaped them into something different. You can even recognize the tunes in some places—that's how close they were."

As a melodic soloist Pass owes a lot to the standard tunes that make up the bulk of his repertoire. The richness of the tunes and their chord changes gives the solo guitarist a deep source of inspiration for counter-melodic composition. "Good, solid melodies, yeah, they go on forever," Pass says. "I sometimes wonder what's happening to American music—the Tin Pan Alley, Broadway show music tradition isn't as productive as it was. Now, we still have some writers who produce a certain

amount of tunes like that—Henry Mancini, Johnny Mandel. But the new writers just aren't coming out of that tradition.

"I don't have any particular favorites among standards. Currently, I'm playing things like *The Touch Of Your Lips*, *My Shining Hour*, some Clifford Brown jazz tunes. But I'll play them for a while, and I won't want to play them anymore. They get kind of stale, and I'll start looking around for other tunes."

It was a collection of such standards—Pass' 1974 album *Virtuoso*—that rekindled a strong interest in solo jazz guitar. To the album's audience—guitarists, critics, and serious listeners—the album and the almost pianistic colors Pass seemed to draw effortlessly from the strings became objects of much study.

"To get that kind of sound, I think you have to pick with your fingers," Pass explains. "I'll play with a pick sometimes on something very uptempo, mainly to create more excitement and a harder, more energetic sound. But 90 percent of my playing is with the fingers.

"When you play like that, you have to start developing a way to play bass lines *and* melodies. I don't do it in a worked-out kind of way; actually, it's a mixture. The bass lines, for instance, aren't *always* happening. They're *implied* sometimes; it's like you have to imagine them in places. A lot of guitarists play like Chet Atkins, keeping a bass line going constantly in two or four, and playing a line around that. Well, I don't do it that way. I play some bass lines, some chords, some melody lines. And if you look at it, in some parts they're all happening at the same time, and in some places they're separate. But by having *motion*—keeping the whole thing moving with substitute chords, a strong pulse, and so on—it sounds like it's all happening at the same time. You've got to have that motion, though. You can't play a chord and just lay on it."

Wherever Pass plays nowadays, members of the huge legion of amateur and aspiring professional guitarists turn out in droves. Like earnest students will, they ply Pass with technical questions, and he's glad to help, as far as he can. But he has some definite ideas about how much value intense study has.

"I'm not much for all the technical stuff," he says. "I think a lot of it gets in the way of the player. You can learn too much, in a way. For instance, a guy will ask me, 'How do you play *Green Dolphin Street*?' And I'll show him a way I might play it. He'll say, 'What chord is that?' And I'll say, 'It's a C.' He'll say, 'That doesn't look like a C.' I'll say, 'Well, okay, actually it's a C6/9. I just stuck the sixth and the ninth in there.' But, see, it's not important that it's a C6/9. If you want to play *Green Dolphin Street*, you should approach it from the basic changes and take it from there. But they want to know each little improvised additional change or note, all the little detailed information. And they get bogged down in that, because they're *thinking* about it all the time, isolating everything.

"You take the country players. They just look at the simple chord changes, but they're playing a lot more than what's there in those changes. But that's why they're so good at it, because they're just addressing themselves to the simple outline. Some of the good rock players do it the same way. But when you get into so-called jazz playing, people start becoming very specialized and technical."

Pass' background has been well documented in various publications. Born Anthony Jacobi Passalacqua in New Brunswick, NJ, he grew up in the steel town of Johnstown, PA. He learned guitar through dedicated study, began playing professionally, and eventually hit the road.

"The jazz guitarists I listened to were Django, Charlie Christian, Barney Kessel and, later in the '50s, Tal Farlow. But as I've said before, I didn't listen a lot to other guitar players, because I didn't want to *sound* like a guitar player. I wanted to sound more like Charlie Parker or Dizzy Gillespie. And I also liked harmony, so I listened to piano players—Art Tatum, Bud Powell, Al Haig. I also listened a lot to saxophone players—Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young.



Pass with Oscar Peterson and Neils-Henning Ørsted Pædersen.

"By 1947 I was playing around New York in a semi-jazz group. I was hanging around the bebop scene, places like the Royal Roost and the Three Deuces. There were a lot of people around there that you don't know about—people who never made a big name for themselves—but they were instrumental in the development of that music, because they were jamming all the time."

After some more road time and a number of years rendered unproductive by a drug habit, Pass straightened out in the '60s, gigging around L.A., doing tv and studio work, and cutting albums on World Pacific and other labels as a leader and sideman. The beginning of his association with Norman Granz and the Pablo label in the '70s marked a real turning point in his career, and he emerged as one of the most prolific and popular jazz guitarists in the history of the art form.

He admits he's "one of the few lucky ones" who are able to make a living playing exactly the way they want to play. And he looks upon the younger players coming up—many of whom consider Pass something of a guru—with understanding and sympathy. "For some of them, the emphasis is on how fast you can play. Young guitarists will ask me, 'Who's the fastest?' You don't see classical players talking like that. They don't say, 'Wow, Horowitz really played *fast* last night.'

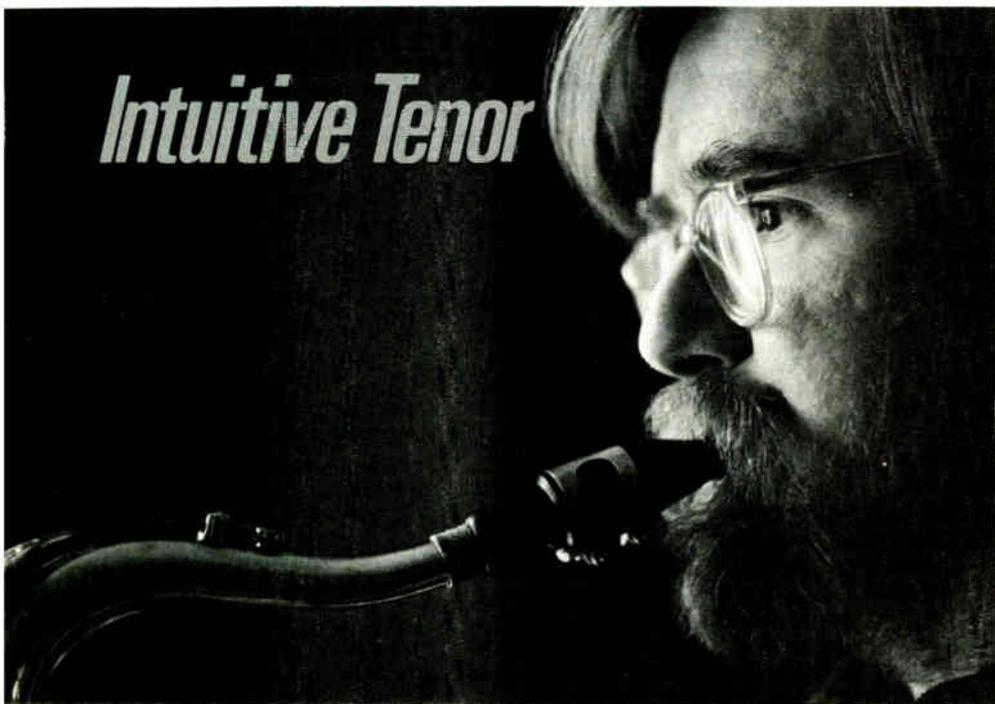
"Nowadays you've got thousands of these guys, because the schools turn them out right and left. And they've got all the tools they need to learn to play the guitar—the visual aids, books, tapes, music, teachers, ways of scientifically knowing the quickest way to get from one string to another, how to pick, everything. But the rest of it is experience, the actual making of music, and that's where it really is.

"They all want to come to New York or L.A., and there's already 10,000 guys there that can play fast. I tell them that they're better off living in a place like Cleveland. Be the best player in Cleveland and get all the good work, whatever there is.

"When I started playing, I didn't say, 'Okay, I can play pretty good, I guess I'll go to New York.' I went to New York because I had a gig there. I was on the road traveling around. Then I went to New Orleans because I had a gig there, and ended up staying awhile. Then to Chicago for a while, moving. But I never said to myself, 'Well, this is a career; I'm gonna do this and go here.' I just played the guitar, and wherever I got a gig, that's where I went and what I did. Some of them were semi-jazz, some were pop, some were commercial. But whatever I did, on every gig. I tried to improvise as much as I could. And you can get away with that. You can do it on any kind of gig—c&w, anything. There are always places to improvise. So you don't have to say, 'Well, unless they're playing pure bebop, I don't want this job.' Today, it's not like that."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 61

Bennie Wallace



COLLIS DAVIS

By Jeff Levenson

Bennie Wallace has that rare capacity as a musician to view his work in relation to the world around him. It is an encompassing perspective of the roles of music, art, and the responsibility to self. He is a complex person: whose opinions on just about everything sound structured and orderly—much like his tenor saxophone solos—and his manner of speaking embodies a warmth and concern for his audience one usually associates with an intimate friend. He truly cares about communicating his ideas with the proper conveyance of meaning.

Wallace's humble, "I'm just a country boy" persona is especially enchanting when one considers that here is an incisive tenorist whose inside/outside inclinations and fascinating amalgam of ideas evoke more than a little urban musicality, a kind of creative madness we've heard from purveyors of much new music. He is an inspiring person, as much for his overall artistic point-of-view as for the high level of mind/body awareness he brings to the difficult tasks

of creating and being.

"I learn about my music from other arts," he mused one recent afternoon in his Upper Manhattan apartment. "Not just other kinds of music, but from any kind of artistic experience . . . things that I read or things that I see. There's a common thread of inspiration. I'm not smart enough to tell you what it is, but I sure can feel it, and a lot of times I can hear something that a writer or another artist has said and apply it to what I'm doing. I was reading about Barok recently and he said that it's not only the right, but the obligation of the artist to build on what's come before. But you have to build on it, you can't just steal it."

"I was real lucky when I was young, because if the older guys heard me steal something from Charlie Parker records, they would get down on me. My teachers stressed, 'Be Creative!' I was taught real early that that's one of the major principles . . . and that is one of the major principles of being any kind of artist."

Life and art is heady stuff for the

hornman whose sound has been compared to that of Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins, Don Byas, and Sonny Rollins. Wallace covers the complete range of his tenor, flaunting confidence and abandon. Even while flying through top-to-bottom arpeggios with the fluency of a master technician, his rich, emotive tone rings clearly. He has the ability and desire to freely probe the interior of a tune so that one hears all facets of the melody scrutinized from within and then implausibly reassembled. Wallace can move, seamlessly and with consummate ease, to the outside and unleash creative flurries using unconventional and not quite atonal variations on the theme. His improvisatory skills place him among the finest soloists in jazz.

* * *
The 36-year-old Tennessee native first attracted attention in 1979 with the release of his debut record, *The Fourteen Bar Blues*, which garnered enthusiastic reviews throughout Europe and won Germany's most prestigious award for a jazz album, the Deutscher Schallplattenpreis. Five more recordings have followed: a live effort from New York's Public Theater, with trio mates Dannie Richmond and Eddie Gomez; *The Free Will*, a group album augmented by Tommy Flanagan's bebop chording; an issue devoted to the music of Monk; a collaboration with Chick Corea; and *Big Jim's Tango*, his most recent work with a rhythm section of Elvin Jones and Dave Holland.

BENNIE WALLACE'S EQUIPMENT

"I've got two saxophones. A Selmer Mark VI and a Selmer Balanced-Action—that's an old one. I play the Mark VI most of the time. It's got a more even scale, and it's a little bit more resonant sounding. The Balanced-Action has a great personality, with a brighter yet smaller sound."

"I use a medium reed, nothing really too hard. I've been experimenting. I don't like most of the American reeds. The problem with European reeds is that they're cut with this french cut, which is too thin at the tip. They're real thick in the back, and they'll respond kind of funny, but the cane is much better."

"The most important piece of equipment that I've got that contributes to my sound is my mouthpiece. It's made by a fellow in Chicago named Frank Wells. Frank has been the premier mouthpiece maker for jazz . . . John Coltrane, Eric Dolphy, Harry Carney, and Sonny Rollins have all gone to him. I've been going to him for about 11 or 12 years. I get most of my sound from what he makes."

BENNIE WALLACE SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader
THE FOURTEEN BAR BLUES—Enja 3029
LIVE AT THE PUBLIC THEATER—Inner City 3034
THE FREE WILL—Enja 3063
PLAYS MONK—Enja 3091
TRIO WITH CHICK COREA—Enja 4028
BIG JIM'S TANGO—Enja 4046
 with Franco Ambrosetti
CLOSE ENCOUNTER—Inner City 3026
 with Chuck Marohnic
COPENHAGEN SUITE—SteepleChase 4002



Within the inside context there's so many things you can do, just playing through the song. Freedom is there. The more you learn about harmony, the closer you get to where you can use all 12 tones in any situation. It's just a matter of being able to know what you're doing and letting your taste allow it. There's plenty of room for just about any kind of expression."

While the formal education Wallace received didn't fully prepare him for a career in music, his studies in classical clarinet served as a solid foundation for his development. His training and exposure to that instrument were underappreciated at the time yet, today, he acknowledges its importance: "I learned a lot from the clarinet because the technique gives you an amazing advantage for the technical things you must do on the sax. The clarinet is technically a more difficult instrument, although, as far as perfecting a sound, the saxophone is harder because it is not built as well.

"One of the major problems is that when playing the clarinet, you have to play with tight muscles; it's a tighter embouchure . . . you have to bite down a bit. I think the ultimate tenor embouchure is no embouchure at all. The whole thing with the tenor is relaxation. You look at some of the old guys who have a fantastic sound, and they just put the horn in their mouth and blow."

* * *

A key turning point for Wallace occurred when a band teacher with a background in jazz and fondness for the music of Miles, Basie, Coltrane, and Rollins came to his school. Importantly, he befriended Wallace and introduced him to other players around town. Traveling in this network of like-minded individuals helped provide career direction—they all jammed together and frequented the local hang-outs. Wallace's experiences in those segregated clubs, rubbing shoulders with deeply committed, though not well-known, musicians convinced him that jazz was his music, the tenor his instrument. At the same time he was affected profoundly by the recorded music he was hearing.

Wallace relates that "Sonny Rollins was the first musician I heard who really made me decide what I wanted to do. I heard him, and that was the first time I really felt the artistic experience . . . this emotional thing. I remember in our high school jazz band, I had a blues solo in F. The director gave me a record and said, 'This is how you play an F blues—*this is it!*' I heard Rollins' solo [on *Sumphin*], and I just thought—even today I still think—it's one of the best solos I've ever heard.

"I can't say enough good things about Sonny Rollins," he continues, "I think that the period he went through in the '60s is an archetypal example of creativity, because every one of those records is totally different. You know, I

As evidenced by a chronological review, Wallace has moved gradually from a somewhat free mode of playing to a straighter, more traditional voice. It is probable that the subtle adjustments in his style are less a conscious endorsement of one ideological affinity over another than a reflection of his exploratory nature and willingness to grow. He speaks of his stylistic evolution as a unifying process, suggesting that the entire body of music he has been exposed to will ultimately present itself equally in his playing. He became aware of this early on. He explains, "I grew up playing in after-

hours joints, playing blues and bebop music, and being around musicians who were really into traditional jazz. In school I was studying Bartok's music and 20th century music. When I got out, it wasn't honest to eliminate either one. *Both* were part of my tradition.

"At the time I recorded *The Fourteen Bar Blues*, I was coming out from working on more avant garde music. I hate to use that term because it can be misleading . . . but, by the time I was into the music for *Free Will*, I didn't feel the need to play a free tune as opposed to a traditional one. Even more so today.

COLLIS DAVIS



W. PATRICK HINELY/WORKPLAY

THREE WITH CC: (From left) Dannie Richmond, Eddie Gomez, Bennie Wallace, and Chick Corea.

love Coltrane, and I wouldn't take anything away from his recognition, but he was developing this one thing, and the critics were all writing about him. His development *was* amazing. But, Sonny . . . every time he'd make a record, it was like a totally different canvas."

Wallace shares with Rollins a propensity for using the entire range of his horn, and an appreciation of melody as the creative springboard for improvisation. The young tenorist has had sensitive accompaniment by players who understand him, the team of bassist Eddie Gomez and drummer Dannie Richmond serving as empathetic soulmates on four of his six albums. The group is ideal because they embrace the responsibility of listening to one another. Both Gomez and Richmond push Wallace—relentlessly when necessary—yet at the same time they provide breathing room for his imposing flights.

Wallace hasn't often worked with pianists. "I feel most comfortable playing with either a trio or with another horn," he explains. "This goes back to my high school days. We had a small group that was modeled after one of those Charles Mingus groups, and we didn't use a piano. We didn't have one in our big band either, so there weren't any piano players around. It was never part of my education.

"I feel like I have to be very careful about whom I play with or else I get

crowded. The things that I do come from hearing just one pitch—hearing a bass line. If the piano player knows how to voice the chords so they don't get in the way, and knows when to lay out, there's no problem; I can stretch out. I think Tommy Flanagan did a good job of that on the record we did [*The Free Will*]; at the same time I was trying to come toward him, too. When I recorded with Chick Corea, we did a lot of short, free pieces and some duets that weren't put on the album. I was real sorry they didn't get included."

Oddly, matters affecting the packaging of an artist's work, or the processes by which the music is ultimately made available for public review, are not always the province of the artist. Wallace has experienced the difficulties of managing his own career, and when the burdens of business overwhelmed him recently, he knew it was time to return to his art. "I have this one symptom every time I get away from my music," he notes. "I start getting crazy, and when I get crazy enough, I notice it.

"I took a vacation about a year ago and went to an island for a week, away from the telephone and everything. It was a revelation for me; I realized that I just had to stop. It took me several months to get to the point where I knew that I just can't do any business. I am a musician. If I'm not practicing, I'm not being fair to

myself or to the people who buy my records or listen to my concerts."

Since proceeding without distraction, the calmer and, certainly, more focused tenorist has been enjoying his work again. His experiences have given definition to a few thoughts on the current state of jazz. "The music has become a lot more popular," he volunteers. "The business part is bigger, and there's a greater possibility today than there's ever been for reaching the audience for *real* jazz.

"There's a kind of commercial music that has come along which is really pop music, and some of it is very good. But it's not art music. I think we're finally getting to the point where the art connoisseurs are realizing that jazz is a real form."

With that in mind, Wallace continues to apply himself in ways that provide stimulation. He makes brief but periodic sojourns back home to Tennessee where he connects with family, friends, and "my totally peaceful place to work." His days are centered on mustering his creative energies and working towards the comprehensive state of good health he could not enjoy while saddled by outside business considerations. One point, in particular, has become clear to him: "The most important thing for a jazz musician is to practice seriously. It's very important to have good craftsmanship, but craftsmanship and art are two different things. To me," he adds with a grin, "art has always been the most interesting." **db**

BILLY BANG

OUTLINE NO. 12—OAO Celluloid 5004: *SEEING TOGETHER*; *OUTLINE No. 12*; *CONCEPTION*.
Personnel: Bang, Jason Hwang, Joseph Hailes, violin; Frank Lowe, soprano saxophone; Charles Tyler, clarinet; Henri Warner, alto clarinet; David Murray, bass clarinet; Khan Jamal, vibraphone; Wilbur Morris, bass; Sunny Murray, John "Khuwana" Fuller, percussion; Lawrence "Butch" Morris, conductor.

★★★★★

ANTHONY DAVIS

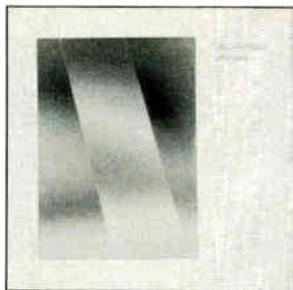
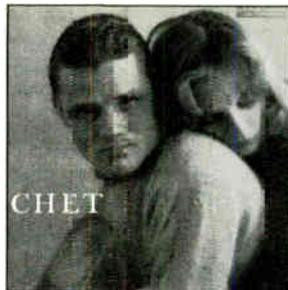
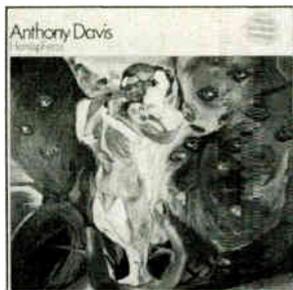
HEMISPHERES—Gramavision 8303: *HEMISPHERES (I—ESU At The Crossroads; II—LITTLE RICHARD'S NEW WAVE; III—IFA: THE ORACLE—ESU THE TRICKSTER; IV—A WALK THROUGH THE SHADOW; V—CLONETICS)*.
Personnel: Davis, piano; Dwight Andrews, flute, piccolo, clarinet, soprano saxophone, conductor; J. D. Parran, clarinet, contrabass clarinet; Leo Smith, trumpet, steelophone, percussion; George Lewis, trombone; Shem Guibory, violin; Eugene Friesen, cello; Rick Rozie, bass; David Samuels, vibraphone, marimba; Pheeroan Ak Laff, drums, percussion.

★★★★★

Two of the most accomplished improvisers to emerge during the late '70s, violinist Billy Bang and pianist Anthony Davis have focused their compositional energies on the integration of structures and processes informed, to a degree, by post-modern classicism, in their own personal vocabularies. Besides being among the most adventurous, challenging, and satisfying recordings by both artists, *Outline No. 12* and *Hemispheres* also poke a few holes in the ranting arguments against the latest wave of composers/improvisers for whom, like Ellington, the orchestra has become an instrument. While both programs come from as uniquely a Black American perspective as any other music, the programs forward markedly different ideas about orchestral music that accommodates the improviser.

Except for the ethereal first and fourth movements, Davis' suite centers around his evolving concept of rhythmic density. The two varieties of rhythmic density utilized in *Hemispheres* result in a propulsive music ideal for virtuosic, linear improvisation. In the second movement the juxtaposition of 4/4, 7/4, and 11/4 rhythmic motifs create a constant poly-metric texture, providing a somewhat minimalist groove for a darting George Lewis solo and a riveting statement from Leo Smith. This approach, which also affords Dwight Andrews' soprano ample room in the third movement, promotes an overt soloist/support dynamic within the ensemble. The variety employed in the final movement uses phrases of upwards to 60 beats to establish shifting, intricate relationships between and within the sections of the ensemble while sustaining strong rhythmic momentum.

Whereas *Hemispheres* is the logical development of ideas Davis introduced on *Episteme*, *Outline No. 12* is a giant step for Bang.



Bang's solos are significant in their own right, as his technique and emotional projection are rapidly maturing, but they are overshadowed by the bold application of a broad palette of orchestral colors. Bang, as does Davis, uses such populist source materials as marches and folk dances, though Bang tends towards a more tactile timbral edge. What ultimately distinguishes Bang's work is his allotment of definable space to the improviser. While Davis' soloists operate within an exact rhythmic and harmonic framework, Bang's cohorts have a free hand in molding the emotional impetus of the work. This is the case with *Seeing Together*, where David Murray intensifies the piece's emotional tone in successive duets with Khan Jamal and Sunny Murray.

In his book *Improvisation: Its Nature And Practice In Music*, Derek Bailey states that "The unique experience for a composer in the use of improvisation must be the relinquishing of control over at least some of the music... not to 'chance' but to other musicians." Bang and Davis relinquish enough of their exceptional music to improvisers the caliber of Smith, Lewis, and the two Murrays, but nothing to chance.

—bill shoemaker

RONALD SHANNON JACKSON

BARBEQUE DOG—Antilles 1015: *BARBEQUE DOG*; *TRIALS OF AN HONEST JOHN*; *YUGO BOY*; *SAV WHAT YOU WILL*; *MYSTERY AT DAWN*; *GOSSIP*; *WHEN CHERRY TREES BLOOM IN WINTER*; *YOU CAN SMELL LAST SUMMER*; *HARLEM OPERA*.

Personnel: Jackson, drums; Vernon Reid, guitars, banjo; Melvin Gibbs, Bruce Johnson, electric bass; Zane Massey, reeds; Henry Scott, trumpet, flugelhorn.

★★★ 1/2

Ronald Shannon Jackson has brought greater clarity and form to his singular interpretations of mentor Ornette Coleman's elusive harmo-

nic music because he's on a quest to capture a wider following. What's always striking about Jackson and the Decoding Society is their enormous energy, though now they're sometimes a free-jazz volcano kept from erupting by the songwriter/drummer's compositional restraints. Some of us may hanker for a return to the wonderfully unbridled, cryptographer-defying sounds found in the vinyl grooves of *Eye On You* (About Time 1003), but the new release, *Barbeque Dog*, like its Antilles predecessor *Man Dance*, is a far cry from a conservative, consumer-obsessed effort.

The press package to *Barbeque Dog* includes Jackson's clever explanations (decoders) of what his eccentric music is meant to bring to mind. The layered, skewed-funk title tune is a tour of his Fort Worth uncle's barbecue kitchen: trumpeter Henry Scott suggests the spicy sauce with his solo, the urison horns are the yams and greens, the basses double for black-eyed peas and corn bread, and Jackson, ambidextrously mixing rhythms, is the master chef. A mood of panic is created by the helter-skelter tempo set by the musicians in *Trials Of An Honest John*, a piece for those falsely accused of something heinous. The quiet *Mystery At Dawn* contains Jackson's pensive feelings upon hearing a wind-blown chain striking a flagpole in the dead of night; Vernon Reid's tranquil banjo harks back to a less hectic time. (Reid shines whenever given the chance.)

The most memorable songs are *Gossip* and *Harlem Opera*. Jackson says the former is "like being in the middle of a New York disco and an African village at the same time." Both places are infested with vicious pratt'e, and the Decoding Society, with rotormouth guitar, brazen horns, and alternating dampened and private passages, does its damndest to parody the nuances of idle talk. *Harlem Opera* is an elegy for a fallen cultural center; the blue four-note melodic theme is made all the more dolorous by the inclusion of voices. Saxophonist Zane Massey, who's submerged in the record mix elsewhere, adds some tortured cries.

RECORD REVIEWS

Jackson's songs are infused with intricate rhythmic ideas. African, Central European, and Eastern influences—rhythmic or otherwise—stir drummer and band. So does jazz, rock (note Reid's guitar), blues, funk, and gospel. Country, too. The distinctions between musical styles—in this moderately emotional album—are thankfully unclear, not decoded.
—frank-john hadley

TEO MACERO

IMPRESSIONS OF CHARLES MINGUS—Palo Alto 8046-N: OOPS! MR. MINGUS; GLORY BE! LET THE SUN SHINE IN; BLUES FOR DUKE; GOODBYE MR. GOOD BASS; MONK'S FUNK; OPEN C; TWO BITS AND A PIECE; CHILL.

Personnel: Macero, alto saxophone (cuts 1-4, 6-8), keyboards (1, 3); David Liebman (1-5, 7, 8), Pepper Adams (1-4, 7, 8), John Stubblefield (1-4, 7, 8), Bill Evans (1, 3), Alex Foster (1, 3), Dick Oatts (1, 3), Al Cohn (2, 4, 7, 8), Lee Konitz (2, 4, 7, 8), saxophones; Dave Valentin, flute (5); Jon Faddis, Mel Davis, Ted Curson, Lou Soloff, trumpet (2, 4, 7, 8); Eddie Bert, Britt Woodman, trombone (2, 4, 7, 8); Don Butterfield, tuba (2, 4, 7, 8); Bob DeVos (1, 3), Jamie Glaser (1, 3), Larry Coryell (2, 4, 7, 8), Ryo Kawasaki (5, 6), guitar; Biff Hannon (1-4, 6-8), Mike Nock (2, 4-8), Jorge Dalto (5), keyboards; Ron Davis, acoustic bass (1, 3); Will Lee (2, 4, 7, 8), Marcus Miller (5), electric bass; Tom Brechtlein (1, 3), Alan Swartzberger (2, 4, 7, 8), Carol Steele (5), percussion; Kitt Moran, vocal (3).

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

Teo Macero's scoring reminds me of thunderclouds rolling on the wind—a combination of density and mobility. His *Impressions* capture Mingus' volatile and vulnerable moods, with wide swings from thrashing bebop to Old Testament pageantry to the eternal down-and-out, all infused with the blues. The record largely succeeds in its titular promise in terms of Macero's compositions and arrangements and the musicians' emotional investment.

The orchestral pieces are best. These include two jump vehicles (*Goodbye* and *Two Bits*), a majestic, stormy lament (*God Lamenting?*) called *Glory Be! Let The Sun Shine In*, and a darker song of despair (*Chill*). Dense layers in the rhythm section—often with two electronic keyboards at once—buoy massive polyphonic horn voicings. But the unit swings (when swing is part of Macero's message) like a lover's heartbeat.

The slapping sound of drums propels the saxophone-dominated *Oops!*, a happy, up-tempo tune alternating 3/4 and 4/4 meters, and *Blues*, a 32-bar-with-a-tag song sensuously read by Ms. Moran. *Blues* would make a great hit song on the radio. *Monk's Funk* and *Open C*, couched in fusion writing and cumulous electronic keyboards respectively, resemble Mingus' style least. They're the half-star discount on this otherwise five-star album.

The horn soloists—Adams, Konitz, Liebman, Cohn, probably Curson, and others I am unable to identify—burn and yearn with various degrees of finesse and rawness, re-

flecting the spiritual intensity of Mingus—and Macero's—moods. Adams is awesome and Konitz movingly tearful on *Glory Be!*, and *Chill* has a soul-wrenching trumpet solo (Curson?). Coryell uncorks a modern, B.B. King-like extension on *Goodbye*—another good one.

But the emphasis is on Macero's melodies (better than average), charts (thick and flowing), and integration of ensemble and soloist. This is one of the more worthy projects propagated in Mingus' name.
—owen cordle

JOE MCPHEE

PO MUSIC: OLEO—hat Music 3514: OLEO (TAKE 1); PABLO; FUTURE RETROSPECTIVE; ASTRAL SPIRITS; OLEO (TAKE 2); I REMEMBER CLIFFORD; ANN KAHLE.

Personnel: McPhee, pocket cornet, tenor saxophone; Andre Jaume, bass clarinet, alto saxophone; François Mechali, bass; Raymond Boni, guitar.

★ ★ ★ ★

Po Music: Oleo must rank as one of the most referential records around. Dedications to seven people—including the Pablos Picasso, Neruda, and Casals—are made for the same number of tunes. On top of that, numerous musical homages are paid to past styles and performers. Moving out from under this weight of influence is a tricky proposition, but these players have done it. They write new texts instead of just annotating old ones.

In their versions of Sonny Rollins' *Oleo* and Benny Golson's *I Remember Clifford*, the musicians rework the tunes according to updated principles. The two takes of *Oleo* are faster and harder-swinging, less offhand, than the recording headed by the composer along with Miles Davis, Horace Silver, Percy Heath, and Kenny Clarke in 1954. Raymond Boni's guitar tremolos wash over the melody, while underneath François Mechali keeps a swinging bass line going. With the help of resonant engineering, they achieve a multi-dimensional layered effect that's quite different from the flatter finish of 30 years ago.

McPhee and Mechali bring a laconic wistfulness to *I Remember Clifford*. Without the support of piano or drums, the interplay between lines is more important than ever, and Mechali comes through, stringing up taut, sonorous webs for McPhee to work around. McPhee's tenor sound has never been better. It's full but not fat, and nuances—like the quick burst of extra pressure at the beginning of a note he wants to stress, say, or the acerbic twist he applies to another—personalize his playing. This duo responds quickly to each other's suggestions. Their version of the ballad has the excitement of spontaneity and the finely worked-out finish of a rehearsed performance.

When McPhee, Jaume, and Boni worked together on *Tales And Prophecies* (hat Hut Twelve 2R12), there was something raw about their playing. Maybe the fact that it seemed so clearly labeled "experimental" was a clue to the problem. One had the feeling that their intentions hadn't been fully realized. On *Po Music: Oleo* all (Mechali included) play with

just as high an energy level as earlier. An added bonus, though, is that they are much more skilled at assimilating avant garde features—of tone production and form, in particular—with older styles. Even at its most free, the playing is directed. This music is complex, yet welcoming.
—elaine guregian

KIP HANRAHAN

DESIRE DEVELOPS AN EDGE—American Clavé 1008EP/1009: TWO (STILL IN HALF-LIGHT); EARLY FALL; VELASQUEZ; (DON'T COMPLICATE) THE LIFE (LA VIE); THE EDGE YOU ALWAYS LOVED IN ME; SARA WADÉ; FAR FROM FREETOWN; ALL US WORKING CLASS BOYS; CHILD SONG; TRUST ME YET?; NANCY (THE SILENCE FOCUSES ON YOU . . .); DESIRE DEVELOPS AN EDGE; WHAT IS THIS DANCE, ANYWAY?; MEANING A VISA; NOCTURNAL HEART (CORACÃO NOTURNO); HER BOYFRIEND ASSESSES HIS VALUE AND PLEADS HIS CASE; JACK AND THE GOLDEN PALOMINOS.

Personnel: Jack Bruce, Kip Hanrahan, Molly Farley, voices; Ricky Ford, John Stubblefield, Ned Rothenberg (cut 8), Teo Macero (13), Mario Rivera (13), saxophone; Arto Lindsay, Elysée Pyronneau, Ti'plume Ricardo Franck, Alberto Bengolea, Jody Harris, Jean Claude Jean, John Scofield, guitar; Steve Swallow, Jamaaladeen Tacuma, Sergio Brandão, Jack Bruce, bass; Ignacio Berroa, Anton Fier, Tico Harry Sylvain, drums; Jerry Gonzalez, Puntilla Orlando Rios, Milton Cardona, Frisner Augustin, David Moss (17), Olufemi Claudette Mitchell (9), percussion; Hannibal Marvin Peterson, Jerry Gonzalez, trumpet (15); strings conducted by Daniel Frieberg.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

If Kip Hanrahan's heavily percussive debut on American Clavé (*Coup De Tête*) sounded like a hip block party, this two-record follow-up expands to a Pan-American fiesta in Central Park moved, appropriately, to Latin/Eurosound Studio. Percussionist/vocalist Hanrahan is so inclusive in personnel and ideas that he's ready to lay out on most tracks; in Jack Bruce (*Cream, Escalator Over The Hill*) he finds a most expressive, haunting voice for his sharper, more substantial lyrics.

Desire keeps *Coup's* Afro-percussion to the fore, and the overlay of solid saxophone (Ricky Ford and John Stubblefield used more sparingly than Chico Freeman, Carlos Ward, and Dave Liebman were), but brings in Haitian rhythm men (legendary guitarist Ti'plume deliciously infects *La Vie*), and Steve Swallow to add wisdom, chord ideas, and to temper Tacuma's taut bass (check their smooth duo on the opener). There is a more headlong pulse to the music, which can better be used to dance, groove, think things over, or make love by.

Impressions: less raw funk and punk touches, more refined ideas and unity of feeling. Such supple percussion—a blend of Haiti, Brazil, and USA—and a far cry from slick. Yet more hooks than a Gloucester party boat: *Boyfriend*, *Trust*. Bruce really wrenches keen emotions from the lyrics (*Velasquez* for one) and responds beautifully to emotive backing (Ford's obbligato on *Fall*, Scofield's

acoustic guitar on *Nancy*). If the title track—leading the six-track EP with six minutes of percussion—didn't capture such an infectious groove and lead dramatically to the album's only salsa big band number, I'd call it filler. Introspective (*Visa*) or carnival (*La Vie*), Kip's combinations move effortlessly from track to track with great joy and fine musicianship. Side One (*Edge* deftly reprising the lovely line of *Fall*) is especially moving and graceful. Loose, yet purposeful. What a fusion! "Innovative and passionate," indeed! Why can't more popular albums put the melting pot on the burner? This one gets my early vote for album of the year.

—fred bouchard

CHET BAKER

SOMEDAY MY PRINCE WILL COME—Steeple-Chase 1180: *SAD WALK; SOMEDAY MY PRINCE WILL COME; I'M OLD FASHIONED; IN YOUR OWN SWEET WAY.*

Personnel: Baker, trumpet, vocal (cut 3); Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, bass; Doug Raney, guitar.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

NO PROBLEM—SteepleChase 1131: *NO PROBLEM; SULTRY EVE; GLAD I MET PAT; KISS OF SPAIN; THE FUZZ; MY QUEEN IS HOME TO STAY.*

Personnel: Baker, trumpet; Duke Jordan, piano; Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen, bass; Norman Fearrington, drums.

★ ★ ★

LINE FOR LYONS—Sonet 899: *JUST FRIENDS; STELLA BY STARLIGHT; AIREGIN; MY FUNNY VALENTINE; MILESTONES; DEAR OLD STOCKHOLM; LINE FOR LYONS.*

Personnel: Baker, trumpet, vocal; Stan Getz, tenor saxophone; Jim McNeely, piano; George Mraz, bass; Victor Lewis, drums.

★ ★

CHET—Fantasy Original Jazz Classics 087: *ALONE TOGETHER; HOW HIGH THE MOON; IT NEVER ENTERED MY MIND; 'TIS AUTUMN; IF YOU COULD SEE ME NOW; SEPTEMBER SONG; YOU'D BE SO NICE TO COME HOME TO; TIME ON MY HANDS; YOU AND THE NIGHT AND THE MUSIC.*

Personnel: Baker, trumpet; Herbie Mann, flute; Pepper Adams, baritone saxophone; Bill Evans, piano; Kenny Burrell, guitar (3, 6); Paul Chambers, bass; Connie Kay (1-3, 5-7), Philly Joe Jones (4, 8, 9), drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

What Chet Baker does is much harder than it sounds. He combines the often antithetical qualities of minimalism and warmth, achieving such apparent austerity of tone and phrasing that the listener finds himself greedily savoring the satin nuances rationed to him. Baker does

not so much whisper into his trumpet as insinuate into it a soft speech seductive as it is spare. Against the recent grain of hardsell musicianship, where virtuosity is often defined in terms of electronic decibels and post-bop breakneck velocities, Baker has preserved the integrity of his modest voice, whose deceptively simple intimacy just about always reveals more than it can possibly hide.

To be sure, *No Problem* features a high level of musicianship, but it is skill pressed into service on a group of Duke Jordan compositions that, while engaging enough, do not reward the close concentration Baker's nuanced delivery demands. Upbeat numbers like the title cut and *The Fuzz* seem especially glossy next to the slower moodiness of *Sultry Eve* and the one unarguable standout on the disc, *My Queen Is Home To Stay*.

Fans of the Baker trumpet are apt to be less unhappy with the tunes than with Baker's tone and phrasing. Both remain technically meticulous but stylistically altered. Tone is breathier, sharper, even intentionally raw-edged—at least in comparison to the fine, dry sherry to which students of the Baker sound have grown accustomed. Phrasing is sharper as well, even terse. With most musicians such changes would go unnoticed or even be welcomed as healthy forays into newer territory. But the fact is that so much of the familiar Baker is present here that the departures go just far enough to

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RECORD REVIEWS

be disturbing without going so far as to be significantly innovative.

Someday My Prince Will Come, recorded just two days after *No Problem*, offers intimate tunes and a trio format (guitar and bass) that allows melodic material and instrumental textures most congenial to the silver introspection that is Baker's métier. There is something remarkable about each number on this album. In *Sad Walk* Baker exploits the lower register of the trumpet, so that his instrument is to other trumpets what a viola is to a fiddle: at once richer, throatier, but also chaste, veiled, and hushed. Bassist Pedersen—whose evocative bowed solo on *Kiss Of Spain* may well be the brightest single moment of *No Problem*—performs with equal lyric intelligence on *Sad Walk*.

Through the title song, Baker's waltz-time legato swings broadly, alternating with virtuosic riffs that amount nearly to full baroque runs. Yet still a warm intimacy prevails, pervading even the coolest tune of the set, Dave Brubeck's *In Your Own Sweet Way*, which is also the most complex and richly realized of the album's offerings.

The *Line For Lyons* LP features a number of characteristic Baker vocals. Unfortunately, they typify everything wrong with this record. The scat singing on *Just Friends*, for example, is lackluster, so laidback as to be a Baker parody—or, worse, a parody of almost anyone performing in a seeming state of limited con-

sciousness. The midnight blue version of *My Funny Valentine* is moody, mannered, and forced. Like much on this album, it is also distended, the musicians chewing more than they have bitten off.

Most of the instrumentals suffer similarly. In *Stella By Starlight*, "cool" becomes synonymous with "tired." *Airegin* is speedy without drive, although there is an exciting Victor Lewis drum break after a singularly unimaginative Getz solo. Nevertheless, there are moments that threaten redemption. Baker wields a terse, epigrammatic horn in *Just Friends* for a welcome contrast to his flaccid scat. *Dear Old Stockholm* is vintage Getz, cool as you please, but with lyricism unabashed. And the title cut, *Line For Lyons*, a counterpoint duet in homage to West Coast bop, is a gem that recalls Baker's early collaborations with Art Pepper. Despite such pleasant interludes, the album is a disappointment.

While *Someday My Prince Will Come* is the most exciting of the four albums under review, many Baker enthusiasts will be more grateful for *Chet*, originally released on Riverside in the late '50s and newly available on Fantasy's Original Jazz Classics label, which retains the original jacket art and notes. Like altoist Art Pepper, Baker was at his most polished—not necessarily his most developed—during the Cool School days of the late '50s and early '60s. Suave, boyish, ingratiating, precise, his

work here is delightful. There is plenty of period atmosphere, but the quietly astounding clarity of young Baker's trumpet is in no danger of sounding dated. The cast of sidemen is stellar.

—alan axelrod

PHAROAH SANDERS

HEART IS A MELODY—Theresa 118: OLE; ON A MISTY NIGHT; HEART IS A MELODY OF TIME (HIROKO'S SONG); GOIN' TO AFRICA (HIGHLIFE).

Personnel: Sanders, tenor saxophone, vocals; William Henderson, piano; John Heard, bass; Idris Muhammad, drums; Flame Braithwaite, Janie Cook, Debra McGriffe, Andy Bey, Cort Cheek, Kris Wyn, Jes Muir, Mira Hadar, vocals (cut 3); Paul Arslanian, bells, whistle (4).

★ ★ ½

Let's think about this title. The heart pulses rhythmically, so we might paraphrase "Rhythm is a melody." The heart is said to be the emotional center—the soul—of things, which leads to "Soul is a melody." Exactly! Rhythm and soul are the vital parts of Sanders' group and solo style. Unfortunately, refinements are in short supply on this album—namely harmonic interest, melding of intellectual and visceral elements, and program variety.

The album was recorded at San Francisco's

Reel Jazz

Why buy albums when you can buy tapes? A decade ago that question might have seemed absurd, but today consumers have shown that there is a market, indeed even a preference for, recorded tapes. The advantages of cassettes are of course, several: they are more portable and compact, less trouble to store, don't need fancy cleaning, are unscratchable and practically unbreakable, don't shake while you're dancing, and can be played in your car or Walkman. The disadvantages are much fewer: you can't hold them up to the light and look at the grooves (we vinyl addicts can tell a lot from that—really); you don't get fancy covers or liner notes unless they stuff them on tissue paper inside the tiny plastic box.

The "cassette albums" I was sent to review are from Digital Music Products with one exception—folk/jazz Radiance's tape on GRD Recordings. The sound on all (as expected) was first-class with virtually no background noise; the music (a surprise) was good to excellent. Contrary to my expectations, I experienced no crisis of packaging disenchantment: the pencil drawings on the DMP covers were fine if tiny portraits of the musicians (except *TriCycle*); the typography (though tiny) was clear and readable and no less informative than at least half the jazz and nearly all pop albums these days. I did miss the lack of heft of the two-ounce tape *vis-à-vis* a seven-ounce record but, faced as most collectors are with a record crunch in my living room (I have a recurring nightmare of my steel record cabinets crashing through the floor), I could readily

appreciate their tidy storage dimensions.

The absolute plus of these cassette albums was their *very long playing time*. What the producers save in vinyl and pressing plant costs they pass on to the consumer in more music; only a pop star purveying pap and filler could object to stretching out for half-again more playing time, so I guess the musicians like that, too. It has been a sad canard of the recording industry that albums play for half-an-hour per side. Classical ones often do (and frequently exceed it in performances of lengthy Romantic works), but jazz ones hardly break 20 minutes per side.

But lo! The short tape here is Radiance's at 52 minutes, and it seems longer because this Third World-oriented band moves from American country and folk-pickin' to free form that includes Afro marimba, Caribbean conga, Brazilian jungle chant over David Darling's cello, Gismonti-strums from guitarist/leader Jim Scott, haunting Celtic oboe and english horn from Nancy Rumbel (ex-Winter Consort), adding Ed Saindon on vibes and Pat Hollenbeck on percussion. Spacy and lovely.

Film and the BBs (pianist Bill Barber and drummer Bill Berg) checks in at 56 minutes with *TriCycle*. It's lightweight and fun, but you can't dance to it. This bag is mostly synthesized pop jazz with lotsa hooks, vamps, cute lines, and Sanfordized alto by Dick Oatts. Nice clean tape sound and sanitized lines by the band have typical fusion drums-in-a-punching-bag, but a few surprises, too, like a clarinet carousel (Oregon crossed with Nino Rota).

Warren Bernhardt's *Trio '83* is the best work I have heard from that tall pianist; it helps that this is a Bill Evans tribute and that Eddie

Gomez plays as richly and intuitively as I remember him with Evans. Bernhardt has many fine solos and stretches out expansively over his 60 minutes. Obviously a labor imbued with love. Peter Erskine is on drums.

Bassist Jay Leonhart emerges as an amiable and not too pushy singer/songwriter on his *Salamander Pie*. He is a prolific (17 stories/songs over 61 minutes), sometimes fascinating storyteller, with that crazed hoot of Donald Fagen, the street seaminess of Tom Waits, and some of Papa Hemingway's bald exposition. There are penchants for alcohol, women, insects, intrigue, and portraits of anti-heroes. Leonhart leaves no room, however, for his superb piano accompanist Mike Renzi, who garners solos only on the first and last tunes.

Joe Beck's guitar is pleasantly showcased on his trio date *Relaxin'*, with Leonhart (who gets much more space as sideman) and Grady Tate, trapmaster. Beck cooks beautifully on Baden-Powell's samba classic *Berimbau* and hits a nice groove on *In A Mellow Tone*, credited on the "box notes" to "Count Bassie," not Duke Ellington. Even at 56 minutes, Beck gets in about a third more relaxin' jazz than he would on your average dinosaur disc—whoops! Am I making the leap to compacts?

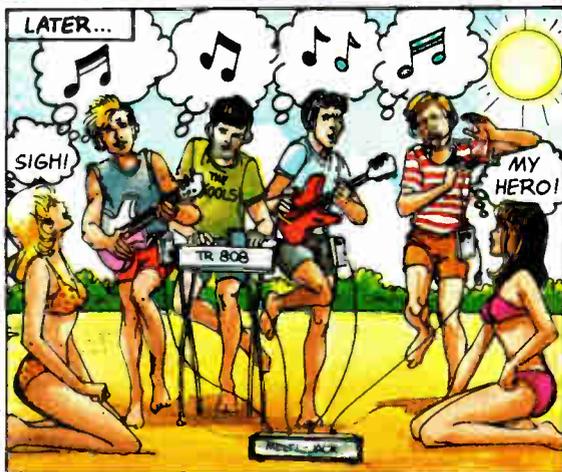
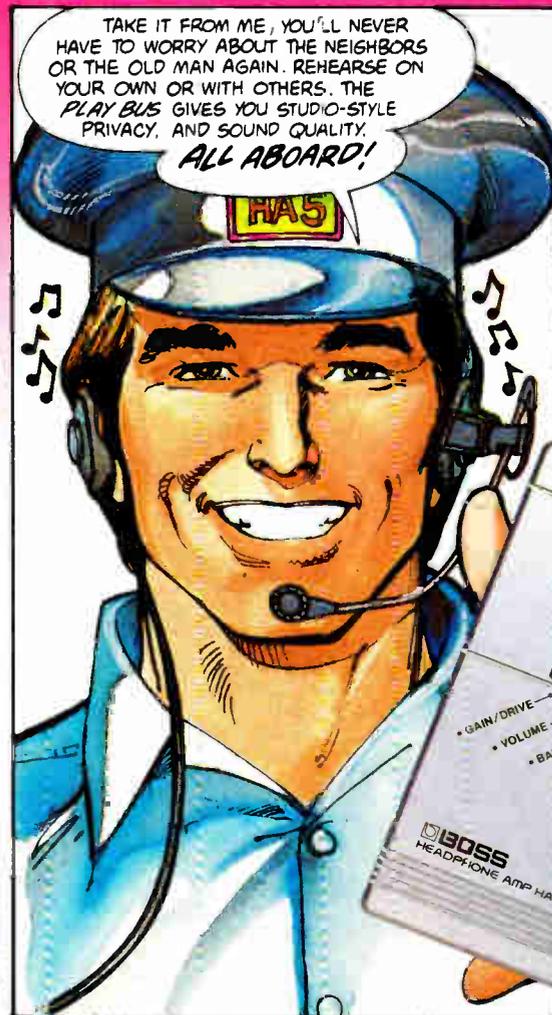
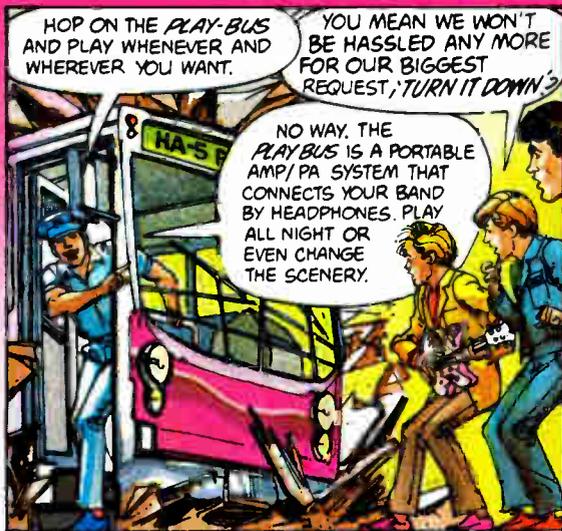
GRD Recordings are at 376 E. Alvarado, Suite 2, Phoenix, AZ 85004; DMP's mail order address is Rockefeller Center Station, POB 2317, NYC 10185. This GRD lists for \$9.98 (postpaid?), and their catalog includes a dozen like-minded goodies, including two more by Radiance and a solo study by Scott. The DMPs cost the same as digital albums: \$12.95 (plus \$1.50 postage each).

—fred bouchard

A

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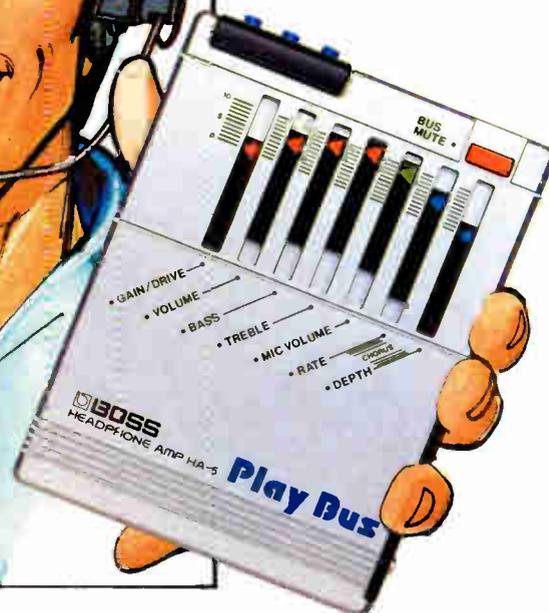
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RECORD REVIEWS

Keystone Korner in 1982, and the tactile forces of a "live" performance reach out everywhere: harmonic vamps anchor *Ole*, the title cut, and *Africa*; a dynamic and emotional rise-and-fall permeates and encapsulates each performance; spiritual electricity or calm prevails. As other saxophonists have mined the technical legacy of John Coltrane (composer of *Ole*, incidentally), Sanders has kept Trane's *spirit* alive. But Sanders' sense of swing in those writhing lines, permuted three-note motives, and upper-register cries is neither as acute nor as headstrong as his mentor's. Sometimes, as on *Ole*, Sanders' hoarse, gargling sound can create an amorphous mess.

Tadd Dameron's *Misty Night* is a good melody, and Sanders romps joyously through the changes. The saxophonist's title cut has voices overdubbed to flesh out an idling performance. Finally, he sings his *Africa* in a voice that gets close to his tenor sound.

The rhythm section is muscular, with Henderson in a McCoy Tyner bag (Henderson's best, like Sanders', occurs on *Misty Night*), Heard maintaining a percussive beat, and Muhammad parading in and out of listener awareness at good times. (Nice New Orleans-style solo, too, on *Ole*.)

The main drags about this album are these: *Ole*, at an edited 21 minutes, is still too long, and *Heart* and *Africa* go nowhere.

—owen cordle

MICHAEL HASHIM/ JIMMY ROWLES

PEACOCKS—Stash 227: *SAVE YOUR LOVE FOR ME; YOU'D BE SO NICE TO COME HOME TO; YOUR LOVE HAS FADED; BARROW STREET; THE PEACOCKS; SATURDAY AFTERNOON BLUES; I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT YOU; WHEN LIGHTS ARE LOW; INDIAN SUMMER; CHERRY.*

Personnel: Hashim, alto saxophone; Rowles, piano; Michael Moore, bass; Joe Baron, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

Having come upon the jazz recording scene only four years ago and literally through the back door, it is no surprise that Michael Hashim's name may be unfamiliar even to the more knowledgeable of this magazine's readership. But recall, if you will, the mild stirrings occasioned among mainstream aficionados a short time back, when they first became aware of a group of young New England-based ex-r&b'ers who called their band the Widespread Depression Orchestra and built their repertoire largely on transcribed charts of '30s and '40s swing bands. Since their debut album in 1979, the WDO (now the Widespread Jazz Orchestra) has put out three additional annual progress reports, each one especially notable for the increasingly mature playing of the group's most outstanding soloist, Michael Hashim.

Although undoubtedly touched by Parker and later players, Hashim seems most comfortable playing in a style that harks back to Johnny Hodges, Willie Smith, and, in some instances, even Louis Jordan and Earl Bostic. Hashim's tone is full, deep, and centered, and

he concentrates his attention primarily toward the instrument's normal range, that area most preferred by saxophonists who value sonority over sensationalism. Similarly, he expresses his swing-based ideas well within the framework of traditional harmony, but his concern for time and melodic contour is such that the listener's interest is maintained throughout.

For his first all-out leader date, Hashim chose an ideal setting. With Rowles' ingenious gifts, not only as a soloist but even more pertinently as an accompanist, and with the solid support offered by Moore and Baron, the altoist has an opportunity for extended self-expression not previously available for public exposure. The tunes are mostly underplayed standards, with the notable exception being Rowles' imaginative ballad *The Peacocks*, upon which Hashim successfully experiments with the legato breath attack so often favored by Hodges, Ben Webster, and Bob Wilber. Elsewhere, he earns his spurs for easy, unlabored swinging.

—jack sohmer

FREDDIE HUBBARD

SWEET RETURN—Atlantic 80108-1: *SWEET RETURN; MISTY; WHISTLING AWAY THE DARK; CALYPSO FRED; HEIDI-B; THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES.*

Personnel: Hubbard, trumpet, flugelhorn; Lew Tabackin, tenor saxophone, flute, alto flute; JoAnne Brackeen, piano; Eddie Gomez, bass; Roy Haynes, drums; Hector Manuel Andrade, percussion (cuts 2-4); Craig Haynes, tambourine (4,5).

★ ★ ★ ★

WOODY SHAW

NIGHT MUSIC—Elektra Musician 60299-1: *ORANGE CRESCENT; TO KILL A BRICK; APEX; ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE.*

Personnel: Shaw, trumpet; Steve Turre, trombone; Mulgrew Miller, piano; Stafford James, bass; Tony Reedus, drums; Bobby Hutcherson, vibes.

★ ★ ★

In the February 1983 issue of *db*, I reviewed a Woody Shaw album (*Lotus Flower*) with one by Freddie Hubbard (*Face To Face*, with Oscar Peterson). I strongly preferred the Shaw album (four stars) to Hubbard's (two stars) typical Pablo jam session date. I concluded that Hubbard needed "a consistent, dedicated working group where his technique will have more meaningful surroundings."

Well . . . maybe. *Sweet Return* is another all-star session, but what a difference! This band, assembled by George Wein to play festival dates in 1983, is simply outstanding. They spur Hubbard into some of his most inspired and meaningful playing in years, and the result is his best album since *Super Blue*. (And there have been a lot of them in between.) The key to the success of this album is JoAnne Brackeen. She is a vital creative force, and her playing is consistently clear, precise, and devoid of clichés. She refuses to allow *Misty* to become slushy, to

cite just one strong example of her work, and her sharp comping and pungent fills throughout the album keep everyone alert. Her *Heidi-B*, a powerful tune based on a 7/4 vamp, is easily the most challenging music here. It presents Hubbard with some really interesting problems, and he overcomes them with muscular grace.

Eddie Gomez is familiar with Brackeen's style, having worked extensively with her, and he meshes confidently with her sometimes unorthodox approach. Roy Haynes, always tasteful, maintains a solid cook and balances Gomez' tendency to rush headlong through the tunes. Lew Tabackin, although he seems like the odd-man-out in this grouping, is an effective foil for Hubbard. Rather than meeting him head-on (as Joe Henderson might), he works around him. His contrapuntal tenor sax lines on the heads to *Whistling Away The Dark* and *The Night Has A Thousand Eyes* are particularly effective.

What we have here, in short, is an all-star group of exceptional balance and cohesiveness. Woody Shaw's working group of 1980-83, now disbanded, also had those qualities, but *Night Music* is not really the best place to hear them. This album is the second one culled from a 1982 recording session at the Jazz Forum in New York City, with Bobby Hutcherson featured as a "guest artist." The earlier release, *Master Of The Art*, is superior in most respects, including its recorded sound. (Which is odd, but true—why should one album sound better than the other?)

Shaw's distinctive music mixes elements of bebop and modal playing into a style that might be called "modern mainstream." It can be very exciting, but it suffers from a certain sameness. The three originals here—one each by Shaw, Turre, and Miller—are all taken at somewhat relentless tempos, and the solos sound like a relay race after a while. *All The Things . . .* finally slows the pace and gives Shaw a chance to develop some of his darkly glowing, lyrical lines. He is, as Miles Davis said, a great trumpet player—this just isn't one of his better records.

—jim roberts

MARK ISHAM

VAPOR DRAWINGS—Windham Hill 1027: *MANY CHINAS; SYMPATHY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT; ON THE THRESHOLD OF LIBERTY; WHEN THINGS DREAM; RAFFLES IN RIO; SOMETHING NICE FOR MY DOG; MEN BEFORE THE MIRROR; MR. MOTO'S PENGUIN; IN THE BLUE DISTANCE.*

Personnel: Isham, synthesizers, trumpets, flugelhorn, piano, soprano saxophone, Steiner EVI, electronic percussion; Peter Van Hooke, snare drum, electronic percussion.

★ ★ ★

The synthesizer and studio electronics have produced a new era of chamber music. Instead of flutes and cellos, one or two musicians multi-track delicate lattice-works of crystalline electronic timbres and textures, alone in a studio. Through the wonders of the phonograph record, the music speaks to the listener on a one-to-one basis, opening a

BLACK SAINT SOUL NOTE

personalized sonic environment. Mark Isham has tried to make such a record, and if his stories become redundant and have the depth of children's fairy tales, they are no less intimate.

This is Isham's first solo effort, but he's not a newcomer. He's recorded with pianist Art Lande, Pink Floyd, William Ackerman, and Van Morrison in between stints with the Oakland and San Francisco symphonies. He was also part of Group 87, an exciting and fresh fusion ensemble that released one record on Columbia.

For *Vapor Drawings* Isham took his synthesizers, keyboards, and horns into a London studio and crafted an album of mood pieces that is equally indebted to the minimalism of Steve Reich and Philip Glass as to the synthesized expanses of Tangerine Dream and Vangelis. Like these artists, Isham's music is based on repetitive structures, in this case the transfixing cycles of the sequencer. The trick to this music is to have lots of layers and effects happening on top or to be constantly adjusting the pattern, but Isham does neither.

Two violin-like patterns play relentlessly against each other throughout the eight-minute length of *Sympathy And Acknowledgement* with drones phasing in and out similar to Reich's *Music For A Large Ensemble*. Reich maintains interest with lively timbral effects, shifting patterns through different instrument groups and slowly mutating the line. Isham lets his admittedly pretty ostinato patterns rattle on unimpeded. In the hands of Terry Riley or Klaus Schulze, this can have a mantra-like effect, but here it doesn't.

When Peter Van Hooke's electronic percussion kicks in, things get more lively. *On The Threshold Of Liberty* is a triumphant march played out against Isham's desolate trumpet theme. *Raffles In Rio* is a jaunty percolation of electronic and acoustic percussion sounds. But the compositions are too thin, and Isham chooses not to improvise in a music that almost begs for some spontaneous input. The pristine symmetry of his colors and patterns are engaging, but the intimacy of the genre reveals their lack of depth.

—John Diliberto

HAMPTON HAWES

THE GREEN LEAVES OF SUMMER—Contemporary 7614: *VIIRD BLUES*; *THE GREEN LEAVES OF SUMMER*; *ILL WIND*; *ST. THOMAS*; *SECRET LOVE*; *BLUE SKIES*; *THE MORE I SEE YOU*; *G.K. BLUES*.

Personnel: Hawes, piano; Monk Montgomery, bass; Steve Ellington, drums.

★ ★ ★

RECORDED LIVE AT THE GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALL—Concord Jazz 222: *FLY ME TO THE MOON*; *SUNNY*; *THE STATUS OF MACEO*.

Personnel: Hawes, piano; Mario Suraci, bass (cuts 1, 2).

★ ★ ★ ★

Although the late Hampton Hawes was often classed with Bud Powell and other seminal bebop pianists, such a characterization overlooks his facility at developing musical ideas

using a thematic, rather than a strictly linear, approach. If it is indeed necessary to classify Hawes' playing, his rightful place belongs among such theme-and-variation players as Sonny Rollins and Erroll Garner.

All this is evidenced by the first of these releases, *The Green Leaves Of Summer*, recorded in February 1964. Backed by Monk Montgomery's bass and Steve Ellington's drums, Hawes addresses six standards and two blues with varying degrees of success. On the carefully voiced *Green Leaves Of Summer*, the pianist gives the listener frequent aural signposts, a la Rollins, by continuously alluding to the melody's thematic material. One wonders, however, whether such effort is worth the bother, for the result is yet another jazzed-up movie theme—intricate, yet somehow stale.

Secret Love, done in a snappy 2/4, is more successful. As Hawes subjects the melody to countless subtle permutations, his lines sing, even his comping behind Montgomery's bass solo is above-average, and Hawes remains in total control of the improvisational flow. *Ill Wind* illustrates Hawes' refreshingly sparse, non-frilly approach to ballads. Moving into a light bounce, he keeps the melody in the forefront, using choice voicings and careful voice leading. The two blues pieces here, Miles Davis' *Viird Blues* and Hawes' own *G.K. Blues*, raise a different set of critical problems. Both pieces are idiomatically correct. Yet on *Viird Blues*, a snappy, tricky line, Hawes lays out his choruses in regular 12-bar chunks, thereby compressing his theme-and-variations approach into a miniature format and destroying the larger flow of his musical thought.

Recorded *Live At The Great American Musical Hall* (Hawes' last live recording) presents few of these critical difficulties. Side one of this release pairs Hawes with bassist Mario Suraci, and the two romp through two time-tested (some might say time-worn) standards. Hawes makes the best of such lightweight material. After a meandering, rubato introduction to *Fly Me To The Moon*, Hawes is joined by the bassist and mixes Bird-like phrases with continuous theme-and-variation improvising, peppered with blues licks, a frenzy of runs, wringing the melody out in every possible way. *Sunny* receives an equally elaborate treatment. Opening with churchy chords, Hawes stretches out for some 14 minutes, playfully squeezing every possible melodic nuance out of this vehicle in a series of continuous variational choruses. The fun Hawes has in taking this simple tune apart and putting it back together is evident throughout.

This release's magnum opus, though, is Hawes' *The Status Of Maceo*, a suite for solo piano in three movements. Opening with fluttery chords supporting a lyrical melody backed by a simple bass pattern, Hawes introduces blues motifs over repetitious patterns in the manner of Keith Jarrett. A bossa nova section gives way to a return of the opening motif. Intermixed with this are passages of non-jazz effects, gospel-blues figures, and rolling boogie patterns.

There's a lot to listen to here, more than can probably be absorbed on one or several listens.

—Jon Balleras



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RECORD REVIEWS

JOHNNY GRIFFIN

CALL IT WHACHAWANA—Galaxy 5146: *I Mean You; Lover Man; Call It Whachawana; A Waltz With Sweetie; Jabbo's Revenge.*

Personnel: Griffin, tenor saxophone; Mulgrew Miller, piano; Curtis Lundy, bass; Kenny Washington, drums.

★★★★★

JIMMY SMITH

KEEP ON COMIN'—Elektra Musician 60301-1: *Keep On Comin'; Be Yourself; No Problem; Piano Solo Medley (Summertime, Yesterdays, I Got Plenty O' Nuttin'); Callit Whachawana.*

Personnel: Smith, organ, piano; Johnny Griffin, tenor saxophone; Kenny Burrell, guitar; Mark Baker, drums.

★★★

The little giant of the tenor seems to be reaching new heights of lyric expressiveness as the feisty one mellows into the philosophical. He's playing the upper end of the horn with a heady yet firm tenderness, programming lady-killers instead of lip-busters, and achieving stretches of bittersweet legato lines that yank instead of kick the beat. He's not snapping off the notes as much, but letting them ring and carry or (on the last note of *Waltz* prominently) stretch and laze. In fact, Griffin is sounding today a little more like those other members of our classiest expatriate tenor triumvirate: a sinewy Dexter Gordon or a witty Ben Webster.

It wasn't Europe that softened Griffin's nautilus-tough tone and iron bite between 1963-78; contrast this one with his rock-hard comeback date (*Return Of The Griffin*, Galaxy 5117) also with perennial producer Orrin Keepnews. In 1983 tempos are down, there's more relaxed yet never limp phrasing, dense structures, and what may be the longest and best ballad of his recorded work. The tiptoe *Lover Man* sustains Ben Webster's agony-slow tempo with exceptional performances from all hands, and Griffin squeezes every drop of emotion out of the tune in maybe the sultriest performance since *Lady Day's*. Hear him bleed tears out of that upper register. It's hard to imagine a trio as springy and delightful as Griffin's original comeback band (Ronnie Mathews, Ray Drummond, Keith Copeland) but these copacetic alumni of Betty Carter College fit beautifully here.

Pivot tune between Griffin's LP and his featured role with Jimmy Smith live in Atlanta is his stop-time blues that has some slippery twists to its line (like *Waltz* and the popular *A Monk's Dream*); Griffin's writing some tunes as deft and well-turned as Jimmy Heath's. *Callit* goes at a faster clip in the big hall, and Griff heats up to fit Smith's extroverted groove and ride over the obtrusive meowlings. He'll still flash fire from the hip when it's called for, too (*No Problem*), though even here Griffin's keening upper edges (*Call and Keep*) touch at moments a gritty Getz, a grabby Gordon. There is a more porous, open quality to his sound on the

quartet sides that make you ponder, and his statements are warmer and more intimate in the studio.

Fried chicken and collard greens backstage fueled some easy going chitlin-circuit blues on-stage at Atlanta: relaxed Burrell doing handsomely what he loves best, hard-sock with ticking hi-hat from Mark Baker, healthy handfuls of Hammond mixed in with Smith's here-and-yon histrionics. Griff doesn't appear on *Medley* and *Be Yourself*, the weaker tracks; on the others he kicks in gamely but is undermiked. Not a bad set, but not inspired, either.

—fred bouchard

SHORTY ROGERS

WITH STAN KENTON, JUNE CHRISTY, THE GIANTS—Pausa 9016: *Jolly Rogers; Art Pepper; A Mile Down The Highway; He Can Come Back Anytime; Do It Again; Viva Prado; Round Robin; Sambo; Popo; Didi; Our Mothers; Over The Rainbow; Apropos; Sam And The Lady.*

Personnel: Stan Kenton Orchestra—Maynard Ferguson, Don Paladino, Buddy Childers, Chico Alvarez, Shorty Rogers, John Howell, Al Porcino, John Coppola, Conte Candoli, Stu Williamson, trumpet; Harry Betts, Milt Bernhart, Bob Fitzpatrick, Bill Russo, Bart Varsalona, Clyde Brown, trombone; John Graas, Lloyd Otto, John Cave, Sinclair Lott, french horn; Gene Englund, Bud Shank, Art Pepper, Bob Cooper, Bart Calderall, Bob Gioga, reeds; Kenton, piano; Don Bagley, bass; Shelly Manne, drums. Shorty Rogers and his Giants—Rogers, trumpet; Graas, french horn; Englund, tuba; Pepper, Cooper, Shank, Gioga, Jimmy Giuffre, reeds; Hampton Hawes, Claude Williamson, piano; Bagley, bass; Manne, drums; June Christy, vocals.

★★★★½

YESTERDAY, TODAY AND FOREVER—Concord 223: *Budo; Blood Count; Yesterday, Today And Tomorrow; TNT; Wagon Wheels; Lotus Bud; Have You Hugged A Martian Today.*

Personnel: Rogers, trumpet; Bud Shank, flute, alto saxophone; George Cables, piano; Bob Magnusson, bass; Roy McCurdy, drums.

★★★★½

Jazz has always proceeded according to its own visions and usually well outside the realm of what is generally accepted as "popular music," so for many years it looked to the classical world as a sort of spiritual ally. The fact that the classical world rarely looked back, however, gave jazz boosters both hurt feelings and inferiority anxieties. Especially after the middle '30s, when jazz' first generation of critics began organizing a basic set of aesthetic bylaws for the music and pressing its case for artistic legitimacy, the desire for high-brow acceptance became almost obsessive. That's why jazz concerts in places like Carnegie Hall once had such great symbolic significance. If you can understand this state of mind, which reached a kind of apogee in the postwar years after the decline of the big bands, you can empathize more fully with the 14 selections on the Pausa Shorty Rogers LP.

The music falls into three categories, each of which illustrate an aspect of jazz' mid-century drift toward classicism.

Five of the selections are by the Stan Kenton Innovations orchestra, a bulky 40-piece behemoth Rogers joined in 1950 as player and arranger. It falls roughly midway in a minor jazz tradition that began with symphonic jazz in the '20s and ended with Third Stream in the '60s. Though an honest experiment, it was inclined to confuse size with growth. Every piercing brass sting seems determined to demonstrate that true art comes from the lungs, not the heart or mind. Art Pepper's dancing alto solos are in a constant tug of war with the Kenton iron works.

Far and away the most interesting, swinging, and intimate sides are the six Giants cuts from October 1951. Heavily influenced by the Miles Davis Nonet sounds of 1949 and '50, Rogers proved himself a glib and intelligent grammarian of the new chamber-bebop language. With the big band movement in near total eclipse, this direction was to have a far more influential impact on the '50s jazz scene. In a sense, it succeeded where Kenton's "symphonic jazz" approach failed. It brought a new awareness of harmony into jazz writing, but on a small scale that never threatened to push the soloist aside. It changed the vivid, emotion-charged reds of the older hot jazz into light, even-tempered pastels of blues and grays. It brought a reserve and civility to jazz that reflected an awareness of modern classical techniques, but without swallowing them whole and ending up constipated. With Pepper, Rogers, and Hampton Hawes contributing the principal solos, the music swings with a precise, swirling power.

There are also three additional cuts in which Rogers and his Giants provide backgrounds for June Christy, the Kenton vocalist of the period. Her husky sound is a perfect fit for the music—cool, detached, vibratoless, close-by but distant.

Rogers returns to the recording scene today with the *Yesterday, Today And Forever* album on Concord, his first in many years. He is joined by Bud Shank, a charter member of the original West Coast group and musical conferee for more than 33 years (Shank is among the personnel on most of the Pausa cuts, although not a featured soloist). Their reunion is both welcome and successful, though its terms are limited to a mere two-horn front line, not the fatter ensembles of the old Giants LPs. In a way that's too bad, because Rogers' signature on his best work over the years has been written largely through the ensembles he crafted for himself. As a musician he produces good, solid, finely balanced solos but doesn't project a strong individual personality or style. All of which tends to leave this album a bit faceless. But Rogers' fans will undoubtedly be pleased at seeing an old friend return to active playing with his skills intact and on form. The rapport with Shank is always lively and (especially in the capella passage on *Wagon Wheels*) sensitive. Shank's big number is *Blood Count* (written for Johnny Hodges by Billy Strayhorn), which he plays in a surprisingly gritty style.

—John McDonough

BARNEY KESSEL

TO SWING OR NOT TO SWING—Contemporary 3513: *BEGIN THE BLUES; LOUISIANA; HAPPY FEELING; EMBRACEABLE YOU; WAIL STREET; INDIANA; MOTEN SWING; MIDNIGHT SUN; CONTEMPORARY BLUES; DON'T BLAME ME; 12TH STREET RAG.*

Personnel: Kessel, guitar; Harry Edison, trumpet; Bill Perkins, Georgie Auld, tenor saxophone; Jimmy Rowles, piano; Al Hendrickson, guitar; Red Mitchell, bass; Shelly Manne, Irv Cottler, drums.

★ ★ ★ ½

SOLO—Concord Jazz 221: *BRAZIL; WHAT ARE YOU DOING THE REST OF YOUR LIFE; HAPPY LITTLE SONG; EVERYTHING HAPPENS TO ME; YOU ARE THE SUNSHINE OF MY LIFE; MANHA DE CARNAVAL; PEOPLE; JELLY BEANS; ALFIE.*

Personnel: Kessel, guitar.

★ ★ ★

Certainly one of the first and most visible of the many Charlie Christian disciples to emerge in the '40s and '50s, Barney Kessel is still one of the most articulate, flexible, and widely influential guitarists on the scene today. An encomium such as this, for obvious reasons, cannot be leveled at too many musicians, but in Kessel's case it is not undue. His professional career, though reaching back to the early '40s, did not really hit its stride until 1945, when his clean swing-to-bop lines were first heard on a brilliant series of records by the Artie Shaw Gramercy Five. These, in addition to his subsequent appearances and recordings with Jazz At The Philharmonic and the Oscar Peterson Trio, ultimately led to his position as foremost jazz guitarist of the '50s.

Other activities during this decade and later included prominence in the West Coast "cool jazz" movement, increasing opportunities for studio work and commercial recordings, teaching, lecturing, writing, and traveling. One might think that after 40-some-odd years of professional involvement Kessel might now consider lessening up somewhat; but apparently this is not the case, for the guitarist is still as deeply immersed in his art as ever before.

The earlier of the two albums presently under review is the welcomed re-release of Kessel's 1955 swinger, in actuality the third volume in a series presumably designed to showcase the guitarist in a variety of settings and styles. This one, happily, is in a small band Basie groove and, thanks to the forthright, stylistically appropriate contributions of Edison, Perkins, Auld, and Rowles, comes across as intended. Kessel's solo conception so easily bridges the gap between Young and Christian, on one hand, and Parker and Gillespie, on the other, that no further argument is needed to discredit the old notion that bop was "revolutionary" in nature rather than being exactly what it was: a peak cycle in the natural evolution of a dynamic art form. Besides the guitarist's many inventive moments, other sources of pleasure will be found in the relaxed but consistently swinging solo and ensemble work of Rowles and the variously appearing hornmen. (Note that Auld and Cottler replace Perkins and Manne on the second of the two sessions represented, and that no horns at all are pres-

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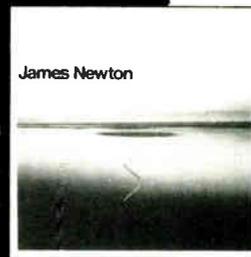
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RECORD REVIEWS

ent on titles one, four, eight, and 10.)

A wholly different side of Kessel's artistry is displayed on the Concord set. Here we find a far more meditative and private guitarist playing in a style that is eminently orchestral in its approach. Generally soft and sweet of tone, the sound of Kessel's guitar, as well as his thoughtfully frequent use of thematic points of reference in his improvisations, might suggest to some a quiet, late night get-together with a few select friends gathered around a cheery fireplace. Relaxation is the keynote and warmth the ambiance. For the most part, the emphasis is on ballads, except for the guitarist's imaginative, swing-style reworking of the old samba *Brazil*, and his surprising launch into a double-time chordal solo halfway through *Sunshine*. But regardless of tempo or mood, the professionalism displayed is of the highest caliber throughout. —jack sohmer

OTHER MUSIC

INCIDENTS OUT OF CONTEXT—Flying Fish 302: *COMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR; MUSIC WITH TOO MANY PARTS; IT IS IT, PART ONE; IT IS IT, PART TWO; THE SPIRIT IS WILLING; INCIDENTS OUT OF CONTEXT.*

Personnel: Andrew Fischer, hammered dulcimer, dumbec, english horn, metallophones, synthesizer; David B. Doty, cello, marimba, metallophones, synthesizer; Dale S. Soules, french horn, trombone; Carola B. Anderson, drums, marimba, metallophones, saxophone, synthesizer; Henry S. Rosenthal, chimes, drums, electric guitar, metallophones, synthesizer.

★ ★ ★ ★

San Francisco's Other Music ensemble dares to be different. The five current members, three

of whom—David Doty, Henry Rosenthal, and Dale Soules—founded the group nine years ago, build their unabashedly peculiar East-West music on the trebly sounds of metallophones, the handmade xylophone-type instruments with metal bars above resonance tubes which dominate Indonesian gamelan music. No longer to be considered pedantic parroters of Javanese court music, as their debut record *Prime Numbers* (Nth Degree 14) sometimes suggested they were, Other Music has secured, with this Flying Fish release, an honorable modern identity for their wise management of synthesizers and other Western instruments, and for their willingness to incorporate both experimental and pop musics into their indescribable aural melange.

Other Music usually adheres to the gamelan rule that one instrument supply a

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sustained melody while the other music-makers offer counter-melodies and rhythmic rephrases of the theme. Doty's *Music With Too Many Parts* has gently malleated metallic sounds aside a pair of synthesizer lines, one reminiscent of a harpsichord's plucked mechanical sound and the other a static, lower-pitched undercurrent. Vaguely lyrical, the

eight-minute piece has its appeal. Andrew Fischer's equally long *The Spirit Is Willing* plays more on the listener's emotions for its mystically Indian feel; featured hammered dulcimer, sweeping then punctuated synthesizer, tablas, and metallophones combine gloriously in this thoughtful, intricate work. The group's apparent desire to bridge continents as well as

critics' choice

Art Lange

NEW RELEASE: Alan Broadbent/Putter Smith, *Continuity* (Revelation). A modest, unassuming, creative, thoroughly engaging program of mostly standards, played with taste and clear-eyed swing by the piano/bass duo.

OLD FAVORITE: Miles Davis, *Bitches Brew* (Columbia). Miles runs the voodoo down, and finds sanctuary in a funkified frenzy of electro-orchestral polyphony.

RARA AVIS: Various Artists, *You're A Hook* (Giorno Poetry Systems). The most recent of John Giorno-produced recorded poetry anthologies (dist. by NMDS), but not his best, despite the presence of William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Patti Smith, Laurie Anderson, Frank Zappa, and others. Still, worth celebrating for 15 years and 14 releases of immeasurable worth.

SCENE: Ran Blake's spellbinding solo piano *noir*, balanced by Warne Marsh's tenor ministrations in quartet, at Joe Segal's Jazz Showcase in Chicago.

Charles Doherty

NEW RELEASE: (tie) Ronald Shannon Jackson, *Barbeque Dog* (Antilles) and James Blood Ulmer, *Odyssey* (Columbia). A hot time in the old harmolodic home tonight, with Blood's stripped-down and raw and Shannon's thick and lush.

OLD FAVORITE: Miles Davis, *Four And More* (Columbia). A fiery live Miles set with classic rhythm (Herbie, Ron, and Tony) and inspired tenor from George Coleman.

RARA AVIS: Lajos Dudas, *Monte Carlo* (Rayna). Blues and jazz with a Bach-bent from the Hungarian clarinetist's trio plus guest plectrist Attila Zoller; includes his '82 Monaco competition award-winning composition.

SCENE: Michael Franks crooning smoothly, Elements plus two swinging brightly, and the ladies swooning unself-consciously, at the Park West in Chicago.

Pete Welding

NEW RELEASE: Oregon, *Oregon* (ECM). An expanded instrumental palette and a reemphasis on a more improvisatory group gestalt make Oregon's return to recording even more welcome; not everything works equally well here, but when it does, it's captivating.

OLD FAVORITE: Robert Johnson, *King Of The Delta Blues Singers* (Columbia). For my money, still the single finest, most compelling blues LP of all time; Johnson's powerful, apocalyptic songs, emotion-filled singing, and stunning guitar playing are among the blues' greatest achievements.

RARA AVIS: Edu Lobo/Maria Bethania, *Edu E Bethania* (Brazilian Elenco). One of the undisputed masters of bossa nova, Lobo, a superlative singer/guitarist/producer, though a generation younger than Jobim, Bonfá, Gilberto, de Moraes, et al., is fully their equal. This set, introducing vocalist Bethania, is a paradigm of his marvelous, intelligent music.

SCENE: David Evans' book *Big Road Blues* (University of California Press), though often mired in dry academese, is a model study of localized blues traditions in a small Mississippi community; painstakingly researched, closely reasoned, and based on extensive fieldwork, an encyclopedic knowledge of the music, its traditions, performers, recordings, and their interrelationships.

Howard Mandel

NEW RELEASE: David Murray Octet, *Murray's Steps* (Black Saint). The next best thing to being where the great young tenorist/composer/arranger and his peers—Henry Threadgill, Craig Harris, Butch Morris, Bobby Bradford, Curtis Clark, Wilbur Morris, Steve McCall—can be caught live.

OLD FAVORITE: Gunter Hampel, *The 8th Of July* (Flying Dutchman). One of the vibist/composer's characteristic swirling free jams with Anthony Braxton, Willem Breuker, and Jeanne Lee contributing to the absorbing, intense, and shifting colors.

RARA AVIS: An impossible to find, independently produced, mid-'60s single: Lester Bowie and Roscoe Mitchell anticipate *Theme De Yoyo* with their break on *My Baby's Got A Whole Lotta Soul*; flipside, Nick Gravenites sings *The Drunken Boat*, with Paul Butterfield, Erwin Helfer on harpsichord, et al.

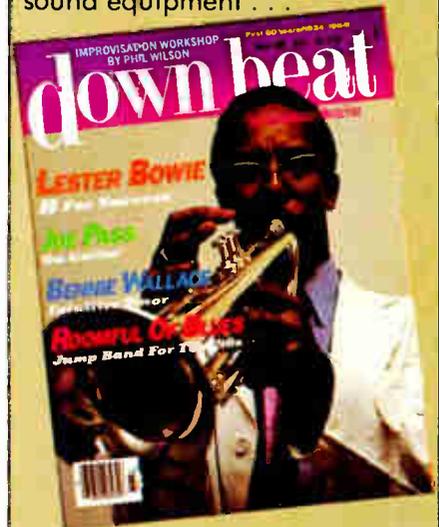
SCENE: Did I lose it at the Ritz, watching Herbie Hancock's future funk with Grandmaster D. ST. or find it at Tramps, where the Five Blind Boys Of Alabama sang gamely after their two performances of *Gospel At Colonos* (at Brooklyn Academy of Music).

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epochs in world music history is well served here.

Apart from the occasional stretch of tedium—for example, the numbing xylophone in the wandering 11-minute Doty title composition—the record qualifies as high-minded fun. Carola Anderson's *Compulsive Behavior* could be the theme for a Balinese *Pink Panther*; the wily saxophone matches wits and melody with mirroring synthesizer and percussion in as vivacious a piece of music this writer has heard for months. Rosenthal's *It Is It, Part One* and *Part Two* have a thick-textured electric guitar permutation so resolutely ominous that it's, well, hilarious. One hopes the composer intended it to be.

Other Music certainly take their tuning systems seriously, take their instrument building seriously, take their music seriously, and still seem to know the importance of measured gaiety. The music proves the air they breathe—winds from Djakarta or wherever—is fresh, not stifling.

—frank-john hadley

AZYMUTH

RAPID TRANSIT—Milestone 9118: *MAKE MINE GUARANÁ; AFTERNOON; MISSING DOTÓ; SOMEWHERE IN BRAZIL; I'M JUST LOOKING AROUND; MONTREUX; GATE OF TIME.*

Personnel: José Roberto Bertrami, keyboards, organ, percussion, beraboi, bells, vocoder, vocals; Alex Malheiros, electric bass, percussion, acoustic guitar, vocal; Ivan Conti (Mamão), drums, percussion, vocals; José Carlos (Bigorna), flute (cut 5); Sidney "Cidinho" Moreira, ánaraug, percussion (1, 5).

★ ★ ★

JOSÉ ROBERTO BERTRAMI

BLUE WAVE—Milestone 9117: *BYE BYE BRAZIL; CHORODÓ; PARTIDO ALTO #2; SHOT ON GOAL (PERIGO DE GOL); BLUE WAVE; SHEDS & WEEDS (BARAACOS E ARBUSTOS).*

Personnel: Bertrami, vocal, electric piano, organ, synthesizer, Oberheim, percussion; Hélio Delmiro, guitar; Robertinho Silva, drums; Aleuda, voice, percussion (2); José Carlos (Bigorna), flute, soprano saxophone (3-5); Claudio Bertrami, bass (1, 7); José (Bicão) Alves, bass (3, 5), electric piano (6).

★ ★ ★

This is Azymuth's fourth recording for Milestone, and Bertrami's first (as a leader). The Azymuth LP doesn't differ too much from its predecessors except that this time they have added guests. The music of Azymuth has been described by the liner annotator as "Sambo Doido," which is loosely translated as crazy samba. One of the band's features, however, is the fact that they have combined all the elements of the old samba with the newer forms of jazz, rock, and even funk.

These characteristics are especially evident on the faster tunes, such as *Missing Dotó*

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and *Montreux*. Doto, by the way was Doto de Pepique, apparently a master of a small hand drum known as a pepique (although this instrument is not listed as being played here). This particular track has the feeling of a typical Brazilian street carnival and features only provocative percussion and a chant-like vocal.

Malheiros is a strong yet extraordinarily sensitive guitarist, and the interplay between him and Bertrami is one of the album's highlights; listen to their call-and-response opening *I'm Just Looking Around*, in which each instrument echoes the other's sound. Also, on at least two pieces (*Afternoon* and *Gate Of Time*) Malheiros' electric instrument has the quality of an acoustic guitar (which he plays very effectively on his own composition *Some-where In Brazil*).

While Azymuth may not grab at you the first time around, there are subtleties and nuances which can be detected as the music grows on you. This is extremely sensuous music, to move to, to lay down and savor, or visualize the soft, warm beaches of Brazil.

Keyboarder Bertrami's first solo effort is not unlike his work with Azymuth, although more of his compositions are featured—and he is a good writer. The music on *Blue Wave*, while being totally accessible and pleasing to the ear, nevertheless is inventive in a subtle, creeps-up-on-you way. Several of the tunes are fast-paced and, although I wouldn't describe them as exciting, the word that comes to mind is exhilarating. This is the case on the title track, which features an excellent soprano saxophone solo by José Carlos (Big-orna).

Bertrami has a collaborator on *Chorodo*—the singer Aleuda, who joins him for a beautiful Portuguese vocal. Bertrami adds his voice here as well as contributing a wordless vocal on *Bye Bye Brazil*. Bertrami's tunes have an insidious quality and leave their mark long after the music has died away. One of the most interesting is the all-too-short (less than two minutes) *Parati*, which has Bertrami on Oberheim accompanied by José Alves on electric piano, and is a hauntingly pretty melody.

It is a pleasant surprise to realize how many accomplished players there are in Brazil, and it's gratifying to know that the tentacles of American jazz continually stretch to such distances.
—frankie nemko

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RECORD REVIEWS

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Blues On The Back Burner

ALBERT KING: *SAN FRANCISCO '83* (Fantasy 9627) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½
ROBERT CRAY BAND: *BAD INFLUENCE* (Hightone 8001) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½
LONNIE BROOKS: *HOT SHOT* (Alligator 4731) ★ ★ ★ ½
BIG JOE TURNER/ROOMFUL OF BLUES: *BLUES TRAIN* (Muse 5293) ★ ★ ★ ½
J. B. HUTTO: *SLIDESLINGER* (Varrick 003) ★ ★ ★ ½
LEGENDARY BLUES BAND: *RED HOT 'N' BLUE* (Rouner 2035) ★ ★ ★
STEVE FREUND/GLORIA HARDIMAN: *SET ME FREE* (Razor 5103) ★ ★ ★ ½
BIG TWIST AND THE MELLOW FELLOWS: *PLAYING FOR KEEPS* (Alligator 4732) ★ ★ ★
POCKETWATCH PAUL AND THE RHYTHM ROCKETS: *BLUE WAVE* (Jamor No #) ★ ★
JOHN MOONEY: *TELEPHONE BLUES* (Blind Pig 1383) ★ ★ ★ ½

While blues records continue to be released at a fairly brisk clip, as the present batch of LPs under review indicates, the music itself seems to be in a limbo of sorts. If one can generalize from this more or less random sampling of recent issues, most current blues productions, particularly those by younger artists, suffer from a number of deficiencies. Many seem content merely to rehash the styles of their sources—Muddy Waters, B. B. King, and other first-generation modern blues performers—without adding anything of real contemporaneity, individuality, or ideational substance, let alone creativity, in their handling of this traditional expression. And the songs, the chief component of any successful blues recording, seem mired in the music's past just as firmly as do the performance practices, again largely as a result of younger performers' practice of simply reworking the themes, lyrics, and oftentimes whole songs of their models without, in most cases, adding anything of real substance or contemporary interest to them. As a result, everything—songs, arrangements, playing formats, instrumental styles, solos—has a palpable second- or third-hand air about it. Competence, ultimately, simply is not enough. To be truly effective, to address us and move us as it should, blues needs more—much more passion, conviction, urgency in both matter and manner.

It may well be that the blues being performed by young players today exists in something of a cultural vacuum. It is no longer addressing in any meaningful way the interests of a large black constituency who not only provide the music broad support, but who also interact with the music and its performers in a vital, fructifying way that ensures its continuing

relevance, as was the case when Waters and King, among others, were shaping the music the current generation of bluesmen is drawing upon for the style and substance of its music. So, while the blues is not dead, as some commentators have claimed, it does appear to be suffering from stagnation. At best it's in something of a holding pattern, while its practitioners and its audience wait for the next important stylistic development to recharge it with new meaning and relevance.

Until that happens, as hopefully it will, the current crop of performers and the labels—generally small, independent operations—recording them are to be commended for keeping the flame burning. And if this is on slow simmer rather than rolling boil, well, so be it—for the time being at least.

There is, I'm happy to say, one genuine stunner among this batch of new releases—**Albert King's** fine new set *San Francisco '83*, which catches this distinctive, hugely talented singer/guitarist at the top of his game, performing with a fervor, commanding power, and excitement that recall his early, ground-breaking work for Stax on which his great reputation so securely rests. Gone are the backup singers, schmaltzy arrangements, inapposite tunes, disco underpinning, and other production vagaries that marred a number of his record releases of the last seven or eight years, replaced with a spare, no-nonsense approach that has yielded some of his most gripping work in years, and certainly one of the finest pure blues albums of the last decade or so. Accompanied solely by rhythm guitar, piano, bass, and drums, King sails through the program of seven songs with perfect elan, turning in one gripping performance after another, singing with heated conviction, and soloing to telling effect. The song program mixes King's remakes of such staples as *Honey Bee*, *I'm Gonna Move To The Outskirts Of Town*, and *Match Box Blues* with B. B. King's *Ask Me No Questions* and several attractive originals, of which his *I Found Love In The Food Stamp Line* and *They Made The Queen Welcome* are topical gems. A marvelous album that confirms the deep communicative power of the blues and reasserts King's preeminence in the idiom. Unreservedly recommended.

It's been three years since the release of his fine debut album (*Who's Been Talkin'*, Tomato 7041), but **Robert Cray's** second outing is even better, confirming the gifts of this young Tacoma, WA singer/guitarist. *Bad Influence* offers an appealing, highly entertaining mixture of soulful blues and bluesy soul tunes—most of them well-crafted originals—delivered with an abundance of conviction and easy power. Linchpin and focus of this five-piece group, Cray's a forceful, movingly expressive singer with deep gospel roots and a guitarist of no mean ability who plays intelligently, creatively, and always to the point. There's no instrumental grandstanding here, just solid, seamless performances in which Cray gives the songs their vocal due, leavening his singing with taut, energetic, beautifully shaped solos of real substance, all supported unerringly by the crisp, effortless work of his bandmen. The level of the writing is quite

high, with the title tune and *Where Do I Go From Here* standouts among the eight originals, into which have been mixed Eddie Floyd's *Got To Make A Comeback* and Johnny Watson's *Don't Touch Me*. Not all of them are winners, to be sure, but they clearly show that Cray and company are on the right track: they know the value of solid, well-written songs. Too, while Cray's influences are evident in his singing and playing, he's already well along in subsuming them into a vivid, personal style of his own. One would be hard-pressed to come up with an album that more perfectly illustrates the contemporary blues at its best, strongest, and most fulfilling.

The pivotal importance of good songs to the success of a blues album is perhaps no better illustrated than in *Hot Shot*, **Lonnie Brooks'** third and latest outing for Chicago's Alligator Records. In failing to deliver interesting, well-written songs, this is not the album it could have been. This is doubly unfortunate in that Brooks is a powerful singer with a wrenching, strangled vocal delivery that's perfect for communicating strong emotion. Too, he's a vigorous guitarist who generates plenty of force and energy, and his band is excellent, tight and crisp. The recorded sound is lustrous, pains have been taken to insure programmatic variety, saxophonist Abb Locke has been added to the Brooks quintet for two selections, and some of the pieces—the Fats Domino-like *Family Rules* and the Little Richard-styled raveup *Back Trail*, for example—come off nicely. The balance of the songs, however, are too lightweight for repeated listening. It's a crying shame, for in every other respect Brooks and his bandmen really deliver the goods. But it's still a grave deficiency that no amount of soloing, impassioned singing, or fine ensemble work can offset.

The pairing of blues better **Joe Turner with Roomful Of Blues** has produced generally satisfying results, much better than a number of his recent outings for Pablo Records. The album is properly raucous and spirited in all the right ways, and the occasional ragged-but-right sloppiness of the ensemble work is perfectly in keeping with the rocking, good-natured character of the music. Turner is in excellent spirits throughout the recital, his singing animated and lustily effective and, in fact, the only indication that all is not well with him—in terms of health, that is—is in the slight slurring of his words, which is most prominent on the slower tunes. But he still gets his message across with power and conviction to spare, and in this he's materially assisted by Roomful's idiomatic, economical, apt arrangements and crisp, vigorous playing. All of the soloists disport themselves tellingly, with guitarist Ronnie Earl's feelingful B. B. King-influenced work particularly outstanding. The results do not challenge Turner's finest work, but thanks to his having risen to the occasion—no less than Roomful Of Blues' solid understanding of his music and what makes it work—everything falls into place and moves forward briskly, with plenty of high spirits. This set is a real joy to listen to.

Given his recent death, there's a temptation to overvalue **J. B. Hutto's** most recently issued

LP, *Slideslinger*, the U.S. release of a set recorded originally for the French Black & Blue label. But no special consideration need be given the album, as it's one of his finer efforts, notable for solid singing and invigorating playing from Hutto and rock-steady support from his regular working band, the New Hawks. Now, Hutto never was known for his songwriting abilities, choosing instead to channel his interpretive gifts through the familiar grooves of the country-cum-urban blues of the immediate postwar period, much as did his mentor Elmore James. So while there's not a high quotient of originality in Hutto's music, it possessed in abundance the solid strengths of traditional expression. When this was allied with Hutto's urgent, impassioned performing—his taut, constricted shouting and slashing, energetic guitar work, particularly on slide—the results were compelling indeed, as they often are in this generally satisfying recital.

Much the same is true of the most recent effort by the **Legendary Blues Band**, which for several years now has been preaching the message of mainstream Chicago blues to appreciative audiences, and turning out one unassuming record after another. Like its predecessors, *Red Hot 'N' Blue* will not set the world on fire, stakes out no new ground, nor strikes new directions in the band's music, but continues to pursue the same, solid middle-of-the-road direction the group has trod since its beginnings. The vocals, primarily by bassist Calvin Jones, are capable enough and the songs, most written by harmonica player Jerry Portnoy (who occasionally essays a vocal), are likewise—solid and dependable without being particularly outstanding. The group's greatest asset is its easy, no-nonsense command of modern Chicago-styled blues ensemble playing; in this, it's like the Muddy Waters band without Muddy's vocals or guitar, and for fans of this style, that's probably more than enough. No rough edges here, just a generous sampling of tasty, finely wrought mainstream blues that is unpretentious, unforced, and eminently listenable. Pleasant and professional but, alas, never more than that. One inevitably misses the power and passion, the raw, cutting edge of the music at its prime. A more forceful, distinctive vocalist and better material would help this group immeasurably.

Set Me Free introduces **Gloria Hardiman**, who is a pretty good vocalist now and promises to become an even better one with seasoning. A singer with extensive gospel experience, Hardiman generally impresses, singing with plenty of power and confidence in an intelligently chosen program that, in the main, well showcases her strong voice and effective interpretive skills. Her gospel roots are most evident in pieces like *Let Me Down Easy*, where she recalls the young Aretha Franklin, and *Dr. Feelgood*; on the latter, however, she seems to have a bit of phrasing trouble with the wordy lyrics. On the straight-ahead blues—*You Got Me* and *That's All Right*, for example—she puts across the songs with convincing emotionalism. Not all the songs are as well matched to her abilities as these; neither Guitar Slim's *I Done Got Over It* nor the venerable *New Orleans Hopscop Blues* come off as

well as the balance of the program does, although it's not for want of trying. The supporting band work is spruce and idiomatic, and featured guitarist **Steve Freund** shines every time he steps forward, playing with sizzling drive, taste, and real creativity. All in all, an impressive debut by a singer we're sure to hear more of.

While not strictly speaking a blues album, the recent set by Chicago vocalist **Big Twist** (Larry Nolan) and his band **The Mellow Fellows** is a largely (no pun intended) satisfying program of r&b, soul, and some blues that hangs together fairly well. Twist's a powerful, gritty-voiced singer with heated energy, who animates everything he turns his talents to, and he simply roars through this program with utter abandon, all stops out. He's adroitly assisted by the band, whose arrangements are first-rate and played to a fare-thee-well. While the album notes make a great to-do over the group's longstanding commitment to r&b and a raw, funky approach to music in general, the performances on the album are anything but that—slick and polished to a high sheen, too flawlessly surfaced to project much in the way of a distinctive, let alone raw and funky, point of view. No, the music sounds as though it had been produced by an anonymous team of crack studio players and this, coupled with the sameness of Twist's all-out approach to the material, ultimately proves a bit wearing—at least after repeated listening. In small doses, however, it's fine.

Contrasting with this set is **Pocketwatch Paul** (Switzer) and **The Rhythm Rockets**, whose album pursues a similar approach, poising Switzer's vocals and guitar against crisp, sizzling r&b horn backing. Here the principal falls short of the mark, for Switzer's not a terribly convincing singer at this stage of his development. Blessedly he doesn't ape black vocal style, but his own, shall we say, unassuming abilities are hardly equal to the task of carrying a full LP. His major deficiency is in the area of rhythm: he doesn't phrase with any rhythmic ease or naturalness, and seeks to compensate by taking everything at a brighter tempo than what might seem to be appropriate for the song materials. It doesn't work, and because of this, there's a hole in every one of these performances.

There's really not a lot that need be said about **John Mooney's** latest offering, *Telephone King*, which, like his previous work, consists largely of his own entertaining, idiosyncratic updatings of country ragtime, hokum, and blues. The music's good-natured, with plenty of high spirits, and this time around a good bit of New Orleans-flavored rhythmic gumbo has been added to spice things up. Mooney's an admirably fluent guitarist who can bring off just about any form of ragtime-influenced guitar with plenty of panache and this, taken with the apt backing of various groupings of supporting players, makes for a pleasing recital that offers his wry musings on present foibles in light of the entertaining black musical past. An eclectic melange, to be sure, but Mooney makes it all work—and without a hint of Tomming either. Not for everyone, but in its own eccentric way quite appealing.

—pete welding

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.)

COLUMBIA

Miles Davis, reissues of *Miles In Tokyo* and *Miles In Berlin* with '60s quintets, HEARD 'ROUND THE WORLD. **Thelonious Monk**, '63 quartet two-fer previously available only in Japan, documenting TOKYO CONCERTS. **Kenny Burrell**, unissued early '60s quartet and quintets from the plectrist, BLUESIN' AROUND. **Al Grey**, unissued '76 nonet from the ex-Basie plunger artist, STRUTTIN' AND SHOUTIN'. **Various Artists**, Tony Bennett, Carmen McRae, Mose Allison, Jon Hendricks, L. H & R, and the Gordons vocalize jazzily, SINGIN' TILL THE GIRLS COME HOME. **Various Artists**, eight unissued tunes from groups led by J. J. Johnson, Slide Hampton, Coleman Hawkins/Clark Terry, etc., ALMOST FORGOTTEN.

STEEPLECHASE

Jimmy Raney/Doug Raney, father/son guitar team with six standards done digitally in '83, NARDIS. **John McNeil**, trumpeter blows in trio and quartet settings, I'VE GOT THE WORLD ON A STRING. **Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis**, new blue '83 quartet from Copenhagen featuring expatriate pianist Kenny Drew, ALL OF ME. **Joe Bonner**, solo piano album of originals and standards, DEVOTION.

STASH

Lloyd Lifton, Tristano piano disciple plays solo improvisations on standard tunes, THE SUMMER OF '81. **George Barnes/Bud Freeman/Carl Kress**, two guitars string out seven chestnuts and add the tenor giant on five more, from '62, TWO GUITARS AND A HORN.

ECM

Michael Galasso, violinist in solo digital original program of nine various SCENES. **Bill Frisell**, mostly solo electric guitar heavy on effects and original sounds, IN LINE. **Harald Weiss**, composed music for percussion and voice recorded digitally in '82, TROMMELGEFLÜSTER. **Dino Saluzzi**, plays bandoneon, percussion, flutes, and sings, recorded digitally, KULTRUM. **Werner Pirchner/Harry Pepl/Jack DeJohnette**, vibes/guitar/drums trio date of originals done digitally in '82, PIRCHNER/PEPL/DEJOHNETTE.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

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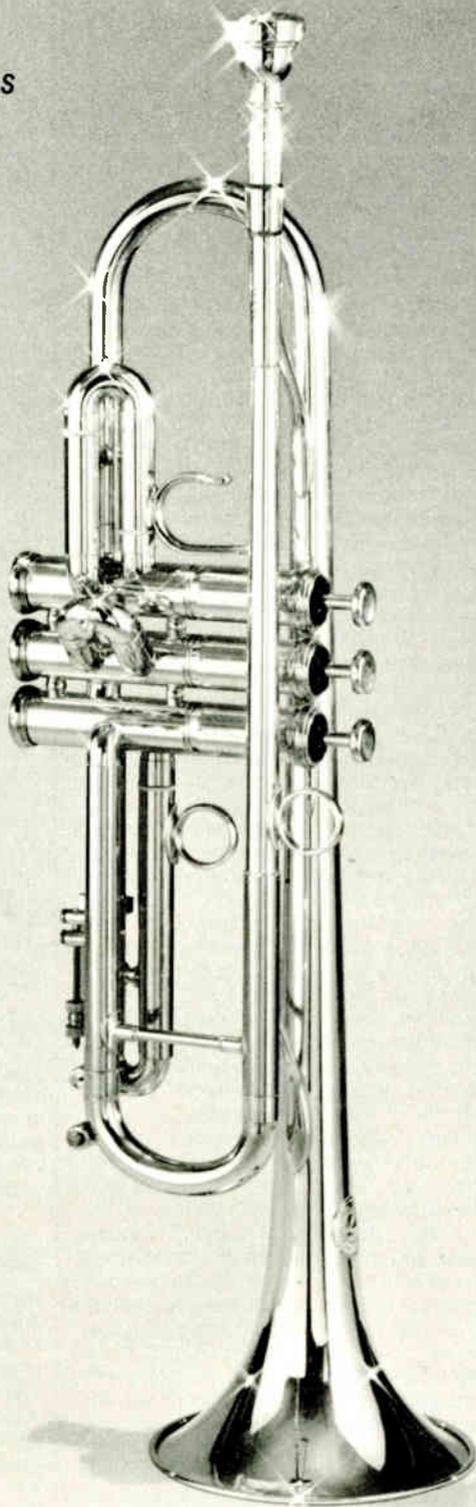
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DOCTOR JAZZ

Duke Ellington, '70s orchestra caught in full form live at a PA dance, ALL-STAR ROAD BAND. **Various Artists**, pianists Erroll Garner, Earl Hines, James P. Johnson, and Art Hodes in various '40s sessions, CLASSIC PIANOS. **Al Jazzbeaux Collins/Slim Gaillard**, w/ the help of Steve Allen, wax for posterity STEVE ALLEN'S HIP FABLES.

INDEPENDENTS

(Often available from NMDS, 500 Broadway, NYC 10012, or contact db.)

Horace Tapscott, second volume of '81 trio concert, from Nimbus Records, LIVE AT LOBERO. **Robert Watson**, ex-Blakey reedman with sextet and mostly originals, from Amigo Records, JEWEL. **Alan Broadbent/Putter Smith**, tasty straightahead piano/bass duets from ex-Herman pianist and arranger, from Revelation Records, CONTINUITY. **Phil Broadhurst**, British keyboarder who migrated to New Zealand and formed this quartet, from Kiwi Records, SUSTENANCE. **Richard Holiday**, "deebee" winning trumpeter in fast company (Alan Dawson, James Williams, etc.) from Jazzbeat Productions, MOMENT'S NOTICE. **Billy Foster**, acoustic & electric keyboarder wrote the music, led the band, produced the LP, from Equistar Records & AUDIO.

Billy Bang, prolific violinist/composer w/ an '82 quartet (Don Cherry, Wilber Morris, Dennis Charles), from Amina Records, UNTITLED GIFT. **Ned Rothenberg**, intricate solo reed experimentations and transformations, from Lumina Records, PORTAL. **Nana Simopoulos**, guitarist/vocalist/bouzoukist adds strong West Coast sidemen to variegated program of originals, from Banana S Records, PANDORA'S BLUES. **Gregory James**, SF acoustic and electric guitarist w/ quartet inc. dber Robin Tolleson on drums, from Rogue Records, ALPHABET TOWN. **Barry Shulman/Gregory James**, mostly flute/acoustic guitar duets in a pastoral mode, from Rogue Records, TIBET. **Nell B. Rolnick**, synthesist/composer w/ pieces for trombone (George Lewis), flute (Robert Dick), percussion (Gordon Gottlieb), from 1750 Arch Records, SOLOS.

Paul Winter, soprano saxist here helped by Paul Halley's keyboards and Glen Velez' percussion, from Living Music Records, SUN SINGER. **John Greaves**, ex-Slapp Happy rocker with 11 new "songs", from Europa Records, ACCIDENT. **Elliott Sharp**, multi-instrumentalist/improviser/noise rocker caught live in NYC and Czechoslovakia, from Zoar Records, (T)HERE. **Kevin Postupack**, Windham Hill-ish solo LP of guitar, recorder, and chimes, from PRM Records, RELEASE. **Quatuor Gabriel Pierné**, French sax quartet plus fifth sax guest play new music, from Cara Records, QUATUOR. **No-Nett**, nine-piece German band plays Weill-y tunes w/ improvisation, from Jazz Haus Musik, WENN DER WEISSE FLIEDER WIEDER BLÜHT. **Henning Berg/Andreas Genschel**.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 56

1 THE GENERATION BAND. EMERALD ISLE (from *SOFT SHOULDER*, Palo Alto). Ernie Watts, soprano saxophone, piccolo; Victor Feldman, vibes, piano, Emulator, percussion.

The opening was in an odd rhythm, five or something, then it ended in six, and there was a little seven thrown in—it made me think of Gary Burton, what he might be doing now. I had a feeling it might have been recorded around '79 or '80. The vibraphone solo made me think of Gary; I've only seen him live once, at the Top of the Gate. It's hard to recognize soprano players. I wondered if it might be the guy who plays with Miles, Bill Evans.

I think it was . . . clinically dominated in a sense, very well put together, as a piece of jazz representative of today's time. It wasn't long and drawn out; I liked that. Anything that's really long and redundant, you have two bookends with miles and miles of solos in the middle; that's just about gone, I think. It was happy—people might say it was too academic, too planned, but you have to look underneath. For an "up" feeling, I'd say two-and-a-half stars.

2 PAQUITO D'RIVERA. WAPANGO (from *MARIEL*, Columbia). D'Rivera, composer, all saxophones; Hilton Ruiz, acoustic piano.

The pianist reminded me of the way McCoy Tyner used to play, but there were some right hand bracket things that he or she was doing that McCoy wouldn't do. I thought of Toshiko. The last time I saw her at the Gate, playing solo piano . . . she uses the pedal a lot on the acoustic piano, and the left hand like she's playing behind John Coltrane.

The sax opening made me think about Supersax. I think Supersax would play more strongly, more bebop-oriented phrasing. This was a Spanish kind of opening. I think these musicians were more classically oriented. Tom Scott might know a lot of people who could make a record like that. I don't want to put it in any musical category, it was kind of a Mulligan stew! I'd say, like a stew, interesting, but I wouldn't want it for a whole meal. I'd give it one star.

3 JOE ZAWINUL. RIVERBED (from *MONEY IN THE POCKET*, Atlantic). Zawinul, composer, piano; Pepper Adams, baritone saxophone; Joe Henderson, tenor saxophone; Louis Hayes, drums.

That sounded like the baritone player from New York who used to play with the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis band, Pepper Adams. The pianist reminds me of Horace Silver, the right hand, and the

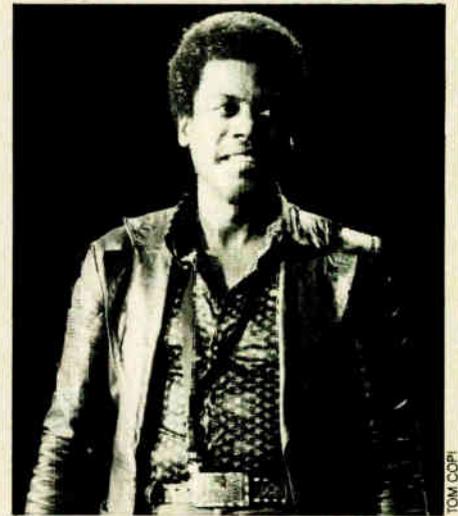
Wayne Shorter

By LEONARD FEATHER

Wayne Shorter's image as co-leader of Weather Report (founded in 1971) is so strong that many observers who have only heard him during this stage of his career are only vaguely aware of other significant aspects both before and during the WR era.

In the 1960 edition of *The Encyclopedia Of Jazz*, I referred to Wayne as "one of the most promising of the younger Rollins-influenced tenor men." At that time he also named Coltrane and Coleman Hawkins as his other sources of inspiration.

Oddly enough, the first time I was impressed with Wayne was during his short sojourn in the Maynard Ferguson band, of which Joe Zawinul was then a member. The seeds of a long friendship and collaboration were planted then, though in the intervening years Shorter established himself during five years with Art Blakey and five-and-a-half with Miles Davis. He recorded several albums as a leader; the best were on Blue Note. Gradually his identity



expanded as he played soprano more often and his compositions achieved wide currency: besides extensive writing for Blakey, Miles, and Weather Report, such players as Stan Getz, Chick Corea, and Jimmy Rowles have recorded his *Miyako*, *Nefertiti*, and *Lester Left Town*, among many others.

This was Shorter's first solo Blindfold Test. He did one jointly with Zawinul in *db*, 5/8/75.

left hand is a little Thelonious Monk-influenced, the weight of the chords and the choice of the notes. Sounds like the way Horace used to write.

The alto sax reminded me of Jerry Dodgion. The drummer was steady. The steadiest thing Horace had was when Louis Hayes was playing the drums. And then after that, all the drummers who followed, he insisted they keep some of that. I think I'll give it two stars. The baritone player was really connecting with the changes nice.

4 JANE IRA BLOOM. MIGHTY LIGHTS (from *MIGHTY LIGHTS*, Enja). Bloom, soprano saxophone; Ed Blackwell, drums.

At first when I heard the entrance of the soprano sax, I thought about Steve Lacy, but he plays with a little more gusto. After the signature of the song . . . I think he would have been more on target with the improvisation. Whoever was playing the soprano I think likes Steve Lacy. They were all playing on the beat, more or less. It's nice when you can play across the beat and across the bar lines.

It sounds as if they were trying to explore something, going "outside" as they said in the '60s, but to be candid, I don't think it was a good job. I heard some drum rudiments there; it was like

taking drum lessons. I know some musicians who play well but approach a piece of music making believe they don't know how to play their instruments. Maybe to get the essence of something. Miles said he used to do that sometimes. "Amateur" means someone who loves something. Herbie Hancock would put his hands down sometimes, like he didn't know what to play, and then when he did, it was like a little kid—it really communicated to the audience. If they were trying to do that . . . still . . . it didn't happen. No stars.

LF: What would you have given five stars, if I'd played it? All your ratings today have been two-and-a-half stars or less!

WS: From anywhere, anytime in history? Let me see . . . there was a thing they put out on Miles, all the groups he went through, with *Blue Christmas*, *Devil May Care*, also a song that Jackie McLean wrote, and Coltrane was on one thing. That's a nice five-star thing.

Some of the things I was with him on in the '60s? Oh, sure. But I'm trying to stay away from anything I was involved with playing-wise. Those Dizzy Gillespie big band things, I'd give those five stars. I think they're listening to that in schools now, but they're applying it to what they're doing today. *db*

Duke Robillard

Though drenched in r&b and blues currents, this rocker is expanding his guitar prowess by wading in the jazz waters of the '30s and '40s.

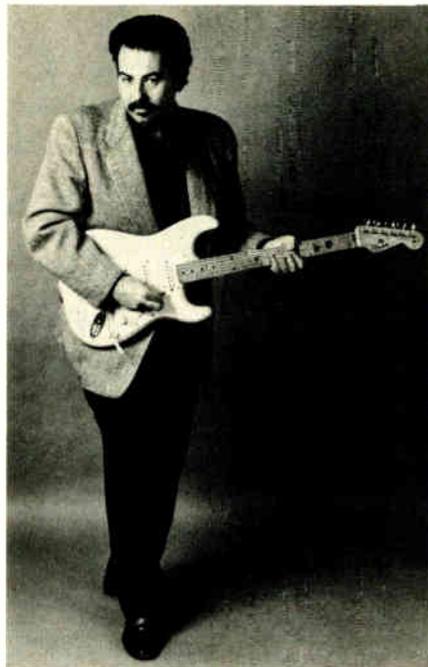
BY BOB ANGELL

At 35 years of age, guitarist Duke Robillard is already a hardened veteran of the American r&b scene. A founding member of the storied Roomful Of Blues ensemble, the Rhode Island-native now fronts a stark three-piece unit called the Pleasure Kings, with whom he's recently waxed an eponymously entitled LP for Rounder Records (3079).

A coast-to-coast tour last fall served to expose the electricity of his live performance to vast audiences while simultaneously garnering accolades in the national press for his blues-drenched guitar sorties and soulful vocals. And, much to his own surprise, he received a wildly enthusiastic response at the prestigious San Francisco Blues Festival, where he shared the stage with the heaviest names in his specialist field.

As a youngster Robillard found a lifelong friend in the guitar. They're still inseparable. In fact, inspired by the Telecaster-toting James Burton, who backed Ricky Nelson so elegantly on the *Ozzie & Harriet Show*, Duke devised an ingenious method to get his own guitar. He told a little lie and convinced his dad he needed to build an electric guitar for a school science project. That instrument, modeled after Burton's Telecaster, featured a popsicle stick bridge and served him through his first semi-pro combo. Says Duke, "My brother played guitar. And that made me attracted to the guitar in the first place, because there was always one around."

The elder Robillard sibling also helped form Duke's early musical tastes through the considerable impact of the records he brought home. The picture soon came into clear focus for the young plectris, who now had an instrument and an uncompromising aesthetic direction. "Yeah, I loved r&b like Chuck Berry and Fats Domino . . . rock & roll, whatever you want to call it. Buddy Holly, Bill Haley, Little Richard. My brother had all



ROBERT LIPET

those records when he was in high school, and I was, like, six at the time [laughs]."

With gathering momentum Duke's guitar playing began developing an increasingly blue hue even at that early age, and laid the foundation for his r&b career. "Two records that made a big impression on me when I was *real* young were *Blueberry Hill* by Fats Domino—I don't know why, but that piano intro always made my hair stand up; it just gave me chills—and *Deep Feeling* by Chuck Berry. And I didn't know what the blues was. I was six years old, but I used to listen to that record over and over. It used to drive me wild. It was the flipside of *School Days*.

"Plus I heard—'cause I had older brothers and sisters—Glenn Miller and stuff, all the pop music from Les Paul and Mary Ford to Theresa Brewer and all that stuff."

But sitting in a tiny Ocean State bedroom armed with his brother's guitar and a stack of records, it was easier to emulate the early rockers at first. The blues sound, immediately attractive to his ears, eluded his fingers for a time. "I started off playing, actually, Duane Eddy—'cause it's just the melody on the bass strings, the easiest thing in the world—and then Chuck Berry, and the Ventures . . . all of that."

Of course, as all the world knows, in the mid-'60s young hairy Britons with electric instruments invaded these shores playing American blues we Yanks could never have heard except in the most sinister of South Side taverns. It

couldn't have happened at a better time for Robillard: "Then the Stones came out and I started picking up on people like that, and that got me hip to Muddy, Wolf, Little Walter, Sonny Boy [Williamson], Elmore [James] . . . y'know, the heavies.

"As soon as I got into *that* stuff, that's when I started Roomful." At the time Robillard was "17 or 18 . . . right after I got out of high school. I was playing blues, y'know, learning it and playing it. I got *real* serious about it right after I got out of high school and started the first Roomful Of Blues with bass, drums, guitar, piano, and harp.

"We concentrated on Chicago blues, and then when I moved to Providence, I started going around trying to buy rare records that weren't in print. At junk shops I started getting r&b 78s. Then when I first started hearing the horn stuff, that did it. When I heard Louis Jordan and people like that, I decided that I could do r&b stuff without trying to sound affected—trying to sound like, y'know, faking a Chicago or some kind of Delta accent. It seemed more natural to be able to put across a Louis Jordan song for *me* than to try to sound like Muddy Waters, 'cause there's no way in hell I was gonna sound like Muddy Waters!"

While fronting Roomful, his undeniable affection for the music led to a distinctly '30s look to complement the sound. Clad in a characteristic baggy suit and broad-brimmed hat, Duke looked and sounded the part of the 1930s-vintage jazz. "I just got into a thing. I had a room in my attic, and I moved all my records up there. And it'd be another world. I'd go up there and listen to '30s records for hours and hours *every* day. It was like reality to me."

A kindred spirit and fellow Rhode Islander, saxist Scott Hamilton, only added fuel to the fire by showing him books of the pictorial history of jazz. And Duke fell in love with the era. "Everybody looked so cool, with the high-waisted pleated pants and suspenders. And I just *felt* like that."

These days Duke's on-stage appearance is considerably more contemporary. Yet the feel of the classic days of r&b and jazz still comes through quite clearly in his actual sound. The hat sits on the shelf, but the spirit of his early idols remains in his flying fingers.

Although the present-day Robillard takes the stage with a hard-driving trio in accepted rock & roll fashion, during the mid-'70s the nine-piece Roomful Of Blues—with Duke at center stage—relentlessly pursued all sorts of r&b and jazz-based material. He dismisses the jazz

stuff easily enough: "Roomful was a fake jazz band. We improvised, but only in 12-bar, 16-bar r&b phrases."

Still, the aesthetic monomania continued raging like an out-of-control brush fire as he continuously expanded his musical horizons through ever increasing exposure to the jazz field—including the big bands. "I loved Basie. And then I heard Charlie Christian and Tiny Grimes. Really, the jazz guitarists that interest me most are the older ones. Al Casey, who played with Fats Waller—he's one of my absolute favorite guitarists. Another guy, Bernard Addison, who played acoustic guitar in that '30s style—real orchestra-style guitar but with chord melody fills. I've been doing a few swing things on-stage now, but at home I've been practicing jazz for the last six months, and I'm learning an incredible amount about chords."

Teaching guitar in his sparsely furnished Providence apartment between gigs has likewise been something of a learning experience for Duke. He ends up teaching himself at least as much as his students. "People come to me because they like the way I voice chords for swing-type guitar playing, and in the meantime I'm learning a lot about those chords and different substitutions and variations of the chords.

"I've always been a total ear player. I realize that I'm all the time playing flatted sixths and sharp ninths and diminished stuff . . . a lot of them I didn't really ever think about the names. I didn't even want to know the names 'cause I just went by the sound. And I knew the sound was right. Personally, I love '30s style jazz guitar . . . I love it. In fact, my Strat feels like a jazz guitar. It's got a great feel."

His choice of instruments has clearly changed from his Roomful days when he preferred a hollow-body guitar. Currently he uses a bastardized Fender Stratocaster with a '72 ash body, chosen for the sustain and fullness of tone. The neck's a DiMarzio copy of an early '50s Strat neck—very fat and distinctly V-shaped. Two '63 Strat pickups (in the rhythm and lead positions) and an early '70s CBS pickup in the middle position deliver his recognizable sound through a battered Fender Super Reverb amp.

"When I started collecting the r&b stuff, I became like a little r&b guru around town. I was so excited about the music that I just turned everybody on to it that I'd meet." And to a certain extent he's still at it—proselytizing, preaching from his gin mill pulpit the gospel of the blues. "Really, it's all I know. Everything I do is based in r&b, blues, and early rock & roll. That's my life." db

Kip Hanrahan

A musical auteur, Hanrahan helps musicians from different backgrounds create fresh sounds in settings of his own design.

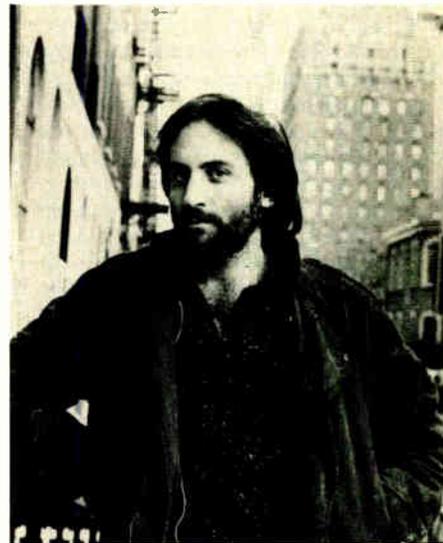
BY GENE KALBACHER

Kip Hanrahan—composer, vocalist, percussionist, recording artist, producer, and owner of his own record company—plays scrabble with music and musicians. New York City is his board. He works hard. But he has fun.

Consider his 1981 debut album, *Coup De Tête* (American Clavé 1007, distributed by Rounder and NMDS). Over a flotilla of Cuban bata rhythms, Hanrahan talks/sings strings of apparently freely associated images and feelings. A score of seemingly incongruously matched musicians—saxists Teo Macero, Chico Freeman, and John Stubblefield (from the so-called jazz community); Jamaaladeen Tacuma and Bern Nix (from the so-called harmolodic community surrounding Ornette Coleman); Carla Bley and Michael Mantler (from the so-called jazz avant garde community); and Anton Fier, Arto Lindsay, and Fred Frith (from the so-called new wave rock community)—add their own letters to the board. Upward. Downward. Sideways. Through.

It would be portentous to suggest that *Coup De Tête*—which sold 8,000 copies, a respectable number for an independent production—could do for new music what *Brown vs. Board of Education* did for school desegregation. But the album did turn up on a number of critics' "best-of" lists for 1981. Hanrahan, a genial and unassuming man who grew up in the Bronx, doesn't use the word *desegregation*, favoring *ghetto* and *displacement* instead.

"New York has many musical ghettos," explains Hanrahan, referring to such labels and boxes as new wave, avant garde, progressive, and so forth. "I started off playing in latin bands, and I know film people, and I've made friends with rock musicians, and I worked [as a publicist] for JCOA [the Jazz Composers Orchestra Association] so I know the



LONA FOOTE

avant garde people. If one likes music, one likes a lot of *musics*.

"One gets a little uncomfortable about people falling very comfortably in their own ghettos," continues the bearded, 30-ish Hanrahan, sitting on the stoop of his Lower Manhattan apartment and surveying the passers-by, many of them musicians. He seems to know everybody. "So I try to take a musician from one ghetto and put him with someone from another ghetto. A ghetto develops a way of phrasing, a way of approaching a song form. On my records they'll be forced to abandon their habits: a musician can't take for granted that the guy next to him will finish off the song form the same way he will if they're improvising together. They don't have the same clichés so, therefore, they don't rely on any clichés."

Ghetto-razing is what *Desire Develops An Edge* (American Clavé 1008/9), Hanrahan's second "solo" album, is all about. Whereas bata percussion served as what he calls "the center of gravity" on *Coup De Tête*, Haitian rhythms both underlie and dominate the music on *Desire*, composed almost entirely by Hanrahan. Jack Bruce, better known for his work with the rock group Cream in the late '60s than for his idiosyncratic solo albums and contributions to the Tony Williams Lifetime, does most of the lead singing, sculpting his phrases around the Haitian rhythms and even offering a verse or two in French patois. On one tune saxophonist Ricky Ford was convinced by Hanrahan to dispense with his individual style and hold a tropical séance with the spirit of Ben Webster. Lindsay, playing electric guitar like a percussion instrument, scratches and scrapes away on a few tracks while fellow guitarists Ti Plume Ricardo Franck and

Elysee Pyronneau thread gossamer lines throughout other tracks. The bottom is provided, variously, by bassists Bruce, Tacuma, and Steve Swallow. All together, the assembled musicians improvise like mad.

Third World rhythms, especially those of African and Caribbean nations, are all the rage among many new rock bands. Yet whereas many of these rockers have never come closer to the Third World than a picture postcard, Hanrahan has traveled widely and studied extensively. He doesn't appropriate or even approximate tribal rhythms—he hires percussionists from Cuba or Haiti and often performs alongside them. His travels have taken him to Haiti, India, and the sub-Sahara region, where he has studied the native musics as well as architecture.

Hanrahan has sojourned in search of the clavé, or distinct pattern of phrasing, on most every continent. His search now seems concentrated in New York City. The name of his record company, American Clavé, consists of two mutually exclusive words because there is no one American way of phrasing, per se, but Hanrahan relishes stirring the musical melting pot that is New York.

When it is mentioned that his ap-

proach as a record producer seems to parallel the *auteurist* concept of film direction, he readily agrees. "The notion of the record producer," he maintains, "is as open as the notion of the film director. It's like I was behind the camera, writing, editing, directing, and packaging the film without acting in it." (Though Hanrahan is the nominal recording artist on *Desire*, he is hardly a principal player; he contributes a few backing vocals, a brief narration, and some incidental percussion.) "What Teo Macero does in some of Miles Davis' post-production is sort of *auteurist* style. Miles will say, 'I've got 100 hours of tape. Find the record in there!' Then Teo will edit it out. I like doing that with film, but at this time I can't get the financing. I can raise \$10,000 or \$12,000 for a record much easier than I can raise \$200,000 for a film. So I direct films with music, in a way." Besides making his own albums, Hanrahan has also put out albums by the art-rock (or noise-rock, depending on one's perspective) group DNA and New York-based latin percussionist Jerry Gonzalez.

Another American Clavé project, soon to be released, combines the urban/urbane poetry/prose of Ishmael Reed with

musical interpretations from such composers as Carla Bley, David Murray, Taj Mahal (who handles most of the vocals), Lester Bowie, Allen Toussaint, and Hanrahan. Entitled *Conjure*, from a Reed book of the same name, most of this material was previewed last fall at a sold-out performance at the Public Theater in Manhattan. Though more heavily steeped in the blues than Hanrahan's other projects, *Conjure* still manages to incorporate Cuban and Haitian rhythms without diluting the primal hipness of the music.

Hanrahan is a mixed-media existentialist. He would probably credit, if coaxed, philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre and film director Jean-Luc Goddard as prime influences. Saxophonist Chico Freeman, who appears on *Coup De Tête*, considers Hanrahan "more of a conceptualist than a musician," adding, "He's an interesting cat, and I enjoyed working with him. He heard sounds and ideas, then pulled the musicians together to create those sounds and ideas."

To Hanrahan, the thrill of music "is trying to hear something you've never heard before. I want the control, but I also want the surprises, and I want to control the surprises ultimately." db

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SON SEALS BLUES BAND

BLUE NOTE

COLUMBIA, MO—Son Seals wields a guitar like a toothpick, the way Willie McCovey and Dick Allen used to swing 44-ounce baseball bats. And like McCovey or Allen, Seals and his Guild Starfire IV—the instrument he bought from a priest six or seven years ago—are poetry in motion. The 41-year-old Seals looks graceful, exudes vitality, and is very good at what he does—an authentic brand of Chicago Blues.

The Son Seals Blues Band, on the tail end of a 6,000-mile road trip, sauntered into the Blue Note here, to perform three nonstop sets, each lasting more than an hour. His current band features Carl Snyder on keyboards, Ron Prince on rhythm and second lead guitar, Lurie Bell on bass, and Clyde “Youngblood” Tyler on drums.

Seals’ playing emphasized dynamic range and was continually resilient and fresh, captivating and, most important, consistent. He’s an impeccable performer; his six-foot-two-inch frame, rockin’ and swayin’ back and forth, seemingly always in a groove, commands and demands attention. His songs segue one into another; tempos blend; sets are well-paced. Combine these characteristics, which have all but become Seals trademarks, with someone who has total command of his instrument, and the result is an awesome display.

Most obvious in Seals’ playing are two main influences: the Kings—B. B. and Albert. Not surprisingly, Seals has toured with both as a bandmember and has performed on the same bill with his own band. Yet Seals manages to leave his own trademark on every composition, whether his own or somebody else’s. He has more bite—sounds “dirtier”—than B. B. King would sound on *Everyday I Have The Blues*; he uses a more subtle approach—again, a great exhibition of dynamic range—than Albert King would use on *Crosscut Saw*.

Particularly impressive is Seals’ ability to extend standards like *Goin’ To New York*. The seeming spontaneity, within a genre that is continually marred by over-long, repetitive renditions of usual fare, is a welcome respite. Nowhere was this more evident than during a wonderfully slow buildup and climax to Jimmy Reed’s *You’re So Fine*. Chorus after chorus, lead after lead, Seals seemed to sense how much time and room to give not only himself, but also second guitarist Prince and the others. For Prince, a former



JAMES LEE SOFFER

member of the Chicago-based reggae band Armageddon, this instance was easily the best he sounded all night.

In fact, if there was any drawback to the performance, it was that this Seals band was not quite up to the quality of past units. Perhaps it was the long road-trip, but at times Snyder, who has been with Seals for a year, and Tyler, who has performed with Koko Taylor as well as Seals and others, seemed tired. Although Bell, still in his 20s and considered a future star on the guitar, anchored the group with adequate bass playing, his strongest contribution was his vocals, which came before and after Seals made his appearance.

While this might not have been the most cohesive ensemble Seals has engineered, and as a result the audience had to focus more on him than in the past, this show was clearly a solid presentation of the urban blues tradition.

—jonathan w. poses

BOB FLORENCE LIMITED EDITION

CARMELO'S

SHERMAN OAKS, CA—The Florence orchestra has been together now for about five years, and in a recent Monday night engagement at Carmelo’s, their con-

sistency and togetherness was very apparent. Most of its members are drawn from that vast pool of Hollywood studio musicians, although several still opt to remain pure jazzmen. While every player is top notch, the band’s character is delineated by the leader’s singularly articulate and exciting charts.

Naturally, though, it takes well-schooled yet adventurous interpreters to bring these intricate compositions to life, and the unity among this 18-strong aggregation is astonishing. On one piece, *Rapture Of The Deep*, there was a quality reminiscent of the hauntingly beautiful suites by Ellington, and since this featured a superb baritone solo by Bob Efford, it was hard not to make comparisons with Ellington’s specially written works for his longtime baritone player, Harry Carney.

Florence has two albums out on the Discovery label, and one recently released on Bosco. There were selections from all three performed this evening, as well as a preview or two of upcoming material now in the process of being recorded. *Soaring*, the title track of the band’s Bosco LP, was given a beautiful, airy workout; *Sailing*, to be featured on the new album, contained some humorous and fitting tuba work by Don Waldrop.

Florence’s most distinguishing feature as a writer is his use of varying textures and layers. Often during a solo, he has a subtle blend of reeds in the background, or reeds and brass interweaving. Sometimes this effect will suddenly come in at a most unexpected point. A two-tenor trade-off between Bob Cooper and Dick Mitchell (the youngest and newest addition) was a joyous blending of two personalities, as well as exemplifying musical compatibility.

Special mention must be made of the rhythm section: Joel diBartolo played acoustic bass throughout and executed some technical prowess not often highlighted in a big band setting. Drummer Nick Ceroli, who has been described by Florence and others as “the best big band drummer,” lived up magnificently to his praise. He makes masterful use of his standard drum set, lowering or heightening the tension as appropriate, with never a need for flashiness or extrovertiness.

Without a doubt this is one of the best big jazz bands in the country, and could be considered a 1980s version of Count Basie, Woody Herman, or Stan Kenton, with well-established jazz values coupled with a strong sense of the contemporary, and adding forward-looking experimentations.

—frankie nemko



From left: George Lewis, Alan Silva, Toshinori Kondo, Evan Parker, Albert Mangelsdorff.

GLOBE UNITY ORCHESTRA

D.C. SPACE

WASHINGTON, DC—Globe Unity Orchestra made its American debut to a packed house—despite the casual nailing of *Intergalactic Blow*, their latest Japo album, by the all-mighty *Washington Post* that morning—albeit in a club with a capacity of slightly over a hundred seats. Only the absence of East German reedist Ernst-Ludwig Petrowsky and tuba player Bob Stewart allowed the horn players, with the exception of Albert Mangelsdorff, to form their usual semicircle on d.c. space's mid-sized bandstand; the trombonist's position between pianist Alex von Schlippenbach and drummer Paul Lovens benefited a racing quartet passage that also included bassist Alan Silva. Despite the informal setting it was an auspicious occasion, as the orchestra's two hourlong improvisations epitomized the still vital notion of free music.

Though neither set was based on any preconceived materials, both improvisations had intrinsically sequential structures. The more "collective" of the two, the first set ebbed and flowed between thickly textured ruminations and full-throated exclamations, triggered frequently by a nucleus comprised of trumpeter Toshinori Kondo, trombonist George Lewis, and saxophonist Evan Parker. Approximating a conventional jam session, each musician was given extended space during the second set to be the lead voice and/or solo unaccompanied, an approach well-suited for trombonist Gunter Christmann, who is

very effective at a barely audible volume, and for trumpeter Kenny Wheeler and saxophonist Gerd Dudek, the orchestra's most reticent, lyrical players.

From Parker's gummy opening tenor

phrase, the improvisers went against the grain of the prevailing stereotypes surrounding free music and, in particular, European improvisers. Parker's visceral tenor makes a strong case that the "English School" is not solely concerned with the microscopic detail championed by the Music Improvisation Company. In a propulsive second set solo, Schlippenbach revealed his primary stylistic debt is not to Cecil Taylor, as the American press has consistently mistaken it to be, but to Monk and, to a lesser degree, Herbie Nichols. In fully utilizing their extremely wide breadth of experience, Mangelsdorff and Wheeler defied any categorization applied to them in the past.

In sum, it was an evening rich in musical surprises—Lovens drumming with a stick and hand cymbal to create abrupt color changes; Kondo shaking a high note with such intensity that he is almost thrown off his feet; Christmann bringing the orchestra to a whisper by moving to the fore and waiting for the silence that is his most able foil; a Silva arco run ending with singing notes in a violin register . . . —the list of which could really go on and on. —bill shoemaker

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PRO SESSION

Charles Mingus' Solo On Folk Forms No. 1— A Bass Transcription

BY BRIAN PRIESTLEY

Brian Priestley is *db's* Great Britain correspondent and a pianist/writer/dj who also teaches a jazz course at Goldsmiths' College in London. He is the author of *Mingus: A Critical Biography* (reviewed *db*, Sep. '83), which includes nine Mingus transcriptions in addition to the one which follows (© 1982, Quartet Books Inc., NYC; used with permission).

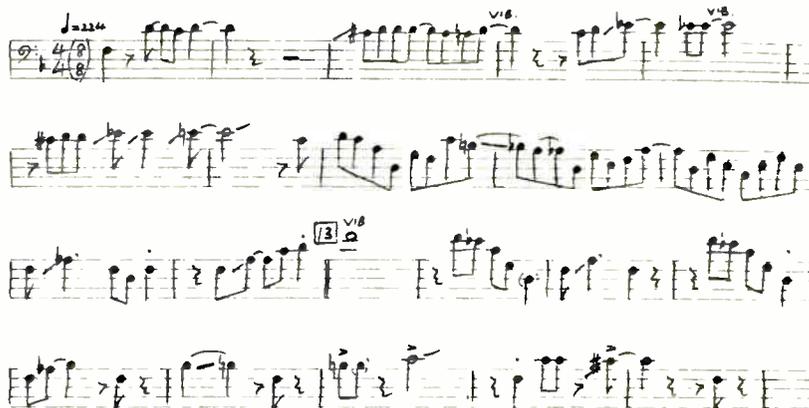


Charles Mingus' *Folk Forms No. 1* (© Jazz Workshop Inc.; used with permission) is a brilliant example of his ability to combine technical innovation with the deep soulfulness and directness which pervaded his music. The piece is available in two classic performances, the live July 1960 quintet version (on *Mingus At Antibes*, Atlantic 3000) and the October 1960 studio date from which this bass part is extracted (done with saxist Eric Dolphy, trumpeter Ted Curson, and drummer Dannie Richmond; currently available on JazzMan 5048).

With no written theme, the entire 12-minute recording consists of an improvised 12-bar blues in F, which continually shifts from four-way collective improvisation to duets to collectives with one instrument out to solo statements. As a result, less than half the time is spent with the bass and drums playing "time" (an explicit 4/4 accompaniment), and the rhythmic brinkmanship is one of the most exciting aspects of the performance.

The other unifying principle is the free use by all four participants of the two main cell-like figures, one of which is shown below in bars 14, 16, and 24; this motive is also heard, for instance, in Dolphy's first entrance, where it is combined with the second rhythmic figure, which Mingus uses here in bars 20-21 below and (as a vocal interjection) bars 64-65. The nine choruses transcribed start with Mingus' bass solo, in which he is accompanied from bar 13 by Richmond, who makes frequent reference to the rhythmic figures. From bar 49 to the end of this extract, Dolphy and Curson join in, accompanied at first by discontinuous figures while, for the last two choruses, the change to time playing by bass and drums builds a tremendous head of steam.

In addition, a couple of stylistic features of the bass part are worth noting. While there is no example of Mingus' double-stops (which he had been working on since 1945!), the related idea of octave leaps is used as a pedal point at the peak of the collective improvisation in bars 95-100. Related also is the use of nearly identical pitches on different strings at bars 36-46, contrasting the open D with microtonal variants between C and D, which make the bass sound like a talking drum. It is most likely that Mingus achieved these pitch slurs by a technique borrowed from blues guitarists such as T-Bone Walker (with whom he worked briefly), depressing the string and then stretching it *across* the fingerboard to raise the pitch, rather than moving his finger *along* the string.



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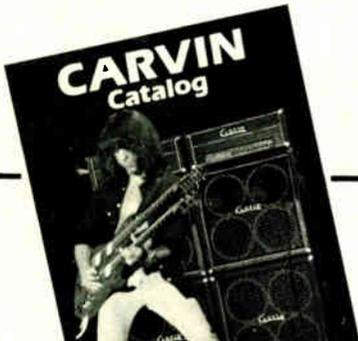
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PRO SESSION

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FRED BOUCHARD

Phil Wilson wears many hats—trombonist/arranger/composer/educator. A veteran of the Woody Herman, Dorseys, and NORAD big bands, Wilson currently is on the faculty of the Berklee College of Music in Boston, and conducts clinics worldwide. His latest album is a duo with pianist (and "deebee"-award-winner) Makoto Ozone on Mainstream Sound.

It is difficult to write articles on improvisation since one either has the knack or one doesn't. It's a false pretense to assume that everybody can improvise, because they can't. If the reverse were true, we would be inundated with incredible sounds from all corners of the earth. Fortunately, time has proven that the ability to improvise is rarer than some would like us to believe, and we are spared, at least on a relative scale, the awesome notion of a world of improvisers.

There are many people in the field who don't improvise but who are great interpreters. These are the musicians who translate the composer's images from the written page for all to behold. Without the interpreters, the world's composers would be at the mercy of the improvisers, and the improvisers, wrapped up in their own music, would have no need for the composer.

Both the improviser and the interpreter are needed. It is not a failing to be one or the other. A degree of specialization is necessary to hone the performance of either to a fine point. There have been some crossovers that were notable for their lack of success—Benny Goodman playing Mozart and Stravinsky's *Ebony Concerto* for Woody Herman come to mind. There are also a few rare musicians, like Jerome Richardson, who cover both functions.

This is not to say that one cannot benefit from studying the tools of the other. The interpreter, playing to Jamey Aebersold records, while perhaps not developing into a jazz great, will surely enhance his sense of jazz interpretation. In studying the classics the improviser not only improves his or her reading ability, but also learns what music came before—music to draw on while improvising.

In terms of survival, there are more jobs for interpreters than for improvisers. You are usually hired to read music, such as in a dance band, symphony orchestra, or jingle mill. Jobs for jazz players are harder to come by.

People should find out who they are first, then pursue the direction that is most natural to them. If that direction is in the line of improvisation, the following are some tools which might help one express oneself.

Before you become a great improviser, learn how to play the melody—like Coleman Hawkins on *Body And Soul*, Lester Young on *But Beautiful*, Bill Harris on *How High The Moon*, and Charlie Parker on *Laura*. How can your audience understand a variation of a theme if they haven't heard the theme yet? You can't play *outside* until you know what *inside* is.

Full knowledge of all the seventh chords is essential. Play the following in all keys in the suggested "fanning out" sequence: A, B^b, A^b, B, G, C, F[#], D^b, F, D, E, E^b. I start in A to get the student away from the acclimation of B^b. Set the metronome at ♩=60 and run through the whole sequence in the following manner:





Write out the above sequence and memorize in all keys; the very act of writing them out will help the process along. Bass clef instruments play an octave below. The Major sixth chord is repeated at the end to give the exercise symmetry.

Once the seventh chords have been mastered, then, and only then, move on to the chord scales. These chord scales will help free your thinking from the confines of a four-note chord, introducing the color tones and giving some thought to awkward notes (i.e., four on I Maj. 7) and why they are unmanageable.

Since the chord scales became an integral part of jazz education in the mid-'60s, the output of the students of this education which showed up commercially in the mid-'70s is very distinctive in that their improvisations consist largely of a working knowledge of the chord scales and little other imagery or emotional content. The scales are a tool—a palette of colors with which to paint your picture, not an end unto itself. They are a means of identifying sounds you hear in your head so you can express yourself.

The sequence of keys should be the same as in the seventh chords ($\text{♩} = 60$). As you get more proficient at this exercise, as well as the first, increase the speed of the metronome:



When playing diatonically, "avoid notes" set up awkward intervals, causing a



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Dave Valentin, "AmeRican" flutist in acoustic and electric settings, from GRP Records, FLUTE JUICE. **Richard Boukas**, Noel Pointer's guitarist plays and sings, from Jazz Essence Records, in TRIO. **Chris Collins**, vibist/pianist with lotsa friends helping out in original program, from Ashland Records, AND COMPANY. **Jan Schaffer**, guitarist plus mostly electric accompaniment (inc. Bjorn J:son Lindh), from SWS Records, BLUE BRIDGES. **Bert Ligon**, keyboarder/vocalist plus his group Condor soar thru 10 self-penned pieces, from SeaBreeze Records, DANCING BARE. **Russ Vines**, bassist/synthesist/composer plus his Contemporary Music Ensemble, from CMS Records, GEMINI.

Byther Smith, Windy City blues vet's premier LP, from Grits Records, TELL ME HOW YOU LIKE IT. **David Thomas Roberts**, 29-year-old pianist/composer plays 11 original rags, from Euphonic Records, PINELANDS MEMOIR. **Bob Stewart**, vocalist waxes standard jazz night club material w/ strong backing, from VWC Records, WHAT ABOUT ME. **New Emily Jazz Orchestra**, seven pieces strong, play trad to bop Italian-style, from TDE Records, DARKTOWN STRUTTER'S BOP. **HSPVA Jazz Ensemble**, 21-piece band from High School for Performing and Visual Arts (Houston), from Mark Records, MORNING GLORY. **Brass Connection**, five Canadian trombonists plus rhythm in their Juno-winning sequel, from Innovation Records, A NEW LOOK. db

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potential malfunction of the chord sound; i.e., 11 on I Maj. 7 sets up an unresolved tritone of the dominant chord. When playing modally, there are no "avoid notes." Write out the above sequence and memorize in all keys. Bass clef instruments play an octave below. The Ionian is repeated at the end to give the exercise symmetry.

The chord scales are based on Grecian modes. You can find them in any basic harmony book—Walter Piston's for example, and Jamey Aebersold has a book and record on them that more than adequately covers the subject.

Improvising means to communicate a thought, an idea—musically and emotionally. Full emotional range must include humor, which is often thought to be cheap, but indeed is the opposite, very dear. A sense of concentration is indispensable. Listen to everything—nature, people, music.

Clarity of purpose should be uppermost in your mind, whether you are a sparse or busy improviser. Some people think faster than others; each must be true to themselves. Buddy Rich, Oscar Peterson, and Dizzy Gillespie are full players; Count Basie plays the spaces. John Coltrane was a full player but also had the capability of playing the spaces. It all depends on your metabolism rate.

Growing up, maturity—you can't rush that—are factors in knowing how to improvise well. You must get to know who you are as a person first. Playing is a direct reflection of your personality, like it or not. You have to get to know your weaknesses and strong points, what you can and cannot do.

At age 25 when I was in Woody Herman's band, I had made some pretty good records by then, but still, I didn't know myself. I was always reaching out, trying to play stuff I could hear, trying to reach beyond my abilities. My playing was filled with a lot of frustration for a variety of reasons, one of which was my inability to play what I could hear. It is only within the last three or four years that I have had the ability to play what I hear. So it's been a long process for me.

It's important for you to know where you are as you try to open a new horizon. Otherwise, how are you going to know what new horizon to reach for if you don't know where you're at at any given moment? Here's a few tips:

- Don't force. Forcing can be heard in the next county. It will betray you every time.
- There are no short cuts. For each shortcut you take, you'll be going back to pick up the pieces, to take up the slack.
- To build a solid foundation, there is no substitute for methodical, careful, daily practice.

Some say you have to be an extrovert to improvise, but that's not it. Chet Baker is not an extrovert; Gary Burton, a great player, is really quite shy; Jimmy Giuffre, Shorty Rogers, Lester Young maybe, Dicky Wells as a matter of fact, Pee Wee Russell—these people all play a lot of notes, but they're introverted, to some degree. Improvising is an expression, an exposure to the world of the player's inner thoughts. I think of it as a *need* to express yourself. db

AD LIB continued from page 64

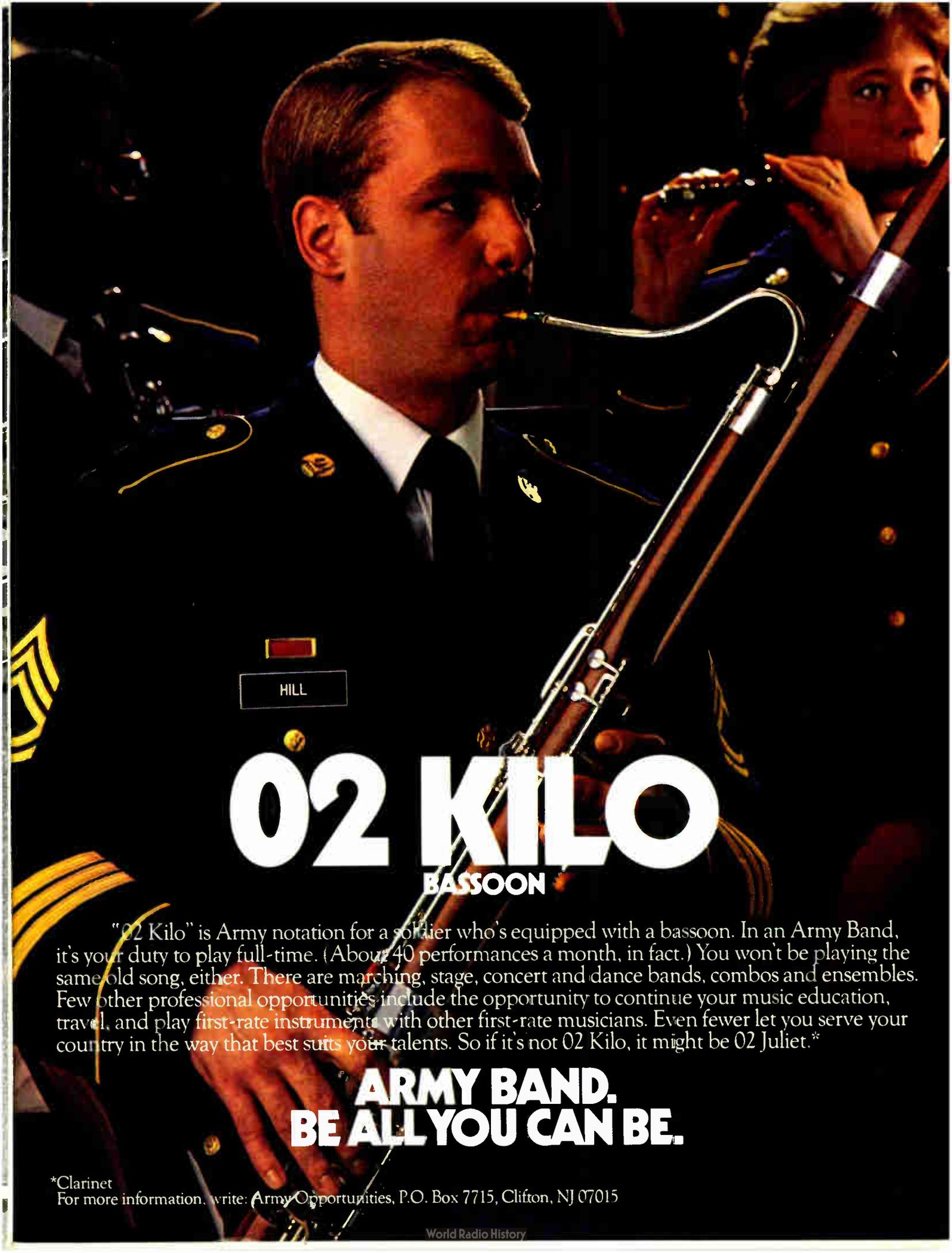
(815 148 1) and *The Ella Fitzgerald Set* (815 147 1) feature their namesakes solely (Hawks is partnered with Roy Eldridge on one side of his disc) and both are in fine form—especially Ella, who at the time of these numbers (six from '49, the rest '53-'54) was particularly fresh-voiced and full of vitality.

The remaining eight albums fall into the jam session format, and their moderate price allow the listener to experience all at once in an orgy of ebullience or to pick and choose. The weakest of these is *Krupa And Rich: The Drum Battle* (815 146 1) which holds a lot of bashing by the named participants (and one cut with Lionel Hampton dueting Buddy on tubs) but only some sweet-and-sour, too-seldom heard alto from Willie Smith to warrant much attention. *Bird And Pres: Carnegie Hall 1949* is probably the series' high point; both men chew up *Lester Leaps In* and the *I Got Rhythm* changes (as does trombonist Tommy Turk) and the rounds by Hank Jones,

Bird, Prez, Eldridge, Turk, and Phillips on the ballad *Embraceable You* are classic, timeless.

Elsewhere, there are epic moments from Ben Webster and Benny Carter on *One O'Clock Jump 1953* (815 153 1)—especially a version of *Cottontail* here called *The Challenges*, which seriously cooks, Buster; an exceptionally galvanizing Phillips outing on *The Blues* from *Blues In Chicago 1955* (815 155 1); and an amazing ballad sequence on *The Trumpet Battle 1952* (815 152 1) which finds a lethal Lester Young in prime inspiration for a deceptively casual *I Can't Get Started*, an abstract expressionist version of *Sweet Lorraine* by Phillips, and Benny Carter's surrealistic *Cocktails For Two*.

As a slice of jazz history probably never to be repeated, these albums make up an important release. However, their most immediate value lies in the sheer excitement, the unfettered joy and abandon, the love of music-making they contain. All of them are from a time when the lifeblood of jazz was pumped by hearts which could break others', but not be broken. db

A man in a military uniform is playing a bassoon. He is looking to the right. In the background, a woman is also playing a bassoon. The man's uniform has a name tag that says "HILL".

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JATP

BY ART LANGE

The first Jazz At The Philharmonic concert took place July 2, 1944 at the Los Angeles Philharmonic Auditorium, organized by the then-25-year-old Norman Granz as a benefit to raise money for legal fees for a group of Chicanos who had been arrested during riots in L.A. That concert, and the hundreds of similarly structured ones which were to follow over the next 13 years, had more than musical significance. The name of the game here was respect—first-class music played in first-class surroundings (mostly concert halls rather than smoky night clubs) by first-class musicians who were paid respectable fees and treated fairly while on tour (which included paving the way for totally integrated audiences and integrated accommodations for touring musicians)—and if along the way the concerts became wildly popular and help make Norman Granz into a millionaire, those things were incidental—at least at the beginning.

Fortunately for posterity, Granz has always been a fanatic for documentation, and so he recorded literally hundreds of hours of JATP performances off the stage—in so doing inventing the “live” album concept—which he began to issue as 78s, first in licensing agreements with labels like Philo and Asch, Stinson and Disc, later setting up his own companies such as Clef and Norgran. As the '50s brought “long play” (LP) recordings, he formed Verve Records and eventually consolidated his other labels under this one banner. And throughout the '50s the records and concert tours helped make Jazz At The Philharmonic a hip household word.

Most of the records have disappeared over the years (though Granz has issued several sides which he still owns the rights to on his current label, Pablo, and a few things are still available as Verve two-fers), but now Verve (which Granz sold in 1959 and is now owned and operated by Polygram) has reissued 10 LPs of JATP material, overseen by the conscientious eyes of producer Bob Porter, and priced at a bargain rate. Though the 10 albums are—as might be expected given the night-to-night grind of touring, different audiences, and varying inspiration over the space of nine years—musically uneven, they are a good reflection of what the JATP phenomenon—and it was a true phenomenon, comparable to rock & roll adulation today—was all about.



From left, Flip Phillips, Norman Granz, Illinois Jacquet, Coleman Hawkins, in Boston, 1947.

JATP revolved around a set group of musicians, hand-picked by Granz, and a set format: an hour or so of large-scale jam sessions on mid-tempo or fast blues changes with a string of solos from the assembled (anywhere from seven to 17) multitude and cutting tunes between instrumentalists (often called *The Challenges*), followed by a second hour of small group performances, usually by bands led by Ella Fitzgerald, Oscar Peterson, Coleman Hawkins, or Lester Young.

But JATP was famous for its soloists—and with instrumental giants such as these, it's no wonder. Imagine a dream lineup consisting of Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Shavers on trumpets, saxophonists Lester Young, Ben Webster, Benny Carter, Willie Smith, and Flip Phillips, Bill Harris on trombone, Oscar Peterson's piano, Herb Ellis' guitar, Ray Brown on bass, and Gene Krupa on drums, and you have a typical on-stage scene—one that actually took place in 1953 (heard on *The Rarest Concerts*, Verve 815 147 1). The musicians, according to Granz' tastes, fell between the stylistic cracks of swing and bebop, with Dizzy and Charlie Parker representing the modernistic wave, Roy Eldridge, Harry “Sweets” Edison, Buck Clayton, Carter, and their ilk retaining swing roots, and everyone else (Young, Webster, Hawkins, Peterson, Harris, Buddy Rich, and others) overlapping.

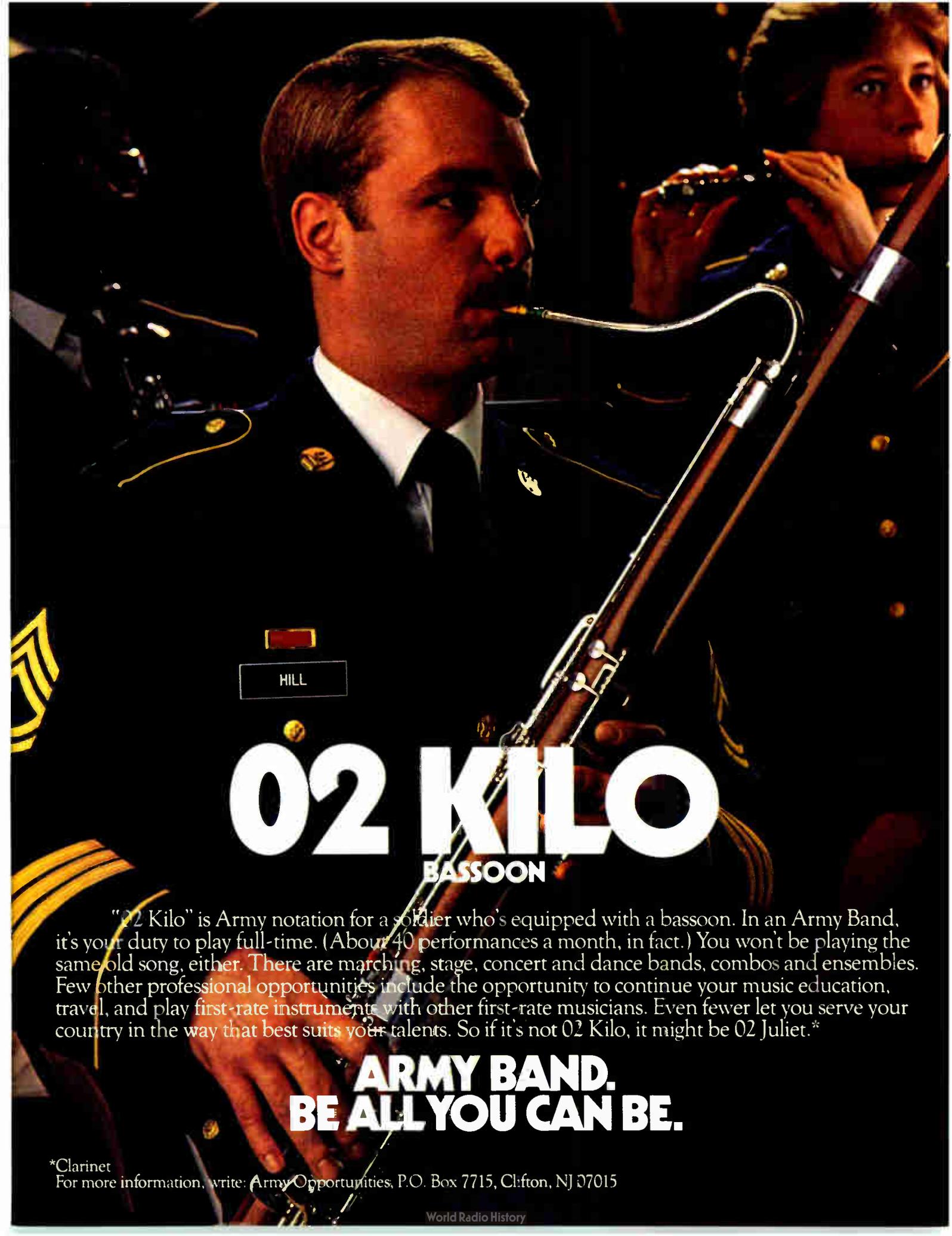
JATP thrived on such an all-star sensibility (where else could you hear the Hawkins-Young-Bird-Phillips sax lineage on-stage at the same time?), and

stylistic friction never really occurred, as each player bent slightly to fit the formula, which meant red-hot, all-stops-out blowing, incorporating the energy and enthusiasm of roadhouse r&b (honking saxes, squealing brass, climaxes aplenty, and excited response from a very vocal audience) with the informal structures of the after-hours jam session. Hard-driving players like Illinois Jacquet (who originally helped put JATP on the map; it's surprising he's heard so little here) and later Flip Phillips came to characterize JATP: combustible solos backed by ad lib collective riffs, climax after climax sounding spontaneous but sacrificing subtlety, despite the occasional ballad medley allowing the audience to cool down before the next explosion.

Hearing all 10 albums in close proximity reveals just how little the formula and accompanying electrically charged atmosphere changed over the nine years documented on these discs. Still, in such an ad lib format, the many moments of individual excellence and ensemble energy make for worthwhile listening. Due to the competitive nature of the concerts, there was much that was sloppy and self-indulgent, but crowd pleasing was what this was all about, and much of what pleased audiences then is still communicated to us through these grooves.

Two of the albums stand out, as examples of the small group half of the concerts. Both *The Coleman Hawkins Set*

CONTINUED ON PAGE 56

A man in a dark military uniform with gold epaulettes and a name tag that says "HILL" is playing a bassoon. He is looking to the right. In the background, a woman is also playing a brass instrument, possibly a trumpet or trombone. The scene is lit with warm, dramatic lighting.

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Baldwin's PianoPro

Designed for the adult who wants to learn to play piano immediately is the new PianoPro from the BALDWIN PIANO & ORGAN CO. (Cincinnati). The PianoPro looks (and can sound) like a conventional upright until the fallboard is raised to reveal an array of electronic controls. The computerized microprocessors offer 14 background accompaniments, dozens of melody fills and flourishes, chords and octaves, and more. Other features include a conductor that controls tempo, a metronome that provides an audible click, and a transposer that allows the user to accompany an instrument in a different key. The PianoPro comes complete with a six-volume home-study course.

GUITAR WORLD



Ibanez' Destroyer II Guitar & Bass

IBANEZ (HOSHINO USA INC., Bensalem, PA) has just introduced the DT155 guitar and DT650 bass to its Destroyer Series. Designed after Def Leppard guitarist Phil Collen's custom Destroyer, the DT155 features a basswood body and three Super 70 humbucking pickups. The maple 25½-inch scale neck has a rosewood fingerboard. The DT650 also features a basswood body, and has one Super P4 and one Super J4 pickup. The bass' maple neck with rosewood fingerboard is 32-inch medium scale. Both

axes are available in a black finish with cream binding.

ELECTRONIC GEAR



Shure's PE66 (left) and PE86 Mics

SHURE BROTHERS INC. (Evanston, IL) has recently added two top-of-the-line models to its PE (Professional Entertainer) series of popularly priced microphones—the PE66 and PE86. Both mics are unidirectional (cardioid), dual-low impedance models with shock-mounted cartridges for quiet, reliable operation. The PE86 has a frequency response of 50-15,000 Hz, while the PE66's is 40-15,000 Hz. Both feature fixed bass rolloff and the upper mid-range presence peak that characterizes the "Shure sound." The PE86 also has a built-in windscreens. Both come in a dark, non-reflective finish, and are packaged complete with swivel adaptor and vinyl gig bag.

PERCUSSION SHOP



Zildjian's Amir China Boy

The AVEDIS ZILDJIAN CO. (Norwell, MA) has just introduced two additions to its popular Amir line of non-cast cymbals. The 18- and 20-inch China Boys respond with a quick, brash Oriental sound great for unique crashes and unusual accents. The 15-inch matched Amir hi-hats sound deeper than the 14-inchers currently offered, and respond with more power and clarity.



Remo's Series 2500 Drum Sets

Ideally suited for younger players are the three compact drum sets in REMO'S (North Hollywood, CA) Series 2500 line, which feature the company's revolutionary PTS (Pre-Tuned Series) heads that are ready to play without tuning. The budget-priced Series 2500's include a 12 × 18 bass drum, 5 × 13 snare, and one-to-three tom-toms (8 × 12, 9 × 13, 14 × 16); sets come complete with chrome-plated hardware and all stands and pedals. The shells are lightweight Acousticon with high-gloss coverings of white, blue, or black. The Series 2500's are also ideal for the professional working in a combo situation where floor space is at a premium and portability is a factor.

Also new from Remo is the PTS/CS series of pre-tuned heads in translucent film with a special reinforced mylar center, similar to the company's popular CS Black Dot tunable drum heads, but designed for use on their PTS Series of latch-type drums without tuning lugs. CS heads offer a more centered sound with reduced over-ring and increased durability. PTS/CS's come in three tonal variations—bright, mellow, and dark.

NEW MUSIC RELEASES

■ After 25 years in the making (and several in the assembling), Bernard "Pretty" Purdie's *Drummer's Textbook Plus* . . . has been unleashed upon the public (via SWISS MUSIC LINE INC., POB 398008, Miami Beach, FL 33139). The drum method, for students and professionals alike, is broken into four sections—the technical part contains valuable tips on selecting, assembling, tuning, and caring for your kit; the rudiments of music section contains a glossary and clear and concise breakdowns on an oft-neglected part of a drummer's education; then the real meat—an extensive exercise section, and an even more extensive one on chart reading covering the gamut from big band to disco. Spiral-bound, 116 pp., \$14.95. db

songs that this guy Scott Hamilton was playing—*Honky Tonk, Handclappin'*—and I said, 'There's nobody playin' those songs no more.' So I joined Scott's band. Then Duke Robillard got the word that there's an r&b drummer around, and they gave me the call. The first rehearsal I walked into, I couldn't believe it—it sounded so real. I said, 'This is it. This is the band.'

Robillard was and is a formidable guitar player (he recently resurfaced with his own trio, the Pleasure Kings—see his Profile on page 46), but New York native Ronnie Earl has more than filled his shoes. Like Robillard, Earl has thoroughly assimilated the Texas blues of T-Bone Walker and Gatemouth Brown; he also lists such Chicagoans as Muddy Waters, Earl Hooker, Otis Rush, and Magic Sam among his favorites. "I started playing very late," he says. "I moved up to Boston to pursue a degree in special education, and I got bitten by the blues bug. I saw Muddy Waters, and I got inspired." He played with John Nicholas and the Rhythm Rockers and with Sugar Ray and the Blue Tones—besides accompanying touring artists like Big Walter Horton, Sunnyland Slim, and Koko Taylor—before joining Roomful. "It was the band I had always gone to see

when I was in other bands. If you lived in New England, they were the kings."

Fifty-nine-year-old trombone marvel Porky Cohen can recount the transition from swing to r&b and rock & roll from personal experience. At the age of 14, he was playing with Bobby Hackett in Providence; at 18 he joined Benny Goodman in New York. At various times he worked in the big bands of Glen Gray, Tommy Dorsey, and Artie Shaw, but his longest tenure—comprising three separate hitches—was served with Charlie Barnet, who led one of the few racially mixed groups of that day.

Along with Barnet's trumpeter, Jimmy Nottingham, Cohen joined Lucky Millinder in 1947, one of only three whites in the band. With Millinder, he played the Savoy Ballroom opposite bands like Buddy Johnson's and Jimmie Lunceford's, and toured the deep South in a show that featured B. B. King. In the early '50s he worked with Max Kaminsky, Jimmy Crawford, Bob Wilber, and others, until a final tour on a package that included Bill Haley and his Comets convinced him it was time to retire. He continued to play occasional weekend gigs in Providence, where he was eventually discovered by James, who says, "We hired him for a gig, and from the start he just fit in perfect." Says Porky, "I fit the style—I know I do—and I'm very happy with this band."

Completing the r&b nonet is trumpeter Bob Enos, a Louis Armstrong fan whose dextrous, high-noted attack adds a crowning sparkle to the lustrous horn section. Trained at the Boston Conservatory of Music, Enos had wide experience in soul and lounge bands through the '60s and '70s. He turned down an offer to join Bill Chase's ill-fated trumpet ensemble, but did spend two years on the road with the Platters before signing up with Roomful.

"We're all really optimistic about the next couple of years," says James. "This is really our time now, with Stevie Ray Vaughan coming up, and the Stray Cats and the Blasters. Our new album has more of a modern rhythm section sound—it's not so foreign to people like maybe some of the other records were—but it's our sound, and we're really happy with it."

"It's not our purpose to start a band and bring something back," Rossi emphasizes. "It's just that this is the only thing we know how to do. If we wanted to go out and play another type of music, we wouldn't be successful at it."

"It's just that once you hear something with that much feeling in it, all the other things don't seem like such hot shit anymore," James agrees.

Rossi's eyes take on a faraway look. "Now Lionel Hampton," he says, "there was rock & roll." **db**

PASS *continued from page 23*

Since he started recording for Pablo, Pass' own records have almost all been in a trio or solo format (he's also guested on a number of LPs by Count Basie, Oscar Peterson, and others). One of his more intriguing recent projects was a duet album with trombonist J. J. Johnson, and Pass hopes to do an orchestrated album in the near future. But, as well received as his albums have been, recording remains something of a frustration for him.

"I've never really been satisfied with the sound I've gotten in the studio," he says. "We've tried different things—playing acoustic, going direct through the board, sometimes through an amp. I don't really get involved in working much with the engineer, and that's why I'm never completely satisfied. I'm very impatient, in a way. I go in, and what I'm really concerned with is getting the date done. Usually my dates take just one or two three-hour sessions, and I'm concentrating on the music."

"The most preparation I've done for a date is to just pick out five or six tunes to start out with. Maybe I'll record them and won't like them, so I'll do it again. But if you keep doing them over, you start censoring yourself, and pretty soon you've got a real sterile kind of piece."

And sterility is one thing Pass wants to avoid in his music, whether it's live or recorded. As a genuine artist, he's deeply concerned with the quality of his creations and the effect they have on his listeners. "The hardest thing is to put it together and focus on it, concentrate on it. It's something that takes a long time. And if the sound isn't right, if there's some disturbance in the audience, if you have intonation problems, these little things will get in your way."

"But when you're playing solo, you can't lay back, and you can't shuck. If you can't play, it's obvious. And you might as well put the guitar back in its case." **db**

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AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BLACK JAZZ by Dempsey J. Travis (Chicago: Urban Research Institute Inc., 1983, 543 pp., \$22.50, hardcover).

This is a family autobiography of sorts, a compilation of 300 interviews with musicians and friends, hundreds of photos dug out of the closets of South Side Chicago homes, research from dozens of written histories, and the author's own 1939 diary.

Dempsey Travis declares that jazz "was most certainly incubated" in Chicago, so it is the focal point for an impressive book that pours out a colorful history of the music that developed there from the 1890s to the 1950s. It is a book of big names that were either born in Chicago or nurtured in the city during their careers, and little names that made the city flourish as a jumping, bopping, boiling caldron of black music.

Travis doesn't attempt to be a musicologist; his book concentrates on the people, the environment, and the economics that influenced the direction of jazz. His father was a rent-party piano player who would come home after yanking hams out of the sweet pickle vat in the stockyards all day and command the piano at night. Travis led his own group in Chicago in the 1940s, but gave up music to go into business, developing the largest black-owned real estate firm in Chicago. A decade ago he began to write, turning out numerous articles and an acclaimed *Autobiography Of Black Chicago*. His writing style is clean and direct, creating pure images of the jazz life. His approach is reminiscent of the late Ralph J. Gleason, who unabashedly wrote about his heroes and made their larger-than-life status ring sometimes with irony, and always with truth.

The most stunning segments in the book are of the pervasive influence of gangsters over jazz in the 1920s and 1930s, and the quietly racist policies of both white and black club owners. Travis details how the Grand Terrace Ballroom, remembered as Earl Hines' opulent home in the 1930s, was an urban plantation where Al Capone's managers literally "chained" Hines' band for 13 years. George Dixon recounts to Travis how he and two other Hines sidemen tried to leave Chicago to work in Detroit and were turned away from jobs there because the mob sent word not to hire them.

The book also offers a detailed history of the saloons, theaters, and clubs that popped up, added to the infamous heri-

tage of Chicago, and faded out. There are attempts by the surviving club owners to explain why, in both black- and white-owned clubs, Travis' photos show whites always seated near the front, and blacks near the rear.

Travis often touches on the economics of jazz, from mob control to the rent-party profit system of buying moonshine for \$1 a gallon and selling it for 50¢ a pitcher. That, and other images, often include a personal account. The book is filled with stories like Travis' cousin Joe dashing from the Savoy Ballroom to avoid the grasp of Big Chinna and the 39th Street Gang; of singer Joe Williams happily landing a job as backstage doorman at the Regal Theater, and later shuffling across stage to *Every Day* . . . at the Club DeLisa, on the verge of becoming nationally known.

The chronology is only half of Travis' book. It also includes 26 oral histories from musicians, dancers, and comedians who had integral roles in the jazz life, including Dizzy Gillespie, Johnny

JOHN COLTRANE: PLAY-A-LONG BOOK AND RECORD SETS, VOLUMES 27 & 28 by Jamey Aebersold (New Albany, IN: Jamey Aebersold, 1983, \$10.95 each, two books and LPs).

For personal enjoyment while learning tunes, developing improvisational skills, and gaining control of rhythm and phrasing, few methods match that of playing along with records. Records always remain patient with slow learners, always stand ready and willing to teach, always retain their original level of musicianship. Furthermore, they never criticize mistakes like rushing or dragging the beat. Instead, they always let students discover and correct such deficiencies for themselves. Small wonder the play-along recording has consistently gained favor as an adjunct educational tool.

The latest two offerings in a long series of "Play-A-Long" packets from Jamey Aebersold focus on 16 classic jazz compositions by John Coltrane, jazz standards like *Giant Steps*, *A Love Supreme*, and *Naima*. The record portion of each packet features clear sound and top performers. The book portion of each packet features eight Coltrane compositions written out for treble clef instruments in concert key, for treble clef instruments in B^b, for treble clef instruments in E^b, and for bass clef in-

Griffin, Cab Calloway, Milt Hinton, and Billy Eckstine. The orals are often informal and poignant, perhaps the most striking collected interviews (though without the anger) since Arthur Taylor published *Notes And Tones*. They create many memorable images: of Cab Calloway playing tobacco warehouses with a rope down the middle of the floor dividing the black and white dancers; of comedian Dick Gregory commuting daily between Chicago and San Francisco, making white customers laugh at night and marching against a white Chicago school superintendent by day; of comedian George Kirby hustling for money when a crowd gathered to hear Redd Foxx lead a trap band on Chicago street corners.

An Autobiography Of Black Jazz won't add new information on the structure of the music that preceded bop; that wasn't the intent. But it is a highly readable collection of first-hand history about the life that revolved *around* the music.

—r. bruce dold

struments. Each book also provides a scale syllabus showing what scale types fit which chord types, an extensive Coltrane discography, and an interpretation of that jazz master's musical evolution written by saxophonist David Liebman.

"My role in the recording was to provide the melody and the feel of Coltrane's improvisations, so that this excellent rhythm section could have something concrete to focus on during the recording session," says Liebman at the conclusion of his Coltrane summary. Although Liebman's contribution to the recording session is not to be heard on the record itself, his unifying presence can be felt in the spontaneous but still cohesive rhythm section, with its realistic jazz feel.

On each record, one channel contains bass and drums, while the other contains piano and drums. By turning the volume down on one channel, a play-along bassist can sit in for Ron Carter, or by turning down the other channel, a play-along pianist can sit in for Harold Mabern. And a play-along drummer can sit in with Adam Nussbaum without turning down either channel: the drumming on the records never overpowers any other sound. Saxists, of course, are supported by the full rhythm section.

Together, the John Coltrane Play-A-Long packets are a most welcome addition to the Aebersold series, produced by an expert, performed by experts, and devoted to the music of one of the greatest jazz experts. —dr. william l. fowler

JATP

BY ART LANGE

The first Jazz At The Philharmonic concert took place July 2, 1944 at the Los Angeles Philharmonic Auditorium, organized by the then-25-year-old Norman Granz as a benefit to raise money for legal fees for a group of Chicanos who had been arrested during riots in L.A. That concert, and the hundreds of similarly structured ones which were to follow over the next 13 years, had more than musical significance. The name of the game here was respect—first-class music played in first-class surroundings (mostly concert halls rather than smoky night clubs) by first-class musicians who were paid respectable fees and treated fairly while on tour (which included paving the way for totally integrated audiences and integrated accommodations for touring musicians)—and if along the way the concerts became wildly popular and help make Norman Granz into a millionaire, those things were incidental—at least at the beginning.

Fortunately for posterity, Granz has always been a fanatic for documentation, and so he recorded literally hundreds of hours of JATP performances off the stage—in so doing inventing the “live” album concept—which he began to issue as 78s, first in licensing agreements with labels like Philo and Asch, Stinson and Disc, later setting up his own companies such as Clef and Norgran. As the '50s brought “long play” (LP) recordings, he formed Verve Records and eventually consolidated his other labels under this one banner. And throughout the '50s the records and concert tours helped make Jazz At The Philharmonic a hip household word.

Most of the records have disappeared over the years (though Granz has issued several sides which he still owns the rights to on his current label, Pablo, and a few things are still available as Verve two-fers), but now Verve (which Granz sold in 1959 and is now owned and operated by Polygram) has reissued 10 LPs of JATP material, overseen by the conscientious eyes of producer Bob Porter, and priced at a bargain rate. Though the 10 albums are—as might be expected given the night-to-night grind of touring, different audiences, and varying inspiration over the space of nine years—musically uneven, they are a good reflection of what the JATP phenomenon—and it was a true phenomenon, comparable to rock & roll adulation today—was all about.



FRED WOLF

From left, Flip Phillips, Norman Granz, Illinois Jacquet, Coleman Hawkins, in Boston, 1947.

JATP revolved around a set group of musicians, hand-picked by Granz, and a set format: an hour or so of large-scale jam: sessions on mid-tempo or fast blues changes with a string of solos from the assembled (anywhere from seven to 17) multitude and cutting tunes between instrumentalists (often called *The Challenges*), followed by a second hour of small group performances, usually by bands led by Ella Fitzgerald, Oscar Peterson, Coleman Hawkins, or Lester Young.

But JATP was famous for its soloists—and with instrumental giants such as these, it's no wonder. Imagine a dream lineup consisting of Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Shavers on trumpets, saxophonists Lester Young, Ben Webster, Benny Carter, Willie Smith, and Flip Phillips, Bill Harris on trombone, Oscar Peterson's piano, Herb Ellis' guitar, Ray Brown on bass, and Gene Krupa on drums, and you have a typical on-stage scene—one that actually took place in 1953 (heard on *The Rarest Concerts*, Verve 815 147 1). The musicians, according to Granz' tastes, fell between the stylistic cracks of swing and bebop, with Dizzy and Charlie Parker representing the modernistic wave, Roy Eldridge, Harry “Sweets” Edison, Buck Clayton, Carter, and their ilk retaining swing roots, and everyone else (Young, Webster, Hawkins, Peterson, Harris, Buddy Rich, and others) overlapping.

JATP thrived on such an all-star sensibility (where else could you hear the Hawkins-Young-Bird-Phillips sax lineage on-stage at the same time?), and

stylistic friction never really occurred, as each player bent slightly to fit the formula, which meant red-hot, all-stops-out blowing, incorporating the energy and enthusiasm of roadhouse r&b (honking saxes, squealing brass, climaxes aplenty, and excited response from a very vocal audience) with the informal structures of the after-hours jam session. Hard-driving players like Illinois Jacquet (who originally helped put JATP on the map; it's surprising he's heard so little here) and later Flip Phillips came to characterize JATP: combustible solos backed by ad lib collective riffs, climax after climax sounding spontaneous but sacrificing subtlety, despite the occasional ballad medley allowing the audience to cool down before the next explosion.

Hearing all 10 albums in close proximity reveals just how little the formula and accompanying electrically charged atmosphere changed over the nine years documented on these discs. Still, in such an ad lib format, the many moments of individual excellence and ensemble energy make for worthwhile listening. Due to the competitive nature of the concerts, there was much that was sloppy and self-indulgent, but crowd pleasing was what this was all about, and much of what pleased audiences then is still communicated to us through these grooves.

Two of the albums stand out, as examples of the small group half of the concerts. Both *The Coleman Hawkins Set*

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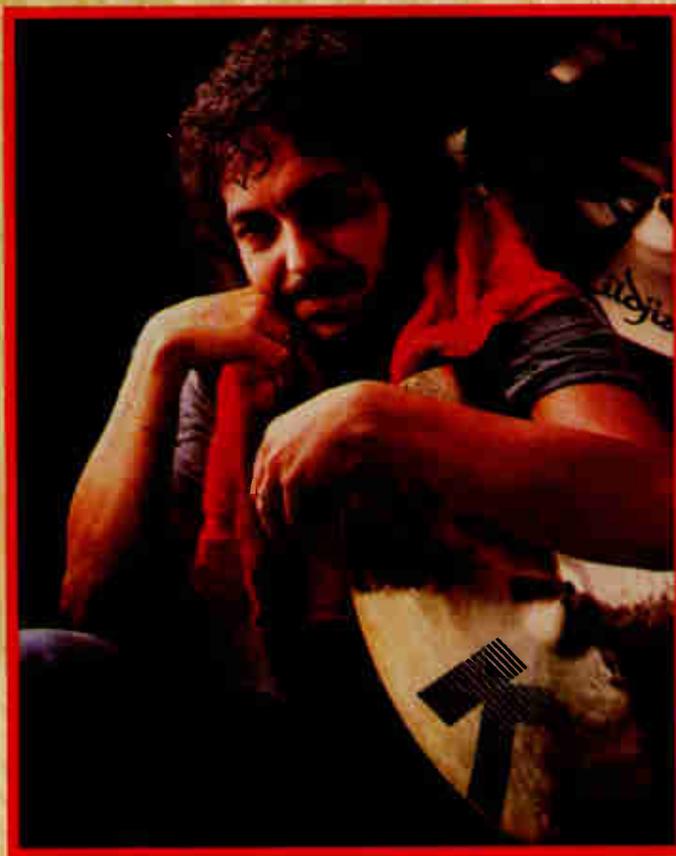
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