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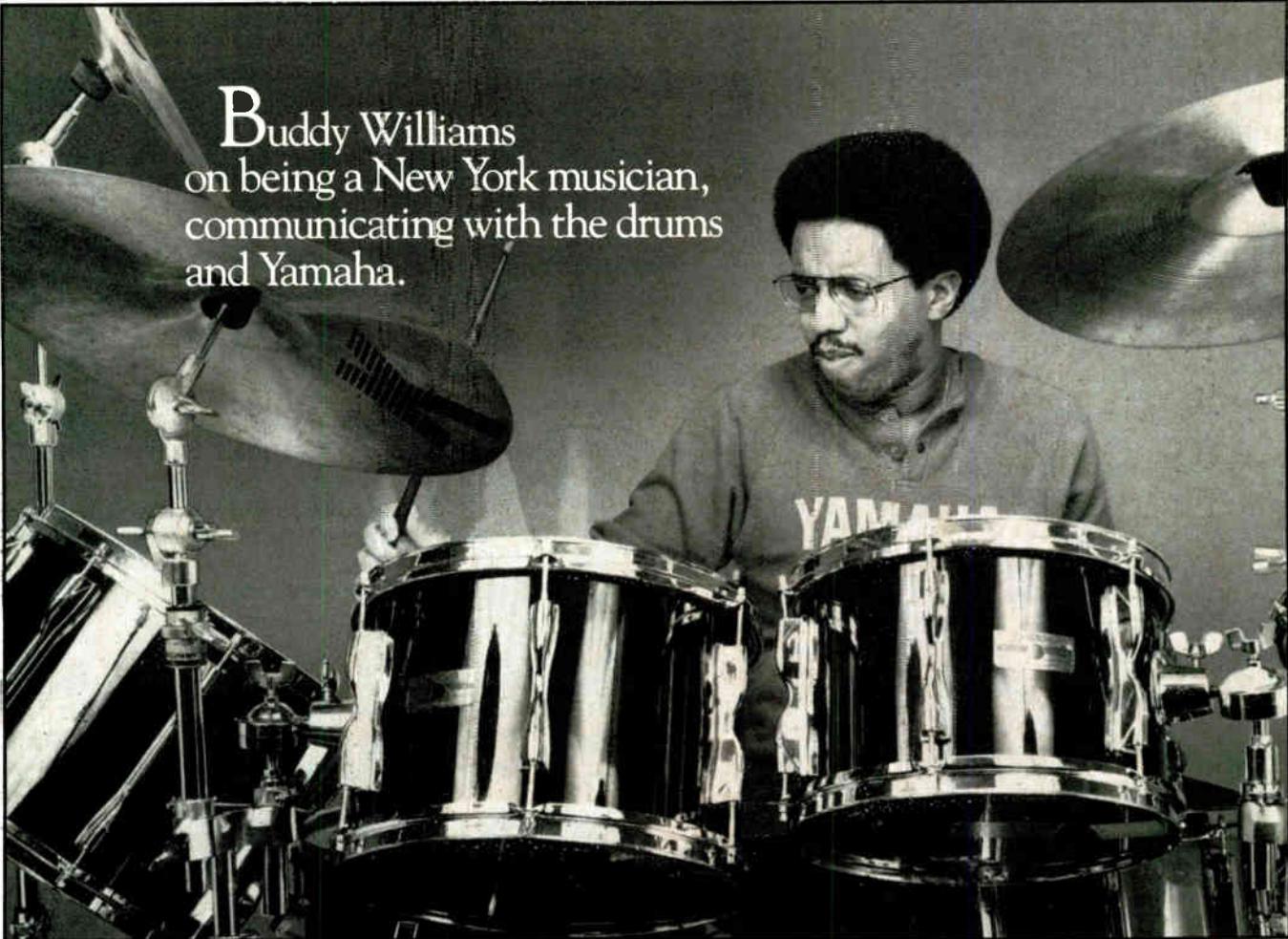
The new YCL-72 and 72A are part of a new family of extraordinary clarinets.

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YAMAHA

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Buddy Williams
on being a New York musician,
communicating with the drums
and Yamaha.

"I'm proud to say that I'm a New York musician. My day will consist of a 10, 11 or one o'clock jingle, an afternoon rehearsal for somebody's concert and then I'll either play a club that night or 'Saturday Night Live.' That's four different styles in four different worlds."

"I'm a team person when I play. I don't feel that the band revolves around *me*. If my part doesn't fit in with the rest of the rhythm section, then I'm not making it. I'm not happy.

"I hear these sounds in my head that should go inside the music, the overall sound that we're trying to get across. As musicians, we're trying to *communicate*. If I'm not communicating with the other guys or I'm not feeling right within the music, then we're not getting it over."

"The sound of Yamaha drums are the closest to the sounds I hear inside my head. They let me get across what I hear and what I feel needs to be inside the music. Sometimes I have to hit 'em real hard for loud situations and I know they'll be there. They're dependable. When I played with Roberta Flack, I had to be sensitive enough to do "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" and still get the part across. These Yamahas let me do that.

"Yamaha drums are very personal to me.

I've always felt they were the last of the hand made drums. I went to Japan and visited their factory and they wanted to hear my ideas because I was a drummer who played their instrument.

"I don't know what Yamaha's formula is and I don't want to know. I just play 'em, I'm not in the business of making them. I just know they're more *applicable* for what I do than anything else on the market, and I get to play a lot of different drums.

"Sometimes I'll walk into a studio and have to play other drums, but I'll always ask for Yamaha. I was on the road with Dave Sanborn last year and I had to use a straight-out-of-the-box Tour Series set in an emergency and it worked out fine."

"I think of my drums as my 'kids.' Very rarely do I let other people play them unless it's unavoidable, a bottom line situation. Me and my kids have to lock up and have an understanding. It's a *feel*."

The reason why Yamaha System Drums meet the demands of many of today's top drummers is because they're "Drummer Designed." For more information and to receive Yamaha's *Drum Lines* newspaper, write to Yamaha Musical Products, Division of Yamaha International Corporation, 3050 Breton Rd. S.E., P.O. Box 7271, Grand Rapids, MI 49510.



BY CHARLES DOHERTY

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From the Yukon River to the Florida Bay, "deebees" '85 is on the roll, and all U.S. and Canadian music students better get rolling to get in on the action.

What's a "deebee"? Well, none other than the **down beat** Student Music Awards, now in its eighth annual edition, that recognize the achievements of the upcoming wave of new musical talent. Again this year the awards will be made with the cooperation and endorsement of the National Assn. of School Music Dealers. Thanks to NASMD's involvement the past two years, the "deebees" have grown to become the world's largest and most prestigious awards program of its kind. The judges are primed and ready for another record-setting batch of entries, so don't disappoint them.

Prizes include special Shure Bros. Inc. microphones, to be presented to individual winners and student leaders (or faculty conductors) of each winning ensemble. Participating NASMD and National Assn. of Music Merchants members will be contributing to a cash scholarship fund. And the Berklee College of Music in Boston will continue to offer scholarship awards to winners in the high school divisions. Additional prizes include "deebee" plaques, pins, certificates, and more.

Any 10- to 20-minute recorded (cassette tape preferred, records are acceptable, and open reel tapes are eligible only in the engineering categories) performance made between February 29, 1984 and February 15, 1985 by U.S. or Canadian jr. high, high school, or college/university students enrolled at an accredited institution is eligible (sorry, grad students and full-time professional players are ineligible). Your local school music dealers should already have the application forms and rules; if they don't, fill out the coupon on the left, and we'll see that they get them.

You can enter your performances in one or more of the 17 categories (listed on the coupon), with separate divisions for high school and college. High school musicians will be judged as aspiring professionals, college players as pros. Please note that for any performance entered in two or more categories, or featuring two or more entries in one category, the judges will require duplicate tapes for each separate entry.

Time is tight. Remember, we've got to have your entry in our Chicago office (**down beat**/"deebee," 222 West Adams Street, Chicago, IL 60606) by February 15, 1985, so you'd better roll on down to your school music dealer today! **db**

Enter now! down beat's 1985 "deebee" awards

Applications are now being accepted for the eighth annual **down beat** Student Music Awards competition.

Eligibility: Any 10- to 20-minute performance by U.S. or Canadian jr. high school, high school, or college students recorded after February 29, 1984 and before February 15, 1985.

Awards & Prizes: Berklee College of Music scholarships, additional cash scholarships to be announced, plus "deebee" plaques, pins, and certificates.

Deadline: All entries must be in **down beat's** Chicago office by February 15, 1985. Results will be published in the June '85 **down beat**.

How To Enter: Pick up "deebee" brochure and Official Application at your local music & sound retailer or use coupon below.

The 1985 "deebee" awards are offered in two divisions—high school and college—in each of 17 categories:

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4. Studio Orchestras

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Send me _____ copies of the 1985 "deebee" awards brochure and Official Application.

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1985 MARKS A TURNING POINT OF THE ACOUSTIC



World Radio History

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POINT IN THE EVOLUTION ACoustic GUITAR.

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World Radio History

CHORDS & DISCORDS

Prior restraint

Let's face it, print is a powerful medium. To some people printed matter is as important as music. In other words, yes, the record reviews in *down beat* have a lot of influence on people. The reviews have hipped me to many new artists, but I've also bought albums (and liked them) before reading a negative review and thought (after reading *db's* review), "Gee, what's going to happen to the sales of this

album and the poor artist who made it?" The jazz/creative music community is so fragile.

I guess I agree with Dave Liebman ("A Musician Critiques Critics," *Ad Lib*, *db*, Nov. '84)—the criticism is necessary, but a little more accent on the positive (i.e., the things we shouldn't miss) would be nice. Great magazine; good luck in the future.

Tom Prior

Haiku, Maui, HI

Northern lights

A number of Canadian members of the National Assn. of School Music Dealers have indicated a very firm desire to do some good, strong publicity with the 1985 *down beat* "deebie" Student Music Awards. *down beat* is providing a very positive educational service with these awards, and we wish to cooperate in any way we can.

George Douglas Winnipeg, Manitoba
Chairman/NASMD Region 6 Canada

Attention student musicians: if your local music dealer doesn't have applications for the '85 "deebie" Awards, fill out the coupon on page 6. —Ed.

Sax and violence

I've been a *down beat* reader since the age of 13 and still thoroughly enjoy each and every issue. The inspiration I received from your magazine in my early years was a primary motivating factor in my subsequent decision to make a career in music.

Now that you know how much I love your magazine, I hope you'll take some criticism. I find your use of the word "saxist" to describe a saxophone player to be in poor taste. This word sounds a little too much like "sexist" to please me. Please let the music world know that a person who plays the saxophone is a *saxophonist!*

Perhaps the term "saxist" could be better used to describe people who discriminate against others on the basis of their chosen musical instrument.

Paul Evoskevich Central St. U.
Asst. Prof. of Music Wilberforce, OH

Stan's the man

I have been just waiting for the month when I'd open *down beat* and see an article on the discovery of Stanley Jordan (*db*, Nov. '84, Caught, by Jeff Levenson). Madtown jazz fans and virtually everyone else here have been extremely fortunate in having had Stanley all to ourselves for a few months last year. Wherever he played his incredible music, everyone had the beaming smile that the joy of his music brings. In addition to enriching this town with the phenomenal sounds, he was always ready to enthusiastically share his techniques, visions, and musical philosophies with hundreds of awe-struck high school kids. To reiterate Levenson, Stanley Jordan is a major talent . . . definitely tune in!

Terry Young Madison, WI

Stay tuned to *down beat*, Terry, we have a Profile of the hot young guitarist coming up soon. —Ed.

New Colors

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Zildjian Basics II active wear fulfills all of your "essential" clothing needs. Whether you're playing live, recording or just hanging out, Basics II always delivers the ultimate in style, fit, and comfort. A perfect gift for your favorite musician.



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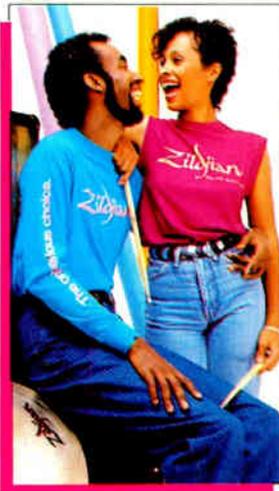
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Keyed up

I found the cover photo of George Duke on the November '84 *down beat* particularly appropriate as George has been blowing on keyboards for years.
Peter Key State College, PA

Latin lover

I have been reading *down beat* for about five years now, and I think you do a very good job on interviews and record reviews; *db* really keeps me up-to-date on new records and new artists on the jazz scene.

I really enjoyed reading your coverage of the latin jazz scene the last two years. The feature on Tito Puente (*db*, Jan. '84) really covered a lot about the artist and the latin-jazz salsa music, which I think more of the public ought to hear more about—also new wave Brazilian music ("Brazilian Beat: The New Fusion?" *db*, Oct. '83), such as Tania Maria (Profile, *db*, Feb. '83). I also liked your Profile on Jerry Gonzalez in the Apr. '84 *db*. Keep up the good work.
Angel Cruz Bedford Heights, OH

Howling mad at Murdock

I'm sorry to inform Chord-writer Ernest Murdock (*db*, Dec. '84) that he has not avoided but rather created further dis-sension by categorizing Wynton Marsalis as Glad Jazz, Ornette Coleman as Sad Jazz, and Archie Shepp as Mad Jazz.

Two of the people Murdock lists among his favorites—Coltrane and Dophy—were influenced by and played with Ornette and his band. To praise Trane and Eric and put down Ornette is like praising Bird and Dizzy and putting down Monk.

Murdock obviously has no idea what Archie Shepp is even up to these days. Which of Shepp's recent albums qualifies as Mad Jazz? *Looking At Bird?* Or *Goin' Home*, his album of spirituals?

I may be wrong, but it seems to me that jazz—all jazz—is not merely Glad, or Sad, or Mad; it is all these things and more. The "beautiful moments" Murdock has experienced when listening to jazz haven't occurred because the musicians were being emotional simpletons; if that were true, he'd dissolve in tears every time he stepped into an elevator and heard muzak. To suggest that there is no anger in Armstrong (and no joy in Coleman) cheapens and misrepresents the entire jazz tradition.

Mr. Murdock, if you don't need arguments at your age (as you claim), don't make debatable statements.
Tony Alexander Chicago



Billy Taylor
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NEWS

MUS. ED. REPORT

Hot tracts

A new two-hour instructional video, *The Drum Set—A Musical Approach*, from **Yamaha Musical Products** (POB 7271, Grand Rapids, MI 49510) features drummers Ed Soph and Horacee Arnold with guests John Scofield on guitar, Tom Barney on bass, and Bob Quarantas on keyboards; based on a totally musical approach to drum set basics, the five segments cover all aspects of the kit with basic themes of time, tempo, and dynamics carried throughout; ideal for students and teachers; complete with instructional booklet.

Roland Users Group, "The Magazine For The Electronic Musician," offers those electronically inclined all sorts of info, news, interviews, and the like; via RolandCorp US, 7200 Dominion Circle, L.A., CA 90040.

Music Business Publications has an updated *Catalog No. 2* of educational materials for the music industry, with an emphasis on (you guessed it) business-of-music publications; included is a new section of b-o-m tape recordings; \$2 from POB 1191, Elmhurst, IL 60126.

In a more specialized vein the **Alfred Publishing Co. Inc.** (POB

5964, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413) offers a *Percussion Catalog*, featuring all the publications of Studio 4 Productions in addition to some new releases covering drum machines, some LPs, a few sax manuals, and some percussion gift gear.

Dizzy Gillespie will appear Feb. 16 with the Clark College (Atlanta) Jazz Ensemble as part of the Black College Jazz Network 84/85 Series; BCJN is the brainchild of Clark prez Elias Blake, and Diz, who claims a special attachment to CC and EB, has donated a number of his early charts to the college's archives; details on Diz' appearance come from Alaina Moss at (404) 522-8776.

More from the campus corner: AEMMP Records (from the Arts, Entertainment, & Media Management Program of **Columbia College** in Chicago) is seeking new talent to record this year, buoyed by the success of last year's Master Plan dance single *Pushin' Too Hard*; more info from the AEMMP office, (312) 663-1600, ex. 354... the **University of Miami's** School of Music now offers a master's degree in computer and electronic music, the first program of its kind in the Southeastern U.S. and only the fourth in the nation... saxist/composer/db Critics Poll TDWRer Jane Ira Bloom has been commissioned to compose a work for the **University of Northern Iowa** (Cedar Falls) Jazz Ensemble and



DYNAMIC DRUM DUO: *Earth, Wind & Fire*-man Freddie White (left) and *Journey*-man Steve Smith battle to a draw in the finale of the recent *Drum Fever '85*, Bill Crowden's *Drums Ltd's* (Chicago) ninth annual percussion clinic, this year co-sponsored by the Avedis Ziljian Co., the world's leading cymbal manufacturer. The clinic also celebrated the 21st anniversary of *Drums Ltd.*, one of the largest percussion emporiums in the world.

will conduct its premiere Mar. 3 as part of the second annual Women Composers Project at UNI; the project coincides with Women's History Month, and Bloom and noted musicologist Dr. Wallace Rave will also deliver lectures; info from Bob Washut, UNI School of Music, (319) 273-2024... and the **Community College of**

Rhode Island Foundation is raising funds for music scholarships by offering a limited edition LP, *Tribute To Bobby Hackett* (a live concert featuring Bob Wilber, the late Pee Wee Erwin and Vic Dickenson, and others); \$13 postpaid for a worthy cause, from Bobby Hackett Committee, CCRI Foundation, Lincoln, RI 02865. □

FINAL BAR



Collin Walcott, sitar and tabla player/multi-instrumentalist who brought Indian influences into the contemporary world music of the quartet Oregon and trio Codona as a founding member of both cooperative units, died Nov. 8 in Magdeburg, East Germany, from injuries suffered in a traffic accident, at age 39. Walcott had also been a member of the Paul Winter Consort.

Jules Bihari, who along with his brothers Saul, Lester, and Joe founded a number of small, influential r&b labels in the '40s and '50s, died Nov. 17 in Los Angeles, after a lengthy illness. He was 72. Among his RPM, Kent, Modern, and Crown labels, he recorded such artists as Elmore James, B. B. King, Ike & Tina Turner, and countless others.

Phillip Moore III, pianist/composer/arranger who worked with Lou Rawls, Freddie Hubbard, Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Stitt, Gerald Wilson, Oscar Brown Jr., and Quincy Jones, died Aug. 21 in Oakland, CA of a stroke at age 45. His father is famed vocal coach Phil Moore Jr.

Johnny Lee Wills, country music artist and Western Swing pioneer, died Oct. 25 in Tulsa, OK of a heart ailment at age 72. Wills was one of the five original members of the Texas Playboys, led by his brother Bob.



Vic Dickenson, one of the most distinctive trombone stylists in jazz history, died Nov. 16 in New York City of cancer. He was 78. A veteran of such big bands as Bennie Moten, Claude Hopkins, Benny Carter, and Count Basie, by the mid-'40s he stepped out into the spotlight alongside Sidney Bechet, Hot Lips Page, Frankie Newton, and other Swing Era standouts. During the '50s his wry, witty, occasionally rambunctious solos were a fixture on the New York dixieland revival scene, in collaborations with Red Allen, Buck Clayton, and various Eddie Con-

don aggregations. He was chosen top trombonist in the db International Critics Poll from 1971-74, and was active up until his death.

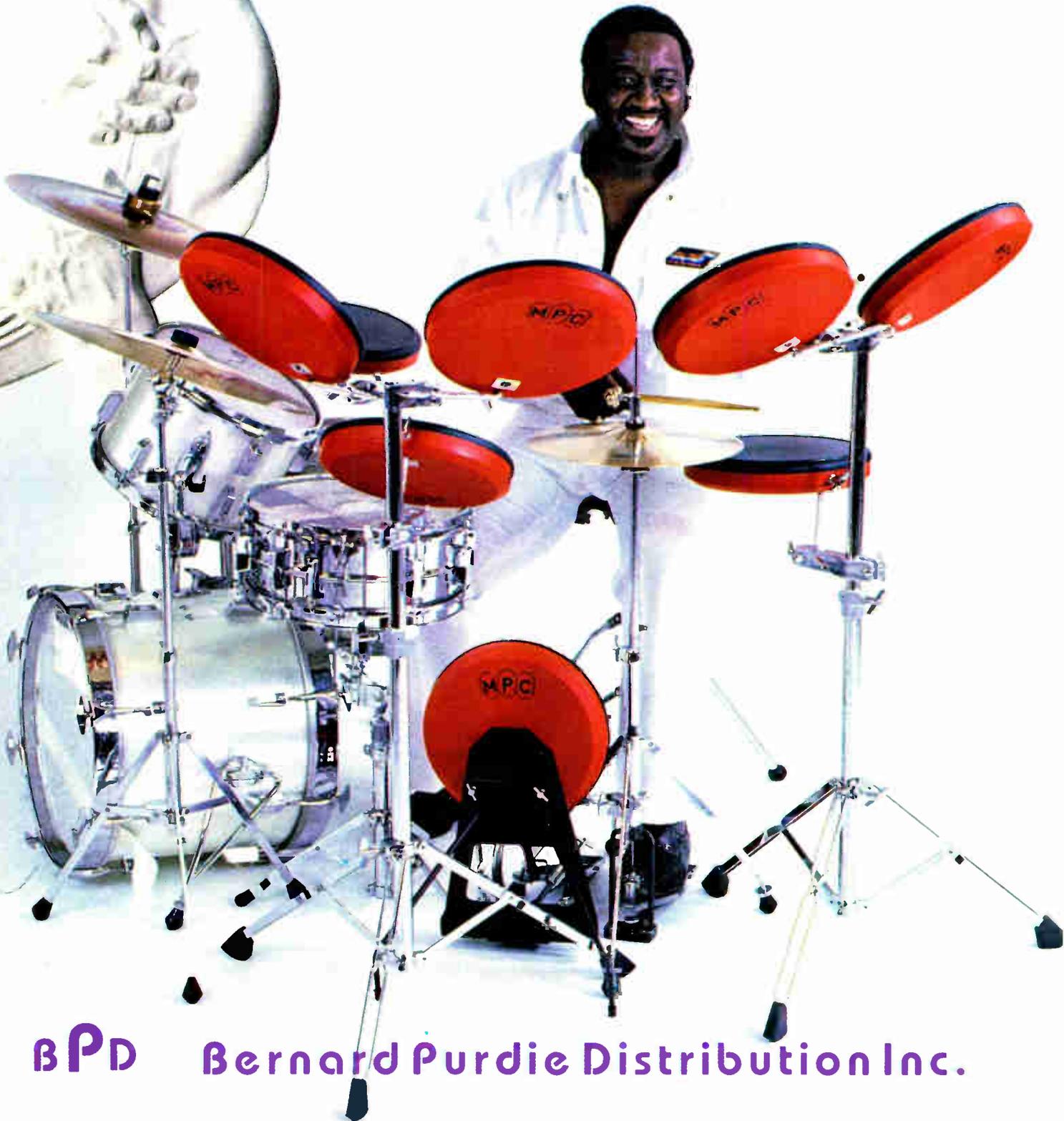
Luchi De Jesus, pianist/composer/arranger/producer, died Aug. 19 in Canoga Park, CA of an undisclosed illness at age 61. De Jesus, who was the a&r director at Mercury Records in the early '60s, later produced and arranged recordings for Sarah Vaughan, Brook Benton, Dinah Washington, Oscar Brown Jr., Willie Bobo, Les McCann, and others.

Irving (Babe) Russin, saxophonist who played with the Dorseys, Red Nichols, Glenn Miller, and Benny Goodman, died Aug. 4 in Los Angeles of cancer. He was 73.

Jess Carneol, tv writer and former reedman with the Dorseys, Benny Goodman, and Artie Shaw, died Sep. 6 in West Hollywood, CA of a heart attack. He was 77.

m p c

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Portrait: Ronald Katz
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World Radio History



DRUMMER *drummer*

JACK DEJOHNETTE

BY HOWARD MANDEL

Jack DeJohnette lives off a winding road called Silver Hollow on the birch-wooded crest of a Catskill foothill that's the setting for the cover photos on *Album Album*, his ninth LP as a leader for ECM, a label he's worked with since 1972. The inside of his log home is sunny and warm, filled with cut flowers, plants, and instruments—from the Haitian drums by the sleeping loft to the Japanese koto “gathering dust,” as he says, to the upright bass and grand piano near the seating area. He's surrounded by life: two dogs, a horse, and pony out front, his wife Lydia stirring soup on the stove, his daughters returning from school in town. You can see why he's not very eager to leave, for any reason but to pursue success with his band Special Edition.

Yet “Music is my art, but it's also my business,” DeJohnette realizes, and he takes care of business. “It's what I do for a living. I still like to get together with musicians; Dave Holland and some other guys come over to play in my studio—this isn't done much anymore, because everybody's busy working to get their own things together—but we still play, just go at it, and I love it like I did the first time. I still get a charge out of it.” You can hear that—on *Album Album*, but also on John Abercrombie's *Night*, Sonny Rollins' *Reel Life*, Keith Jarrett's trio projects *Changes* and *Standards, Vol. 1*, among others.

DeJohnette's not itching to travel—he's lived out here 11 years—but he gets out. He keeps his trap sets—one stacked up, one set up—in a basement that's like a weight room (a punching bag hangs from the ceiling, though the walls are covered with photos of Dolphy, Trane, et al.) but remains, strangely, the buried heart of his house. He gets a steady stream of phone calls from musicians, local artists, his manager in New York City; DeJohnette's obviously pivotal to an active, creative community, depended upon for some inner resources when there comes a crisis (we spoke just a week after his friend Collin Walcott and Oregon's road manager Joe Harting died in a traffic accident in East Germany). It's the same with his playing. Again and again, DeJohnette's helped make some project: Walcott's *Cloud Dance*, Abercrombie's *Timeless* and *Gateways (One and Two)*, Jarrett's *Ruta And Daitya*, Rollins' concert with Wynton Marsalis and his all-star tour of Japan (with Pat Metheny and Alphonso Johnson), Terje Rypdal's trio with Miroslav Vitous, Vitous' own *Mountain In The Clouds* (a.k.a. *Infinite Search*), albums by Joe Farrell, Joe Henderson, the late Bill Evans, Charles Lloyd, Miles Davis.

What he's brought most often is rhythm that's powerful, propulsive, full of finesse and feeling. But that's not all—he's multi-dimensional, a bandleader, a composer, and about to release a piano trio album (on Orrin Keepnews' Landmark label, with ECM's blessing) on which he's at the keyboards, not on the skins.

“The younger jazz musician now really has a broader view of what he has to do,” DeJohnette believes, and at age 42 he

can still be speaking for himself, though many listeners aware of his associations with early AACM bands, organist Big John Patton, Jackie McLean, Betty Carter, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, and Stan Getz would consider him a veteran. “It can't be in one area all the time. You don't want to alienate your audience; you don't want to play down to them, either.” Here's reality, from the guy who sang the *Inflation Blues* and laughs about a deficit follow-up: “If a jazz musician has aspirations to make more money from his craft, the only channels open to him are the pop areas, and in a sense the jazz and pop worlds are not so far apart. There are only two types of music, after all: good and bad.

“My wife Lydia says, and I think it's true, that jazz musicians keep rock & roll honest—because the people who make quality statements in pop music have to look at Miles Davis, Sonny Rollins, Coltrane, Charlie Parker, Louis Armstrong, all that. Groups like the Rolling Stones, the Police, Earth, Wind & Fire, people like Linda Rondstadt, Joni Mitchell, Phoebe Snow—they know who's who, what names to drop, how to borrow from the jazz idiom, and it lifts their things up. But there's a separation which works against the jazz musician, because for the jazz musician to have success in pop is considered selling out, and he's got to deny his jazz affiliation verbally to the record companies, because on some levels jazz is considered too artistic, too eclectic, too esoteric, and something that's not going to sell.

“I'd like to be involved with both areas, jazz and pop, without one taking anything away from the other,” he continues, “but it's a very big problem. With the advent of music videos and all that, there's even more pressure, more competition the jazz artist is up against.”



SPECIAL EDITION: From left, David Murray, Howard Johnson, Rufus Reid, Jack DeJohnette, and John Purcell.

KAREN MONK



ANDY FREEBERG

JACK DEJOHNETTE'S EQUIPMENT

"I just got my Sonor Lights—I've been waiting for them quite a while," says Jack DeJohnette. "I've been playing the Sonor Signature series, and they're great sounding drums, but they're heavy, and they have a dark-sounding projection. The Sonor Lights are a lighter drum—lighter weight, but they project; the shells really resonate incredibly; the snare drum is fantastic. The wood is a beautiful blondish birch, and the resonating quality is much brighter. It's real sensitive, like for jazz playing, and projects well for pop playing, or when you're playing with amplifiers. I ordered two bass drums, an 18-inch for small jazz group playing, a 20-inch for pop, electric, heavy metal sounds. They've got that Sonor quality, but I think maybe they're a little lower-priced than the Signatures, which are out of the reach of a lot of average players. All my drums have Remo heads. I use different weights for different playing situations, usually coated Ambassador batters, with clear heads on the bottoms. My sticks are 5A.

"I'm a so very excited about a cymbal company called Istanbul that I ran into at the NAMM show. They've reproduced the process of making cymbals sound dark, and dry, like the old K. Zildjians. Mei Lewis also endorses them, and Art Blakey, and they're trying to get a few other people. I played them at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention in Ann Arbor, Michigan last year, and I fell in love with them right away."

JACK DEJOHNETTE SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

ALBUM ALBUM—ECM 25010-1
INFLATION BLUES—ECM 1244
TIN CAN ALLEY—ECM 1189
SPECIAL EDITION—ECM 1152
NEW DIRECTIONS IN EUROPE—ECM 1157
NEW DIRECTIONS—ECM 1128
NEW RAGS—ECM 1108
PICTURES—ECM 1079
UNTITLED—ECM 1074
SORCERY—Prestige 14081
COSMIC CHICKEN—Prestige 10094
HAVE YOU HEARD?—Milestone 1029
COMPLEX—Milestone 90022
with Keith Jarrett
RUTA AND DAITYA—ECM 1021
STANDARDS VOL. 1—ECM 1255
CHANGES—ECM 25007-1
with John Abercrombie
NIGHT—ECM 25009-1
GATEWAY ONE—ECM 1061
GATEWAY TWO—ECM 1105
TIMELESS—ECM 1047
with Miles Davis
IN A SILENT WAY—Columbia 9875
BITCHES BREW—Columbia PG-26
LIVE AT THE FILLMORE—Columbia 30038
LIVE-EVIL—Columbia 30954
with Pat Metheny
80/81—ECM 1180
with Ralph Towner
BATIK—ECM 1121
with Collin Wacott
CLOUD DANCE—ECM 1061
with George Adams
SOUND SUGGESTIONS—ECM 1141

with Charles Lloyd

FOREST FLOWER—Atlantic 1473
BEST OF...—Atlantic 1556
DREAM WEAVER—Atlantic 1459
LOVE IN—Atlantic 1481
FLOWERING OF THE ORIGINAL QUARTET—Atlantic 1586
IN EUROPE—Atlantic 1500
IN THE SOVIET UNION—Atlantic 1571
JOURNEY WITHIN—Atlantic 1493
SOUNDTRACK—Atlantic 1519

with JoAnne Brackeen

ANCIENT DYNASTY—Columbia 36593
KEYED IN—Columbia 36075

with McCoy Tyner

SUPERTRICKS—Milestone 55003

with Miroslav Vitous

MOUNTAIN IN THE CLOUDS—Atlantic 1122

with Torje Rypdal/Miroslav Vitous

TRIO—ECM 1125
TO BE CONTINUED—ECM 1192

with Jan Garbarek

PLACES—ECM 1118

with Kenny Wheeler

DEER WAN—ECM 1102
GNU HIGH—ECM 1069

with Gary Peacock

TALES OF ANOTHER—ECM 1101

with Richie Beirach

ELM—ECM 1142

with Bill Evans

AT THE MONTREUX JAZZ FESTIVAL—Verve 68762

with Sonny Rollins

REEL LIFE—Milestone 9108

The 1980s aren't the first years during which jazz musicians have been confronted with the question of whether, and how much, to go for the broader audience out there; the problem reared its head with the Original Dixieland Jazz Orchestra, was emphasized by Paul Whiteman, and really rubbed in by the various kings of swing. "Working hard is not enough," DeJohnette says. "If it were, we'd all be rich. There's a lot of politics involved with what gets produced and promoted—as I've known a long time, since I was with Columbia records with the band Compost. The corporate mentality is only concerned with numbers, and that becomes what the musician has to look at. Did you fill up the hall? Did you break even? That's the name of the game." Though ECM considers DeJohnette one of the label's strongest assets, Warner Brothers, ECM's corporate overseer in the U.S., has other acts in which it wants to invest. Only if *Album Album* shoots right from the warehouse shipping rooms through the retail racks and up the sales charts will DeJohnette be able to argue successfully that he deserves the sine qua non of contemporary promotional tools, a music video.

"The tune *New Orleans Strut*, I wrote that for *Album Album* on purpose—that wasn't an accident," DeJohnette says of the good time, Second Line number opening side two. "I knew I had to have something that's good for airplay, and I wanted to write something that would be commercial but still be authentic and ethnic in nature. *Strut* is something I could identify with—see, my father's from New Orleans, so I have some New Orleans roots, though I never grew up there," the Chicago native confides.

"I used some synthesizer to lay down the basic tracks, then had Rufus Reid come in and put his bass track down, and then had Rufus conduct the band—[tubaist/baritone saxist] Howard Johnson, [saxist] David Murray, [saxist] John Purcell, and myself. We put it together like that, in installments. The rest of the pieces on *Album Album* were straightahead, with a few minor overdubs in the backgrounds, but *Strut* was really produced." The result has synth darting around a hummable theme that swaggers off the parade route to follow Murray wending his bluesy way; Johnson puffs out the bottom on tuba while Reid's bass moves into guitar range; Purcell holds the center. All stay in step, each in his own way, just like at the Fairgrounds during the Jazz & Heritage Festival. ECM issued an edited *Strut* for radio stations, and DeJohnette reports the response has been positive.

But in fact it's not just one tune out of *Album Album*'s six that's been designed with accessibility in mind. "You have to think

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

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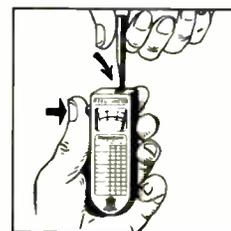
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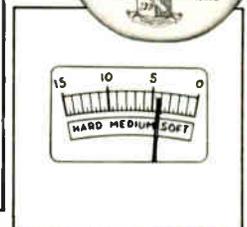
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BY GENE SANTORO



PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

It's not that he's unknown, exactly. *Time* magazine featured him and then-wife Linda in its August 30, 1982 issue, saying that his music "has the clenched power and pitiless clarity of a Francis Bacon painting." *Rolling Stone* that same year proclaimed him "one of the great buried treasures of British rock." Writing in the *New York Times* last year, Robert Palmer called his most recent release, *Hand Of Kindness*, "an apparently effortless blend of rock and soul with sprightly dance rhythms. There's nothing more infectious in all of pop music." Strong words, but they mirror the strength of both Richard Thompson's music and the devotion of those who know it. With his new Polygram contract in hand, Thompson is getting ready to break out of his cult.

Both his music and his following share a hard-earned depth, built solidly on almost two-decades of Thompson's accomplished musicianship and the five centuries' worth of sounds that he's dug up and recycled through his songs and guitar stylings. Literary and musical motifs from African and Arabic sources, Celtic ballads, Hank Williams, Buddy

Richard Thompson

Rockin' Guitar In The Celt Tradition

Holly, and Eric Dolphy all somehow find a home in the music that Richard Thompson makes with such power and wit.

Thompson's wide-open ears reach back to his earliest days. "I don't remember ever *not* hearing records with guitar players," he claims. "My father used to play some guitar—dance-band guitar—and he had a few Les Paul records and Django Reinhardt records, so I heard that kind of stuff. Plus, when I was growing up—I was seven or eight—rock & roll came over to England in a big way; I heard Buddy Holly, and Scotty Moore playing on the Presley records, and James Burton playing on the Ricky Nelson stuff, so I always wanted to get a guitar." By the time he was 11, the aspiring musician had gotten what he wanted—sort of. "My first guitar was a wrecked Spanish guitar," he laughs, "with a hole in the back. Once we glued it together, it seemed to work okay; at least it lasted a couple of years."

Not long after the glue dried, Thompson began the earliest of his musical studies. "When I was almost 12, I took about two years of classical lessons, but I've forgotten most of that. Actually, I learned a lot from my older sister's boyfriends," he continues with characteristic irony. "When they would come 'round to pick her up, she'd always spend at least an hour putting her makeup on, so I'd get about an hour's lesson on whatever the current style of guitar was. It was pretty useful." His first bands, which played at school dances, featured him in their guitar-heavy imitations of the Shadows, England's answer to the Ventures, as well as in their typical covers of r&b stalwarts like Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, and Muddy Waters. "There must've been 20,000 bands like us," Thompson grins.

Perhaps, but one of the bands he started evolved far beyond its school-kid beginnings to make a real musical mark. "Earlier versions of what became Fairport Convention actually started around '65 or '66," Thompson recalls, "after I'd been playing with Simon Nicol and Ashley Hutchings. At that point it was still very much a cover band. But there soon came a point when we decided that one of the things that we really liked was lyrics; it was also something we found lacking in our British contemporaries, though we saw in America there were a lot of people writing interesting stuff, like Bob Dylan and Phil Ochs, Joni Mitchell perhaps. And we thought, 'Well, here's something more interesting than what people are doing in England,' which at that time was entering the realm of half-hour psychedelic instrumental excuse-me's. So you could see that as a thread running through Fairport for a long time." Holding that thread, the band unraveled and rewound entire spools of musical history, as it took tradi-

tional ditties like *Matty Groves* and *The Deserter* and arranged them over an electric rock rhythm section, with skirling fiddles, ringing guitars, and clear-voiced singing. In fact, *Matty Groves* (on *Liege & Lief*) is an example of this hybrid sound at its best, featuring, as it does, Thompson's Duane Eddy-derived guitar solo, complete with heavy twang and echo.

"... I didn't want to be like Eric Clapton, a British blues player. I try not to listen to other guitar players too much... though I do find listening to... Coleman Hawkins or Jimmy Smith is a help."

Asked why Fairport Convention decided to mine that particular traditional vein for material, the guitarist shrugs. "English white suburban kids that we were, we thought to ourselves, 'What's the point of trying to play as well as Muddy Waters? We're never going to make it; we don't have the basic experience. What's the point of being a British ersatz version of Hank Williams? What's the point of playing inferior jazz? Let's try and do something that at least has elements of indigenous quality to it, something that's based on where *we* come from.' So that's when we started looking at music from the British Isles and ways to *perform* it—preferably in a contemporary style. I suppose that's when we came to the inevitable conclusion that traditional amplified music was the thing to do." However inevitable hindsight makes it seem, Fairport Convention blazed a trail that countless bands soon followed.

Hindsight also makes the next step in the band's development seem inevitable.

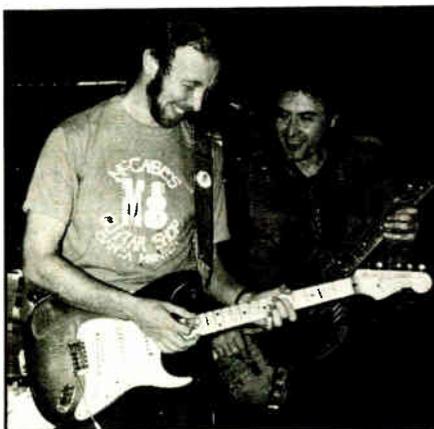
"We decided to try and write stuff in a derived style, a sort of contemporary British music," is how Thompson puts it. Which is just what they did: songs like his *Farewell, Farewell* or *Come All Ye* by vocalist Sandy Denny and bassist Hutchings (both on *Liege & Lief*) make full use of the idiom, the changes, and the modal melodies so prevalent in the folk material they adapted. But along with the group's individual songwriting efforts emerged new and different perspectives on their collective musical vision, which led to the band's dissolution in 1971-72. "It was fairly amicable at all times," Thompson recalls, "but there were a lot of strong personalities in Fairport, and it got hard to contain that many people for that long. People inevitably had their own ideas on how to do things and wanted to experiment."

* * *

Armed with his tunes, his guitar, his rich baritone voice, and his own ideas, Thompson performed as a solo artist briefly until he met Linda Peters, who soon became his co-vocalist as well as his wife. Not surprisingly, his music after Fairport Convention was soon showcasing his own forceful guitar work—the skewed, slashing, idiosyncratic lines that still snake through his music today. *I Want To See The Bright Lights Tonight*, his first album with Linda, makes the most of his virtuoso's range, with the Keith Richards-style acoustic chords on *Down Where The Drunkards Roll*, the stinging triplets, gut-wrenching bends, and dazzling register leaps on *When I Get To The Border*, and the pedal-steelish solo in *Withered And Died*.

The guitarist summarizes his basic approach to his instrument this way: "Because at a certain point I took a British slant on music, I didn't want to be like Eric Clapton; I didn't want to be a British blues player—that all seemed pretty boring. I try not to listen to other guitar players too much even today, though I do find listening to soloists on other instruments, like Coleman Hawkins or Jimmy Smith, is a help. I also listen to a lot of Irish and Northumbrian pipe music, which has a kind of sound, with grace notes and embellishments, that translates very well to the guitar. I like that kind of ring and sustain and trills and pulls that you get trying to imitate pipes." As for the other instruments he's mastered, the 34-year-old explains modestly, "I didn't really pick them up until I was in my 20s, and they were just sidelines to playing the guitar, really. It's just seeing stuff in junk shops and figuring out that it's got frets, so you have a rudimentary grasp of it straightaway. A mandolin, a dulcimer—if you're a guitarist you can pretty much make noises on them without too much trouble. To play them well comes a lot harder."

Also harder for Thompson was successfully reaching beyond his cult to a



PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

RICHARD THOMPSON'S EQUIPMENT

Of his equipment Richard Thompson draws, "I've only got one guitar, really. I'm not your phenomenally rich pop star, y'know; I'm your semi-phenomenally rich pop star. So if anyone could find me a '53 Telecaster, I'd be grateful." His "one guitar" turns out to be a 1957 Fender Stratocaster, standard except that "the wiring's been tampered with a little; I'm not at liberty to reveal how." In addition he has a Time guitar, custom-made for him, that follows the Strat configuration of three pickups ("with coil upon coil in there") and tremolo bar. For acoustic guitars Thompson relies on his 1965 Martin 000-18, as well as his double-cutaway custom-made axe by luthier Danny Farrington. "It's an extremely unusual guitar," Thompson enthuses. "Everything about it is special. For one thing it's all off-center, asymmetrical, and it has a very different sound because of that. It has less harmonic overtones: notes sound clearer and more distinctive, a bit more towards a piano."

Thompson's two amps are 1956 and 1960 models of the stalwart Fender Deluxe Reverb ("absurdly standard, but they sound great"). For touring he sometimes uses Music Man amps, which he finds "extremely good." As one who prefers tube amps, Thompson adds, "The only transistor amp I do like is the Yamaha line—their guitars are good as well." His effects include the Roland Boss chorus, a Morley volume pedal, a Korg echo/delay unit ("It's cheap, but it sounds nasty enough to sound authentic"), and a MESA preamp "to clean up and boost the signal."

The electric guitars are strung with Ernie Ball steels, .009 to .042; on the acoustics Thompson uses "whatever I can get—any kind of bronze, light-gauge string. The ones I like best are D'Addario and D'Addarios, but they're expensive." Picks are Gibson mediums, pear-shaped; "they used to be the Les Pauls." For finger-picking Thompson eschews anything but his own digits, "though I do break nails occasionally, which is a real drag. Generally I tend to play with a flat pick and two fingers."

RICHARD THOMPSON SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

HAND OF KINDNESS—Hannibal 1313
 SMALL TOWN ROMANCE—Hannibal 1316
 SHOOT OUT THE LIGHTS—Hannibal 1303
 STRICT TEMPO—Carthage 4409
 RICHARD THOMPSON—Carthage 4413
 HENRY THE HUMAN FLY—Carthage 4405
 SUNNYVISTA—Carthage 4403
 FIRST LIGHT—Carthage 4412
 POUR DOWN LIKE SILVER—Carthage 4404
 HOKEY POKEY—Carthage 4408
 I WANT TO SEE THE BRIGHT LIGHTS TONIGHT—Carthage 4407

with Fairport Convention

FULL HOUSE—A&M 4265
 LIEGE & LIEF—A&M 4257
 UNHALFBRICKING—A&M 4206
 FAIRPORT CONVENTION—A&M 4185
 FAIRPORT CONVENTION—Cotillion/Atlantic 9024

larger audience. Though the string of albums he released with Linda between 1974 and 1980 garnered largely favorable and enthusiastic reviews, airplay and distribution were extremely limited—unfortunately, because on *Sunnyvista*, for example, Thompson's effective deployment of a wide variety of musical idioms really comes into its own, from the tango-based title track to the Cajunish reel of *Saturday Rolling Around*; on *Civilization*, Thompson uncorks a brief gem of a solo that combines trilling with wang-bar manipulation for stunning results. "It's pretty Hendrixy, that technique," he explains. "He was the first person I heard doing that kind of stuff on guitar. Saxophone players do that sort of thing quite a lot as well, where you trill and you bend at the same time. I love it, and there are a lot more possibilities in that direction I want to explore." He pauses, then deadpans, "I'm planning to become a heavy metal guitar player." Unlikely as that is, there's no denying that Thompson's especially prominent guitar on 1982's *Shoot Out The Lights* helped propel that album onto most critics' 10-best list for the year. Ironically, since it was the last time Richard and Linda would record together, *Shoot Out The Lights* also attracted the attention of larger audiences who, spurred by the likes of *Time* and *Rolling Stone*, began to perk up their ears and take notice.

And with good reason. The starkly emotional, carefully crafted songs are set flawlessly within richly textured arrangements, over which Thompson's Strat lines—farther up in the mix than ever before—shimmer and bite, groan and ring with the edge of abandon. Asked how he captured that sense of spontaneity, Thompson replies, "I record all my stuff live, including solos, so it's sort of every man for himself: the solos I put on record come out mistakes and all. I don't think we've ever done more than four takes of a tune. It's the choice I make, really, to record live. I do try to structure the solos; I suppose you *do* think of a solo in terms of a beginning, a middle, and an end, like you're telling a story—that's what you aspire to, anyway." Discussing individual solos, he continues, "My favorite solo on *Shoot Out The Lights* was on *Did She Jump Or Was She Pushed?*, because it has a completeness and a spontaneity; I don't know *how* I did it, but I might one day be able to do it again [laughs]. The solo for *Walking On A Wire* was done on a Strat through a Roland Boss chorus and a delay unit; that motif at the end is Algerian. I know literally hundreds of North African tunes, and use things from them all the time. For *Shoot Out The Lights* itself, we did three or four takes over a week, and I felt that of them that version was the best *track*, but possibly not the strongest solo. That's the kind of compromise you have to make when you're doing live solos. For that twangy

opening I unscrewed the tuning peg and then retightened it, while the harmonics later on in the solo are the kind you get with your thumb next to the pick—if you hit those fairly sloppily you can get some bizarre effects."

No more bizarre an effect, though, than the ending of personal and professional relations between Richard and Linda just as their music began to find an audience. Drawing on his Sufi Muslim beliefs for support, Thompson went back into the studio for 1983's *Hand Of Kindness* and came out with a guitar-powered winner. Soon there followed, as with *Shoot Out The Lights*, widespread critical acclaim and a triumphant American tour, this time with Thompson alone fronting a "big band" (the usual rock-style lineup augmented by a horn section). They gleefully scrambled up their sets with odd numbers like Glenn Miller's old *Pennsylvania 6-5000*. "I had to keep the horn section happy," Thompson grins. "Pete Thomas had a bicycle bell on his sax, and I had to give him *something* to do with it." His on-stage eclecticism and humor further underscored Thompson's own tunes of irony and vulnerability, wit and resignation—and the audiences loved it.

Thompson has put the final touches on an LP scheduled for imminent release. It also marks another ending in Thompson's career—it will appear on Polygram, not Hannibal. As he explains, "With Hannibal we'd reached a maximum sales figure in America, and we want to do better. With Polygram I'm sure we will." As for the new record itself, he says with typical candor, "It's a strange record; I'm not sure what to make of it myself. Some of it's in German. We did have one word in Zulu, but we took it off because we thought that was a bit too trendy, with Talking Heads and all [laughs]. But I guess you could say it's generally in the vein of the last two albums, though with less horns than *Hand Of Kindness*. There are some medieval instruments on there instead: shawms, krummhorns, a regal, all manner of things—a potpourri of ill-tempered instruments," he puns mysteriously.

Queried about what he would choose to do as a "dream" project, Thompson characteristically reaches out for the unexpected in the form of a well-known exponent of the well-tempered keyboard. "I'd love to work with McCoy Tyner sometime. I really like his keyless modality, and I think he's great." An actual upcoming project that Thompson happily anticipates is a collaborative instrumental album with guitarists Fred Frith and Henry Kaiser. But first, there's the new LP, tour rehearsals, and the tour itself (stateside in March and April), then back to Europe for at least the month of May. "I'm going to be pretty busy for a while," says Richard Thompson, sounding more than a bit pleased. **db**

The Modern Jazz Quartet

FORM AND RE-FORM

By Will Friedwald

“Show up at the studio at noon,” the voice on the phone said. “They’ll be able to talk to you after they’ve finished rehearsing.” The Modern Jazz Quartet rehearsing? Surely, if there’s one group in jazz that *doesn’t* need to rehearse, it’s the Modern Jazz Quartet. It’s been 30 years since they’ve even had a personnel change! They’ve been playing together so long that not only can they anticipate each other’s every move, but one also suspects that they all get hungry at the same time and wake up at the exact same time every morning. (“And more importantly,” emphasizes bassist Percy Heath, “we all play cards at the same time!”)

But the more they rehearse, the better they get. It’s the only way they’ll add to their ever-growing list in the mythical *Guinness Book Of Jazz Accomplishments*. The list already includes the most successful mixture of composition and improvisation in all of music, the longest-lived and most consistently excellent small group in jazz, and the most satisfying fusion of jazz and European classical music ever achieved. The new addition to this list is a worthy one: the most important comeback in jazz history.

As even the newest **down beat** reader must know by now, the MJQ is back. After seven years of heading in separate directions, they temporarily re-formed for a tour of Japan in 1981. This led to the decision to stay together a few months a year, and from there they moved to full-time activity. Last summer the group’s first record since their 1974 *Farewell Concert* was released to almost unanimously positive reviews, and their second disc since the reunion, a 1982 concert at Montreux, is due this month from Pablo Records.

In photos the group resembles Mount Rushmore, not only for the stately majesty of their faces, but also for the way in which any one of the four would somehow seem incorrect without the other three beside him. In conversation they are anything but statuesque, and instead resemble and oppose their stage personae in revealing ways. As he sounds on wax, vibist Milt Jackson is the most aggressive and animated member of the group, while bassist Heath and drummer Connie Kay, who never were content or even expected to be mere timekeepers, always have something to add. On the other hand, John Lewis, the group’s pianist and musical director, is reticent to the point of embarrassing shyness. “But not when I’m performing,” he conceded recently to Gary Giddins, “I love to perform.”



The MJQ in the '80s . . .



. . . in the '70s . . .



. . . and in the '60s.



ANTHONY EDGEWORTH

THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET TODAY: From left, John Lewis, Connie Kay, Percy Heath, and Milt Jackson.

The origin of the Modern Jazz Quartet has been told so often that it hardly bears repeating here, but a few points require clarification. Although it is well known that the MJQ came into the world as the combination rhythm section and band-within-a-band of the 1947 Dizzy Gillespie Orchestra, Lewis is too-often portrayed as a sort of counter revolutionary, who sought to harness the free-blowing style of the first generation of beboppers with European formal techniques. Actually, Lewis was doing nothing more than building on an idea that Gillespie had initiated. With the big band Gillespie sought to reconcile his new music with the conventions of both pre-modern jazz and the mainstream of popular music. Lewis took this notion of reconciliation a vital step further, beyond jazz and pop and into a shadowy domain up to that point only marginally explored by jazzers: Western classical music.

By 1956, when Connie Kay had replaced the group's first drummer, Kenny Clarke, and helped relocate them to Atlantic Records ("I put Atlantic in business," says Kay, who was the label's house drummer before joining the MJQ), Lewis' search for a linking point between jazz and classical music had borne fruit. He built his bridge at the same place where engineers always build bridges: the narrowest point between the two musics. Baroque music stands in relation to the later Classical and Romantic styles at about the same position that ragtime prefaces jazz, and it suited Lewis' purposes for any number of reasons. For one, Baroque composers rarely used the extra-musical, programmatic associations that later became part of

the Romantic period (Berlioz and Beethoven are good examples); in its place was a concern for form that drew attention to itself, much the same way Lewis wanted his forms to compete with the individual statements of his soloists. For another, Baroque style was built on repeated rhythmic patterns with filled-in chords much the same way bebop was, and even left the choice of these chords open to the player, making Baroque the only genre of European concert music that provided improvisation. Lastly, Lewis proved that the Baroque fugue form—which emphasized the repetition and variation of a given musical motive (riff)—could be as valid a vehicle for jazz performance as the blues or the popular song.

Only a group that worked with such dedication and stayed together as long as the MJQ could have pulled it off. They were on the road for 22 years, not even taking time for a summer vacation until 1962, building up "years of prestige" (as Heath put it) and a considerable following along the way. They also found time to become jazz' ultimate high-class act, performing in concert halls instead of cabarets, starting and ending sets on time rather than showing up late and then endlessly jamming, and avoiding drugs and any other of the million hobgoblins that have stereotypically bedeviled jazz musicians. As Lewis told Nat Hentoff, "We don't want to look like a bunch of tramps." This provoked a much-quoted and characteristically generous reaction from Miles Davis, who compared the MJQ's dignified approach to "Ray Robinson bringing dignity to boxing by fighting in a tuxedo" (which didn't stop Davis from joining the ever-increasing list of jazzmen, from Stan Kenton to Wynton Marsalis, who have recorded Lewis' best-known composition, *Django*). But Davis' wisecrack might have been made out of jealousy for a group that achieves the highest possible level of audience rapport *every* time out. "It's just a



ROBERT STEINAU

CROWD PLEASER: The MJQ at the French Lick Jazz Festival.

.....
 midding night for them," one young fan was overheard saying between sets at a recent gig at New York's Blue Note, "meaning they're only terrific."

Fans like these wanted the MJQ to go on forever, but in jazz '22 years is forever. In 1969 Milt Jackson said, "The quartet will *never* break up." But 15 years later, the same Milt Jackson, with an obvious chip on his shoulder after a decade of being asked the same question, pleaded *mea maximus culpa* for the group's disintegration: "I decided to leave, and when I left, they decided to disband." Lewis, in the

New York Times, accused Jackson of shortsightedness, and Kay not long ago said aloud what they all had been thinking, that "the break-up was a pretty foolish thing to do."

Though the split was inevitable, the reunion turned out to be equally so. There's no doubt in anyone's mind—including the MJQ themselves—that they would have re-formed even without the lucrative impetus of the Japanese tour. When Kay, who was the only one not to organize his own band during the years of silence, was asked what the re-formation meant to him, he said, "Money."

That the MJQ, one of the highest-paid acts in the bebop business, was never able to make money on a level comparable with its enormous pool of collective talent has always been a sore point to its members. Jackson feels that the critical fraternity has done much harm in segregating jazz from the large popular audience. "They used to write in magazines," charges Jackson, "that jazz was too sophisticated and that you couldn't dance to it. Now that's a restriction; that's a block right there. People who wanted to go out dancing would say, 'We don't want to go to a jazz concert because we can't dance.' The critics told them that beforehand, and now they come to us with a closed mind, and that's wrong."

"Dancing has changed," adds Heath. "Music means nothing; they're dancing to rhythm with fake instruments and fake everything else—their so-called dancing is just shaking their behinds. If you expect us to accommodate that, no!"

"It's just an attitude," Jackson continues. "Take [Bobby Timmons'] *Moanin'* played by Art Blakey and [Lee Morgan's] *The Sidewinder* over to Dick Clark. If they can't dance to those, send 'em home and don't let 'em come back!"

Although they never will rival even the least-gifted rock & roller for popularity, the MJQ has more followers than ever. Lewis' star, too, is rising again, now that a new generation of avant gardists are turning to classical music for ideas. Young players like David Murray have learned Lewis' lesson of paying as much attention to the form a solo appears in as to the solo

itself. As the late classical conductor Ernest Ansermet once prophesied for Sidney Bechet and for all of jazz, "His 'own way' is the highway the whole world will swing along tomorrow."

The re-formed MJQ travels Lewis' highway as far as they can go. Today, it is more of a quartet than ever before. Instead of the leader, star soloist, and sidemen setup which they began with in the very early '50s, the group has long since accomplished its goal of equal partnership between all four creative allies. When this observation was raised to Heath, he disagreed, but Lewis countered, saying that "It's intentional." Heath, Kay, and Jackson are also doing more writing for the band than ever before, although "John Lewis is still the musical director as far as my compositions are concerned," says Heath, "and I wouldn't try to infringe on that."

In addition to writing for the group, Heath and especially Jackson, who says he "has been writing as long as I've been playing music," will continue to work with their own units during the MJQ's off-seasons: Jackson with his continuing series of Pablo albums; Heath (and brother Jimmy) with the Heath Brothers Band. Kay, the least individually active, will lay off when he can; while Lewis is currently hard at work on his version of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*—"To play the pieces straight, with some feeling and then with improvisation," as he describes the project. "It's mostly for solo piano, but there are some other voices."

But for most of the year from now on, they'll be touring as the Modern Jazz Quartet, under the personal management of the great bassist Ray Brown. ("Ray showed me how to hold the bass properly," Heath told Whitney Balliett. "I always considered Ray the great rhythm man.") Through Brown, who previously managed Quincy Jones, they've signed with a new agency, the Association of Performing Artists, that is preparing for Lewis and the MJQ to work with symphony orchestras again, a reminder that in the '50s and '60s the four worked with no less than 36 such ensembles. However, Lewis has no plans for any permanent additions to the group because, he says, "This quartet is way too big for any guests right now."

It's a tricky thing to begin with a theoretical concept and then try to make music that sounds good in practice and performance. It's something that took generations of opera composers hundreds of years to perfect, and it's something that countless others in all types of music are still working on. But that is precisely what John Lewis, Connie Kay, Percy Heath, and Milt Jackson have accomplished, even if one chafes them for having what Lewis Carroll called the "curious sort of memory that only works backwards." Thus they'll continue to swing down Lewis' highway as four souls with a single voice. A voice that speaks to history. **db**

MODERN JAZZ QUARTET'S EQUIPMENT

Milt Jackson owns and travels with a 1937 Deagan vibraharp. **Percy Heath** plays a 200-year-old Rogeri acoustic bass. **Connie Kay** uses Sonor drums, with calf-skin heads as opposed to synthetic ones, and a Remo Roto-Tom. **John Lewis** owns two pianos, a Beckstein and a Steinway, and a harpsichord.

MODERN JAZZ QUARTET SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

MILT JACKSON: *THE FIRST Q*—Savoy 1106
 M-J-Q—Prestige 7059
 DJANGO—Prestige 7057
 CONCORDE—Prestige 7005
 SONNY ROLLINS WITH THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET—Prestige 7029
 PYRAMID—Atlantic 1325
 AT MUSIC INN WITH GUEST ARTIST SONNY ROLLINS—Atlantic 1299
 FONTESSA—Atlantic 1231
 THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET—Atlantic 1265
 WITH JIMMY GIUFFRÉ—Atlantic 90049-1
 NO SUN IN VENICE—Atlantic 1284
 THIRD STREAM MUSIC—Atlantic 1345
 LONELY WOMAN—Atlantic 1381
 THE LEGENDARY PROFILE—Atlantic 1623
 BLUES ON BACH—Atlantic 1652
 EUROPEAN CONCERT—Atlantic 2-603
 COLLABORATION—Atlantic 1429
 PORGY & BESS—Atlantic 1440
 DONAUESCHINGEN JAZZ CONCERT 1957—German MPS 68.161
 BEST OF . . .—Atlantic 1546
 BLUES AT CARNEGIE HALL—Atlantic 1468
 THE LAST CONCERT—Atlantic 2-909
 MORE FROM THE LAST CONCERT—Atlantic 8806
 ECHOES—Pablo Digital 2312-142

Vienna Art Orchestra

Variations On A Big Band Theme



by Francis Davis

DONNA PAUL

“Jazz has become an international language, I think,” says Mathias Rüegg, the 32-year-old Swiss-born leader of the Vienna Art Orchestra, referring to the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult (and increasingly spurious) to categorize creative music by national origin. “What the String Trio Of New York or Anthony Braxton’s groups are playing sounds more ‘European’ in some ways than the improvising of some of the cats in my band, like [saxophonists] Roman Schwaller and Harry Sokal, both of whom are well-versed in the European classical literature but have also gained a lot from working with black American improvisers like Mal Waldron and Art Farmer.”

Perhaps because government subsidies make it far easier to keep a large ensemble afloat in Europe—or perhaps because the very *concept* of a large jazz ensemble is so rooted in the European symphonic tradition—Europe has recently become a spawning ground for post-modernist big bands of a kind that hardly exist in the United States (or exist precariously at best). In the last few years Rüegg’s 14-member Vienna Art Orchestra has taken its place alongside Alexander von Schlippenbach’s Globe Unity Orchestra, the Willem Breuker Kollektief, and the George Gruntz Concert Jazz Band as the most invigorating of these fully contemporary behemoths. Internationalist in both outlook and personnel, the VAO offers far more than a pale European echo of American jazz in full cry. Yet “American jazz with—I hope—American timing and idiomatic American phrasing, but from a Euro-

pean point of view,” is the way Rüegg characterizes *Live At The Dead Sea*, the program of new Rüegg compositions the VAO premiered on its maiden tour of North America last fall. “The *style* as well as the philosophy of composition is the European part—certain of the sound combinations derive from the European classical tradition. But it’s American jazz in the sense that the writing is basically a vehicle to encourage individual expression from the soloists. I wanted to give the players a chance to blow as a reward for the good job they did on our last project, *The Minimalism Of Erik Satie*, where there was little room for individual interpretation.”

The grueling North American tour—sponsored in part by the Austrian government—got rolling in Washington.

DC the last weekend of September and climaxed with a recording session at Rudy Van Gelder’s studio three weeks later, after swings through Canada, the East Coast, the Sun Belt, Texas, and the Pacific Northwest. For the two American-born members of Rüegg’s troop (tuba player John Sass is originally from Boston, and scat singer-cum-vocal colorist Lauren Newton from Portland, OR), the tour represented a homecoming. For their leader it was something else. Rüegg had been to the United States once before, visiting New York only a year ago, but this time around he was seeing more of the U.S. than most Americans will ever get to see, and that he was seeing it all from much the same European vantage point from which he perceives jazz was underlined by his im-



MITCHELL SEIDEL

pressions of Texas. "It's like Italy or Spain," he declared, "not just the climate and the landscape, but the people as well. In the evening there is so much life—people strolling the streets singing, music coming from the open windows."

* * *

Homo sapiens demonstrate a remarkable ability to translate new experience back into the familiar, and perhaps only a European would think of comparing the Lone Star State to the Mediterranean. But the series of hat Art albums that preceded Rüeegg to America reveal that the ability to re-imagine what already exists—the ability to jolt the familiar with the shock of the new—is perhaps the most astonishing of Rüeegg's many gifts. *Concerto Piccolo*, the record that introduced American listeners to the VAO in 1981, and *Suite For The Green Eighties*, released the following year, were dominated by Rüeegg's cheeky extended compositions, the most attractive of which utilized pastiche to wring modernist changes on traditional forms—*Tango From Obango*, for instance, which was whimsically dedicated to the people and the sea of Obango, or the captivating *Em Hermineli Z'liab*, which Rüeegg describes as his "compositional mastering" of an authentic Swiss *ländler*. "The *ländler* is the music of the farmers, a folk dance that originated in Switzerland and the Austrian mountains and is usually played by two clarinets, contrabass, and bandoneon [a squeeze-box keyboard similar to the accordion]," Rüeegg explains. "People compare the *ländler* to the polka, but it reminds me of ragtime or dixieland in its happy-go-lucky feel. So it seemed only natural to use it as a setting for contrapuntal improvisation."

The VAO's most recent two albums have featured Rüeegg's arrangements of material by other composers—though his variations on these borrowed themes

frequently entail such complete overhaul that it is advisable to think of them as "recompositions" rather than "arrangements" in the conventional sense. *From No Time To Ragtime* weighed in as a kind of impudent, inverted chronology of jazz evolution, commencing in the present with Anthony Braxton's thorny, arrhythmic *N 508-10(4G)* and culminating with an orchestral enlargement of a Joplin rag. "I like to have a unified concept, a completely new program, for each tour we do," Rüeegg says, "and the concept that time was to perform 'Unknown Jazz Tunes'—that was the title I originally chose—pieces that had previously been played only by their composers but seemed to offer endless possibilities for expansion, like Roswell Rudd's *Keep Your Heart Right*, or Charles Mingus' *Jelly Roll*, which was his variation on Jelly Roll Morton, or Ornette Coleman's *Silence*, which is almost like Ornette's arrangement of John Cage's *4'33*", with all the breaks in Ornette's melody throwing the audience into confusion about how they're supposed to react. In concert we also performed other pieces not on the album, including pieces by Booker Little and Blood Ulmer. I also wanted to call attention to the writing being done by Austrian jazz composers, so I included on the record new pieces by Fritz Pauer and Hans Voller."

In its backtracking survey of jazz history, *From No Time To Ragtime* in a sense paralleled Rüeegg's own belated discovery of the jazz past. "I grew up playing classical music, and for three years I played Hammond organ in a rock band in Switzerland, as well as playing piano in a jazz trio modeled pretty much after Erroll Garner's, but for the most part my interest was in free jazz and the classical avant garde of the 20th century. Then gradually I worked my way backwards through bop and swing, until now I know quite a



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Mathias Rüeegg

bit about early jazz and ragtime." Indeed, although his heady eclecticism marks him as an unrepentant modernist, as a listener Rüeegg actually prefers jazz of the '20s and '30s because of the greater symbiotic relationship between composition and improvisation he hears in older styles.

Rüeegg's boldest venture so far was last year's *The Minimalism Of Erik Satie*—a crafty yet straightfaced series of transformations upon the scores of the flintiest of the French impressionist composers, involving vibist Woody Schabata, singer Lauren Newton, and the horns of the VAO. "There were several inspirations for that," Rüeegg says. "First, I wanted to do a program without rhythm section. Second, I wanted to prove that musicians can express themselves even without improvising. And third, I have always admired Erik Satie, who reminds me of Thelonious Monk in a way—they are both cranky humorists, lovers of nonsense. He was the forerunner of Cage and the minimalists, but he also influenced jazz musicians, indirectly through Bill Evans and Chick Corea. He was not writing jazz, of course, but he absorbed the rhythms of ragtime, just as Stravinsky did, and he anticipated much of modern jazz in his use of ancient modes and his impressionistic view of music. His compositions were predestined to be played by jazz musicians."

In wanting to obliterate the essentially bourgeois distinction between "serious" and "light" musics, Satie anticipated the efforts of contemporary jazz composers like Rüeegg in another sense as well. As Polish critic Jorge Solothurnmann once observed (and Rüeegg heartily concurs), the Vienna Art Orchestra does not play "serious" music, but it plays music seriously—a nice distinction equally applicable to any number of contemporary American jazz composers like Anthony



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Davis and Henry Threadgill, not to mention such classical avant gardists as Robert Ashley, Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson, and Glenn Branca.

Rüegg, who was born in Zurich and came to Austria as a teenager to study composition, says "nothing was happening in jazz in Vienna when I arrived there 10 years ago, but it was a good place to make a beginning, because there was a lot of money allocated for culture, and the government officials were very favorably disposed toward jazz. In Austria now, we are accepted the way a symphonic orchestra would be. We are considered worthy of being sent out as ambassadors on cultural missions." (Wouldn't George Russell or Muhal Richard Abrams love to be able to say the same thing?)

The VAO evolved out of alliances Rüegg formed while playing solo piano in a Viennese night club for two years in the mid-'70s. Each month or so he would invite another musician to join him (beginning with alto saxophonist Wolfgang Puschnig) until eventually he had what amounted to a big band on his hands. For the last six years the VAO has enjoyed more or less stable personnel—a crucial factor in the band's excellence, given Rüegg's admission that he writes for specific instrumentalists (much as Mingus and Ellington did) rather than for specific combinations of instruments. "The different soloists in the band and I have known each other for so long now that when they improvise, I can almost predict beforehand what they will play," he says, "and that is something I take into consideration as I write our music."

The VAO concert I attended in Haverford, PA (if Texas reminded Rüegg of Italy, what images of the Black Forest did Philadelphia's leafy suburban main line trigger in his mind?) threw the spotlight on the band's improvisers, just as Rüegg had promised, and they exercised their options with such cohesion and such a feel for thematic exposition as to make Rüegg's charts seem prescient in divining composition and improvisation as all of a piece. As conductor, Rüegg gets to stand with his back to the audience without being accused of being rude. Tall and slender, wearing a hip-length black leather jacket and wrinkled black cords, his long scraggly hair tucked behind his ears, he hardly presents the authoritarian figure one expects of a conductor. He walked off-stage several times during the set, and frequently knelt passively with head bowed to sheet music in the semicircle formed by the standing horns. Yet if it appeared as though he had nothing to do, it was because his work had already been done—and done beautifully. His hand was clearly evident in the sequencing of soloists and the complementary backdrops he provided for them, cushioning an airy Newton



CONNIE PAUL

VIENNA ART ORCHESTRA'S EQUIPMENT

Let's start with the brass: **Herbert Joos** plays a Benge flugelhorn and trumpet; a Barth baritone horn, and a Pilatus alphorn; **Hannes Kottek** wields a Benge trumpet and Getzen flugel, while **Karl Fian** blows a Holton trumpet and Cowson flugelhorn. **Christian Radovan** hoists a King trombone, as **John Sass** kicks out the bottom on a Cervanny tuba.

Reedwise, we find **Wolfgang Puschnig** playing Selmer alto and soprano saxes, and Yamaha flute and piccolo. **Harry Sokal's** similar setup is Selmer for tenor and soprano sax. Yamaha for flute, and **Roman Schwaller** makes it unanimous with a Selmer tenor.

Malletman **Woody Schabata** pounds a Studio 49 set of vibes with Good Vibes mallets. **Uli Scherer**, besides tickling the local acoustic ivories, programs a Yamaha DX-7 synthesizer. **Heiri Kaenzig's** electric bass is made by J&L, his acoustic bass pickup is by Underwood, and his amp is a Walter Woods with an Electro-Voice B-115 speaker.

Drummer **Wolfgang Reisinger** favors Sonor: an 18-inch bass drum, 10- and 13-inch rack toms, 16-inch floor tom, and a wooden snare. His skins are Remo FiberSkyn 2. For sticks he prefers Paiste maple 4s, and his Paiste cymbals include 14-inch medium Sound Edge dark hi-hats, 22-inch Sound Creation dark ride, 20-inch Sound Creation ride/crash, 15-inch Ride crash, Formula 2002 20-inch flat ride, Formula 602 22-inch dark China, plus Paiste 2002 cup chimes and four Sound Creation gongs. And then there's the miscellaneous percussion he adds—Indian bells, cow bells, Latin Percussion bar chimes, agogo bells, caxixi, triangles, cabasa, tambourines, whistles, opera gong, woodblock, maracas, guiro, vibra-slap, shekere, and Indian temple cymbals.

Joris Dudli, meanwhile, drums on a Tama 18-inch bass drum, 10- and 12-inch rack toms, a 14-inch floor tom, and a wooden snare, with Remo heads and a combination of Zildjian and Paiste cymbals.

And, of course, **Lauren Newton's** microphone of choice is an AKG D-321.

VIENNA ART ORCHESTRA SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

TANGO FROM OBANGO—Art 1002
 THE MINIMALISM OF ERIK SATIE—hat Art 2005
 FROM NO TIME TO RAGTIME—hat Art 1999/2000
 SUITE FOR THE GREEN EIGHTIES—hat Art 1991/2
 CONCERTO PICCOLO—hat Art 1980/1
 Vienna Art Choir
 FROM NO ART TO MO-(Z)-ART—Moers MUsic 2002
 Part Of Art
 MOEBIUS—Sesam 1005
 SON SAUVAGE—Extraplatte 316135
 Lauren Newton
 TIMBRE—hat Music 3511
 CONTRAST—Paddle Wheel K28 P6243
 VOCAL SUMMIT—Moers Music 2004

vocal with tuba, for instance, and topping it with flute; turning percussionists Joris Dudli and Wolfgang Reisinger loose to splash behind a ducky Wolfgang Puschnig soprano chorus; stockpiling riffs behind a boisterous, heated Roman Schwaller/Harry Sokal tenor exchange that recalled similar confrontations between Johnny Griffin and Eddie "Lock-jaw" Davis.

In concert no less than on record, Rüegg's most valuable accomplice was Lauren Newton, who lines up with the horns and whose timbre and vocal catches are equal parts Cathy Berberian and Anita O'Day. "I had always wanted to write for voice, and when I met Lauren, I thought she was the best singer I had ever heard," says Rüegg of the American singer who gives his music its delicious garnish, and who has also collaborated with Rüegg on the Vienna Art Choir's album *From No Art To Mo-(Z)-Art*.

The Vienna Art Choir is just one of the VAO's offshoots. With their leader's blessing, Puschnig, Reisinger, trumpeter Herbert Joos, and pianist Uri Scherer moonlight as Part Of Art (with bassist Jurgen Wochner). "An orchestra presents inhibitions to a creative player, no matter how one tries to make improvisation part of the overall structure. In the quintet they get to blow more, and that is good for them," says Rüegg, who describes himself as the band's patron as well as its maestro.

All of his composer's royalties go back into the VAO's upkeep "because it is important for me to hear my compositions realized—otherwise they remain abstractions on paper. I constantly have offers to write for other bands—to become a kind of free-lance arranger, in effect—but I turn them all down because I like to be able to collaborate with the musicians who will eventually play the music that I write, and the only way I can be sure of accomplishing that is to write only for my own orchestra." (One commission that piqued his interest, and which he did not reject, came from the king of Thailand, who requested three pieces the VAO premiered in Bangkok and reprised on their American tour.)

Although it distances him some from his music in performance, Rüegg no longer plays piano with the VAO. "I'm so busy composing all our music, copying all the individual parts, securing funding for our concerts, and arranging our itinerary that I no longer have time to practice!" he jokingly complains. "Why bother anyway, you know? Uri is a fantastic pianist—a much better improviser than me anyway. There is only so much one person can do, and I had to decide what my role in this band was going to be. I chose the role of bandleader." As was so often said of Ellington, Rüegg's instrument is the orchestra. And it is an instrument to which he brings both facility and imagination. **db**



CLIFFORD JORDAN

REPETITION—Soul Note 1084: *THIRD AVENUE; FUN; REPETITION; EVIDENCE; NOSTALGIA/CASBAH; HOUSE CALL; QUIT 'N TIME.*

Personnel: Jordan, tenor saxophone; Barry Harris, piano; Walter Booker, bass; Vernel Fournier, drums.

★★★★

STARTING TIME—Jazzland OJC-147: *SUNRISE IN MEXICO; EXTEMPORE; DOWN THROUGH THE YEARS; QUITTIN' TIME; ONE FLIGHT DOWN; WINDMILL; DON'T YOU KNOW I CARE; MOSAIC.*

Personnel: Jordan, tenor saxophone; Kenny Dorham, trumpet; Cedar Walton, piano; Wilbur Ware, bass; Albert Heath, drums.

★★★★½

Clifford Jordan is a fine wine among tenor saxophonists, and he came from a reliably good crop: Chicago jazzers of the 1950s (note how many have been in the limelight over the past decade). Jordan, unobtrusive and never heavy-handed as a stylist and yet obviously muscular in his attack, has quietly aged well. The bouquet of his music, dry though full-bodied, is impossible to appreciate if you like music in a hurry. This is wine to be savored, then sipped. Jordan himself, even at fast tempos, is an uncannily relaxed improviser, one of the best-paced saxophonists around.

Recorded 23 years apart, these albums share Jordan's tune *Quit 'N Time*, and their respective titles provoke the ironic. *Starting Time* has no title tune but was a tribute in 1961 to the promise Clifford Jordan continues to fulfill; *Repetition*, after the Nea Hefti number, attests to Jordan's continuity in the bop tradition, his sensitivity with a ballad that affirms his stature as a giant, and is a testimony to his own perseverance.

Starting Time is a quintet date featuring two tunes each by Kenny Dorham and Cedar Walton, with whom Jordan has had a lasting alliance. Several evocative selections here, like Walton's *Mosaic* and Dorham's Indianist *Sunrise In Mexico*, brought out the lyrical penchant in Jordan that not even the trumpeter's *Windmill* can overwhelm. Ironically (and I recall feeling this way when the album first appeared), only Jordan's rendition of Duke Ellington and Mack David's *Don't You Know I Care* takes on the often lackluster quality that characterized too many ballads in 1961, a kind of obligatory reading to fill out a set whose strength lay in original writing.

Repetition offers monster performances by bassist Walter Booker, who too long has been under wraps. It's always delightful to listen to the attentive Vernel Fournier and a Barry Harris

intent on being fully a part of the music (Monkishly at times) without getting in the way. The album displays ensemble sensitivity and commitment all the way, with the title tune as the centerpiece. Jordan solos casually as if to survey the landscape and comment on its many details; his is an ease so magnificent in its big sound it could make you faint-hearted. It involves the grandeur annotator Stanley Crouch attributes to the mature improviser; you wonder if today's young and praised will have it as they gray. On *Nostalgia/Casbah*, the blend of Dameron and Navarro over *Out Of Nowhere*, and Jordan's own *Third Avenue* and *House Call*, the collective ensemble mind is heightened as the saxophonist displays his ability to achieve filigree of dynamics, then robust attack, and then float above the energy and foundation he's empowered.

Clifford Jordan has never made a bad album. *Repetition* is perhaps his best.

—ron welburn



LOS LOBOS

HOW WILL THE WOLF SURVIVE?—Slash/Warner Bros. 25177: *DON'T WORRY BABY; A MATTER OF TIME; CORRIDA #1; OUR LAST NIGHT; THE BREAKDOWN; I GOT LOADED; SERENATA NORTEÑA; EVANGELINE; I GOT TO LET YOU KNOW; LIL' KING OF EVERYTHING; WILL THE WOLF SURVIVE?*

Personnel: David Hidalgo, vocals, guitars, accordion, lap steel guitar, percussion; Cesar Rosas, vocals, guitars, bajo sexto, mandolin; Steve Berlin, soprano, tenor, baritone saxophone, percussion; Conrad Lozano, bass, guitar, vocals; Louie Perez, drums, guitar, quinto; Alex Acuna, percussion; T-Bone Burnett, acoustic guitar, organ.

★★★★

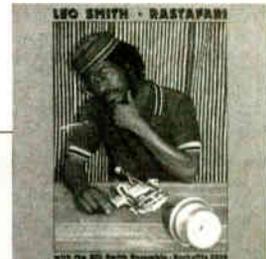
The first three songs on this album, the first for L.A.'s Los Lobos, loosely define the limits of the group's sound. *Don't Worry Baby* is a ferocious guitar boogie, a slice of raw Texas blues. *A Matter Of Time* is much different, a melancholy rock ballad with a New Orleans r&b flavor. *Corrida #1* represents yet another direction, this one based on traditional Mexican music with its two-beat rhythm and prominent accordion.

At first, it's a bit of a shock hearing these tunes back-to-back-to-back. The question immediately arises: Have the Wolves taken on too large a beast? I don't think so. As the rest of the album makes clear, these musicians are remarkably good at integrating all their influences. The Los Lobos style, as defined here, is a complex brew of Southwestern sounds—Texas, Louisiana, California, Mexico—but its appeal is not parochial. Like Ry Cooder, who

has also drawn from the same rich sources, Los Lobos have tapped the vitality of their roots and come up with something unique. Their sound is perhaps not as sophisticated as Cooder's—less cerebral and more from the gut—but their ability to rework old ideas into a new sound is no less convincing.

A lot of factors contribute to their appeal—the punch of the rhythm section, the impressive variety of instrumental colors, the clever songwriting and arranging—but perhaps the single most important one is the contrast between the band's two lead vocalists. The alternation of David Hidalgo and Cesar Rosas—one smooth and plaintive, the other rough and powerful—adds a tremendous amount of depth to the music and helps to give each song a clear focus. I don't think it's an overstatement to say that their voices are as important to the impact of this music as Lennon's and McCartney's were to the Beatles.

What comes through after listening to this album repeatedly is a strong feeling that this band really knows its own identity. Everything they do is concise and to the point—there's nothing muddled or trendy about it. That sort of purity is pretty rare these days. —jim roberts



LEO SMITH

RASTAFARI—Sackville 3030: *RASTAFARI; RITUALS; MADDER LAKE; LITTLE BITS.*

Personnel: Smith, trumpet, flugelhorn, percussion, harmonica; Bill Smith, alto clarinet, soprano, soprano saxophone; David Prentice, violin; David Lee, bass, cello; Larry Potter, vibes.

★★★★½

BREAK THE SHELLS—FMP 0920: *UNLOST TIME; RASTAFARI IN THE UNIVERSE; BREAK THE SHELLS.*

Personnel: Smith, trumpet, flugelhorn, thumb piano; Peter Kowald, bass; Gunter Sommer, drums.

★★★★

Here is American trumpeter Leo Smith in Canada, with the Bill Smith group (no relation to Bill Smith, the Seattle composer and Brubeck clarinetist), and in Germany, with a trio from both sides of the Iron Curtain (Gunter Sommer is from East Germany). Most of the music on both LPs is freely—in terms of rhythm, harmonic structure, theme—improvised, a way of creating that Ornette Coleman forecast with his early '60s trio with David Izenzon and Charles Moffett. Those early Coleman aesthetics of spontaneity and group interplay are shared in these collaborations: the music's objective is ensemble creating, and Leo is the catalyst around whom creation crystallizes.

RECORD REVIEWS

In free improvisation smallest ensembles are best, otherwise lines and textures become obscured and direction dispersed. On *Rastafari* the problem is generally solved by one or more players dropping out of the ensemble from passage to passage. Extensive, very sober improvisation is the content of three tracks—the trumpeter provides the music's warmth. I especially like the first half of *Madder Lake*, in which a quiet, languid mystery is sustained over a dark and mobile bass while Leo, remarkably, extends the others' isolated, fragmentary ideas into satisfying moods. In *Little Bits*, here and there are improvised ghosts of Roscoe Mitchell's *L-R-G*, perhaps not surprising since leader/composer Bill Smith's reed playing very much recalls the thematic procedures of Chicago saxmen Mitchell, Joseph Jarman, and Anthony Braxton. Like Bill, vibist Larry Potter plays brittle, thematically developed thoughts, while the two string players conceive in longer lines. Violinist David Prentice's efforts toward expressive sound are admirable; he and the cellist, David Lee, bowing together, suggest a sort of post-Bartok gypsy idiom.

The remaining track is the title composition, by Leo. It moves through a series of contrasting, seemingly incongruous events differentiated in terms of range, sound/silence duration, velocity, color, from shredded counterpoint and long-note value to smaller units (including a sparkling duet between the two Smiths) to suspended, floating moments. It's an obliquely structured, deceptively flowing work, like Leo's improvising, and a very substantial performance.

Whereas Leo is clearly the central figure of the Canadian LP, in *Break The Shells* his spontaneity, technique, and capacity for strong emotion are matched by the bassist and drummer. This disc is the successor to the very fine Smith/Kowald/Sommer *Touch The Earth* (FMP 0730), from 1979. In fact, for half its length this is the equal of its distinguished ancestor; both are wholly improvised. In contrast to the Canadian quintet, this music is intense, even in passages of free, open space. Trumpet tones open *Unlost Time* into a roar of bass; low drums convey an advancing army's threat, over which Smith develops long tones into lines and then spits of sound. There's a delightful flow of motion in *Rastafari In The Universe*, as Smith plays fluent wooden flute melodies over a berimbau-like high bowed bass line that becomes a rhythm on small bells while trumpet and bass draw into counterpoint; agitated passages follow, and also an Oriental mood of a trumpet/space line over very long, sustained tones.

Bassist Peter Kowald is a charged player, sometimes melodramatic, while the bold Sommer is a peer of drummers like Andrew Cyrille, Milford Graves, Sunny Murray. When they meet the highly individualistic, carefully balanced, essentially lyrical lines of Leo Smith, their own personalities become defined by the freedom of idiom. The sidelong title track also has fine moments, yet by and large is less closely attuned. At their best, this trio offers interplay as rich and provocative as the best of free ensemble music, so *Break The Shells* is recommended listening.

—john litweiler



JOHN ABERCROMBIE

NIGHT—ECM 1272: *ETHEREGGAE; NIGHT; 3 EAST; LOOK AROUND; BELIEVE YOU ME; FOUR ON ONE.*

Personnel: Abercrombie, guitar; Mike Brecker, tenor saxophone; Jan Hammer, keyboards; Jack DeJohnette, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

JOHN SCOFIELD

ELECTRIC OUTLET—Gramavision 8405: *JUST MY LUCK; BIG BREAK; BEST WESTERN; PICK HITS; FILIBUSTER; THANKS AGAIN; KING FOR A DAY; PHONE HOME.*

Personnel: Scofield, guitars, DMX bass; David Sanborn, alto saxophone; Ray Anderson, trombone; Peter Levin, synthesizer; Steve Jordan, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

Abercrombie and Scofield. Not tea merchants to the scones-and-crumpets set. Not founding fathers of a staid specialty store or restaurant. As we know, they're two perceptive, exacting musicians with solid claims to being preeminent exponents of the contemporary electric guitar. Abercrombie first began closing the gap between jazz and rock guitar techniques with the early fusioners *Dreams* and hasn't looked back. Scofield, with Miles or on his own, refuses to be shackled to specific influences and styles. They've collaborated: the pleasing, boppish *Solar* album from Palo Alto last year. Each guitarist has a newly released album, and both are found in group settings speaking equally compelling dialects of the same fretted, amplified language.

Scofield's *Electric Outlet* won't raise the hair on your head, but nonetheless it delivers a good jolt. All through the Scofield-penned album tracks, the Connecticut native unwinds skeins of chord-based singing notes. His urgency is most often gloriously understated, dynamic contrast to the forthright heavy touch of drummer Steve Jordan and his own muscular bass lines. The funk-ed-up fever of *Pick Hits* seemingly demands guitar flamboyance, but instead Scofield packs a wallop with a levelheaded, frugal response—and it's just right. While *Just My Luck* nearly boils over into a permuted blues boogie, he constructs sensible, emotive Ibanez improvisations with characteristic grace-under-fire. The lazy *Thanks Again* has him limning the blues feeling, which is fully embraced on the jaunty Albert and B. B. homage, *King For A Day*. His lyricism, perhaps most effectively expressed in the calm *Best Western*, appears unforced and natural.

Indeed, Scofield's comrades sizzle, energizing like a committed band. Peter Levin, alongside Jordan the powerhouse, discerningly anneals the proceedings on synthesizer. Trombonist Ray Anderson and saxman David Sanborn are efficient bit players here, but it's when the guitarist plugs in that we really hear the sparks.

Abercrombie's *Night* makes more cerebral demands of the listener than *Electric Outlet*, as it's richer in its artfulness. The articulate conviction of Abercrombie's playing is ennobled by his extraordinary rapport with drummer Jack DeJohnette, the result of years of close musical involvement. Further poignancy is supplied by the large contributions of tenor saxophonist Mike Brecker and Jan Hammer on electric and acoustic keyboards.

The aural pleasures are pervasive. Hammer's *Etherggae* weaves its quasi-reggae spell with dulcet electronic ivory timbres and impassioned solos, first by Brecker, then Abercrombie. Principal songwriter Abercrombie's title song calls to mind the mysterious stillness of the darkness, and *Four On One* is riveting extemporaneous boldness. *Believe You Me* mesmerizes due to its (old Mahavishnu Orchestra-like) spiritual flammability—note recurring organ and the ascending modal feel of the piece.

—frank-john hadley



QUEST

QUEST—Palo Alto 8061: *DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE; WISTERIA; SOFTLY AS IN A MORNING SUNRISE; ELM; NAPANOCH; LONELY WOMAN.*

Personnel: Dave Liebman, soprano saxophone, alto flute; Richie Beirach, piano; George Mraz, bass; Al Foster, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Recorded in 1981 but only recently released, *Quest* in many ways represents a continuation of the directions Dave Liebman and Richie Beirach took with the short-lived but fruitful Lookout Farm band. Both the *Quest* band and Lookout Farm evidence a careful, sophisticated concern with musical ends as well as means and with broadening their members' resources for improvisation while at the same time demanding complete concentration and conviction from them.

Al Foster's *Dr. Jekyll And Mr. Hyde*, like Lookout Farm's *M.D.*, is a portrait of Miles Davis, evoking Davis' shifting moods. Pianist Beirach is pensively lyrical, playing a loose, non-jazz solo by conventional standards, enhanced by bassist George Mraz' echoing of his melodic lines. Beirach plays without seemingly imposing his will on the music, allowing it to flow in its own directions. Liebman continues

this attitude, joining Beirach in staccato melodic fragments. Throughout this cohesive exploration of Davis' persona, the group is constantly responsive to the direction the music is taking, moving not by the force of its individual voices but by the strength of its collective musical personality. And while collective improvisation is hardly a new idea in jazz, rarely has a group played with such attentive listening to the nuances implied by its own inner workings.

Wisteria, a slow, calm waltz, again blurs the conventional line between solo and accompaniment in a small group context. Mraz, a sensitive, melodic bassist, matches Beirach's thoughtful lyricism, and when Beirach plays behind Liebman's sax, he doesn't merely comp but plays responsive melodic backgrounds. *Softly As In A Morning Sunrise* is a study of this tune's harmonic implications; the melody is stated only obliquely. Throughout, the group strives to expand this tune, to probe deeper into its structure, to play into it rather than play on it. The result is a piece that grows out of itself; even Al Foster's drum interchanges point in this direction.

The band's collective attentiveness is audible in other ways. Solos seem not only individual statements but also extensions of the musical thought that preceded them. This attitude carries over to the modal burned *Napanoch*, a piece borrowed from the Lookout Farm book. The group's concentrated energy doesn't still its internal rapport and cohesive development of its material. Equally cohesive is *Lonely Woman*, done more freely than Ornette Coleman's original version. Liebman solos over an ethereal background of cymbal swishes, bass drones, and strummed piano strings. The effect is that of a miniature, fluid jazz orchestra enveloping Coleman's haunting melody. This and the music that has gone before is no small achievement.

This album is a must for anyone interested in the possibilities and beauties of small group improvisation. —jon balleras

MAKOTO OZONE

MAKOTO OZONE—Columbia 39624: *CRYSTAL LOVE; I NEED YOU HERE; FLIGHT; ENDLESS SEASON I; II; IMPROVISATION.*

Personnel: Ozone, piano; Gary Burton, vibes (cuts 1, 4, 5); Eddie Gomez, bass (1, 2, 5).

★ ★ ★ ½

For all its adulation of Western culture and uncanny ability to reproduce its products, Japan has come up with precious few jazz musicians for export. Along with Scotch whiskey and Spanish guitars and all manner of optical equipment, Japan ships out splendid keyboard instruments and oodles of jazz albums, both reissue and new, but almost no jazz practitioners. The artists are there, all right, for *Swing Journal* is half-full of them each month, but they only seem to arrive as refugees to Berklee College, and very few of them at that. The latest is Makoto Ozone, a squirrely cheeked, personally engaging youth of few years (born in 1961) and a phenomenal musical gift which he has applied to the piano.

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RECORD REVIEWS

Ozone's history begins with his father Minoru, a well-known jazz pianist who owns a night club in Kobe where Makoto cut his teeth at six on a Hammond B-3. Idolatry of Jimmy Smith was supplanted precipitously by an earthshaking exposure to Oscar Peterson at the impressionable age of 12, after which Makoto somewhat compulsively transcribed O.P.'s entire recorded corpus and gradually became able to reproduce his solos fairly convincingly at will. This extraordinary ability is hinted at in his duo debut with teacher/trombonist Phil Wilson (Shiah 113), a free-wheeling stomp on standards roughed-up good-naturedly with much more than a "look, ma! three hands!" pyrotechnical display. Over the last two years Ozone has progressed at lightning speed: shed his clone image, absorbed more

piano history (Teddy Wilson, James P. Johnson), played the West Coast with Bobby Shew, studied and worked with Gary Burton in quartet and duo, and begun to find his voice as composer—as documented on this Columbia album, where Ozone with Burton as his producer, appears to wield artistic license akin to that afforded Wynton Marsalis.

After his exploration of roots, Ozone appears to be headed not to the pop-fusion right but to the intellectual classicist left; this seems to be his natural bent, though guided by Burton's tutelage and Chick Corea's example, as he seeks to be led by his heart and the melody. His writing here, especially on *Endless Season*, is mannered and complex, full of youthful joy and frivolity, but not really overwrought, and show him to be (with kudos to the

Impressionists) a budding Third Stream composer of considerable talents. Similarly his playing, rich and full on Corea's rebuilt Hamburg grand, is rather less brittle and peripatetic than it has been live, and more harmonically focused. Yet the tracks are so fervent and facile, there is such a rush of new ideas fighting to emerge, that I crave a few extra seconds of silence between tracks. The first two tracks may be the most lasting: *Crystal Love* has proved a hit with Burton's band and has substance here, while *I Need You Here* is a very effective ballad in the manner of Paul Bley and middle-period Keith Jarrett.

If Ozone keeps his wits about him, and does not lose his humor, humanity, and heart, we'll be hearing good things from him for years to come. —fred bouchard

School Bands On Wax

Here are 11 birds of a single feather: that much celebrated musical species known as the school "lab" band. School bands have the luxury of being responsible not to an audience but only to the standards of their department chairman, a fact which often makes their music more a lively academic exercise in performance discipline than an expression of artistic vision. But there's time for visions later. This is a learning experience, and it's an exciting one—a kind of jazz equivalent to college football. And like their gridiron counterparts, more than a few of these college band players go on to careers, or at least jobs, in the pro leagues.

To anyone who thinks that real big band jazz lives only in New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles, these performances tell a different story. Visit Iowa City one day, for instance. You'll find the **Johnson County Landmark**, the jazz ensemble of the University of Iowa School of Music under Don Yoder's direction. The band's *Live At Montreux* LP (University of Iowa HC-2) contains a mixture of standard audience pleasers such as Maynard Ferguson's arrangement of *People* and Billy Strayhorn's *Intimacy Of The Blues* (though not, I believe, a Strayhorn arrangement) with some almost r&b tenor by Keith Ellis. Ernie Wilkins' polite updating of *Moten Swing* is played with flash and confidence, but it's clearly a missed opportunity. The original Bennie Moten chart would not only have challenged the band to swing harder, but also have introduced a contrasting sensibility into an otherwise contemporary repertoire. Lead trombonist Bret Zvacek is apparently the band's resident composer/arranger, with three originals among the album's seven titles. He demonstrates a solid mastery of all the current fashions in big band writing today, a necessary first step toward an ultimate individuality.

Sixty miles northwest of Iowa City blows the **University of Northern Iowa Jazz Band**. In *Creative Cooking* (available from the UNI School of Music, Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614) the

band tackles a couple of Ellington classics. Oddly enough, these seem to be the most difficult to bring to life, perhaps because we already know what they can sound like. The reeds on *Koko* sound pale and bloodless, even compared to Ellington's 1956 version for Bethlehem. Also, the more familiar *Take The 'A' Train* is plagued by bland ensemble phrasing, although John Sjolinder is remarkably fluent on french horn. *Straight, No Chaser* is a better showcase of ensemble phrasing, with the reeds especially bright in the middle passage. Two originals by faculty and student incumbents are included. Forest Stewart's *Pacman* is a one-minute pastiche of swing and r&b ideas that goes nowhere. And *Milesian Web* by faculty member Bob Washut is a picturesque but all too rambling program piece as eccentric as the work of the player to whom it's presumably dedicated. Soloists Doug Huey and Bryan Ruth aren't given much to take hold of or play to in this much too leisurely exercise.

In the school band genre, Mecca is Denton, Texas, where the **North Texas State University One O'Clock Lab Band** under Neil Slater presides. *Lab '84* (LA8401-NS, Lab Band Records, Box 5038, Denton, TX 76203) is an album easier to admire for its accuracy and hi-tech perfection than to love for its warmth and style. The repertoire seems more like a workbook of musical challenges and problems for the students to master. The brass is loud, the tempos are jittery and nervous, and the soloists, in this context at least, seem curiously empty. What the music lacks most of all perhaps is a sense of pace, the logic of a well-timed climax. The music is full of energy and a great undercurrent of anxiety. That's why the sheer simple mellowness of *One O'Clock Jump* at the end brings an unbelievable sense of emotional relief to one's nervous system.

Reflection from the **Widener University Jazz Band** (Widener University, Chester, PA 19013) has been assembled with all the finish and professionalism of a major label entry (the cover design even has an ECM look to it). But the results are oddly chilly. For repertoire director John Vanore has chosen from the libraries of Don Menza, Oliver Nelson, Alan

Broadbent, Johnny Richards, and Frank Foster. With all the fireworks on side one and the mood pieces on the back end, the programming is unusually segregated. That latter group, which is no doubt supposed to be beautiful and moving, seem to be performed with such an obsession for perfection that there is no space for spontaneity. It's colorless. I don't even hear so much as a hint of vibrato in the ensembles and most of the solos. The trombone work of Dan Chester is especially cold in its pristine flawlessness. It makes me wonder if music students today are even aware of past masters the likes of Jack Teagarden and Bill Harris, or even J. J. Johnson.

There is a warmer, more swinging feeling to the **Georgia State University Jazz Band's** LP of the music of the late pianist and arranger Duke Pearson (Georgia State University, GSU-CR-22884). Marvin Stamm plays on two of the album's seven cuts. The best tracks are the Pearson originals (*New Girl*, *Minor League*, and *Make It Good*). His working of *Days Of Wine And Roses* is pretty, but Chick Corea's *Straight Up And Down* is a rather pompous and overweight chart which ultimately steps aside in order that drummer Ed Emory can show his very impressive chops. The one ringer is *On Mother's Day*, a Pearson song never before recorded, that is appropriately old-fashioned, even to having a preambulatory verse. It may remind some of *Home For The Holidays*.

Another consistent winner (multiple "deebies" over the years) on the college jazz band circuit is the **Northern Illinois University Jazz Ensemble** directed by Ron Model. Their current work is well documented on *Live At Montreux* (Northern Illinois University NIU-7). The material includes a couple of stock charts (*Midnight Run* by Bill Holman and *Wee Small Hours* with *Lil' Darlin'*-like voicings by Billy Byers), but mostly the writing is inbred. Dave Slonaker's *Dues Blues* is a soaring showcase for Tom Reed's outstanding plunger trumpet. Frank Mantooth's treatment of *Cherokee* is more a jam session donut than a real arrangement. John Carlson's tenor, which shines on *Midnight*, also strikes some real sparks. The band has

a good, relatively open sound here, which may help explain why it comes over better than most.

On *Mucho Gusto* by the **Jazz Ensemble of Los Mendanos College** (LMCB-1; no address given), the liner notes are almost apologetic for the use of a mere eight-track studio. But judging from the easy natural sound of the band, next year they ought to try for two-track. Yet recording is only secondary. Perhaps even the musicianship is too, since there is no reason to think that the players at LMC are any better or worse than those of other colleges. Taste is primarily accountable for the excellence of this record. *Be-Bop Charlie* by Bob Florence, *Waltz For Jenny* by John Grove, and Toshiko Akiyoshi's *Let The Tape Roll* are charts full of ensembles designed to swing with the kind of surging, forward momentum that's startlingly rare on these LPs. And the band handles the material with impressive skill.

If the Los Mendanos College band is the most straightahead swing crew of the batch, then I must also give credit to the **Los Angeles Jazz Workshop** for being the most imaginatively (and occasionally outrageously) modern on their album, *Stan's Donuts* (Sea Breeze 2021, L.A. Jazz Workshop, Box 2795, Sepulveda, CA 91343). Wayne Shorter's *Yes Or No*, and Freddie

Hubbard's *Take It To The Ozone* are the only non-originals on the program, and all arrangements are from within the ranks of the band. These young player/arrangers invent sometimes subtle, sometimes wild puzzles to work out. *Yes Or No*, one of three charts by Scott Collard, is an ensemble tour de force full of screaming, clenched-fist solos where each note is delivered as a knock-out punch. Collard delivers again in a free-form overture to *Stick To The Breast, Mary* and *Let's Eat Carcass*, which contains some sax ensemble work worthy of Supersax. Overall, this is a clever and challenging romp.

The **Los Angeles City College Jazz Band** under Woody James is heard on *Zinger* (Sea Breeze 2015) in four different bands, though with overlapping personnel. Supposedly a student band, one wonders what former Count Basie trombonist Mel Wanzo and veteran Buddy Childers are doing in the brass section. Anyway, *Zinger* gets off to a bright, solid start with the LP's title track. Not everything that follows is as appealing, and Chuck Mangione's *Children Of Sanchez* and *Samba De Beach* are typically busy and overly hectic college band workouts. Marian McPartland's *Ambiance* is a moderately interesting mood piece of voicings, but without much emotional texture.

Terry Buckley and Jim Linahon (who had a

production hand in several of these albums) take the **Fullerton College Jazz Band** (an '84 "deebee" winner) through its paces on *Primarily Jazz* (AM-PM Records, AM-13, Box 48081, Los Angeles, CA 90048), which includes a murderously rapid Matt Catingub original called *Bop Brothers Beach Party* and Linahon's own *Four Play*. Both are pure bebop, but even in less overt charts the bop genre dominates the solo patterns one way or another. And this is a theme that runs throughout these albums. After 20-odd years of free jazz, Coltrane, the "New Thing," and what-have-you, the inventions of the jazz generation of the late '40s continue to provide the real challenges and grist for the coming generation. A second personnel lineup is heard on *Morning Sun*, and a septet contingent featuring Scott Eilers (trombone) and Jack Cooper (alto) do *Why Not*.

The California school band scene doesn't stop at the college level though, as *Time After Time* (AM-PM Records AM-11) by the '83 "deebee"-winning **Hemet High School Jazz Band** proves. Although one of the least interesting in terms of the material (*Baile De La Mariposa* combines the worst of Chick Corea with the best of Spike Jones), the band proves what it can do on *Thank You Band*, a brisk obstacle course of neat, clean swinging ensembles. —john mcdonough



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GEFFERY MORGAN—A & M 5033: *RIDDLE ME; AS ALWAYS YOU WERE WRONG AGAIN; IF IT HAPPENS AGAIN; D.U.B.; THE PILLOW; NKOMO A GO GO; SEASONS; YOU'RE NOT AN ARMY; I'M NOT FOOLED SO EASILY; YOUR EYES WERE OPEN.*

Personnel: James Brown, drums, syncussion; Ali Campbell, vocals, guitar; Robin Campbell, guitar, vocals; Earl Falconer, bass guitar; Norman Lamont Hassan, percussion, vocals, trombone; Brian Travers, saxophones, Lyricon; Michael Virtue, keyboards; Astro, vocals, trumpet; Doctor X, voiceover (cut 10).

★★★★★

SPECIAL AKA

IN THE STUDIO—Chrysalis 41447: *BRIGHT LIGHTS; THE LONELY CROWD; HOUSEBOUND; GIRLFRIEND; NIGHT ON THE TILES; FREE NELSON MANDELA; WAR CRIMES; RACIST FRIEND; ALCOHOL; BREAK DOWN THE DOOR.*

Personnel: Jerry Dammers, piano, organ, bongos, vocals; John Bradbury, drums, bass (10), synthesizer (10); Stan Campbell, Rhoda Dakar, vocals; John Shipley, guitar, percussion (3); Gary McManus (1-3, 5, 6, 9), Horace Panter (4, 7), bass; Dick Cuthell, cornet, flugelhorn, tenor horn, piano (8), bass (8); Andy Aderinto, saxophones (2, 5, 6, 9, 10); Rico Rodriguez, trombone (3, 4, 9, 10); Egidio Newton, (1, 4, 5, 8, 10), Lynval Golding (5, 6), Caron Wheeler, Naomi Thompson, Claudia Fontaine, Elvis Costello, Ranking Roger, Dave Wakeling, Molly Jackson, Polly Jackson (6), vocals; David Heath, flute (6); Paul Speare, penny whistle (6); Nick Parker, violin (7); Roddy Radiation, guitar (8); Tony "Groko" Utoh, congas (2).

★★★★★

Britain's "ska revival" hit the doldrums with disbandment of the Specials (1981) and the English Beat (1983). The movement drew inspiration from Jamaican ska, a speeded-up proto-reggae, with occasional borrowing from reggae itself. The British groups carried the "2-Tone" label—a term meaning racially integrated but also referring to the seminal record company that spread the style. Their socially and politically aware lyrics sounded fresh-off-the-street. If the bands of ska shared affinities with the punk rockers in energy and disaffection, they also cared more deeply about musical values than their safety pin-pierced peers.

The Birmingham (England)-based UB40, the story goes, grouped in 1978, then taught themselves how to play as an alternative to life on the dole. ("UB40" refers to the bureaucratic form for processing unemployment benefits.) The building blocks of the UB sound still come

from reggae: sweet 'n' sour horns; ubiquitous larger-than-life bass lines; springy rhythms from peck piano and clank guitar; and dub arrangements based on the addition and subtraction of instrumental and vocal parts. These features in themselves hardly would have set UB40 apart from the pack, but their devotion to studio craft and songwriting did. The octet, in co-producing their recordings, raised mastery of the mixing board to a fine art and penned irresistibly tuneful singles about unequal justice and unemployment that took the UK charts by storm.

Geffery Morgan's songs about mind control, paranoia, anti-nukes, and wasted love speak with the eloquence of a nocturnal Sgt. Pepper. The lead selection, *Riddle Me*, is surely prophetic. The recurring and riddling tension between the music's lively edge and the words' depressing survey of British society is key to the power the album exerts.

The new LP advances the "hooks are" bent of UB40 while successfully introducing synthesized drums and other fresh technology to the UB style, molding electronics to its brightly animated melodism. Synth and Lyricon countermotives add to the texture on many tracks. *Nkomo A Go Go* combines plunging horns with a tribal festival of vibrating percussion—a Third World *Wipe Out* where stretched skins and computer chips meet on equal terms. On *As Always You Were Wrong Again* the rat-tat-tat of machinegun syncussion "spanks" the powers that be smartly, the latter represented by a lazily yacking sax refrain. When *If It Happens Again's* dotted line for horns is crossed by a seven-note synth (or is it Lyricon?) theme, the effect is one of resolution blunted by dreaminess—proposing a tension that perfectly suits the lyric about a lovers' tiff.

But Geffery Morgan rewards interest for more than the techno-acoustic blend. The sweetly phrased vocals of Ali Campbell; seductive, unexpected hints of British Isles folkiness tied to reggae rhythm (*I'm Not Fooled's* hornpipe-like synth); along with a host of other wrinkles and pleasant details, caught me off guard and kept me listening. This is a progressive "Anglo" mutation (three UB40 members are black), not the stick-figure reggae of the Police. Resistance to such charm is futile.

The Specials got their start in Coventry (England), only 15 miles from Birmingham. In contrast to the collective identity of UB40, Jerry Dammers leads the AKA Special, an offshoot of the pioneer ska revival band. He has a hand in all the writing, and his keyboards anchor many of the arrangements. Also unlike UB40, the Special AKA is not interested in developing one recognizable sound. *In The Studio* mostly avoids the infectious beatnik abandon and good-timey looseness of the Specials. Instead, the AKAs look to world music for inspiration: highliffing African horns and lilting vocals (*Free Nelson Mandela*); Near Eastern harmonic and metrical models (*War Crimes*); the broken beat and dub-echo of reggae (*Racist Friend*); and the chromatic runs and intertwining horn lines of jazz (*Alcohol*). Produced by Elvis Costello, *Free Nelson Mandela* best represents the group's fusion of international elements. This moving plea for release of a South African political prisoner is not only feelingly

performed but also beautifully arranged. The song gains impact through a repeating title chant (progressing from a cappella to band to bass drum accompaniment) and punctuations from penny whistle and flute. Here, as on *Racist Friend*, musical choices appealingly reinforce the call to action.

If the Special AKA cannot match UB40's cohesion of sound and style, Dammers and company do write lyrics that are one cut above. AKA's songs dramatize ideas through human situations such as the disillusionment of a London (probably nonwhite) émigré waiting for a break: "The living down there must be pretty easy/I could rip up my jeans deliberately" (*Bright Lights*). Still, the Special AKA and UB40 seldom choose humor over irony and direct statement. Like the ska revivalists, they take seriously the mission of affecting public opinion—taking aim right between the headphones. The proven access these bands have to the British charts gives them a fair shot at being instruments for change.

—peter kostakis

Suffield Gothic



RAN BLAKE

PORTFOLIO OF DOKTOR MABUSE—Owl 029:

YOU STEPPED OUT OF A DREAM; VRADIAZI; AWAKENING; THE FROG, THE FOUNTAIN AND AUNT JANE; THE TURNCOAT; INTERROGATION AT LOGAN AIRPORT; SMOKE AFTER SMOKE; CHICKEN MONSTER; CART AND RIDERS; JEAN-JACQUES; PRESENT TENSE.

Personnel: Blake, piano; the New England Conservatory Symphony Orchestra.

★★★★★

SUFFIELD GOTHIC—Soul Note 1077: *CURTIS; PETE KELLY'S BLUES; THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE IN MY LIFE; VANGUARD; OLD MAN RIVER; TRIBUTE TO MAHALIA; INDIAN WINTER; STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER; MIDNIGHT LOCAL TO TATE COUNTY.*

Personnel: Blake, piano; Houston Person, tenor saxophone (cuts 1, 4, 7, 9).

★★★★★

Taking his title from a silent movie made in the '20s by German expressionistic film-maker Fritz Lang, and his musical inspiration from sources as disparate as Monk and Ives (as well as contributing composers Herb Nacio Brown, Daryl Lowery, Mikis Theodorakis, and Michael Linn), Blake has assembled a powerful and unconventional work for the title composition of his Owl recording. This four-part suite is scored for a symphony orchestra, but it retains the soloistic character of a chamber work. It takes up the entire first side of the recording with all the evocative magnetism—yet none of the impermanence—of a dream.

In the skewed fantasy *You Stepped Out Of A*

Dream, slightly out-of-tune piano interjections jangle long golden saxophone lines by Daryl Lowery like wind rustling through chimes. The Ivesian quarter-tone dissonance in the piano comes as a surprise, but only until you realize the scope of Blake's resources. Not only does he draw on a vast stockpile of styles, from rural to urban, ethnic to art music, but he also puts them next to each other, collage-like, so they take on new contextual meaning.

The New England Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Larry Livingston, sets a high standard of performance lowered

only in the third section, *Vradiaz*. Here the Berio-like shapes of the lines are appealing, but the singers' and instrumentalists' time is too carefully measured for this ethnically influenced music.

Each section of the suite stands well on its own, but even though the playing is consistent, the work doesn't roll smoothly forward as a unit; it stalls when the gears shift between sections. For tunes that flow without a hitch, consult the second side of this recording. On these brief, finely crafted solos, Blake sets down his delicate, quirky harmonies with a firm sense of

CRITICS' CHOICE

Art Lange

NEW RELEASE: Flip Phillips, *A Melody From The Sky* (Doctor Jazz). Full-bodied, effusive '44-45 tenor stylings (most issued for the first time on LP) from a saxist too often misrepresented solely as a JATP honker.

OLD FAVORITE: Booker Little, *Victory And Sorrow* (Bethlehem). The yearning tone and quizzical nature of Little's trumpet, surrounded by compatible sidemen playing moody blue charts, make this an indelible album, and heighten the tragedy of Little's loss in 1961 at age 23.

RARA AVIS: Robin Williamson, *Music For The Mabinogi* (Flying Fish). One-half of the eclectic '70s Incredible String Band, Williamson blends harp, woodwinds, synths, and strings into a subtle rainbow of colors, inspired by British Isle folk tunes and Welsh myths.

SCENE: Cyclonic turbulence contrasted close-order construction (leavened by a cool wit and clear-eyed intelligence), making the Rova Saxophone Quartet's first visit to Chicago's NAME Gallery a memorable one.

Charles Doherty

NEW RELEASE: James Cotton, *High Compression* (Alligator). A well-paced program of classic urban blues and contemporary charts in all-star and working-band settings by the master blaster of the harp.

OLD FAVORITE: Elvis Presley, *The Sun Sessions* (RCA). Caveat Emptor: before you pop for one of the "50th anniversary" packages by the King, check out his first sides here to see what all the fuss was about.

RARA AVIS: Charles Brackeen, *Rhythm X* (Strata-East). Eerily Ornette-ish stylings (how could they not be, with firm harmonic support from Don Cherry, Charlie Haden, and Ed Blackwell?) from the formative pen and reed of the seldom-heard saxist in a '73 session.

SCENE: Bebop, boogie, and stride (no jive) plus Basie blues, solo Sphere, Dukal chimes, and much more from McCoy Tyner, in top trio form with Avery Sharpe and Louis Hayes at the Jazz Showcase in Chicago.

John Litweiler

NEW RELEASE: Charles Tyler, *Definite Vol. 2* (Storyville). Swinging melody streams forth endlessly from the blues-rich "inside the outside" altoist/baritonist; the fertile, intense interplay from his hot quartet is almost as stunning as *Vol. 1* (that's a *big* compliment).

OLD FAVORITE: Wilbur Ware, *The Chicago Sound* (Riverside). What amazes most about the great bassist's solo and ensemble lines is the naturalness, the inevitability of his rhythmic and harmonic adventures; these are definitive examples of the way the modern bass *should* be played (plus an old-pro quintet, too).

RARA AVIS: Jimmy Yancey, *1943 Session* (Jazztone Society). The infinitely subtle master of improvised form at the peak of his blues piano powers—including the burning *Midnight Stomp* and the classic *At The Window*.

SCENE: Milwaukee's Woodland Patterns Bookstore hosted a Roscoe Mitchell solo set; progressively, the altoman's art is undergoing transformation as he discovers the lineaments of new lyricism, new unities.

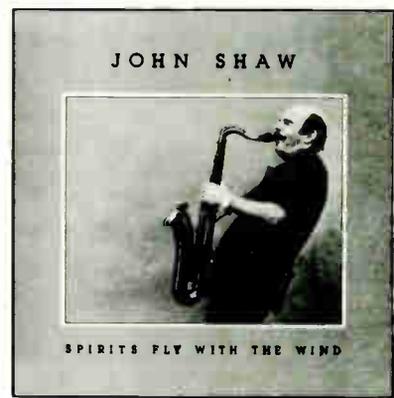
Jim Roberts

NEW RELEASE: David Murray, *Morning Song* (Black Saint). Murray's recent LPs have featured his composing as much as his tenor playing, but this quartet album is a blowing date—and a very fine one.

OLD FAVORITE: Albert King, *Laundromat Blues* (Edsel). This English LP is actually a repackaging of the classic Stax *Born Under A Bad Sign* album plus a few added cuts, all with great backup by Booker T & the MGs.

RARA AVIS: Steely Dan, *Steely Dan* (English ABC). This curious untitled four-song EP from '77 includes a couple of familiar tunes—*Do It Again* and *Haitian Divorce*—along with two outtakes from the *Can't Buy A Thrill* session (one of them, *Dallas*, is a minor gem).

SCENE: The Neville Brothers rattling the hallowed halls of Harvard with two sets of the most potent dance music in the world.



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—George Winston

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RECORD REVIEWS

time. Like Monk, he uses silence as well as sound to structure his phrases.

Monk, with his wide-spaced sense of time, is an influence in *Suffield Gothic*, too. Here again, Blake's rhythmic placement of each note is impeccable. The play with silence on the gospelish *There's Been A Change* lends the piece an aura of cool, abstract, calm. For the most part, the mood of *Suffield Gothic* is lighter than that of *Portfolio*. Some of the tunes are standards; others are composed by Blake; all demonstrate his versatility and musicianship, whether he's playing stride style or blues.

Blake displays everything on this recording: melodic and harmonic inventiveness, rhythmic subtlety, and an infallible sense of pacing. On four pieces he's joined by saxophonist Person, a friend of 30 years who has a strong solo personality and a close musical rapport with Blake. On *Curtis* he opens the piece with his fat tenor sound, and Blake backs it up, framing it to its best advantage. Here and elsewhere, the duo's time is so solid that it's hard to believe they don't have a bass or drums supporting them. This is top-notch improvisation and ensemble playing.

—elaine guregian

THE DREAMS OF CHILDREN
SHADOWFAX



SHADOWFAX

THE DREAMS OF CHILDREN—Windham Hill 1038: *ANOTHER COUNTRY*; *SNOWLINE*; *THE BIG SONG*; *THE DREAMS OF CHILDREN*; *WORD FROM THE VILLAGE*; *KINDRED SPIRITS*; *SHAMAN SONG*; *ABOVE THE WAILING WALL*.

Personnel: G. E. Stinson, six-, 12-string guitar, vocals; Chuck Greenberg, Lyricon, tenor, soprano saxophone, stone flutes; Phil Maggini, bass; Stuart Nevitt, drums, percussion; Jamii Szmazdzinski, violin, baritone violin; David Lewis, Yamaha DX-7, Memorymoog, piano; Morris Dollison, vocal, guitar; Hara Lambi A, vocal; Michael Spiro, Adam Rudolph, percussion.

★ ★ ★

With their third LP since re-forming, Shadowfax puts back some of the muscle and incisiveness that had gone flaccid on their previous outing, *Shadowdance*. That is, as much muscle as you can have in what is essentially electric chamber music. Shadowfax combines the folk-classicism of Oregon with the electric sonorities of John McLaughlin. When it works, as it does on most of Chuck Greenberg's pieces, it's an inspired synthesis. When it doesn't, as on most of G.E. Stinson's tunes, it comes off like ethnological forgeries.

Greenberg writes on a panoramic scale: large soundscapes with lush details. *Another Country* is dominated by his childlike stone flute melody that dances lightly across a lyrical

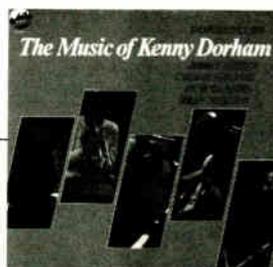
polyphony of counterrhythms. Szmazdzinski's pizzicato violin in the left channel criss-crosses out of phase with Stinson's guitar in the right, creating ping-pong delayed images that are centered by yet another counterrhythm from Nevitt's drums.

Simplicity is the hallmark of Greenberg's compositions, like the title track's lilting melody played on his Lyricon over a gentle, ascending cycle from the Rhodes sound of Lewis' DX-7. Greenberg seems to write preludes, rather than pieces, beautifully poignant introductions that are constantly going somewhere, but never arriving. However, the scenery is still gorgeous.

Stinson's titles give away the ethnicity that he wears on his sleeve: *Word From The Village* with its imitation village cries and exotic African percussion; *Above The Wailing Wall* with the ornamental Middle Eastern bends of its guitar lead. Both are nicely made, but become cloying with repeated listenings. On the other hand, *The Big Song* that he co-wrote with David Lewis leaps out of the Genesis/Steve Hackett spectrum with sustain-laden lead guitar from Stinson that builds heroically among Lewis' keyboard filigree.

Shadowfax is a composer's band, with meticulously wrought compositions that are played (and recorded) with an unerring precision. This group drips attractive melodies like a maple tree drips sap, and only occasionally do they become too sweet to bear.

—john diliberto



KENNY DORHAM

KENNY DORHAM QUINTET—Debut Original Jazz Classics 113: *AN OSCAR FOR OSCAR* (TAKE 1); *RUBY, MY DEAR* (TAKE 2); *BE MY LOVE* (TAKE 2); *RUBY, MY DEAR* (TAKE 1); *OSMOSIS*; *I LOVE YOU* (TAKE 2); *DARN THAT DREAM* (TAKE 1); *DARN THAT DREAM* (TAKE 2).

Personnel: Dorham, trumpet; Jimmy Heath, tenor, baritone saxophone; Walter Bishop, piano; Percy Heath, bass; Kenny Clarke, drums.

★ ★ ★

BLUE SPRING—Riverside Original Jazz Classics 134: *BLUE SPRING*; *IT MIGHT AS WELL BE SPRING*; *POETIC*; *SPRING IS HERE*; *SPRING CANNON*; *PASSION SPRING*.

Personnel: Dorham, trumpet; David Amram, french horn; Julian "Cannonball" Adderley, alto saxophone; Cecil Payne, baritone saxophone; Cedar Walton, piano; Paul Chambers, bass; Jimmy Cobb (cuts 1-4), Philly Joe Jones (5, 6), drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

DON SICKLER

THE MUSIC OF KENNY DORHAM—Uptown 27.17: *SPRING CANNON*; *ESCAPADE*; *WINDMILL*; *PHILLY TWIST*; *LA MESHIA*; *THE FOX*.

Personnel: Sickler, trumpet; Jimmy Heath, tenor saxophone; Cedar Walton, piano; Ron Carter, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

These albums begin to correct an oversight. Kenny Dorham's compositions are a gold mine. His trumpet playing was original enough to influence—by osmosis if not by outright imitation—Lee Morgan, Donald Byrd (back when Byrd was a jazz player), Tom Harrell, and of course Don Sickler.

Dorham was born in 1924, died in 1972, and led and appeared on many Blue Note and Riverside albums during the '50s and '60s. He worked with Bird, Art Blakey, Max Roach, and Thelonious Monk. In the mid-'60s he, along with several prominent jazz musicians, reviewed records for **down beat**.

His debut as a leader came in 1953 with the release of *Quintet*. The original 10-inch LP has been expanded to include alternate takes on the OJC reissue. His chief trumpet assets were in place then—the beautiful burnished tone; long, breath-defying bop lines; careful phrasing and solo structure; and the Miles Davis-like grace notes and inflections. *An Oscar*, his sole composition on the album, is a bright bop tune, with a fluid solo by the composer and Heath eating the changes almost as cleanly as today. The rhythm section is a little dry by today's standards, but *Darn* (take 2) boasts a nice block chord outing by Bishop. The alternate takes show that Dorham often approached things the same way each time, but his security increases from take to take.

Blue Spring, recorded and originally released in 1959, should twist some ears. Dorham's composing (four scores) and arranging (all six tunes) create a moving portrait of late '50s-early '60s jazz. The melodies are distinct—above average—and the charts resonate with crisp punctuation, flowing internal lines, and warm voicings. The solo playoff between Dorham's dark-toned etchings and Adderley's tumbling bop alto adds to the interest here, too. Dorham's low- and middle-register solo on *Spring Is Here* is a gem.

Spring Cannon plus pianist Walton from *Blue Spring* and bassist Heath from *Quintet* all appear on *The Music Of Kenny Dorham*. Trumpeter Sickler has assembled an attractive program that, again, demonstrates Dorham's strength as a composer and that features strong playing by all, especially the rhythm section. Sickler improvises perkily with a brighter tone than Dorham's. Heath's up-and-down style and soulful tone seem little changed from 30 years ago—still good. Walton has improved since the '59 date—more two-handed interaction, more and better chords, and a more propulsive drive. Carter and Higgins play all kinds of combustible background figures that expand the performances. *Escapade*, a 20-bar minor-key tune, and *La Meshia*, Dorham's ballad for his daughter, are the winning tunes. The whole album reflects love and intelligence. —owen cordle

KING SUNNY ADÉ

AURA—Island 90177-1: ASE; GBOROMIRO; OGUNJA; OREMI; IRE; IRO.

Personnel: Adé, guitar, vocals, bongos, congas; Bob Ohiri, Segun Ilori, John Akpan, guitar; Ademola Adepoju, steel guitar; Jerry Ihejejo, bass guitar; Santa Mamola, tenor guitar (cut 1); Shino Abiodun, congas, vocals; Akanbi Moses, Tony Allen (4), drums; Michael Babalola, maracas; Ganiyu Alashe, shekere; Niyi Falaye, Jacob Ajakaiye, Tunde Temiola, Femi Owomoyela, Kayode Dosumu, vocals; Rasaki Aladokun, Alhaji Timmy Olaitan, talking drums; Phil Ramocon, clavinet (4); Stevie Wonder, harmonica (1).

★ ★ ★ ½

FELA ANIKULAPO KUTI

LIVE IN AMSTERDAM—Capitol/EMI 12359: MOVEMENT OF THE PEOPLE I; MOVEMENT OF THE PEOPLE II; GIMME SHIT I GIVE YOU SHIT; CUSTOM CHECK POINT.

Personnel: Kuti, vocals, soprano, tenor saxophone, piano, organ; Tajudeen Animashoun, Achampong, baritone saxophone; Oyinade Adeniron, tenor saxophone; Nana Femi Anikulapo Kuti, alto saxophone; Moses Sobo Wale, Akameah, trumpet; Laspalmer Ojeah, guitar; Benjamin, congas; Lamtey, sticks; Fosibor, maracas; Dele Soshimi, piano; additional guitarists not identified.

★ ★ ★ ★

SONNY OKOSUNS

WHICH WAY NIGERIA?—Jive Afrika/Arista 8-8247: AFRICAN WOMAN; WHICH WAY NIGERIA?; TELL MY PEOPLE; MY ANCESTORS.

Personnel: Okosuns, vocals; Jonny Woode, keyboards; Geoffrey Omadehbo, drums; Nelson Tackie, Yakubu Daniel, Rick Howard (1), guitar; Patric Oziegbe, congas; Fred Fisher, trombone, vocals; Big John, Robert Ngumu, trumpet, vocals; Fuzzy Ojefua, tenor saxophone; Jerry Ihejeto, bass guitar, vocals.

★ ★

The African invasion is upon us. King Sunny Adé was the first Nigerian pop star to reach American audiences with his 1982 stateside debut, *Juju Music* (Mango 9712). He quickly became the darling of critics and was tagged as the guiding force behind an exciting new movement in music, even though he and his contemporaries had been doing their thing back in Africa for several years. The impressive sales figures on Adé's 1983 follow-up, *Synchro System* (Mango 9737), no doubt prompted American major labels to jump on the juju bandwagon.

Adé's latest release, *Aura*, is his most Westernized work to date. Whereas his stateside debut put great emphasis on melody, harmony, and intricate polyrhythms (which critics dug), this one goes for the feet in no uncertain terms. It's a hip-hop affair, complete with synthesized handclaps, electronic drum effects, and plenty of techno-flash in the studio. *Ire* sounds right out of Herbie Hancock's *Future*

Shock (which is curious since Herbie's last album, *Sound-System*, was reminiscent in parts of Adé's *Synchro System*).

Adé's signature talking drums are upfront in the mix, supplying that all-important organic-roots quality, but much has changed since *Juju Music*. The shimmering guitars and singing steel guitar sounds that played such a big role on that album have been pushed back in the mix, deferring to the relentless beat that pervades *Aura*. The result is a less distinctive, less diverse package. Those who liked the softer, sparser production of *Juju Music*—with its tricky rhythms, odd time signatures, surprising stops, and memorable melodies—will find this pulsating funk session less appealing.

Fela Anikulapo Kuti's Egypt 80 band is a primal powerhouse, and *Live In Amsterdam* is a far superior effort to his two studio albums recently released by Capitol, *Black President* and *Original Sufferhead*, both recorded in 1977 with his Afrika 70 band. In concert Kuti is able to really stretch out, getting in touch with his jazz muse while never losing sight of the seminal primitivism of his native country. He's an uncompromising man, both musically and politically, and this double album is evidence of that fact.

Fela's brand of Afro-Beat is an odd blend of influences: James Brown meets Sun Ra and John Coltrane in the Congo. Sides one and two comprise one extended J.B. goodfoot jam

entitled *Movement Of The People*. The whole thing goes on for some 38 minutes, giving Kuti plenty of time to rant and rave in his booming, resonant voice. Throughout this endless vamp the horns accent with the punch of the Fabulous Flames while carrying the disturbing dissonant quality of Sun Ra. Kuti switches from organ to soprano to vocals and rhythmic scating. What he lacks in technique on any of these, he more than makes up for in raw, unbridled passion.

Sonny Okosuns shares Kuti's love of horns, but his arrangements are bland and lacking in imagination by comparison. The naive melodies owe more to American folk songs than any African musical traditions. Surprisingly, there are no polyrhythms to be heard anywhere on this album. Instead, a monotonous Western rock-ish 2/4 backbeat prevails on *Tell My People* and *African Woman*. *My Ancestors* is a simplistic two-chord vamp that goes nowhere, more reminiscent of dirge-like reggae tunes than exciting, polyrhythmic African tunes.

Okosuns is a political creature, but his lyrics are delivered in such a sing-song fashion that his method dilutes the message. This watered-down affair bears none of the ferocity of Fela or the sly insinuation of Adé. It's hard to imagine that these cheesy pop arrangements were conceived in Africa. If there's a Holiday Inn in Nigeria, this guy could cop the house gig.

—bill milkowski

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RECORD REVIEWS

WAXING ON

Whither Fusion?

KITTYHAWK: *FANFARE* (Zebra 5001)

★★★★★

MWENDO DAWA: *STREET LINES* (Dragon 72)

★★★★★

KOINONIA: *CELEBRATION* (Breaker 9970)

★★½

SCOTT LINDENMUTH GROUP: *ANOTHER SIDE, ANOTHER TIME* (Dark Stream 1001) ★★ ★★ ½

BLUE SKY: *BLUE SKY* (C.T. 83-002) ★★ ★

EARWAX CONTROL: *EARWAX CONTROL* (Depot 005) ★★ ½

SPECIAL EFX: *SPECIAL EFX* (GRP 1007)

★★★★½

MAKOTO: *MAKOTO* (Qwest 25111-1) ★★

JOHN MACEY: *MELTDOWN* (G-String 619) ★★

WINDOWS: *WINDOWS* (ITI 021) ★★ ½

SIMON & BARD GROUP: *THE ENORMOUS RADIO* (Flying Fish 321) ★★ ★★ ½

GREGORY JAMES: *ALPHABET TOWN* (Rogue 1278) ★★ ★★ ½

What once seemed a wondrous marriage has ended up as a dilution of strong blood lines. At least that's one view of the fate of fusion in the hands of today's insipid crossover artists. Ten to 15 years ago the bold experiments mixing jazz and rock found their way out of the laboratory. The best of those ventures stayed just their side of middle ground, incorporating the best elements of other musical styles—without pasteurizing them.

Perhaps it was the success of "jazz-rock" and "fusion" in the hands of some real masters—Miles Davis, John McLaughlin, et al.—that convinced the not-so-masterful to jump on a good thing. Far too many jazz artists blatantly abandoned lifelong musical directions to try for bigger bucks. On the other hand, a lot of rockers got mixed up with jazz before they had a clear view of their own musical identity.

Despite a substantial amount of so-so fusion/crossover in recent times, there are now some newer faces on the horizon, and a couple of recharged ones. Some of them have what the charlatans have lacked—conviction of an individual direction, not just some formula for mixing electric/acoustic, East/West, and so forth. The term fusion, albeit somewhat dated, may soon be open for discussion once again—if the music receives an infusion from a younger generation of players who are on their way up.

Kittyhawk started off on a major label with much ballyhoo and a good first album. That was five years ago. Now they're on an independent label out of California. What happened? One theory might be that Kittyhawk, like others striving to make the charts, went for too much of a mass appeal sound and lost some of their punch in the process. Never fear. The band has abandoned the weak vocals and pop pursuits to turn in a great album. *Fanfare* kicks off with a sparkling version of Aaron Copland's *Fanfare For The Common Man* and offers up some superb new originals, like *Melting The Heart Of A Winter Spirit*. The fivesome's sound represents a strong group approach to soloing and

ensemble playing—no meaningless blowing, just a natural, organic approach to playing well together. They're *tight*. In fact, Kittyhawk recorded this beauty on a 30 ips, two-track master. The sound is superb.

Sweden's **Mwendo Dawa** has received limited exposure in the U.S., but this group warrants attention. They've got seven albums on Dragon Records out of Stockholm, and the experience shows on *Street Lines*. Ove Johansson's tenor sax style is fresh and unorthodox, though obviously rooted in modern jazz. Pianist/keyboardist Susanna Lindborg adds an eerie but effective synthesizer sound. When you realize that "Mwendo Dawa" means "the way to a special goal" in Swahili, you know you're in for an unusual group. The cuts here are urban jungle all the way, and they gain impact with repeated listening.

Koinonia is a good premise for a super-group, combining top players from North, Central, and South America. The band is Abraham Laboriel (bass, vocals), Alex Acuna (drums, percussion), Harlan Rogers (keyboards), Justo Almarino (woodwinds), Bill Maxwell (drums, percussion), and Hadley Hockensmith (guitar). Half of the 10 tracks are fairly typical fusion frameworks for soloing by the principals, giving up compositional ambitiousness to showcase individual skills. These guys sound very polished together, and the mix is excellent for a live gig. If they get together for another go, however, let's hope things don't always go this smooth—there's too much talent here to go the homogenized route.

Guitarist **Scott Lindenmuth** leads a fine young group out of the Pacific Northwest that plays with a kind of quiet fire. First of all, the band is hot—little known, perhaps, but instrumentally accomplished and unified in their direction. The compositions, such as *Average Families* or *Afterthought* have a touch of mantra, a hint of rock, and compelling concepts. Lindenmuth's tunes can be impressionistic at times, and they inevitably take the listener to vivid destinations. *Another Side, Another Time* is definitely on the buy list.

Blue Sky is another promising Northwest band, the region's sound inherent in the laid-back touch evident on some of these pop-jazz cuts. This particular band is built around vibes (Kevin Rolstad) and guitar (Dave Peterson), and the music is generally upbeat and enjoyable. More dynamics and some writing challenges are needed to help Blue Sky hold attention. Nothing jumps out at the listener; the album is consistent, but not very dramatic.

Paul Wertico, who currently drums for Pat Metheny, and a pair of longtime colleagues have released **Earwax Control**, and it may have been undertaken on a lark. Much about it, from the album/group title right through to the overly pungent humor of *Dogshit Blues*, suggests that this project was taken rather lightly. The titles are temporarily funny: *Let's Mecca Deal*, *Trance In My Pants*, *4 AM Prostate*, etc. Unfortunately, many parts of the disc seem to indulge in weirdness for weirdness' sake. It takes a Frank Zappa to make dogshit work, and even Frank is hit or miss. These three guys (bassist/guitarist Jeff Czech and keyboardist Gordon James) have played around Chicago for 11 years. They're *still* playing around. Some

of these improvised ideas do have a crude, alternative depth to them. Less earwax and more seriousness might make this a very interesting group.

Special EFX could do better than just create surface appeal. The digital master recording has good overall sound, and some decent cuts as well. Produced by Dutch flutist Chris Hinze, this young New York sextet has a touch of Brazil in its melodies and percussive style. That may be a promising new development on the U.S. scene, and the rise of other American/Brazilian bands should be noted across the U.S. The bright tunes on this debut album represent the freshest material to come out of GRP land in some time—a real find for label co-owners Dave Grusin and Larry Rosen.

Makoto takes its name from leader/guitarist Makoto Horiuchi, and this is a showcase for him. He can play well enough, but the material doesn't go far enough to establish Makoto as any kind of new force to be reckoned with. The tunes are highly arranged crossover material, nicely done, but the likes of which we have heard before. The songs don't even serve as vehicles for guitar heroics. Lack of inspiration is the only thing holding Makoto back, but that's a major hurdle.

You have to admire the aggressiveness of **John Macey**, but sometimes it costs him on *Meltdown*. Guitar-wise, he is potent on cuts like *Meltdown* and *Male Strum*. But a delicate, solo acoustic reverie like *Longing* doesn't belong on the same LP as Macey's quasi-satirical vocals, *Presidential Ambitions* and *The News Blues*, which disrupt an otherwise decent album. The need is for less variety and more of a consistent direction.

Windows is a skilled group of young players from the West Coast, and they've obviously learned a lot of the right moves from the forefathers of fusion. Fast-paced blowing tunes are interspersed with a couple of nice ballads, and all of the tracks are flawlessly executed. Again, however, there seems to be a lack of important or distinctive musical statements. Risk-taking should be on the band's agenda for next time.

The **Simon & Bard Group** is gifted compositionally on *The Enormous Radio*, with a pan-cultural sound and a flair for modern turns of folk-like phrasings. *The Barber Of Peru* is a case in point, creating a spirited Andean melody with a combination of acoustic and electric reeds, keyboards, and percussion. This band epitomizes fusion in all forms, crossing stylistic barriers, experimenting with instrumentation, mixing power and beauty, progressiveness and simplicity.

Gregory James has some great moments on *Alphabet Town*, songs when his potent quartet bridges the gap between musical adventure and mass appeal. Barry Shulman's cool saxophone echoings on *Jamaica . . . N.Y.* provide a brilliant foil to the Peter Gunn-type bass line. Elsewhere, James' electric, acoustic, and synthesized guitars are both strong and subtle, and balanced by a solid rhythm section of Bruce Barrett (bass) and Robin Tolleson (drums). A couple of the heads herein threaten to go overly commercial, but the charisma of the group's sound makes for a generally superior recording.

—robert henschen

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.)

ATLANTIC

Jean-Luc Ponty, high-flying electric violinist adds more synths to his arsenal with an OPEN MIND. **Jimmy Giuffre**, reissue of the clarinetist's '56 outing in varying instrumental settings, THE JIMMY GIUFFRE CLARINET. **Sonny Stitt**, alto giant surrounded by Tadd Dameron and Jimmy Mundy charts ca. '62, & THE TOP BRASS. **Stephane Grappelli**, classy violinist's '62 updating of the Hot Quintet, FEELING + FINESSE = JAZZ. **Herbie Mann/Bill Evans**, flutist joins the pianist's '66 trio for a taste of NIRVANA. **Chris Connor/Maynard Ferguson**, ex-Kenton vocalist and trumpeter re-team in '60-61 reissue, DOUBLE EXPOSURE. **Charles Mingus**, reissue of legendary '57 session (first released in '61), THE CLOWN.

PAUSA

Louie Bellson/Ray Brown/Paul Smith, reissue of '78 direct to disc piano trio in audiophile sound, INTENSIVE CARE. **Armand Boatman**, Oscar Peterson disciple debuts with set of standards caught LIVE AT GREGORY'S. **Laurel Masse**, former Manhattan Transfer-ite sings, scats, and vocalese's a set's worth of standards, ALONE TOGETHER.

SAVOY JAZZ

Little Esther Phillips, reissue of '49-59 hits and near misses by the strong songstress, THE COMPLETE SAVOY RECORDINGS. **Paul Bley**, '62-63 waxings document the crystallization of the pianist's ethereal trio sensibility, FLOATER. **Nappy Brown**, r&b stylist's 16 biggest and best songs from '54-56, DON'T BE ANGRY! **Jive Bombers**, vocal quartet from '56-59 with their own r&b-styled pop sound, BAD BOY.

DOCTOR JAZZ

Count Basie, second time around for the Count's '70 meeting w/ arranger/composer Oliver Nelson, AFRIQUE. **Various Artists**, Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Julian Dash, and Lockjaw Davis in separate 78 rpm reissued tracks, CLASSIC TENORS VOL. 2. **Bob Thiele**, and his New Happy Times Orchestra in reissued return to the Gatsby Era, THE '20S SCORE AGAIN. **Supersax & L.A. Voices**, some standards and a few newcomers as saxes meet singers, VOLUME 2. **Teresa Brewer**, '78 and '83 dates featuring the spry songstress and lotsa guest stars inc. Diz and Clark Terry, LIVE AT CARNEGIE HALL & MONTREUX, SWITZERLAND. **Lonnie Liston Smith**, keyboarder continues his '70s quest with an '84 evolution, SILHOUETTES.

PALO ALTO/TBA

Various Artists, the Adderleys, Diz, Woody Herman, Buddy Rich, Johnny Griffin, and a cast of thousands in samples of JAZZ MONTEREY 1958-80. **Free Flight**, classical-jazz combo play arrangements and originals, BEYOND THE CLOUDS. **Quest**, '81 co-op from Dave Liebman, Richie Beirach, George Mraz, and Al Foster, QUEST. **Bobbe Norris/Larry Dunlap**, singer and her piano partner play old songs in new settings, HOISTED SAILS. **Scheer Music**, rotating membership group led by saxist/composer/arranger Scot Scheer inhabits a HIGH RISE. **Richie Beirach**, first American release of the pianist's '81 Japanese Trio memorial, ELEGY FOR BILL EVANS. **Victor Feldman**, keyboarder/synth'er/vibist plus all-star pals (Chuck Mangione, Lee Ritenour, etc) create a FIESTA.

FLYING FISH

Duke Tumatooe, bar band r&b with its own energetic curves, DUKES UP. **The Klezmorm**, trad Yiddish instrumentation given new vitality and jazz licks, NOTES FROM UNDER GROUND. **David Burgin**, harmonica wiz walks the country side of the street, WILD CHILD. **Bryan Bowers**, acknowledged autoharp virtuoso plays traditional and original tunes, BY HEART. **Hot Rize**, young bluegrassers gas a live audience, IN CONCERT. **Andrew Calhoun**, second album of original songs, THE GATES OF LOVE. **Charlie King**, songs with a political and social bent, MY HEART KEEPS SNEAKIN' UP ON MY HEAD. **Reel World**, all-woman bluegrass quartet perform songs of social relevance, IN GOOD TIME. **Robin Williamson**, one-half of the old Incredible String Band plays music inspired by Welsh legends, MUSIC FOR THE MABINOGI. **San Francisco Mime Troup**, original cast production of the songs from STEEL TOWN. **Alexander Ilitch Eppler**, balalaika soloist performs classic Russian repertoire, BARINYA. **Mike Craver**, pianist plays idiosyncratic program of tunes and ditties, FISHING FOR AMOUR. **Rare Air**, Scottish quartet (formerly Na Cabarfeidh) contemporizes traditional Gaelic airs, MAD PLAID. **Cathy Winter**, original songs of concern and protest, BREATH ON MY FIRE.

INDEPENDENTS

Jack Wilkins, highly regarded guitarist cajoles Phil Woods into his sextet, from Greenestreet Records, CAPTAIN BLUEJ. **Roger Kellaway**, underrated keyboard vet in synthesized surroundings, from Greenestreet, CREATION. **Bobby Enriquez**, flashy Fillipean pianist solos, via GNP Crescendo Records, LIVE IN TOKYO VOL. II. **David Matthews**, arranger's all-star studio band cuts six self-penned pieces, from GNP Crescendo, SUPER FUNKY SAX. **George Kelly**, Savoy Sultans

CONTINUED ON PAGE 40



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survivor waxes first leader session with sextet, from Stash Records, **PLAYS THE MUSIC OF DON REDMAN**. **Tom Hoffman**, guitarist plus Dave Demsey's reeds and John Hunter's bass, from Redwood Records, **LIVE AT KEYSTONE KORNER**. **Ronnie Wells**, song stylist acc. by Ron Elliston's quintet, from Jazz Karma Records, **THE GIFT**.

Red Holloway, solid saxist of long standing with Horace Parlan's piano and Danish rhythm team, from SteepleChase Records, **NICA'S DREAM**. **Duke Jordan**, bop pianist/composer's trio in a second live set, from SteepleChase, **TIVOLI TWO**. **James Dapogny**, pianist and his Chicago Jazz Band in the trad tradition, from Jazzology Records, **BACK HOME IN ILLINOIS**. **Phil Wilson**, trombonist extraordinaire with the Big Band Machine, from Shiah Records, **LIVE AT JOE SEGAL'S JAZZ SHOWCASE**. **John Shaw**, saxist/composer amid a varied cast of accomplices, from Aisha Records, **ASSEMBLAGE**.

Jazz Doctors, Billy Bang, Frank Lowe, Rafael Garrett, and Dennis Charles prescribe new music, from Cadillac Records, **INTENSIVE CARE**. **Harry Miller**, late bassist with unique quintet sound, from Vara Jazz Records,

DOWN SOUTH. **Gijs Hendriks**, Scandinavian saxist's extended Construction Company in six originals, from Vara Jazz, **SÁMER**. **Niko Langenhuijsen**, bassist-turned-keyboarder's crew produces "melodious and harsh sounds," from Vara Jazz, **HYPO**. **Bernd Köppen/Heinz Becker**, organ/trumpet duets of German origin, from Senti Records, **TANZ DER ALTARFIGUREN**. **Aha!**, Norwegian quintet play it their way, from Hot Club Records, **KEEP NOSE IN FRONT**.

Winds of Change, eclectic quartet creates inside and out sounds, from Muse/Art Records, **FAR EAST SUBWAY BLUES**. **Larry Chernicoff**, pianist/vibist and cohorts combine ethnic sounds in new ways, from Muse/Art, **GALLERY OF AIR**. **Tom Schmidt**, solo piano explorations of philosophical moods, from Muse/Art, **DEER PARK**. **Gino D'Auri**, flamenco guitar "channeled via electrocrystals thru deep digital verb," from Sonic Atmosphere Records, **PASSION PLAY**. **Craig Huxley**, synth'er/engineer composes expanded versions of music originally in *Star Trek* and *The Disappearance* soundtracks, from Sonic Atmosphere, **GENESIS PROJECT**. **Michael Sterns**, synth'er creates sounds echoing the

cosmos' resonances, from Sonic Atmosphere, **PLANETARY UNFOLDING**. **Maurice Jarre**, heavily electronic soundtrack, from Sonic Atmosphere, to the film **DREAMSCAPE**.

Johnny Walker, Chicago-via-Mississippi pianist/vocalist's premiere solo feature, from Red Beans Records, **BLUE LOVE**. **Buddy Charles**, Windy City's Rush Street piano bar fixture plots playful program, from Red Beans, **JIVE'S ALIVE**. **Cozzetti & Gemmill**, sax/keyboard pair fronts quartet in a variety of grooves, from ITI Records, **SOFT FLOWER IN SPRING**. **Richard Elliot**, saxist/Lyricist cuts loose for the first time, from ITI, **INITIAL APPROACH**. **In Sync**, 11 pieces with lotsa performers inc. Tom Kubis' saxes, from Silver Seven Productions, **SYNC OR SWIM**. **db**

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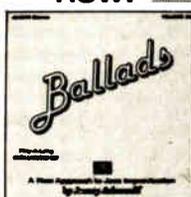
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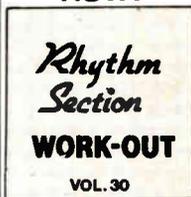


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MARK MCHENRY, Band Director, Kokomo High School, Kokomo, Indiana

There's a simple lesson Mark McHenry teaches all his kids in the Kokomo (Indiana) High School band that can mean a lot to the rest of us in music. He's shown them by his own example the key to success.

By any standard, his program is indeed doing well.

When he took over nine years ago, there were 30 kids in a band barely able to play the school's own fight song, and a booster organization completely unable to muster as much as \$2,000 a year in total receipts.

"Before I came," he confided, "the program was in shambles."

Today it's anything but. His files reveal that this 100-member band now performs more difficult, more meaningful music and drills each

year. The booster organization can raise more than \$40,000 a year *in profits* – in spite of a struggling local economy.

The band has brought home a great deal of "hardware," as he calls it, from state and regional competitions. Trophies crowd his office, display case, and band closet.

They've been invited to play before both Presidents Ford and Reagan, and given McHenry the highest honor and the praise of the people of Kokomo.

And along the way the kids have learned from him the key to success: cooperation. It's as true for the program in general as it is for any single performance.

Everyone – the school board members, the administration, the

boosters, all the teachers and local music retailers – everyone shares in the band's success. And McHenry's the first to admit it.

"Together we've made it happen," he's proud to say.

We at *down beat* and *up beat* magazine ask you to take a hard look at the band program in your hometown. Remember, one kid can't carry the band, or one director, the program. Success requires the active participation of the director, the administration, the retailers, and the community in general. Everyone.

The greater the teamwork behind the scenes, the better the performance in front of the crowd. It's as simple as that.

"But you'd be amazed at the difference," said one who knows.

down beat
For Contemporary Musicians

1 TONY WILLIAMS LIFETIME.

SPECTRUM (from *EMERGENCY!*, Polydar). Williams, drums; John McLaughlin, guitar; Larry Young, organ. Recorded in 1969.

This is *Emergency!*, right? An important record. It captured a feeling about that particular time, when our music was about to take a great change. It's a five-star record; the only thing unfortunate about it, considering how recording techniques have advanced, is that the beauty of Larry Young's sound is not captured properly. But it still sounds great!

One of the things I like most about jazz-related music is that excitement when musicians go into the studio, look at each other, and say, "Let's play!" This album has that, rather than glossy production values, or anyone saying, "Oh, we've got to do something four minutes long." There's so much spontaneity and intensity—which is not to say you can't record a beautiful ballad. But on cuts like this, where no one's holding anything back, this group set a tone some of us got away from, of sheer purity of intent.

2 PAT MARTINO. *DREAMSVILLE* (from *WE'LL BE TOGETHER AGAIN*, Muse). Martino, guitar; Gil Goldstein, electric piano; Henry Mancini, composer.

That little decorative lick gave Pat Martino away. Or it's one of the many people influenced by him. Wes Montgomery did this tune, too—is it *Dreamsville* by Henry Mancini? Is this from the duet album with Gil Goldstein?

What a great song this is. In the first two to three bars of this tune, you can hear the beautiful marriage of melody and harmony. And from a guitar player's perspective, you can't say enough good things about Pat Martino. Like George Benson, he comes out of the organ trio background, and that life makes their music sound a certain way. We don't have that life anymore. Pat's sound is great—his sense of time, the intensity, the insistence in every note and phrase that grabs your attention. In a duet between two guys with great sound and pretty touch, a dry recording like this doesn't hurt too much.

3 LARRY CORYELL. *COMMUNICATIONS #9* (from *THE JAZZ COMPOSER'S ORCHESTRA*, JCOA). Coryell, guitar; Michael Mantler, composer, conductor.

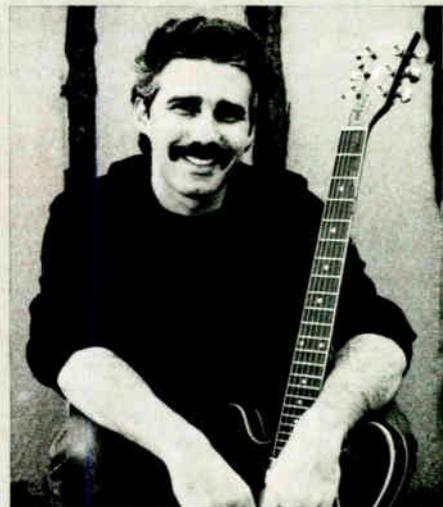
From the large silver album? I remember when Larry did this. I was a big fan of Gary Burton's *Duster* quartet—they really opened the door, to find there were more aspects to the guitar than only the

Steve Khan

By HOWARD MANDEL

Since guitarist Steve Khan's first Blindfold Test (db, Jan. 1979), there's been a second wave of jazz fusion that he's remained part of as player, composer, bandleader, and producer. Khan's most recent release, *Casa Loco* (Antilles 1020), is his third album with Anthony Jackson, Steve Jordan, and Manolo Badrena—preceding it are *Eyewitness* (Antilles 1018) and *Modern Times* (Trio 25016), the latter recorded live in Japan. With Donald Fagen on synthesizer, Khan paid tribute to Thelonious Monk by playing *Reflections on That's The Way I Feel Now* (A&M 6600); previously, he recorded a side of Monk's music solo on his LP *Evidence* (Arista 3023). In the past he's collaborated with Larry Coryell, Billy Joel, and the Brecker Brothers besides cutting three albums (*Tightrope*, *The Blue Man*, and *Arrows*) for Columbia.

Though Khan came to his instrument late, at age 20, after years of piano study and drumming, the 37-year-old is firmly committed to guitar as a studio session



maker, expressive artist, and fan. He's produced *Step It* for guitarist Bill Connors (Pathfinder Records) and is acutely aware of how post-production mixing affects what you hear; he also believes that "being able to make a living playing your own music is the best of all possible worlds." He was given no information in advance about the records played.

Charlie Christian lineage. Within jazz settings Larry was one of the first to experiment with amplified feedback, though Jimi Hendrix was probably out there first with sound effects.

This had that "Let's play!" feeling. What a strange piece of music to be thrown in the middle of, told: "You're the soloist, express yourself." What it must have been like in the recording studio that day! Larry once said, "There's a lot of beauty in distortion," and there is. But I'm not sure the mix captures everything Mantler as composer wanted out of it, and the recording quality probably hurt some aspects that would make this more listenable to the casual listener. Which is a lesson: your job's just begun when you've played the last note—don't leave the music in someone else's hands.

4 RONALD SHANNON JACKSON AND THE DECODING SOCIETY.

TRIALS OF AN HONEST JOHN (from *BARBEQUE DOG*, Antilles). Jackson, composer, drums; Vernon Reid, guitar; Zane Massey, reeds; Rev. Bruce Johnson, bass.

Never heard that before. Something Ornette's been doing recently? I'm pretty sure I heard an alto in there. I really liked what the drummer was doing—there's a spirit happening you don't hear in other areas of jazz-related music, not so far

from what people call new wave rock.

The effects, the slides, the glisses that the guitar player did, to relate to what the horn can naturally do—I liked that stuff. Right from the downbeat, the drums had that positive attitude, playing those Cobham-like single-stroke rolls, very forceful. But the unison line was out of tune, and that bothers me in this day of tuning machines. For my personal enjoyment, two to three stars; for spirit, five.

5 PETER FRAMPTON/CHRIS SPEDDING. *WORK* (from *THAT'S THE WAY I FEEL NOW*, A&M). Frampton, Spedding, guitars; Marcus Miller, bass; Anton Fier, drums; Thelonious Monk, composer; Hal Willner, producer.

I know this one; I was involved with the album. That's the Monk tune *Work*, with Chris Spedding, Frampton, I think Marcus Miller, and Anton Fig. Fier?

I like the way the tune's played, and the guitars sound good. Doug Epstein, the engineer, did all the *Eyewitness* work, and I think he did great work on this whole album. This particular tune lays well over the solid eighth-note feeling. I'm not sure it's fair to judge Frampton's eight bars as a jazz solo. The cut doesn't have that "Let's play" feeling—the whole set is more intended as a tribute to Monk's writing. db

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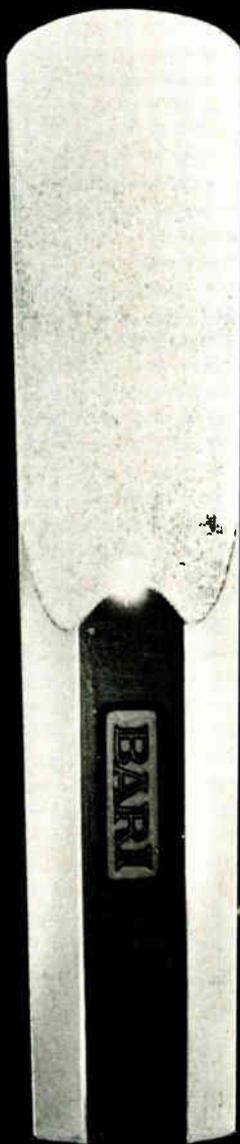
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about the presentation of an album today," DeJohnette advises. "You really can't overindulge in solos; maybe live you can stretch out longer, but even there an audience's attention span isn't what it was when Coltrane was playing. Now we're almost back to when Parker and Gillespie had to record two- and three-minute cuts. It makes you concentrate, consolidate yourself—and sometimes you can get more out of that. The solos on my record aren't overbearing. They don't wander; they hold your attention—and that's also what I'm going to concentrate on in live performance.

"At the same time, you can't get so nervous about putting a format together, or a record, that you go to the other extreme. We don't want to get so carried away with presentation and arrangements that the *playing*, the improvisational aspect, falls by the wayside. The music has to be calculated in such a way that you set up situations that set up improvisation, so it brings not only the musicians into a focal point, but the audience, too, so there's a constant sharing. I think Howard did that on *Monk's Mood*, which he gave a luscious arrangement. Of course, I think he really shines on the record. But all the guys—Rufus has been great, and he's got potential that gets tapped when we work consistently. John's a key figure; I've watched him develop, and he's coming on incredibly fast as a soloist, besides having that talent to sound like each instrument he plays is *the* instrument he plays. And David's aggressiveness and spirit speak for themselves.

"It's not cheap to go around with a five-piece band," DeJohnette sighs, "but I love the sound of this band, and that third voice really makes a difference; it has a strong impact. Plus, I can play melodica, if I want to write counterlines, stuff like *Central Park West* or *Zoot Suite* where I don't need the drums. Sometimes you can write rhythmically so that you can hear the tension the drums usually add as the rhythm written into the piece. And then I have all those options." Taking advantage of the options, as well as his keyboard technique on the tune *Ahmad The Terrible*, DeJohnette's created in *Album Album* a tight ensemble effort that will please fans of both the Dirty Dozen and the World Saxophone Quartet, and is unlikely to make the severest critic cry sellout.

While aiming for the wide market leads some musicians to abandon their greater ambitions and integrity, DeJohnette's professional past helps him avoid that. He recalls, "The AACM got under way a little bit after I left Chicago, but I was around when Muhal Richard Abrams first formed it, and I got a lot out of it—Muhal was a great inspiration to all the creative musicians there. I did a lot of professional work when I was in Chicago, late '50s, early '60s—mostly club work playing with singers, leading my own groups, playing both instruments, playing r&b, Top 40, weddings, bar mitzvahs, piano bars—I served my time doing that. I knew Maurice White—he was the drummer in one of my piano trios—and Phil Upchurch, both guys who were good studio musicians who could also play well.

"And one of the things we all got from the AACM—or at least I did—was not to make separations between commercial music and the music you liked to play. I found a way to take advantage of playing commercial jobs, just as good as I could: the discipline of playing them was also good in directing the energy when you got a chance to play in less restrictive environments. So on different nights I'd play concerts for the AACM, then I'd do a blues gig, then straightahead jazz gigs; also I had the balance of playing behind singers. It was great, because I was playing all kinds of music, without any attitude behind it. I still feel that way. It's only the nature of the music business that makes for those separations."

With that kind of mature perspective, DeJohnette can also

CONTINUED ON PAGE 61

Simon & Bard

Imagination, luck, and perseverance have taken this group from a local '70s fusion act to national '80s eclecticism.

BY MARK RUFFIN

The first album by keyboardist Fred Simon and reedman Michael Bard was called *Mosaic*—an adroit title that could also describe the relationship and career that these two musicians share. The Simon & Bard Group creates aural images by processing bits of their knowledge and inlaying them into the fabric of American music. After years of studying and playing together, Simon & Bard have absorbed what it takes to succeed. Now, they're ready to conquer the music world.

Simon & Bard began their professional partnership in 1978, a time when the Chicago jazz market was saturated with fusion bands. The Windy City's oversized club scene couldn't support the overabundance of soundalike outfits, and subsequently many of them folded as the fusion fad faded. Simon & Bard survived, however, because their aspirations were greater, and each man specializes in a different facet necessary to run a viable musical organization. Both are strong technicians on their respective instruments; in addition, Simon is the most comfortable composer, Bard the businessman.

The seeds of the band were planted as far back as the Fred Simon Rubber Band and the Carmen Miranda Ensemble, groups co-led by the two during their junior high and high school days in suburban Evanston, IL. They played the music of Charles Lloyd, Keith Jarrett, and Simon originals, inspired by a high school instructor who steered them through theory and application. Upon graduation, both went to the University of Illinois, though after a year they split up and went their separate ways.

At the U. of I., Simon was a composition major. His activities included heavy experimenting in the school's electronic music studio, and jamming with such future Chicago notables as saxist Ron Dewar and pianists Jim McNeely and John Campbell. "I'm influenced by



From left, Fred Simon, bassist Larry Gray, drummer Phil Gratteau, and Michael Bard.

as many different people as I've ever heard," Simon explained, while trying to avoid specific references. When pressed, though, he names such typically diverse artists as Aaron Copland, Jimi Hendrix, and John Coltrane as his influences.

After graduation day he had a gig he termed "creating atmosphere music." Along with solo piano jobs, he worked for a choreographer, accompanying modern dance classes. "When I was writing for dance, the music wasn't the only focus. My imagination would be as far out as possible when the movement combined with the music. The music," he reasoned, "was absorbed like air by all the participants." Hearing Simon & Bard in concert, the airy quality of Simon's music is evident. On-stage he plays acoustic piano for the most part, but programs an Oberheim OB-X for additional colors and textures. His earlier pieces, on *Mosaic* (Flying Fish 243), have a loose, earthy acoustical sound, with sporadic doses of electronics. Later albums *Tear It Up* (Flying Fish 262) and *The Enormous Radio* (Flying Fish 321) find Simon has refined his tunes, increasing the use of electronics, irregular meters, and alternating melodic patterns.

Up until now, Michael Bard's compositional fires have been boiling under a skittering lid. His first piece appeared on the band's second LP, while three were featured on their most recent, *The Enormous Radio*. As Bard emerges as a writer, it is obvious that he takes chances with his music. This comes as no surprise considering that the development of his musical business sense has been built on opportunistic maneuvers and calculated risks. His latest gamble is moving to the Pacific Northwest. "We can't be a local band anymore," he related. "I burnt out

on it. We've done it 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for six years. I want to keep the group alive and fresh. This makes it harder, in terms of logistics, but we're stronger for it—on the road promoting our records, and really playing spontaneous music. It's a groove, instead of beating it in the same old clubs over and over again for the same lousy money."

Portland has its attractions for Bard the instrumentalist, too. "Chicago is a city of three-and-a-half million people. Portland is a city of 350,000," he rationalized. "There are not 500 saxophone players here, maybe only 50. There is a lot more work, so it all goes around easier." Portland also allows for more artistic freedom, whereas Bard felt he was pigeonholed in Chicago, so he is able to play standards one night, then screaming guitar licks on Lyricon the next. His axes of preference are a Martin B \flat soprano with a Guy Hawkins #4 mouthpiece, a Conn 110 tenor with a Berg Larsen 100/1 mouthpiece, and his Lyricon Wind Driver through a Moog source modified especially for the Lyricon. He also has an Apple IIe keyboard running a Soundchaser 16-voice digital synthesizer, using a MIDI interface made by Passport Design.

After Bard left his musical buddy at the U. of I., he traveled to Lawrence University in Wisconsin, where he joined a band led by keyboardist/composer John Harmon. This jazz/rock nonet, known as Matrix, secured a recording contract from RCA, gained solid representation from the Willard Alexander Agency, and acquired a regular touring schedule. Bard stayed with the group for two years, then, through his contacts at the Alexander office, he segued smoothly into Stan Kenton's big band. His four-plus years with Kenton were a

PROFILE

lesson in the power of organization; though he didn't always get along with his boss, he admired Kenton's manipulative abilities with business affairs.

Ironically, it was Kenton's sudden illness that brought Simon and Bard back together. With the pianist out of commission, and the band playing a Chicago date, Bard recommended Simon for the vacant piano chair. Though he had

mixed feelings about the move ("My attitude towards big bands was less than benevolent. Unless it's the absolute cream, it seems like a kind of football mentality. Interplay in a small group is much more preferable," Simon explained), he took the job. The next step was solidifying the pair's musical concepts. Kenton's band often devoted time to high school and college clinics, where

the big band broke down into small ensembles. Fred and Michael often played together, with drummer Gary Hobbs, and discovered their interaction had intensified.

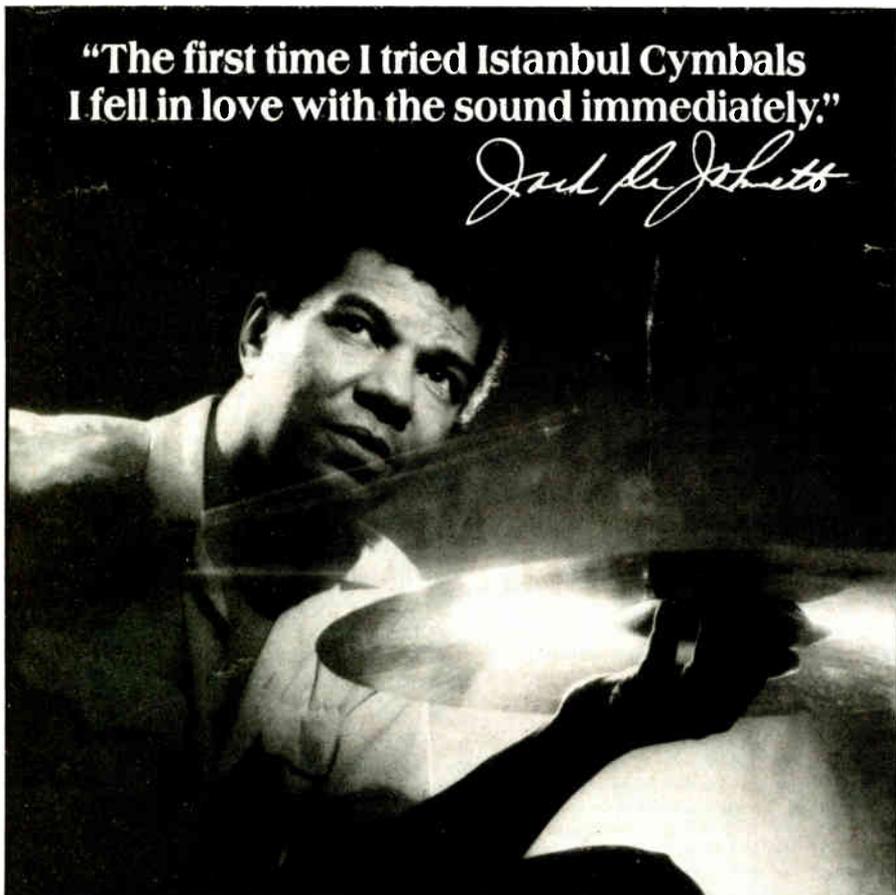
Not long after Kenton returned and replaced Simon at the keyboard, Bard quit the band, and in '78 the Simon & Bard Group debuted with Hobbs on drums and Kelly Sill on bass. Although the free-thinking band was mismatched with the Buddy Rich Orchestra for their first gig, Bard dubbed the initial performance a success, as he plotted for the future. "I knew we could get a record deal," the reedman proclaimed, "if the music was original and creative enough."

Their persistence and luck paid off almost immediately. While on the road, they recorded basic tracks in a Portland studio. On their return to Chicago, they struck up a deal with a friend who was putting together a new studio, and were given unlimited studio time while he worked out the bugs in his system. Bassist Steve Rodby and drummer Paul Wertico (currently Pat Metheny's rhythm unit) joined in on a few tracks, adding spice to Simon's originals.

The band's deal with Flying Fish Records was being finalized as the Alexander Agency arranged a mini-tour for the band with Larry Coryell. The finale was in Champaign, IL. After the last set a listener approached Bard with another offer: for free studio time in a new 24-track studio. "Larry had his guitar plugged in the board as soon as we walked in," Bard recounted. "By the time we were all set up, he had all his guitar tracks laid down on this little riff tune. We built the tune, *Fancy Frogs*, on his riff."

Bruce Kaplan, owner of Flying Fish, appreciated Simon's music and Bard's drive to get it heard, and signed the band. Each of their successive LPs has received more critical acclaim than its predecessor. Though the label's roster is mostly folk and ethnic music, Bard believes the band's appeal to the label is its "world music. We have some reggae tunes, acid rock, and some esoteric tunes—very eclectic music, for an eclectic label."

Because of their geographical distance, Simon & Bard's tours are now more coordinated, and both musicians are using the extra time to further their individual careers. The duo insists this will improve the quality of the material they record together. "It gives us a fresh perspective," Simon said. "We don't feel the pressure of trying to force everything that we learn and come up with on the Group; the band is stronger for it." db



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Borbetomagus

Developing an original musical language rooted in high-energy playing, this trio creates music with an Industrial Strength edge.

BY KEVIN WHITEHEAD

Imagine, if you will, the sound of a pair of 1966 free jazz saxophonists, playing at fever pitch; their sound is a banshee wail of high squeals, an abstract roar of thick textures. Now imagine these saxes in the middle of some hellish factory running at full blast. On one side, power saws buzz through groaning beams; on the other, metal grinds on metal. Finally, imagine this onslaught continuing for 20 minutes at a stretch. Imagine this, and you'll have some conception of the sound of Borbetomagus: saxophonists Don Dietrich and Jim Sauter, and electric guitarist Donald Miller.

Over the course of five albums since 1980—four for their own Agaric Records (*Borbetomagus* [Agaric 1980], *Work On What Has Been Spoiled* [Agaric 1981], *Borbetomagus* [Agaric 1982], *Barbed Wire Maggots* [Agaric 1983]), and *Borbetomagus And Friends* for England's Leo (113) label—the trio has brought new performance standards to high-energy music. Their intensity level is virtually unparalleled. Yet while flat-out blowing is commonly associated with reckless abandon, Borbetomagus have made high-energy playing into a curiously rigorous discipline. Sustaining that intensity, while listening hard and constantly responding to the other performers, is not easy work.

Such overwhelming music is often considered anti-social, too, but Borbetomagus reject that notion. "It's a scream of joy," says Don Dietrich, "a rush that's better than drugs. If the audience is tuned in right, they can have a great time."

His lifelong friend Jim Sauter concurs. "It's a problem when people misinterpret what we do as some kind of negative statement about the unfortunate state of the world. That's not where we're coming from; we're doing a life-affirming thing."

Still, in Dietrich's case at least, the scream of joy was born of a mischievous impulse. When Don was nine, his first teacher got him hooked on playing saxophone; later, however, more regimented instruction proved less inspiring. "Lessons became a real drag, so what I did

CONTINUED ON PAGE 62

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JAZZ SHOWCASE

CHICAGO—The more some groups change, the more they play the same. This rewording of a cliché worn thin by overabuse may elicit some puzzled head-scratching and wrinkled brows. However, it is the most suitable summary of the reunited Jazztet. The group's distinctively cohesive ensemble work is a dead ringer for its original early '60s sound. However, when broken down into individual parts, it's hard to miss the differences effected by two decades worth of change and independent projects.

Art Farmer's Harmon-muted flugelhorn intro to *Killer Joe* carried a familiar ring for almost everyone in the sold-out Jazz Showcase, as did the tune's intimate, choir-like second section. Curtis Fuller added further reminders of the finger-snapping original by inserting the entrance and *Old Devil Moon* quotes from his recorded solo. Orientation completed, the trombonist then assumed a booming sound and pugnacious attack which drastically departed from the french horn intonation and smooth phrasing of his '60s style.

Tenorman Benny Golson has also undergone an obvious metamorphosis. His formerly lithesome tone and Byas-inspired creations have given way to a more brittle sound and rollicking flow of notes executed with great urgency. The event-toned, breathy notes of yesteryear are now played with a crying quiver, while his previous trademark of acrobatic arpeggios has aged into more level linearity.

While Golson's tenor has incurred renovation, his pen still writes the same style of song. *Moment To Moment*, the title tune from the group's most recent album (Soul Note 1066), demonstrated many qualities found in the Golson book, including a reflective trombone intro, a minor-key romantic theme, and remorseful chords. The breakneck tempo prompted assertive solos from all involved. Even the ultra-mellow Farmer gave glimpses of the more outgoing trumpet he used to play. In the company of his longtime cohorts, his playing seemed to regain some of the bite it has lacked since his conversion to full-time flugelhorn.

The set also featured Golson's clever rearrangement of his own *Are You Real* and the standard *Autumn Leaves*. The latter included challenging intro and tag extensions which spotlighted the precise rhythm section of pianist Mickey Tucker, bassist Rufus Reid, and drummer Albert Heath. Throughout the evening, and



Benny Golson

MITCHELL SEIDEL

especially on *Autumn Leaves*, Tucker baited the crowd with a mixture of short figures, unlikely substitutions, and a comically extended quote from *The Shadow Of Your Smile*. Reid and Heath turned in imaginative solos of their own, and together boosted the solo efforts of the others.

The proceedings came to a romping conclusion with Golson's minor-blues break tune. *Time Speaks*—an appropriate title for a group that has simultaneously changed with the times and made time stand still.

—Tom Nuccio

JAY McSHANN

SIGNBOARD LOUNGE

KANSAS CITY—This night, part of Jay McShann's monthlong stint at the Signboard Lounge, there were plenty of "money tunes." The "money tunes," as the 76-year-old pianist labels them, are the commercial standards, crowd-pleasers, and usual fare he knows people will request before he walks into a club. The trick, McShann adds, always has been to make the songs you *have* to play—the predictable—interesting and fun.

The Signboard, housed in Cowtown's most luxurious hotel, Crown Center, is a far cry from 12th and Vine Streets and the places where McShann helped carve out and contribute to the development of the "Kansas City Sound." But more than

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four decades later, McShann's quintet—consummate professionals all—systematically pounded out the timeless, vibrant hybrid that evolved from the blues, boogie woogie, and swing. The group made the performance refreshing, avoided the mundane, and sounded modern.

Intermittent, unaccompanied, elongated introductions by trumpeter Carmel Jones (for example, on *Stardust*) and by tenor saxophonist Budd Johnson (on the ballad *Ghost Of A Chance*) were always tasty, soulful, dynamic, and full-bodied. McShann's piano quarterbacked the rhythm section consisting of bassist Noble Samuels and drummer Paul Gunther. Occasionally, McShann would egg Samuels on, blurting, "Mr. Bassman, Mr. Bassman," successfully enticing him into a solo. Throughout the three-set night, they worked tightly to keep the music moving.

McShann is at his best when he draws from the style of stride pianist Pete Johnson, whom McShann cites, along with Earl Hines and Art Tatum, as his main influences. Smiling, while he waves the index finger of his left hand in a circular motion, with his right McShann breaks into numbers such as the shuffles *Please Don't Dog Me Around* and *Do-Wah-Do*. And what is impressive about the unit, whose average age exceeds 70, is that the other, much-heard, even overplayed standards are performed with enthusiasm, zest, creativity, and originality. *Goin' To Chicago* featured Johnson's fat tenor; he even got around to stretching it a little bit, bringing in some overtones and honkin' r&b. Who would think *Lady Be Good* could still be a killer? Nevertheless it was easily the night's best example of K.C. Jump. With all participating, Samuels' bass and McShann's piano properly set the heavily syncopated pace. Extensive solos were the norm, not the exception; McShann allows everyone the freedom to express himself. At times, especially on ballads, Johnson shed luscious, Ben Webster/Lester Young-like light, alternating between a big Southwest tone and a breathier, airy tenor.

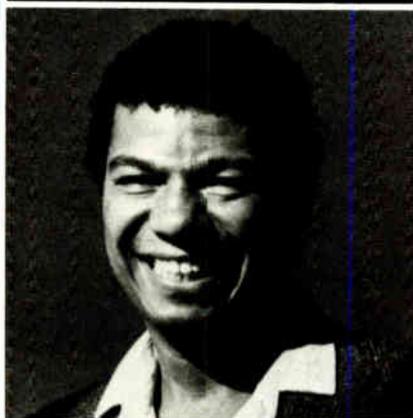
The end result from the ensemble is best described as an honest elaboration, an articulate statement. This was an astute, succinct, classic display of musical history, an energetic example of a subgenre that helped mold and shape the sounds of the next half-century.

One sad, ironic note. Budd Johnson, who was uncompromisingly strong this night, died of a heart attack the next day. I feel privileged to have witnessed his last performance.

—jonathan w. poses

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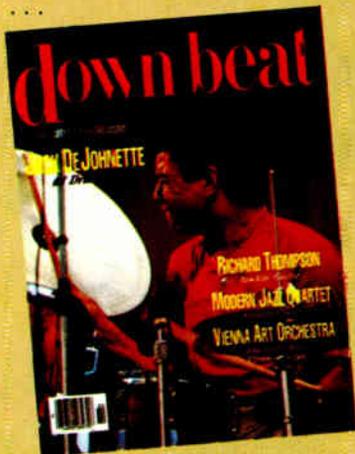
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PRO SESSION

Milt Jackson's Solo On Milano— A Vibes Transcription

BY JOEL SIMPSON



Joel Simpson is down beat's New Orleans correspondent and a working pianist in the Crescent City (at the Meridien Hotel's La Rotonde lounge). He has a PhD in comparative literature from Brown but gave up academia for jazz piano in 1978.

This solo by Milt Jackson on John Lewis' classic *Milano* first appeared on the Modern Jazz Quartet album *Django* (Prestige 7057) and was later reissued on *The Modern Jazz Quartet* (Prestige 24005). In addition to its rich beauty, the solo is a formidable study of rhythmic subdivision in a ballad context.

Performance notes:

- 1) The pulse is very steady throughout, serving as the foundation for the elaborate rhythmic byplay.
- 2) I have represented Jackson's slower grace notes as 32nd notes; viz. chorus bar 1, beat 1; bar 8, beat 1; bar 10, beat 2; bar 12, beat 3; and bar 19, beat 3; check with the recording for the exact nuance.
- 3) In bars 25-28 I've added John Lewis' piano figures, since they form a distinctive head arrangement around Jackson's return to the melody for the last eight bars of the tune-form; if you are playing the solo on piano, you might cross hands to play Lewis' figures.
- 4) Note the key change in bar 25 and the coda modulations, bars 30-35; Jackson uses them to end this ballad elegantly, avoiding a laborious recapitulation of the entire head.

Handwritten musical score for saxophone, featuring various chords and measures. The score includes measures 1 through 35, with chords such as Em, Am, Dm7, G7, C7, F, Fm, F#m, B7, Ebm7, Ab7, Eb7, D6, Gm7, C7, A7, D7, Gm7, Abm7, Gm7, Em7, Ebm7, D, and Dm7. The score is marked with 'db' at the bottom right.

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PRO SESSION

HOW TO sweeten sound with sixths

BY DR. WILLIAM L. FOWLER



William Fowler, composer/clinician/professor (University of Colorado, Denver) holds a PhD in Music Composition and is db's Education Editor.

Individual Major and minor sixths sound sweet. Successive sixths sound sweeter, but successive sixths over accompanying chords sound sweetest. To hear how parallel sixths increase sweetness, test them on Beethoven's *Ode To Joy* from his *Ninth Symphony*:

- 1) Play the melody alone as it appears in the example;
- 2) Play E above G, the first Major sixth in the example;
- 3) Play F above A, the first minor sixth in the example;
- 4) Play the entire melody with sixths added below it as in the example;
- 5) Add chords by playing the entire example.

Ode To Joy

The image shows two staves of musical notation for 'Ode To Joy'. The top staff is the melody, and the bottom staff is the accompaniment. The first two measures of the accompaniment are labeled 'M6' and 'm6', indicating Major and minor sixths respectively. The melody is a simple, joyful tune.

Diatonic sixths consist entirely of notes belonging to the scale of some particular key. In the key of C, for example, where the scale contains no sharps or flats, the diatonic sixths also contain no sharps or flats:

A diagram showing a C Major scale on a treble clef staff. The notes are C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. An arrow labeled 'sixths' points to the interval between E and C. Another arrow labeled 'C Major scale' points to the entire scale.

Within the scale of C, E-F and B-C form half-steps, while other adjacent notes form whole steps. If a sixth spans both the E-F and the B-C half-steps, the sixth is minor. If, however, a sixth spans only one of these half-steps, the sixth is Major:

Two diagrams showing piano keyboards. The first diagram shows a minor sixth interval between E and C, with the notes E and C highlighted. The second diagram shows a major sixth interval between F and D, with the notes F and D highlighted.

Starting from the minor sixth with tonic C as its top note and moving up the scale of C, the diatonic sixths line up in pairs of the same type—M6-M6, mi6-mi6, M6-M6—until reaching the original minor sixth an octave higher, as the next example demonstrates. And as the example also demonstrates, whenever the type of sixth changes along the way, one note always moves by half-step, the other by whole step. But when the type of sixth stays the same along the way, both notes always move by whole step:

A musical notation example showing a sequence of sixths on a treble clef staff. The notes are C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. The intervals are labeled as m6, M6, M6, m6, m6, M6, M6, m6. A legend indicates that 'M = Major' and 'm = minor'.

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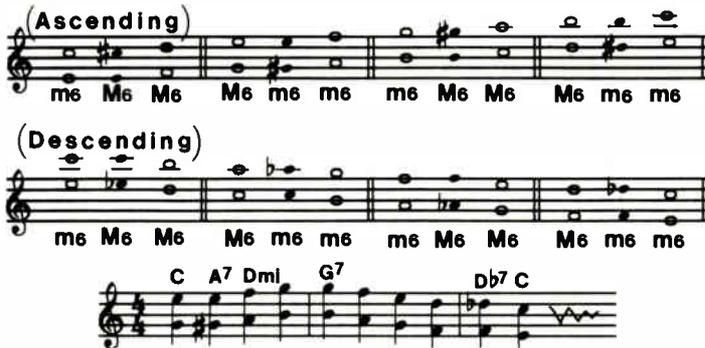
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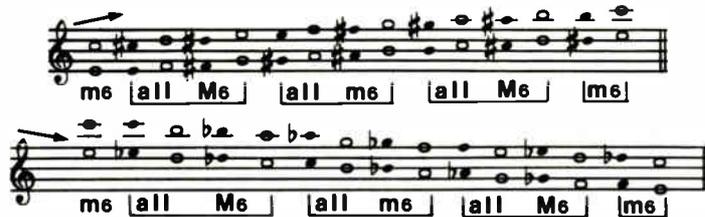
Between any two successive sixths of the same type lies a chromatic sixth. Such chromatic sixths are always the same type as their neighboring diatonic sixths, as the next examples show. Now similar types of sixths occur in smooth groups of three:



When the type of sixth changes along a diatonic scale, one note always moves by half-step while the other moves by whole step. Repeating the note which will move by half-step while inserting the chromatic note within the whole step makes another chromatic sixth, this time containing both a diatonic and a chromatic note. Such partially chromatic sixths add harmonic intensity to the inherent sweetness of successive sixths:



A succession of all diatonic, chromatic, and partially chromatic sixths groups its sixths into four of each type. The next two examples show how such ascending sixths differ from their descending counterparts:



As a final example, here is a 12-bar waltz which mixes diatonic, chromatic, and partially chromatic sixths and which demonstrates in its last few measures the extent of dissonance successive sixths can achieve:

Effie's Waltz



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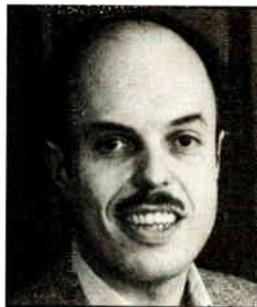
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PRO SESSION

Recording On A Budget: Direct To Two-Track

BY WAYNE WADHAMS

Wayne Wadhams has toured and recorded as a lead singer/keyboardist with the Fifth Estate and other rock groups. Upon moving to Boston, he formed Film Associates, which has produced tv spots, documentaries, and worked on feature films. In 1974 he opened Studio-B Inc., a 16-track facility and home-base of the regional label, Boston International. Most recently he designed the curriculum and six new recording studios for the Music Production and Engineering major at Berklee College of Music.



The \$50/hr. and \$75/hr. studio rates will not be the same in all towns and all studios, but 24-track will cost *at least* 50 percent more than direct to two-track, so the ratio will be about the same. The simple fact is it will cost at least two-and-a-half times as much to do the project on 24-track. In fact, the lower the studio's rates are, the higher the cost ratio, simply because the recording tape itself will become a larger part of the overall budget. Remember again that there is no time in the 24-track budget for overdubs. I guarantee that with several empty tracks glaring at you, you'll think of some way to spend even more time and money. The idea is to get your money's worth regardless of which format you choose. If you want to get gigs now, do a good two-track session and use that as a warm-up for a more ambitious multi-track one to follow.

Back to the studio: the techniques of distant miking are highly dependent on the acoustics of the individual studio, so there are no general rules I can give you. But *before* you book the studio, make sure you hear a couple of examples of bands reasonably like your own, recorded by the same engineer in the *same room*. Accept no substitutes! If you don't hear good sounds on these tapes, you probably won't get them on your own.

As a time-and-money-saving idea, I would suggest that you mike your horn, wind, or string sections first. Fiddle with their placement in the room, the mic selection, and even their equalization until you're satisfied that you've got the best section sound possible with the least rhythm section leakage. Knowing this leakage factor early in the session will guide you on how much time to spend miking and processing drums, piano, etc. There's no sense spending time on the subtleties of drums if your efforts will just be washed out by the section mics. Instead, you can plan your drum miking to provide the best sound possible under the circumstances, and one which sounds *right* with the section. This kind

CONTINUED ON PAGE 59

The decision to make a tape direct to two-track is a difficult one. Multi-track is hard to avoid if you feel the engineer will be unable to follow and command all the musical cues in your music, bringing instruments in, out, up, and down at the right times. Certainly the recording studio will want you to go multi-track if you can possibly afford it. On the other hand, with two-track you don't even need to remix. One pass and you're done—saving time, and especially money!

Oddly, the two-track question may hang on your response to a second, seemingly unrelated factor: Does your group include a horn, wind, or string section which *must* be recorded simultaneously with the rhythm section? If the answer is yes, then the way that section is miked will probably be the actual limiting factor on the overall sound quality of the tape. Why? Many studio engineers are reverting to distant miking on acoustic sections, beefing up the weakest single instruments with tight mics. Distant miking gives much better blend within the section, and this makes perfect sense when you think of how horns, winds, and strings are meant to be heard in performance. If you want that ensemble sound, then the section mics will be picking up substantial amounts of drums, piano, or any instruments playing live at the same time. Leakage from these sources will seriously alter the sounds you have worked hard to get on rhythm instruments.

But, you say, why not just put the section mics on two separate tracks and noise gate them during the mix? Because, I retort, more than just a little noise gating on tracks which contain a lot of leakage will definitely be heard in the mix. The sound of rhythm tracks will tighten up every time the horns or winds drop out and vice versa. Furthermore, let me remind you that this is supposed to be a *budget* session in the first place. Even though we've gone through lots of studio tricks which you *can* use, your overall budget and *the intended use for the tape* should guide you on how many of these tricks you *should* use.

A word on my philosophy of making

tapes. Let the recording quality be appropriate to the task. Just as a live recording, even if made on 24-track, should reproduce the real ambiance and sound of the concert, a demo should sound like a *demo* rather than an unfinished master. Club owners auditioning gig-demos really aren't looking for ultra-sophisticated sounds. They want to see if *your* feel will make *their* audience feel good. If you're hired, the important thing is to deliver pretty much what the booker heard on your tape. Likewise, a record company listening to a demo should not confuse it with a master; it is proposing to spend a bundle on master tapes and wants to know that this investment will result in something better than your demo. If the studio techniques used in your demo are more polished than the writing and performance, then by unspoken comparison your music will lose out to its own recording!

Thus, for jazz acts from trios up through big band, or any group whose demo should really have a live feel, I definitely vote for direct to two-track.

We haven't talked real budgets in this series yet, so this will be a good time to compare what the same project would cost if done direct to two-track or on 24-track. Let's assume you have an eight-piece group, including three horns, plus lead singer. Furthermore, let's say that for musical reasons it's important that everyone perform live, with no overdubs, even if you opt for 24-track. If the project is to record four tunes, the costs might be as illustrated in the box below:

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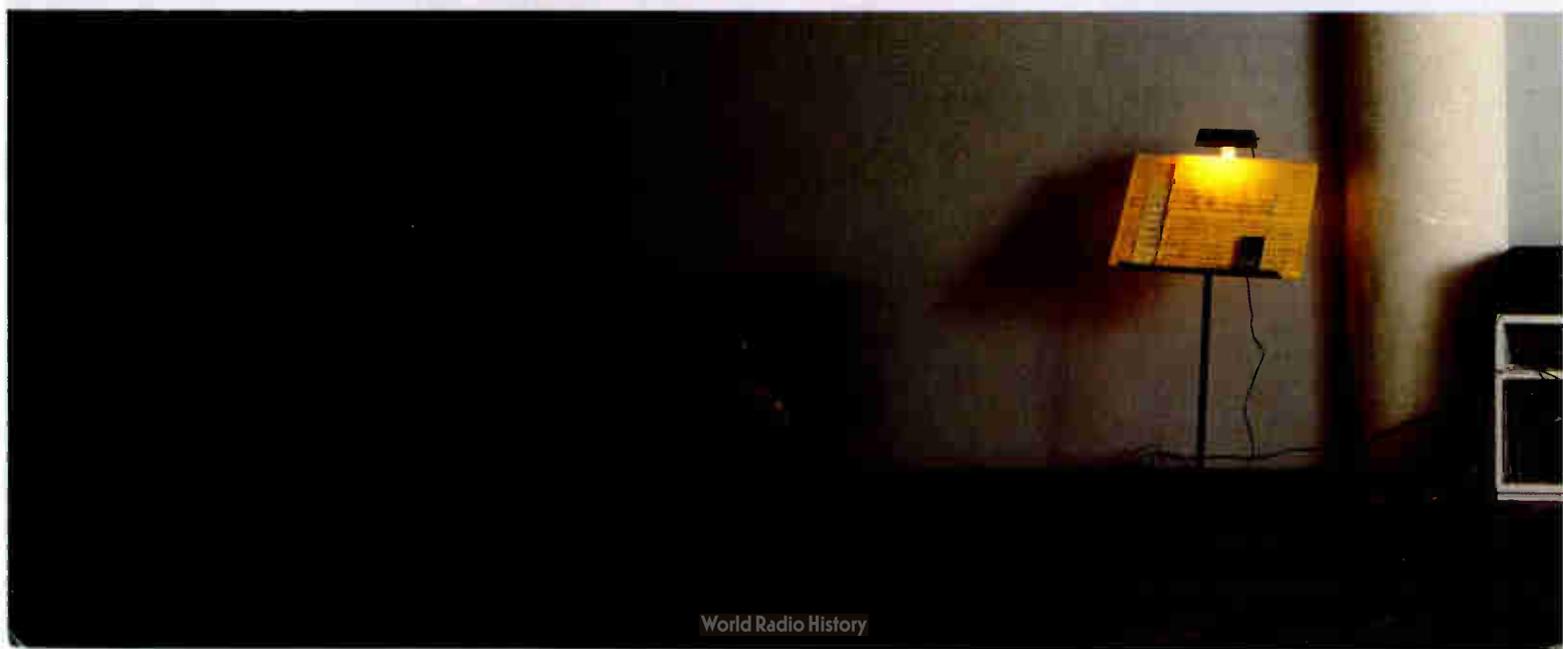
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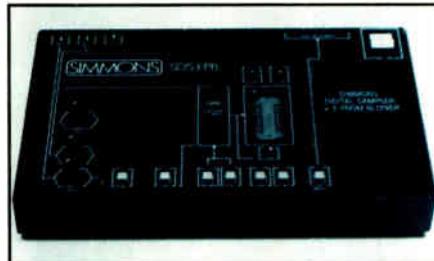


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of backward logic can turn the clock and budget back in your favor. In addition, by getting section sounds early, your horn or wind players can take a healthy break while you work on rhythm sounds. They'll come in fresher for the real takes that way, rather than blowing their brains out for the engineer right before Take One.

By the way, if you do discover that some noise gating and special processing is necessary on a section, by all means do it direct to two-track. Just make sure your parameters are set to minimize your awareness of the processors. For instance, don't try to drop the drum leakage out altogether when the section gates are closed. Just make sure the attack is set so that it neither clips notes nor gives an electronic click, the release is smooth and slow, and the floor is set just low enough to afford tighter rhythm sounds without sudden changes in "crispness" when the gates kick in or out. Likewise with the equalization—taking the entire low end off the horn mics will doubtless give a tighter bottom end on the drums, but the overall sound of the tape will suffer by the inconsistency between fat drums and thin horns. Compromise to keep the band sounding unified.

Remember that my goal in asking you to consider direct to two-track is to shift more of your studio time and budget back to making music. Time saved in *not* dealing with multi-track can pay for extra and better takes of more tunes, careful listening to playbacks in the control room, some editing-together of the best sections of several takes, and more copies of the finished demo—all things not to be sneezed at.

But, you say, what if we don't like the sound of the two-track when we take it home? Don't take chances, I say. Bring in a couple of records you think are well engineered and keep one of them on a turntable throughout your sessions, just to make sure your engineer doesn't stray too far. It's easy to do that after a few hours in a stuffy control room. As a second "backup," bring in a portable system you know—be it a blaster, walkman, or your car system parked outside. When you get your sounds together, spit out a rough take of one tune direct to cassette. Then play that back in the lounge, the hallway, the restaurant during dinner break—anywhere outside the studio and control room.

One final suggestion. Direct to two-track is the engineer's toughest challenge. If all the group members will be out in the studio, someone should be in the booth giving the engineer cues, preferably someone *very* familiar with the tunes. In addition, prepare cue sheets for the engineer. These can be a simple

CONTINUED ON PAGE 60

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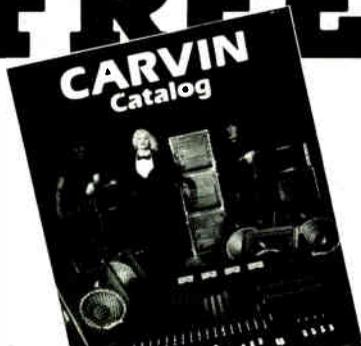
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PRO SESSION cont. from page 59

bar chart of the entire arrangement of each tune, with sections numbered and lettered, vocals, solos, and other sound cues clearly noted. Or you might type out complete lyric sheets, leaving plenty of space around the lyrics for engineering notes. Either way, if you can go over these with the engineer at a short pre-production meeting, you'll get a better tape and save valuable studio time. It's just this type of organization that we stress in Music Production courses at Berklee, and it pays off almost every time.

The next and final article in this "Recording On A Budget" series will cover techniques for the mixdown. Many of these suggestions can be used in a direct to two-track session, so stay tuned. db

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accept musical factors that may have limited the commercial success of some of his previous projects. "I had the New Directions band—an all-star band with [trumpeter] Lester Bowie, [bassist] Eddie Gomez, and [guitarist] John Abercrombie—and we thought we could make it commercially as well as musically, but I think the reason it wasn't as successful as it might have been was that we were playing music that was kind of cerebral and experimental. It was great music, yes, it sounded good, but maybe people couldn't figure out what that combination was. I mean, the combination of elements was very special, and maybe ahead of its time, too. We had some successful tours of Europe, where we were very well received, and we had a great time; it was very loose, but there was also a lot of interplay happening. It was just too diverse, I guess.

"But then when I did the Special Edition thing, it was very timely, and the response I had to that first Special Edition record was the biggest I've had from any records I've done. Of course, [saxist] Arthur Blythe was hitting then, and David Murray was hitting—they were both in the band—and the World Saxophone Quartet was hitting, and there was a play called *Zoot Suit* on Broadway, and my tune *Zoot Suite* on the record—which is also on *Album Album* . . . the timing of that first record was just right.

"Then I had two other Special Edition records before *Album Album* with changing personnel, and the records weren't as unified as the first one. I've pulled myself together and gotten everything back on target, though, and the rest of the records I do from here on are going to be more thought-out, with more directed, concentrated energy in them.

"There are a lot of people who don't even know Special Edition is a working band," DeJohnette admits, abashed, "and I've been a bit aloof from the public with my band, only

because I've felt we deserved more than has sometimes been offered. We played the Blue Note in New York last summer and did good business; we've done real well with festivals in Canada—we did Toronto, Montreal, where we were headliners, and Edmonton. The audiences I can get to are usually excited—'Wow, man, we haven't heard any music like this in ages—it's got some energy to it, some conviction, some life.'

"So the future for me looks like trying to get some decent work for my five-piece band. I've asked my manager, Mary Ann Topper, to see about the college market—I've done some clinics this year, for the first time in a long while, and we've done some college gigs, but not consistently. Other than that, I'm interested in doing my piano projects—I did a week at Lush Life, with Charli Persip on drums—and some collaborative projects. Keith and [bassist] Gary Peacock and I are going to Japan, and there's something tentatively in the works with [guitarist] Andy Summers of the Police. I went to one of their concerts, and he'd said he knew what I did and liked it, so I talked with him, and we've spoken about doing something since then, but he's got a whirlwind schedule. There's also a possibility I'd do something with Miles again, but I don't know if that will ever come to pass. I think I'd sound a lot better with him now than I did before.

"Miles coming back has definitely stirred up some activity. He's on his next plateau right now, making clear that he is for getting the pop audience to start hearing jazz instrumentalists. He can take a funk format, solo over it, and put his stamp on it so a lot of pop musicians will have something else to deal with, to try to get to that level, 'cause he's still ahead of them."

But multi-directional Jack DeJohnette's out in front, too—a drummer/composer who plays piano with a nod to Ahmad Jamal, beats reggae for John Abercrombie, keeps a hip little sax section, goes flying with Keith Jarrett, and knows how to live on the top of a hill with his family around him, his art and his work merging though it's, yes, hard. db

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was figure out ways to screw up the system. Playing high screeches and groany sounds, biting the reed—anything the saxophone wasn't supposed to do were things I was looking into. I was kicked out of band in seventh grade, in eighth grade, and all through high school. Finally one bandleader took my mouthpiece away as punishment!"

Jim Sauter, who was born in 1953 the day before Dietrich, and who like his chum has lived most of his life in New York's suburban Rockland County, was also taking lessons, and blowing tenor in that same high school band. Together, he and Don played in several cacophonous rock bands. "We did a lot of three-chord songs, and the average length of each number was about an hour," Jim laughs.

While away at college, Sauter was exposed for the first time to the exploratory music of "Ayer and Dolphy, and some of the more 'out' Coltrane things. I brought some tapes back for Don to hear, and we both flipped out." Dietrich remembers his original reaction to Albert Ayler: "I was pretty infuriated that he was getting away with this stuff I was beaten down for." Subsequently, the two put together "a really weird jazz band" called Industrial Strength, "taking very strong liberties in the direction of electronic music played on acoustic instruments," according to Dietrich. "Then one day I was flipping the radio dial and came up with some wild sounds that really turned me on—European improvised electronic music, like the Music Improvisation Company, AMM, and Mauricio Kagel. That was on WKCR from Columbia University, and it turned out that the disc jockey was Donald Miller." He and Sauter called Miller to register their approval; Miller mentioned that he was a musician too, and he invited them to his place in New York, where Brian Doherty (who played various electronics on their first LP) was also living at the time. The four began jamming, and the group later known as Borbetomagus was born.

Oh yes, about the name. Actually, it was only supposed to be the title of that first LP. Borbetomagus was the original name of the medieval City of Worms, and the album's cover design featured an earthworm motif. Reviewers assumed that Borbetomagus was the name of the group, and the moniker stuck.

While Sauter and Dietrich came to Borbetomagus from a jazz listener's perspective, Donald Miller's background is classical. "My father was very open to modern music, and when I came along [in Washington, DC, in 1958], this music was always in the house. *The Rite Of Spring* was my favorite piece of music when I



KEITH BYRNE

Borbetomagus: from left, Jim Sauter, Donald Miller, Don Dietrich.

was two years old, and that opened up the way toward hearing other forms of music. I got interested in rock & roll like everyone else, around eighth or ninth grade, listening to some of the more psychedelic groups. But around then, when my father began listening to Stockhausen, Xenakis, and Penderecki, we developed that co-passion together."

Miller had four years of classical guitar training, and still plays flamenco for fun, but atonal electronic music is the most obvious influence on his heavily distorted guitar work. He plays a circa-1960, single-pickup Rickenbacker solid body, often with the strings randomly detuned. "Pickups put out a magnetic field, and since I'm using metal objects on the strings—files, tuning forks, sheet metal—which interrupt that magnetic force, you have all this interference coming through the pickup, and that disturbance coming through a fuzzbox and a big Sunn amp sounds pretty monstrous. Outside of when Jimi Hendrix set fire to his guitar at Monterey, the only other person I know who's worked with that same magnetic tension was David Tudor, on John Cage's *Variations II*, using phonograph cartridges on piano strings."

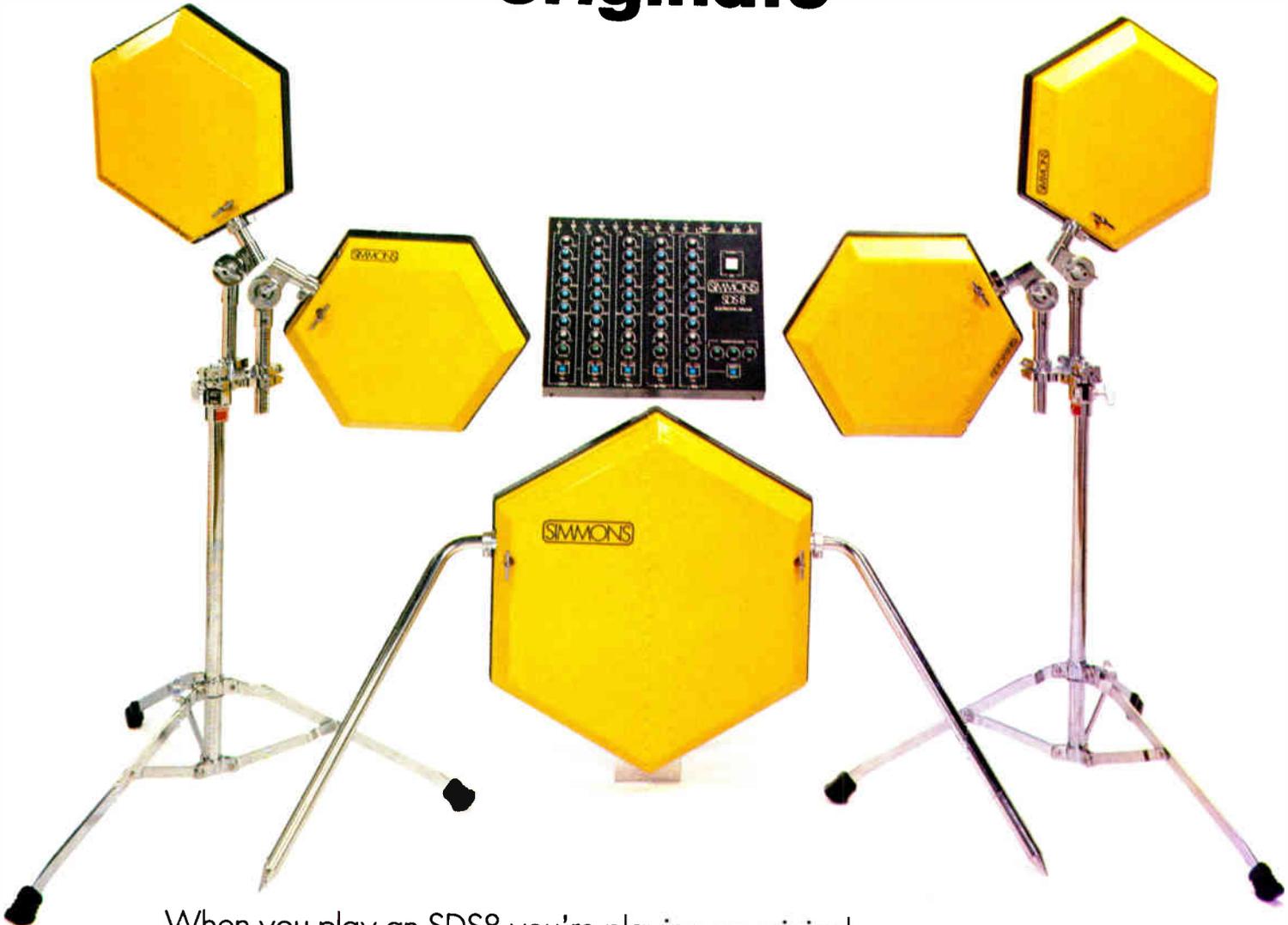
Dietrich and Sauter have long been interested in interference patterns as well, specifically in relation to a concept they call Bells Together, which they began working on when they were 16. They stand facing each other, push the bells of their saxes together, close all the pads and blow. The result sounds oddly electronic. "What you're doing in essence is creating a shared sound chamber, so the

two vibrations cross sympathetically," explains Dietrich. "The two sounds crash into each other and sneak out in air leaks. When all the pads are closed, the focus of the sound is at the bells. If I open a high key on the upper end of my horn, the focal point of the sound collision is brought up into my sax, and the sound warbles. If Jim opens a different high note, that brings the sound closer to him, and it vibrates in a different way. If both saxes are locked, and Jim blows and I open my mouth, his sound is now in my mouth, and I can actually make words, vocalizing with his sound." Using different combinations of horns—Jim plays baritone, tenor, and alto, and Don alto and tenor—results in further timbral variations.

Developing an original musical language, individually and collectively, is of paramount importance to the members of the group. They pride themselves on blending their sounds so completely that sometimes even *they* can't tell, on listening to their tapes, who's playing what. The longer they play together, the better they can anticipate each other's moves. Though Borbetomagus has worked with guest performers from time to time, the rapport the trio has developed makes additional players superfluous.

"I don't think I'm just scraping away and making noises," says guitarist Miller. "My style takes the same amount of work as any other kind of guitar playing. What I've always tried to do is to create as close a sound as I can to whatever's going on already. The music's very cyclical and a little bit hermetic. It's like the Big Bang—it keeps perpetuating itself." **db**

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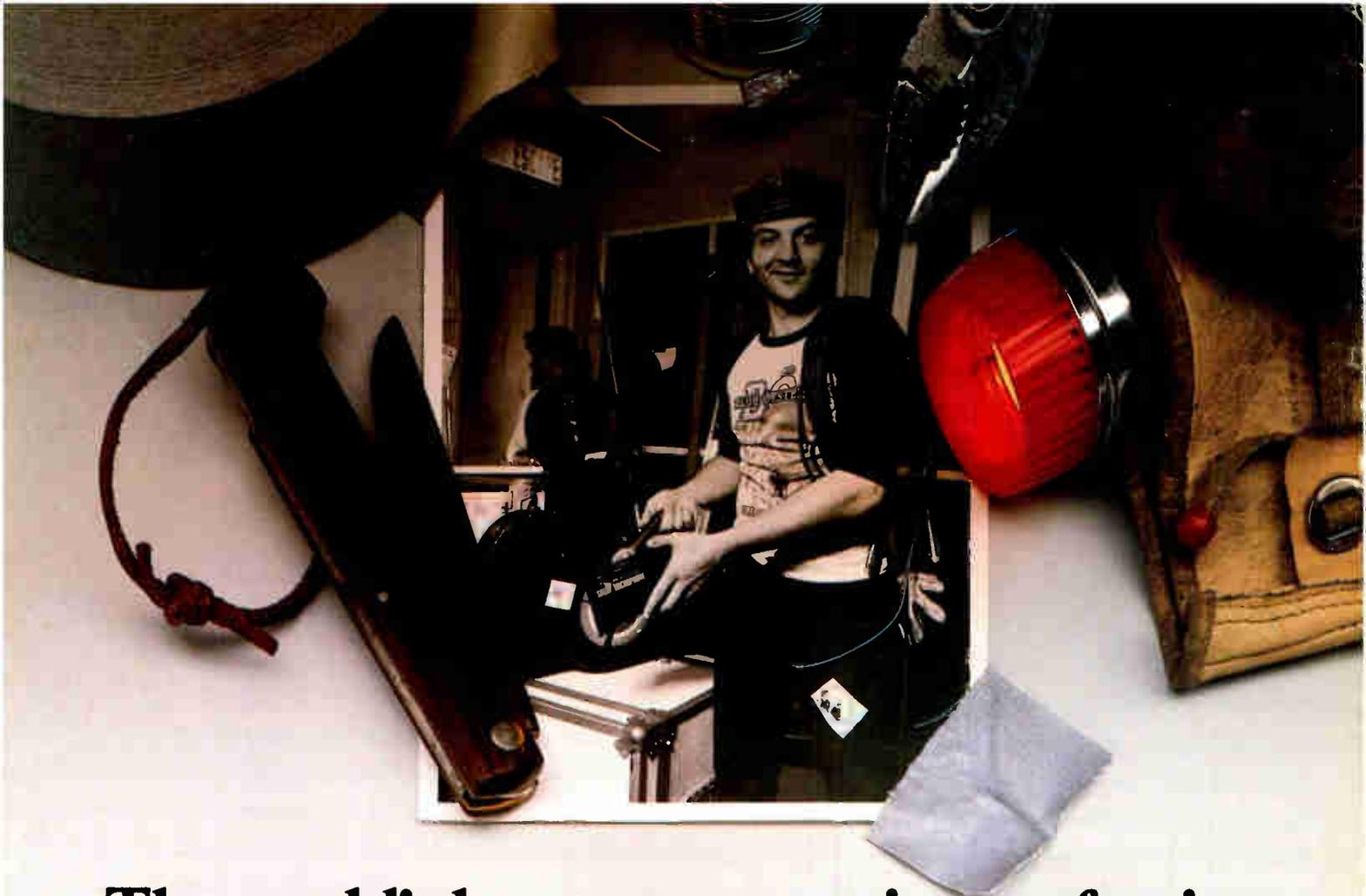
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