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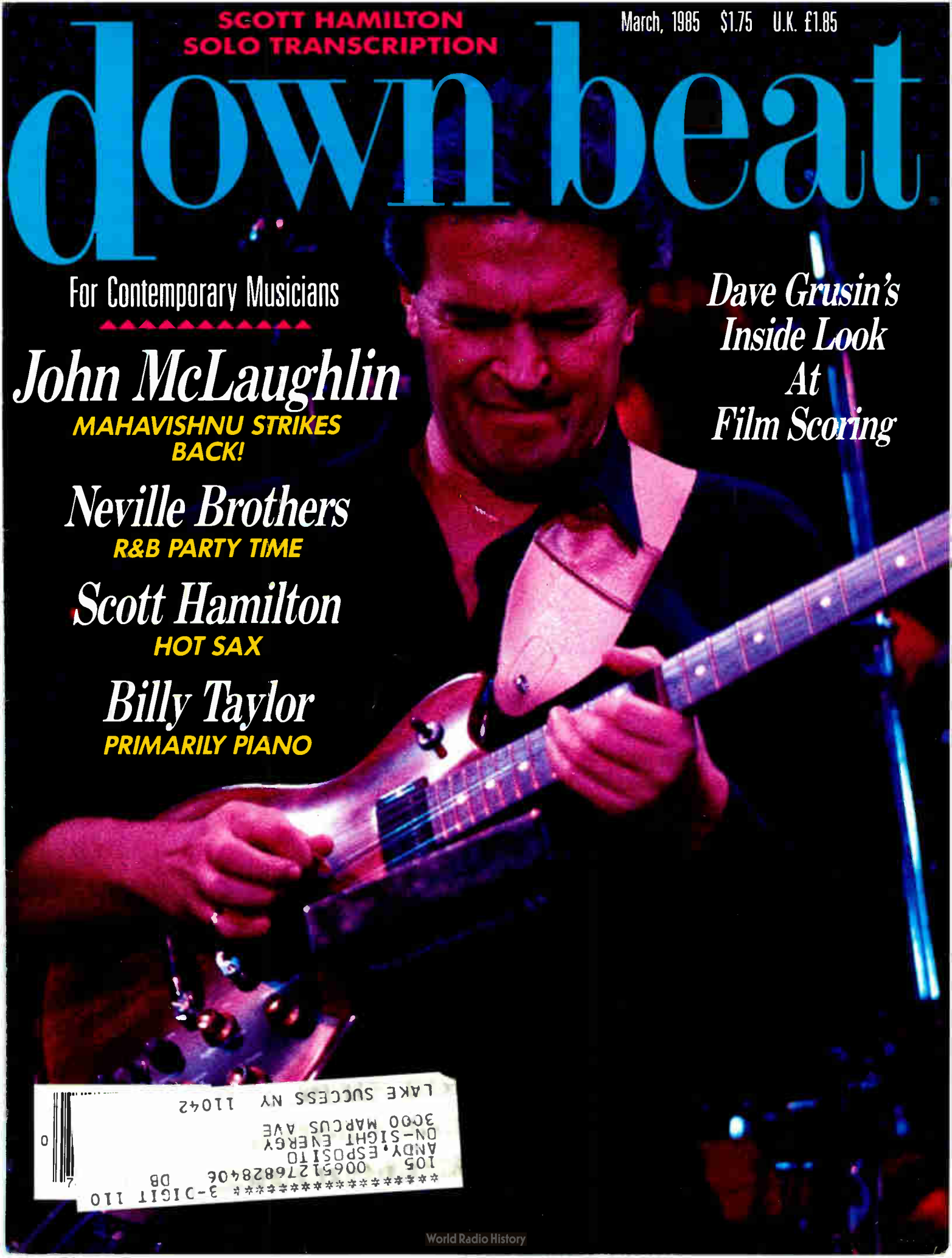

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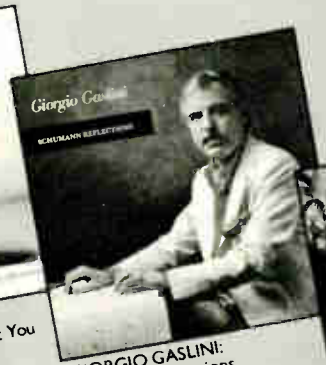

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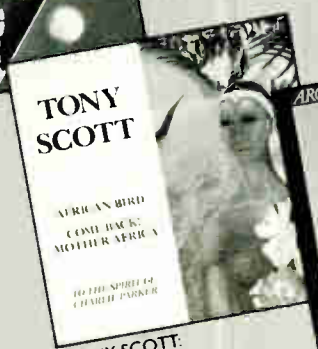

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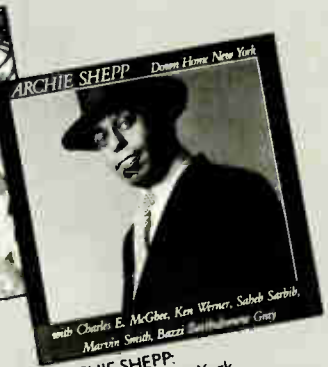

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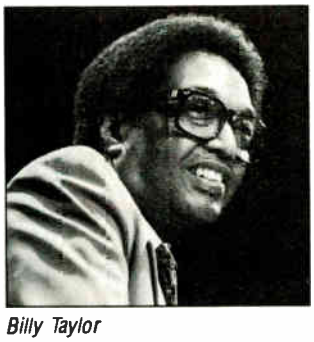
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"When you can touch people and feel them respond, it makes all the hours of practice worth it."

The Chicago Brass Quintet was formed over 20 years ago. This immensely talented quintet today consists of Ross Beacraft and Brad Boehm on trumpet, Jonathan Boen on french horn, Robert Bauchens on tuba and Jim Mattern, the group's founder on trombone.


Chicago Brass Quintet

Back in 1962, though, the group's beginning didn't start out on much of a high note. Recalls Jim Mattern, "I believe when we started out, the appeal of the Chicago Brass Quintet was too narrow. The music was too predictable, not interesting enough. Consequently, we missed a lot of audiences that we should have been reaching. A situation that was as unsatisfying for us as for them. Because, in essence, music is communication, communication between performer and audience. When you can reach people and feel them respond, it's wonderful, it makes all the hours of practice worth it."

So the Chicago Brass Quintet changed. They began to put much more variety into their programs.

According to Ross Beacraft, the response was almost immediate. "Our audiences became much more enthusiastic and energized. It was exciting because as performers you feed off the energy of the audience."

And, for the Chicago Brass Quintet, part of that giving involves not just sharing their music but sharing their thoughts.

Jonathan Boen: "Talking to the audience develops a special relationship. It helps people see us not just as performers but as people. Hopefully they walk away knowing a lot more about our music and our instruments than they ever did before."

"One question in concert and at clinics that always seems to come up," remarks Brad Boehm, "is why we all use Yamaha instruments. For me, the answer revolves around three words: response, intonation and sound. Yamaha brass instruments have all three."

Ross Beacraft plays a Yamaha trumpet because it "has the best intonation of any trumpet that I've ever played. Furthermore," says Beacraft, "as for response and sound quality, my new 'C' is unsurpassed."

Robert Bauchens feels that good intonation and sound quality are present throughout the entire line of Yamaha background brass instruments. And he makes a special point of saying how nice it is not having to compensate for inconsistencies in the instruments. "Because of their consistently superior response, when you play Yamaha background brass," states Bauchens, "you can just concentrate on making the music as expressive as possible. And in so doing, touch your audience in ways you may have never touched them before."

"It really can be thrilling," says Ross Beacraft. "I mean when we're out on that stage and the audience is really with us every step of the way. At times like that, there is a bond between performer and audience unlike anything else you could ever experience. It's hard to explain, but it's wonderful to be a part of it."

For more information about the complete line of Yamaha brass, visit your authorized Yamaha dealer or write to Yamaha Musical Products, 3050 Breton Road, S.E., P.O. Box 7271, Grand Rapids, MI 49510.

YAMAHA

ON THE BEAT

BY ART LANGE

A few random notes (to borrow a phrase):

People with more nerve than I keep trying to define jazz once and for all, to put concrete limits—stylistic, chronological, racial, and the like—on what jazz is and isn't. Watching the *Jazz Comes Home To Newport* special on PBS-TV recently, it struck me that if, as some claim, what someone like Anthony Davis plays is not jazz, then neither is what Dave Brubeck played on this occasion. Despite offering such familiar fare as *Take Five* and *Blue Rondo A La Turk*, Brubeck's piano solos failed to fit the hackneyed, stereotypical definitions of jazz—he didn't swing; he used block chords not for punctuation or dramatic effect but rather to explore patterns of rhythmic displacement *contrary* to the band's swing beat; he essayed harmonic questions and answers in a manner more reminiscent of Milhaud than Monk (to pick two of the most audacious harmonizers I can think of). In other words, Brubeck did what Brubeck's been doing for nearly 40 years—not playing someone else's idea of what jazz should be, but playing Brubeck. As Anthony Davis plays Anthony Davis. And Doc Cheatham plays Doc Cheatham. And Jaco Pastorius plays Jaco Pastorius. And . . . well, you get the idea.

* * *

Speaking of Brubeck, watching him with his current brash, blaring sidemen reminded me just how much we miss Paul Desmond's wit, pith, and sophistication.

* * *

The rest of the *Jazz Comes Home To Newport* show was fine—a bit conservative, but solid, not too heavy on the nostalgia bit (fortunately), nice to see and all—but this sort of program, as unadventurous as it was (with Brubeck, Dizzy, and Stan Getz combining for 90 percent of the music), should be at the very least a regular occurrence on tv—and not just PBS. A show like this—given added prominence simply because it is such a rare item—is the absolute minimum television can do for jazz and jazz can do for television. Perhaps it's time for another protest on the order of the one Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Charles Mingus, and others organized in the '60s to attempt to obtain wider exposure and more jobs for jazz musicians on television. In retrospect, the gains that group won seem fleeting and token (though I remember the pleasure and amazement I felt seeing Kirk, Mingus, Archie Shepp, et al. wailing on, of all things, the *Ed Sullivan Show*). But maybe it's time for another volley. Does anyone have any ideas? **db**

Next month in **down beat**: an interview with Quincy Jones, Bruce Springsteen—Caught, and much more.

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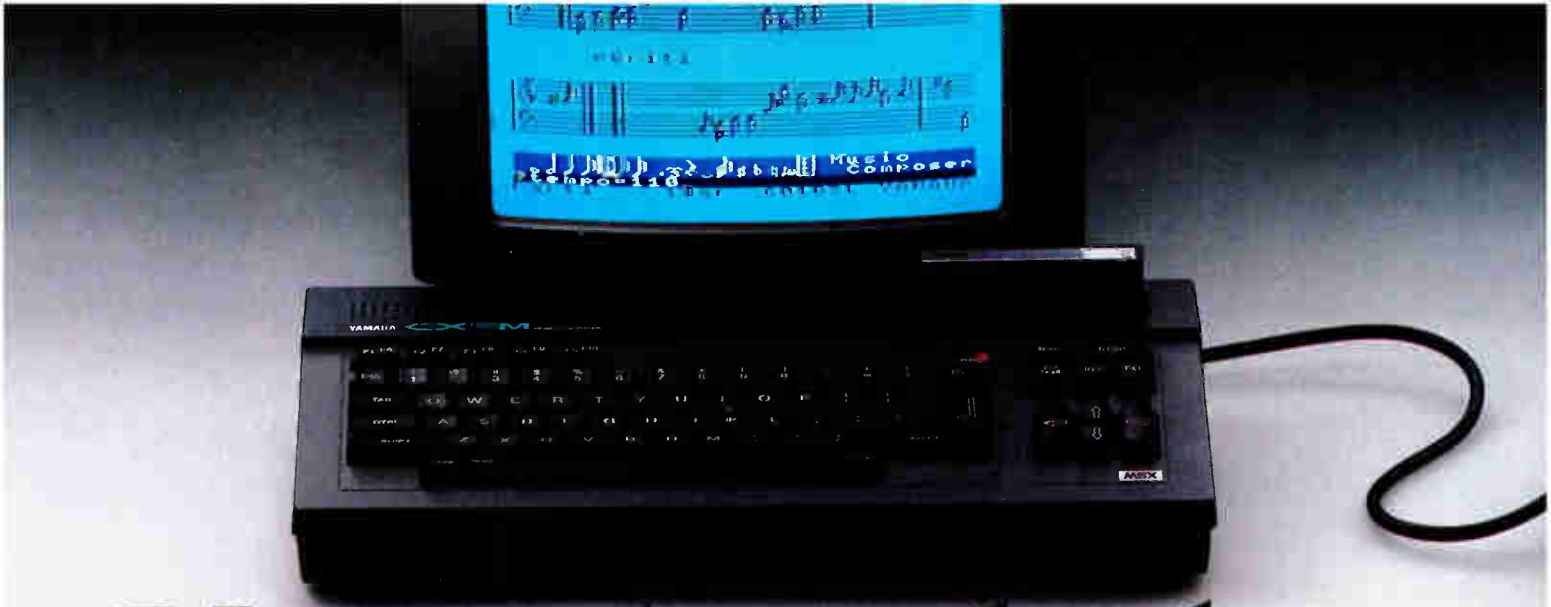

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CHORDS & DISCORDS

Foto faux pas

Great article by Larry Birnbaum on Little Milton in the Jan. '85 **db**, and that is indeed Milton Campbell Jr. pictured on page 27, but the photos on pages 4, 26, and 28 are of Otis Clay. Thought you should know.

Record Mart Roger Chicago

COURTESY *LIVING BLUES*

The real Little Milton.

Thanks also to author Birnbaum, Living Blues *editor Jim O'Neal, and other eagle-eyed readers that caught our error; seems our pictures were mislabeled. Our apologies to both Messrs. Clay and Campbell.* —*Ed.*

Foto faux pas, ad 1

In the Dec. '84 **down beat** News you pictured Shelly Manne with the Jackson Five. Well you named the wrong Jacksons in the picture! It should have read: "from left, Tito, Jackie, Marlon, Randy, and Michael."

Jessica Jones Los Angeles

One for Sco

Why is it that Miles Davis feels he must consistently put down his sidemen, specifically John Scofield, as in the Dec. '84 **down beat** interview? Certainly as bandleader and employer he is entitled to his opinions (feelings?) about the playing of his musicians, but to publicly criticize them as he does surely must be detrimental to their reputations and careers.

John Scofield is an excellent player, with several fine albums under his belt. It's about time we gave credit where credit's due and left the bullshit to Miles. . . .

Juan Kamuca King Of Prussia, PA

Star person

The Miles Davis "telephone" interview (**db**, Dec. '84) needs a video to go with it. Here's the scene: Miles is at his pool with shades and designer duds on. Prince records are playing, and Miles is on the phone with CBS hassling for more money. Willie Nelson is at the door with his Emulator. Wynton Marsalis is at his Master's feet playing the *Haydn Concerto* while Miles checks for any trace of "white" sound. And so on, ad nauseum.
Jim Beebe Glendale Heights, IL

Hey-hey for Haden

I always thought Charlie Haden was vastly underrated, though slowly he was, to the ears of some critics, getting through. Well, it's 25 years since Charlie made the scene in the early quartets of Ornette Coleman, and now he wins a **down beat** Readers Poll (**db**, Dec. '84). He still plays intelligently and still cooks. I guess some things take time. Congratulations Charlie.
Christian Beltley Philadelphia

Record addict

I am addicted to music in any form. I've considered injecting vinyl into my veins with a phonograph needle.

People ask me where I hear about the obscure artists that I love. Well, I read every available record review column—most of which are either inconsistent or fanatically exclusive stylistically.

I'm sure that anyone reading this letter column now knows who the exception is. Which brings me to this idea: I would love to see published a compilation of your record reviews to date. Perhaps a 50-year special with yearly editions to bring it up-to-date. The **down beat** *Record Encyclopedia* . . . better than intravenous vinyl!
Chas. P. Harris Tucson, AZ

Revolution remembered

After reading the Oct. '84 **down beat**, I was amazed and disappointed that it contained no reference to the 20th anniversary of the "October Revolution In Jazz" concerts.

Surely if you couldn't see fit to interview Bill Dixon or some of the other significant participants in these concerts, you could at least have acknowledged this important event in jazz history, which introduced to the world, in effect, the second generation after Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor, et al.

In my opinion the importance of these concerts would have perhaps even justified devoting the whole of your October issue to them and their ramifications.
John Doyle Sydney, Australia

NEWS

The Cotton Club true to jazz past

NEW YORK—Long before the film critics had a chance to render their judgments, the musicians who had worked on the movie were spreading the word that *The Cotton Club* was a landmark in jazz history.

"It's the first jazz-oriented film where they got the music right," said Vince Giordano, who took time off from leading his Nighthawks orchestra to appear briefly on camera and on the soundtrack.

"Richard Gere sounds very Bixian, believe it or not," added Warren Vaché Jr., who had coached the actor so that Gere could play his own cornet solos. This was the first case of a movie star doing his own playing, Vaché said, and the first major film in which the people in charge knew about jazz.

Others spoke of the uncanny accuracy with which Bob Wilber recaptured the unique sound of Duke Ellington's 1928 orchestra. Wilber, who supervised the jazz and dance music in the $50 million film, said he re-created the ensemble sound of the Ellington band of that time by seeking man-for-man counterparts of the original musicians.

"Trumpeter Lew Soloff, who was our Cootie Williams, has made a lifetime study of Williams," said Wilber. "Randy Sandke did Arthur Whetsol. Dave Brown was Freddy Jenkins and, at times, Bubber Miley. Britt Woodman, who of course played with Duke, was Lawrence Brown. Joel Helleny does the best Tricky Sam Nanton I've ever heard. Dan Barrett was Juan Tizol on valve trombone. Joe Temperly gets the resonant sound of Harry Carney on baritone. John Goldsby set up his bass special, with heavy gut strings and high action, to get that big, fat sound that Wellman Braud got. Guitarist Mike Peters gets that ukelele-style playing of Freddy Guy. Pianist Mike Shane gets that raggy way of playing Duke had then. And Chuck Riggs on drums has made a study of Sonny Greer's playing. These are a new breed of jazz men. Their presence hasn't been recognized yet. They're young, New York-based repertory players. They know—and love—the history of jazz."

Wilber decided that since so many Hollywood jazz films, from *Young Man With A Horn* to *Lady Sings The Blues*, had been travesties, he wanted everything as true to the past as he could make it. He scrapped some numbers because they were written just a couple of years after the period depicted in the film (1928-30). Thus *White Heat* from 1934 was out, and *Cotton Club Stomp* from 1929 (two versions) was in.

Wilber's studio orchestra played at the gala party at Regine's following the film's New York City premiere. (Though the musicians' original enthusiasm was somewhat dampened as some of the best music wound up on the cutting room floor.) And an eight-man version of the group, billed as Bob Wilber & His Cotton Club Orchestra, opened at New York's Rainbow Room, playing many of the authentic transcriptions created for the motion picture and heard on the Geffen Records soundtrack. —*chip deffaa*

CHUCK PULIN/STAR FILE

PUTTIN' ON THE RITZ: *Club-hoppers in Manhattan enjoyed a rare treat recently when Stevie Wonder (right) joined Herbie Hancock in duet on the latter's '73 classic* Chameleon *during Hancock's set at the Ritz. Herbie's been busy of late on the tube too, with appearances on* Saturday Night Live *and* Late Night With David Letterman*; keep an eye out for Mwandishi's dramatic role on CBS-TV's* Mike Hammer *series.*

BERT ANDREWS

STUDIO SCENE: *Pictured principals from the cast of* Ma Rainey's Black Bottom *include (standing from left) Scott Davenport-Richards, Charles S. Dutton. Leonard Jackson, Theresa Merritt, Robert Judd, and Joe Seneca with (above from left) Lou Criscuolo and John Carpenter.*

Rainey's rage staged

NEW YORK—August Wilson's play, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, now enjoying a successful run at the Cort Theatre on Broadway, wrenches the heart while it reminds us that rage inwardly directed is perhaps the most destructive of human emotions.

Wilson's powerful drama, vividly directed by Lloyd Richards, asserts that racism and the economic exploitation of black performers—in this case blues singer Ma Rainey and her backing musicians—often reduces perpetrator and victim to one and the same.

Set in a Chicago recording studio in 1927, *Black Bottom*'s key character is trumpet player Levee, a young, slick maverick who not only wants to modernize Ma's "jug-band music" and form his own band, but who also openly disavows the sense of resignation and powerlessness expressed by the other bandmembers. Levee feels that he, and probably he alone, knows how to negotiate his place in the white world, and that the other bandmembers represent an old order unwilling to move with the times.

It is Levee and his many confrontational episodes—with Ma, with each of his bandmates, with the white owner of the recording studio, and ultimately with his own dreams and memories set against the frustrations of being black in America—which fuel the incendiary action. Charles S. Dutton plays Levee, and his performance is riveting.

Theresa Merritt as Ma Rainey, the "Mother of the Blues," is an imperial singing star, a despot in the studio, who understands all too well that once the white folks get her voice recorded, "Its like if I'd been some kind of whore and they roll over and put their pants on." Ma knows how debilitating and murderous the system is, yet her awareness alone cannot possibly renew her dashed hopes or those of her musicians.

The band members—played by Leonard Jackson, Robert Judd and, the night I saw the production, understudy Bill Cobbs—exhibit an on-stage camaraderie that, even in the face of adversarial bantering, posits a collective "us-vs.-them" sentiment so central to their characters' survival. As they taunt and chide each other in a loose, almost improvisatory manner, it becomes clear that the actors are as interdependent and as group-oriented as a seasoned jazz ensemble.

Interestingly, the music performed in the show—effectively woven through the story and staged with an ear towards dramatic tension and release—is played live by the actors themselves and bolstered with pre-recorded tapes. Much credit belongs to Dwight Andrews, who not only designed and structured the musical sequences, but who insisted, for authenticity's sake, that the actors also learn to play their instruments. They do so convincingly, which, as it turns out, is an added dividend to an impressive dramatic offering. —*jeff levenson*

BOOK BEAT

Strings & things

Violinist **Julie Lyonn Lieberman**, author of *Blues Fiddle* (Oak Publications), now presents *Improvising Violin*, a comprehensive examination of violin improv styles in blues, swing, jazz, rock, and fusion, including discussions of history, electronics, and repair; 14 major American improvising violinists are interviewed, and compositions and solo transcriptions by the likes of Leroy Jenkins, Darol Anger, John Blake, Michal Urbaniak, and others round out the 215-page volume; $20 from Columbia Pictures Publications.

▪ ▪ ▪ ▪ ▪

Danish jazz writer **Peter H. Larsen** has compiled *Turn On The Stars: Bill Evans, The Complete Discography*; 125 paperback pages, including bio and listings of the pianist's issued and unissued recordings and known broadcast tapes from 1954-80; $11 from 41 Lyngskraenten, DK 2840 Holte, Denmark.

▪ ▪ ▪ ▪ ▪

Blues musicologist **Paul Oliver** traces vocal and lyric traditions of "race" records, medicine show ballads and comic songs, songsermons and gospel tunes in his *Songsters & Saints*; $9.95 for 339 paperbound pages from Cambridge University Press.

▪ ▪ ▪ ▪ ▪

Philip Kamin (camera) and **Peter Goddard** (typewriter) team up for *Springsteen: Live*, a 132-page paperback chronicle with scores of b&w and color pix of Boss Bruce's current concert tour; Phil & Pete do likewise in *Van Halen*, with 80 b&w and 80 color snaps of David Lee, Eddie, & the boys, on-tour in '84; both from Beaufort Books Inc. at $9.95.

▪ ▪ ▪ ▪ ▪

Footnote: **Chris Parker**, an editor at Quartet Books Ltd. (27-29 Goodge St., London W1P 1FD, England) is putting together a book of short jazz fiction and is seeking American contributions. □

PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

FRIPP TRIP: *The sky over Charleston turns crimson this year as iconic guitarist Robert Fripp (pictured) offers three guitar instruction courses, each for 15 select plectrists. According to the King Crimson/Frippertronics axe-man, the five-day residential seminars (3/26-30, 7/30-8/3, 8/6-10) aim "to develop a relationship with the quality of music by accepting the discipline of playing the guitar. After this course one would be able to do in two or three years what would normally take seven years." The courses are open to beginners who meet some basic requirements, as well as "clever players." Write for details to Claymont Court, Rt. 1, POB 279, Charleston, WV 25414.*

POTPOURRI

Crimestoppers Textbook: the mystery regarding the Boss references ("Bruce," "*Thunder Road*," "*Darkness On The Edge Of Town*") in the *Dick Tracy* syndicated comic strip has been solved; seems artist Dick Locher's son John, who draws the backgrounds, is a sneaky-type **Bruce Springsteen** fan . . . film fare: according to a *Washington Post* report, filming of **Anita O'Day**'s autobiography, *High Times, Hard Times*, starts soon with Cybill Shepherd playing Anita, but the soundtrack will feature O'Day . . . yet another royal gesture: thanks to the generosity of **Prince** and his management (Cavallo, Rufalo, & Fargnoli), who donated a block of choice seats to a Chi-town show, nearly two grand was raised by the Midwest Chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences to establish the Midwest Recording Arts Foundation, whose goal is to establish an avenue for Midwestern talent to develop . . . also in the Windy: the **Music Industry Institute**, in conjunction with NARAS, sponsored a Keeper Of The Sound awards dinner/benefit to raise money to buy musical instruments and offer instruction to underprivileged youngsters; Keeper Of The Sound awards were presented to Quincy Jones, the Staple Singers, Survivor, and Bruce Swedien; a Keeper Off The Sound Trendsetter award went to Vivian Carter, former partner of VJ records; Keeper Of The Sound Humanitarian award-winner was *Sun-Times* newspaper columnist Irv Kupcinet; and 14 others were cited for Lifetime Achievement Awards . . . speaking of awards: President Ronald Reagan recently presented a Presidential Commendation to Grammy-winning singer and actor **Lou Rawls** for his *Lou Rawls Parade Of Stars* tv special which benefits the United Negro College Fund . . . also composer **Philip Glass** received the 1985 Musician Of The Year award from *Musical America*, a special edition of *High Fidelity* magazine, and he's also the cover feature of the 25th anniversary edition of *Musical America's International Directory Of The Performing Arts* . . . many pennies from Lane: rock star **Ronnie Lane** (of Small Faces/Faces fame) presented a check for nearly $1 million to the Action for Research into Multiple Sclerosis that will fund m.s. research by major U.S. universities and med schools; the check represents the proceeds from the Ronnie Lane Appeal for A.R.M.S., an American concert tour by British rock heavies Jeff Beck, Eric Clapton, Jimmy Page, Paul Rodgers, Charlie Watts, Bill Wyman, et al. (organized by Glyn Johns and Bill Graham); Lane, now nearly restored to his former mobility, was stricken with m.s., the degenerative disease of the central nervous system, at the height of his musical career . . . on the bandwagon: to support the debut of their new Taster's Choice Maragor Bold freeze-dried coffee, the Nestlé Co. has sponsored a 10-city jazz concert series, **Maragor Bold Jazz**, featuring piano virtuosi Dave Brubeck, Marian McPartland, and Billy Taylor; upcoming stops by Taylor include St. Louis (2/16, Kiel Auditorium Opera House), K.C. (3/1, Music Hall), and Minneapolis (3/28, Orchestra Hall); Brubeck plays Chicago (3/21, Auditorium Theatre); McPartland in L.A., end of March . . . westward ho: ***The 1982 Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival***, the film of the event, copped the Best Documentary Award and the Governor's Gold Cup (Best Of Show) at the second annual New Mexico Film and Video Awards; seven distinguished American composers, including Aaron Copland, John Harbison, George Rochberg, and Ned Rorem, are featured in the film which occasionally still airs on PBS-TV outlets as well as the Hearst ABC Arts cable-tv channel . . . in the Pacific Northwest: ***Earshot***, an out-of-pocket monthly jazz newsletter produced by Gary Bannister, Allen Youngblood, and **dbr** Paul de Barros, debuted recently; for news on the Seattle scene and from 'round the world, drop 'em a line at POB 85851, Seattle, WA 98145 . . . from the record world: Island Records has instigated a new series of 16 "best of . . ." compilations entitled ***Reggae Greats***; first batch includes Toots & the Maytals, Gregory Isaacs, Steel Pulse, and the D.J.'s; future issues will follow with Sly & Robbie, Third World, Burning Spear, Pablo Moses, Jimmy Cliff, the Wailers, Black Uhuru, and so on . . . radio waves (Atlantic division): **WZAM**, the Norfolk, VA 50-kw AM daytimer, is quickly becoming JAZZAM as the urban contemporary format fades to jazz raves . . . (Pacific division): **KPLU**, an NPR FM station in Seattle, recently celebrated its first anniversary as an all-jazz outlet; since dumping the standard NPR mold of news, classical music, and a little jazz, the station has noticed dramatic audience increases seconded by a swell in funds derived from on-air promotions . . . benefit bash: Carmelo's (Sherman Oaks, CA) recently hosted more than 50 musicians in an affair to raise money for the ailing saxist **Bill Hood**; ring-led by the nonprofit Musicians Wives Inc.; Benny Carter, Mundell Lowe, Don Menza, Dave Frishberg, and Supersax were among those who donated their services . . .

NEWS

W. PATRICK HINELY/WORK-PLAY

Jamboree a fest for ears

WARSAW—While the 26th annual Warsaw Jazz Jamboree lasted only four days, it was a veritable marathon, with 25 groups in six concerts at the main venue, the sumptuous (inside, at least) Congress Hall. Saturday evening was devoted to the PolJazz Festival, a sort of miniature Northsea threering extravaganza featuring 19 Polish groups in other theaters of the huge Palace of Culture.

Big stars abounded, spanning the spectrum from Ornette Coleman to Ray Charles, and included Cecil Taylor, Lester Bowie, Red Mitchell, Woody Shaw and the United Jazz + Rock Ensemble (the closest thing yet to a truly all-star Western European band). All three major Polish saxophonists were also there, leading their own groups as well as participating in others: Jan "Ptaszyn" Wroblewski, Eastern Europe's senior statesman of bebop (*Ptaszyn* = Bird), and the ever-surprising Zbigniew Namyslowski, as well as the promising relative youngster Tomasz Szukalski.

Other celebrities from the U.S. and nearly every nation in Europe as well as the Soviet Union performed too, with concerts running virtually nonstop from 2 p.m. until about 1 a.m., after which the night clubs started hopping with various permutations of Jamboree acts.

Cuban trumpeter Arturo Sandoval (pictured) and his quintet played both scenes, igniting audiences in every case. Given the recent political climate on the planet, it was especially reassuring to see Sandoval greet *Voice Of America* jazz mastermind Willis Conover with a deference fit for the Pope. Like many European jazz players, Sandoval received his first doses of Dizzy Gillespie et al. from *VOA* radio broadcasts.

Of the big names, Bowie's Root To The Source aggregation delivered the most intelligible and intelligent (if not the most intellectual) music. David Peaston's vocal renderings of 1960s Motown hits with the trumpeter's surrealistic accompaniment were the highlight of the final concert.

The most unique groupings were those assembled just for the Jamboree. Cecil Taylor's Music From Two Continents featured Italian Enrico Rava and native Tomasz Stanko on trumpets, and the reed section included John Tchicai, Frank Wright Jr., Gunter Hampel, and Jimmy Lyons. For those less enamored of free jazz, the combination of Poles Jacek Bednarek and Krzysztof Zgraja on bass and flute with Spaniard flamenco guitarists Josemaria Molero and Luis Pastor was more pleasing.

It was, however, American violinist John Blake who took the cake in this regard, guesting with the Polish group String Connection, whose leader, violinist and keyboard player Krzesimir Debski, is the next step past the late Zbigniew Seifert. To hear the two violinists discover one another's musics was to watch two children who had just discovered how to escape gravity. Moments like that are what make long and arduous journeys to faraway places worthwhile.

—w. patrick hinely

Contemporary arts converge at the crossroad

NEW YORK—Here in the Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris, across the street from Grand Central Station, you can see artist Claes Oldenburg's giant ice-bag inflate and deflate, or hear Music At The Crossroad: Jazz And Beyond.

A series of six supper-time concerts, curated by pianist Anthony Davis and sponsored by Philip Morris with Meet The Composer, began last fall with Lester Bowie's Brass Fantasy, James Newton and a string quartet, and alto saxist/tape composer Earl Howard playing solo and in ensemble with Carol Emanuel on harp, Paul Taylor on keyboards/synth, and Gerry Hemingway on drums. Concerts resume 3/12 with Davis and his group Episteme, continue 3/19 with Leroy Jenkins' Mixed Quintet, and conclude 3/26 with the Anthony Braxton Ensemble.

The Whitney's long, narrow, sculpture garden, filled with provocative art, converts into an intimate site for music, and affords easy discussion between musicians and their audiences following the performances, a requisite of Meet The Composer programs. Howard, for one, spoke readily about his synthesized work—he repeated a piece he debuted at the 1984 New Music America Festival in Hartford, CT—and his choice of unusual ensemble instrumentation.

Commuters passing by the gallery's floor-to-ceiling windows were stopped for a moment by the sounds seeping from the museum, but then hurried on to their trains. To these outsiders looking in, Jazz And Beyond simply seemed like more modern art, sheltered right where it belonged. For concert information call Meet The Composer at (212) 787-3601.

—howard mandel

HYOU VIELZ

GERMAN JIVE: *Nearly 10,000 recently attended the fifth annual Leverkusener Jazz Tage, organized by the jazz club of Leverkusen, W. Germany, in cooperation with the local cultural board and corporate sponsors Bayer and Agfa-Gevaert. The eight-day fest included competitions, films, club jams, and two "Jazz Giants at the Forum" Saturday shows featuring the bands of Randy Weston (pictured), Arthur Blythe, Sal Nistico, Archie Shepp, Ronald Shannon Jackson, Milt Jackson/Ray Brown, and Geri Brown (with Oliver Lake and Andrew Cyrille), plus Oregon, Andrew White, Nana Vasconcelos, Jack Bruce, Tony Williams, and David Sancious.*

FINAL BAR

Jimmy Lyon, pianist best known as accompanist to Mabel Mercer and other singers, died Nov. 28 in New York City of cancer at age 63. Lyon was also noted for his solo musical theater performances of the works of Kern, Porter, and Rodgers, and performed actively in New York night clubs until last October.

Gene Ramey, veteran jazz and blues bassist who performed with Count Basie, Billie Holiday, B. B. King, Jay McShann, and others, died Dec. 8 in Austin, TX. He was 71.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Charles P. Buchanan, manager/operator of the legendary Savoy Ballroom in NYC for 32 years from the mid-'30s until the '60s, died Dec. 11 in New York at age 86.

FEST SCENE

From the Rockies to Big Muddy

Go west young men (and women) for the pair of jazz fests held at the U. of Northern Colorado in Greeley; first up, the eighth annual **Invitational High School Vocal Jazz Ensemble Festival**, 3/8-9, with clinics and competitions in the afternoon, plus evening concerts featuring guest artists Anne Marie Moss (Fri.) and Roberta Davis (Sat.); then from 4/25-28 the 15th annual **UNC/Greeley Jazz Festival** gathers top vocal and instrumental groups from all over the West for clinics and performances in a non-competitive affair; evening concerts feature guest artists Freddie Hubbard, James Moody, Butch Miles, Mavis Rivers, and Matt Catingub; details on both fests from the Jazz Studies Program office at (303) 351-2577.

■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Meanwhile, down yonder in New Orleans the **Jazz Ensemble Festival** calls Loyola U. home 3/7-9; featuring limited competition and individual awards, the fest gathers mostly high school groups (with a few community college, jr. high, and grade school aggregations) with guest clinician/performer Dr. Billy Taylor; fest director Dr. Joseph Hebert has the score at (504) 865-3748. □

How to make a living with synthesizers.

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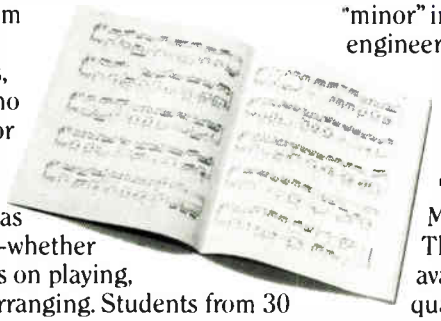

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PHOTO BY PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

BY HOWARD MANDEL

John McLaughlin

Spirit Of The Sine Wave

"You know the old adage," John McLaughlin smiled winningly, perched on the bed of his neat-as-a-pin hotel room. "If you don't practice for a day, you know it; if you don't play a few days, your colleagues know it; if you don't play for a week, everybody knows it." With fondness and respect, he lightly brushed his Ibanez acoustic laying within easy reach in its open case.

"I feel nervous without a guitar," he admitted quietly. "It's part of my body. I've felt that way since the beginning, since I first picked up a guitar when I was 11 years old. That same day I was taking the guitar to bed with me, so that gives you an idea what I feel about it."

To see McLaughlin brandish his instrument on-stage, one senses the guitar was cast for him, as Excalibur was made for King Arthur, the hammer for John Henry, the saxophone for Bird. Far from guessing McLaughlin's gone a day or two in his life without fingering a fretboard, everybody knows one thing about Mahavishnu: his Orchestra's been dormant too long.

Last fall McLaughlin and Warner Bros. corrected that, by issuing a remarkable album titled simply *Mahavishnu* with a reconstituted Orchestra (saxist Bill Evans, keyboardist Mitchel Forman, bassist Jonas Hellborg, drummer Billy Cobham assisted by Danny Gottlieb, pianist Katia LaBeque, and Indian musicians Hari Prasad Chaurasia and Zakir Hussain) and following it up with a first-class U.S. tour.

"I've been asked a number of times why I called this group the Mahavishnu Orchestra," McLaughlin explained patiently, "and for me, personally, the kind of spirit that was established in my first ensemble with that name, something I love very much, is now present in the new band. We play a strong, joyful kind of music that's in the tradition, for me, of the old band. Of course, I don't really want to go back and play the old hits—though there are certain tunes that even the guys in the band want to play—because there's so much new music that's been written, and that's been my primary concentration. But I think on the next rehearsal we'll look at some of the old tunes. Even so, they'll have to be re-arranged, because we're not going to play them the old way."

* * * * *

No one would expect simple revival, or any other form of stagnation, from McLaughlin; he's been the "Go-ahead John" of so-called jazz-rock fusion since bursting onto the American scene in the late '60s with the Tony Williams Lifetime, with his own hallucinatory *Devotion* (recently reissued by OAO/Celluloid) and ethereally acoustic *My Goal's Beyond*, then joining Miles Davis to create *In A Silent Way*, *Bitches Brew*, *Jack Johnson*, and a host of other electric extrapolations—not to mention *Inner Mounting Flame*, *Birds Of Fire*, *Between Nothingness And Eternity*, all passionate products of the first Mahavishnu Orchestra. An avatar's humility, dedication, and power remained McLaughlin's hallmarks through the '70s as he restlessly met Carlos Santana (*Love Devotion Surrender*), Jean-Luc Ponty (*Visions Of The Emerald Beyond*), and the

London Symphony Orchestra under Michael Tilson Thomas' baton (*Apocalypse*).

Then there was his One Truth Band, the quasi-Indian Shakti, and several albums of McLaughlin with a mixed bag of collaborators, featuring in turn his electric guitar, his European sophistication, his virtuosic trio with Paco De Lucia and Al Di Meola. Always new compositions, ever new challenges overcome, finally the discovery of a musical invention that fires his imagination—you guessed it: the digitally synthesized, computer-interfacing electric guitar.

"I love the electric guitar," McLaughlin protested right out front. "For certain things it's irreplaceable—but for other areas it's a little narrow, not very subtle, misses a certain depth. So, for me, the Synclavier guitar is actually a revolutionary instrument. It's infinite, as far as sounds are concerned. It allows me to create sounds that are my own. It's not just 'okay, you've got some programs—play marimba, play tom-tom, play flute, play this, play that.' There are, of course, sounds that are flute-like, or brass-like. But more significantly there are sounds *I've* created, that are very personal, that belong to me and have become my voice. I don't adopt sounds arbitrarily and gratuitously—I hope to say something with this instrument, because its capabilities are phenomenal. It's what I can do with it that's really important.

"It's a Roland guitar, of which the electronics have been quite extensively modified by New England Digital, the Synclavier people," he said. Actually, all that makes it look different from a standard electric axe is a cigar box-sized panel jutting out from the body below the strings.

"The programming's done at home, on the computer, with a keyboard on which you can alter parameters and a terminal where you can do really fine-tuned work. It offers 16 bytes in real-time sound, which is very powerful, in computer terms. So you just start off with a fundamental, a sine wave, and you go from there. You build. You can change the sine wave—you can do anything with it, anything. I've been working on the Synclavier for more than two years now, creating sounds and timbres; the guitar's quite new, this year, but I've been waiting very impatiently for it. Together, their capabilities are so big I feel I should continue to work.

"On the guitar there are these modular buttons that allow you to address the computer. Because you can record directly from the guitar if you want, you can record in digital memory. You can play back; you can transpose; you can assign a different timbre to each string, if you want. You can preprogram sequences that you can play at any time; you can record on top of it, if you want to play it back. You can call up your banks of information—each bank, for example, can hold eight entirely different timbres, and you have eight banks, so at any moment you have 64 entirely different sounds. And the programming of the sounds is really up to you and your imagination. Your imagination is really your tool.

"Learning how to use the computer was difficult, yeah, but I just hacked away at it. You have to understand logic, the logic of computers, and know how to figure them out—if you can't get what you want, how you *can* access it. And then, how to manipulate the information, how to transform it, how to work all the numbers—because it's numbers that transfer into sound.

"It's work," McLaughlin agreed, "but the results are most satisfying. The sounds originate from the computer, finally, but I can trigger them either from the keyboard or the guitar. And I think this is a credit to Synclavier: when it's triggered by the guitar, it has a guitar feeling; it's not a keyboard feeling at all. Through a terrific research program on the guitar's peculiar characteristics, they've been able to translate this weird information about the shape of the string's wave, its dynamics, into digital information—an amazing thing to do.

"But I have to *play*," he stressed. "I have to do something with it. That's my philosophy. What am I going to do with it? What does it say to me? What does it touch in me? How do I feel about it? What can I *give* to that?"

For initial answers to these questions, one must turn to his new album and absorb the variety of sounds—each evoking some pre-mental response—McLaughlin's designed. On *Radio-Activity*, the opener, this guitar screams like a missle's arc across the sky; on *Nostalgia* it's a goatherd's lissome pipe, reedy high and full-blown low; on *When Blue Turns Gold* one is hard pressed to distinguish between McLaughlin and Bill Evans' flute (for most of the album, Evans on tenor or soprano offers a raw-edged vocal tone in contrast and syncopation to McLaughlin's guitar; live as well as on record, their duets soar). Forman and LaBeque on Minimoogs and Prophet keyboards summon their own quite complex sounds, as (I assume) the Olympic fanfare introducing Evans' composition *Clarendon Hills*, and Hellborg's bass, which he's adept at playing arco, has its own electric sheen. In fact, it's a relief to hear McLaughlin use his good old Les Paul Custom on *Nightriders*—maybe not *Mahavishnu*'s most elaborate or ambitious track, but a hot one nonetheless which, with the rave-up *East Side West Side* and some other relentless passages, proves the guitarist's off-hand and undetailed comment that the Mahavishnu Orchestra's music is "a little . . . *crazy*."

Crazy in terms of unpredictable, inexplicable, highly energized, and even sometimes wild. And better that McLaughlin should retain that willingness to follow his musical whims than have packaged all his influences, from Tal Farlow and classic bebop records through the British blues towards Coltrane's jazz, then Ravi Shankar, Sri Chimnoy, and Miles, Chick, Keith, Weather Report, flamenco, Western symphonic history—he asserted "the barriers between pop and classical musics are really falling now"—into one smooth formula. What will young listeners think of his experiments (and those of Pat Metheny) with digitally synthesized sound?

"I hope they're going to hear the tradition behind it," he responded immediately. "I believe nothing is contemporary unless you can feel the tradition behind it." But what part of the tradition does he employ in these experiments—or the earlier ones with form and amplification, in league with Williams, Larry Young, and Miles? "I had my jazz discipline. Without a discipline, I wouldn't know what I was doing. You have to have a discipline, whether it's classical Western or classical Eastern or jazz or rock & roll—though you don't need much theoretical background in harmony or rhythm for rock.

"I believe," he went on thoughtfully, "if you listen to Shakti or the *Belo Horizonte* album or the guitar trio LPs or *Music Spoken Here*—that's just guitar. I'm a guitar player—that's what I am primarily; that's what I'll always be. I like to write music, but a guitar player's all I ever want to be. I want to be better and better, just as I want to be a better person. I want to be more articulate; I want to be able to utilize space better, to play silence more profoundly. There are many things left for me to do; there is much work to be done. And that can all be accomplished on acoustic guitar. Acoustic guitar will never die. It's impossible.

"I think the technological advance for guitars is similar to what's happened to keyboards. You have keyboard synthesizers that are very much part of contemporary music, because they're new instruments of tremendous potential, and they stand on their own as instruments—they aren't a hybrid. But I know when I speak to keyboard players, they still say there's no comparison between an electronic instrument and a fine grand piano.

"Take someone like Joe Zawinul, a real flag-waver and leader in synthesized work, one of the great innovators. He still plays acoustic piano, and wants to more and more—for personal satisfaction, and expressive capability, if you like. But he's not going to stop his research with the synthesizer—and thank God he's doing it, because it's inspiring. He's opening doors to us that wouldn't normally be open, that we wouldn't even know existed. But because he's playing it, and it's music, doors open to the listener, and I think that's wonderful. Hopefully, Pat and I will do the same thing with this guitar.

PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

JOHN McLAUGHLIN'S EQUIPMENT

On the recent Mahavishnu tour John McLaughlin's electronic excursions came via his modified Roland GR-303 guitar interfaced with the Synclavier Digital Music System. The more rock-oriented material was performed on a Gibson Les Paul Custom with a Tom Scholz Rockman. Acoustically, it's his Gibson custom-built by luthier Abraham Wechter. McLaughlin's only on-stage outboard effect was a Yamaha R-1000 digital reverb; the processing and chorusing was mixed at the board by sound engineer Brian Risner. McLaughlin's amplifier of choice is a Roland Jazz Chorus 120. He has been experimenting with different strings and hasn't yet settled on any particular set. Off-stage he serenades his hotel suites with an Ibanez acoustic. His at-home treasures include acoustic axes custom-built by Wechter, Richard Schneider, and Gibson.

JOHN McLAUGHLIN SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

MUSIC SPOKEN HERE—Warner Bros 23723-1
BELO HORIZONTE—Warner Bros 3619
ELECTRIC DREAMS—Columbia 35785
JOHNNY McLAUGHLIN, ELECTRIC GUITARIST—Columbia 35326
BEST OF—Columbia 36355
MY GOAL'S BEYOND—Elektra Musician 60031
EXTRAPOLATION—Polydor 1-6074
DEVOTION—OAO/Celluloid 5010
WHERE FORTUNE SMILES—Pye 12103

with Mahavishnu Orchestra

MAHAVISHNU—Warner Bros. 25790-1
INNER WORLDS—Columbia 33908
VISIONS OF THE EMERALD BEYOND—Columbia 33411
APOCALYPSE—Columbia 32957
BETWEEN NOTHINGNESS AND ETERNITY—Columbia 32766
BIRDS OF FIRE—Columbia 31996
INNER MOUNTING FLAME—Columbia 31067

with Carla Bley

ESCALATOR OVER THE HILL—JCOA 3LP EOTH

with Al Di Meola/Paco De Lucia

PASSION, GRACE & FIRE—Columbia 38645
FRIDAY NIGHT IN SAN FRANCISCO—Columbia 37152

with Shakti

NATURAL ELEMENTS—Columbia 34980
A HANDFUL OF BEAUTY—Columbia 34372
SHAKTI—Columbia 34162

with Miles Davis

DIRECTIONS—Columbia KC2 36472
GET UP WITH IT—Columbia 33236
BIG FUN—Columbia 32866
LIVE EVIL—Columbia 30954
JACK JOHNSON—Columbia 30495
BITCHES BREW—Columbia GP26
IN A SILENT WAY—Columbia 9875

with Tony Williams Lifetime

ONCE IN A LIFETIME—Verve VE2-2541
TURN IT OVER—Polydor 24-4021

with Carlos Santana

LOVE DEVOTION SURRENDER—Columbia 32034

"I must say that the guitars that are available so far for such synthesis still lack some capacities, but it's so new. As the technology improves, they too will improve; there's no doubt about it. As for me, the people who've created the new instrument for guitar are the Synclavier people, but I think we'll see in the next five years a really big evolution going on in guitar synthesis."

And what about the kid who's inspired by this evolution, but finds guitar synthesizers far beyond his or her budget? "Well, before a kid wants to go out and spend a lot of money on a guitar synthesizer, they've got a ton of work to do on acoustic guitar. A five-dollar guitar can provide you with an unbelievable amount of work. I think there are a number of keyboard synthesizer players who don't have a lot of technical means, but have these programs—and today's factory programs are becoming so complex and interesting, software development is snowballing—but these people with slight means are able to get a good sound and get by. From the playing point of view, we have to distinguish the difference. It's one thing to play sounds; it's another thing to play and *play*. A guitarist with a $15 acoustic has work cut out for him—it was the same for me, all those years when I had this real cheap guitar.

"Now, I'll create a sound, and it will stir something in my imagination that never happened before. Because of certain feelings it evokes in me, it will put me in another place. But I can't just go out and play *sound*, saying, 'Isn't it great?'

"The analogy I can make is to an artist's palette. With the synthesizer guitar you have a large selection of colors, but what are you going to paint is really the big question. You're not going to just throw sounds at people—it's boring, and not even that: there's no meaning. Basically, when you play music, it's your life that you're really talking about, that's expressing itself through music. That's why music's very rich, because it comes from the life of people. And there are things spoken in music that cannot be said vocally, or any other way for that matter. So we have to keep the horse before the cart. Nothing can replace work in music, and discipline. I can only speak personally, but these are my musical parameters. When I'm listening to music, I want to feel the person's life; I want to feel the personality, the character of the individual, and individuals together.

"I think we learn everything from other people—everything, philosophy, what we think. I need to be inspired in my life, and for me, all great musicians are spiritual people—in fact, everybody's spiritual, really, and music is the language of the spirit. That's it, if anything is—because music speaks from the heart of the player to the heart of the listener. And no, we don't care what language, what culture, what nationality—music doesn't pay attention to any of those things—that's why music is so great. So music, globally speaking, is the spiritual language. And everybody loves music, so who doesn't have a spirit? Everybody wants to listen to music.

"My work in music is a work of the spirit; it's a development of my spirit, and the development of myself as a human being," concluded McLaughlin, who prefers to be more discreet about his spiritual and religious enquiries than he was back in the days when he accepted the Hindu name Mahavishnu. "These words 'spiritual' and 'religious' can be very easily misunderstood. But what I really feel in my heart is that music is higher than any religion, which is probably heretical to at least half-a-dozen religions in the world, but be that as it may, that's what I feel. We don't know if there's a God, but if there is a God, I think music is the face of God."

Had we come far afield of discussing digital guitar synths? Not if they're to be understood as keys to unlocking the music that people have inside. "Religion's a paradox; I'm sure we all see that," sighed McLaughlin. "If you have no religion, you probably revert to blatant materialism, which must be sheer hell. But organized religion? I'm against it. It divides people. The absurdity of it all is staggering—the less said, the better." Far better to organize an orchestra, through hard work and discipline, and practice one's own approach, every day, to inexplicable music itself. **db**

"It's been a long time, and we've paid a lot of dues. The zeitgeist done caught up with us."
—Cyril Neville

The Neville Brothers

R&B Dynasty

RICK OLIVIER

By DON PALMER

Backstage at the Lone Star in New York City, the Neville Brothers—Art, Charles, Aaron, and Cyril—relaxed and mingled between sets on the last of a four-night stand. They broke open a case of Bud in long-neck bottles and dipped into a buffet catered by a new Cajun/Creole restaurant called Bon Temps Roules. Art encouraged people to try the gumbo: "It's serious." And it was, since it had just the right spice to send a tingle from your palate to your scalp. Charles pigeonholed people to talk about the New Orleans dilemma, about the city by the river bend, about the Big Ease, about a place where ambition and success seem to be sapped as the temperature and humidity rise. Aaron and Cyril found comfortable seats and waited to be spoken to, but not with an air of arrogance or displeasure. They were just two friendly people taking the time to catch a breath during what appeared to be more of a dinner party at the Neville household than a meal in a dressing room.

Even on-stage the Neville Brothers communicate something beyond your average rhythm & blues, funk, or jazz band performance. They typify the eclecticism, the cosmology, and communal nature of New Orleans music which allows it to encompass a wide range of talents and sounds. Even on an off night when the band lacked the normal spark, the quartet's harmonies were sharp and the musicians tight. Opening with *Hey Pocky A-Way*, the Neville Brothers worked through nearly 50 years of popular black music. Saxist Charles was featured on a warmhearted, lounging version of *Caravan*; Cyril and Aaron traded vocals on a rousing version of *Fever*; Aaron sang a medley that included *She's A Lady* and *Wildflower* (the latter being only one of the sentimental pop tunes that he imbues with a sense of grace and beauty); and Art penned some contemporary message songs like *Fear, Hate, Envy, Jealousy* that benefitted from chilling, call-and-response harmonies. Woven into the set were more traditional New Orleans songs such as *Brother John, Jambalaya*, and *Big Chief*, and a sweet blend of African- and Caribbean-derived rhythms played on a host of percussion instruments.

Yet, if the Lone Star date lacked the edge, the excitement, the transcendent passion that the Nevilles usually transmit, their energy outdistanced their competitors. This past spring at the New Orleans Jazz And Heritage Festival, the Nevilles closed the 10-day extravaganza with a set that linked Cyril's Mardi Gras Indian chants and dances with the hip-hop of the New Orleans Breakers, a crew led by Aaron's youngest son Jason. Not only was the show fresh, its enthusiasm was infectious, getting a crowd of thousands up and dancing for over an hour. Even in clubs which look more like home remodeling projects, the Nevilles pack in dancers, drinkers, and partyers who bounce off the walls until Aaron breaks into a patented ballad that cools off the crowd. In short, the Nevilles' warmth and dynamism warrants them a place in American music which has eluded them for close to 30 years.

Art, the senior member of what is undoubtedly New Orleans' most popular band, attempts to explain the magic. "There's something about the longitude and latitude, 30 by 90—the spot that New Orleans is sitting on. Charles came up with that. There's something about that shit down there that reminds me of the closeness of the family scene and how this stuff is being passed on. It's like a tribal situation; that's the only way I can think to describe it."

* * *

As far as musical families go, the Nevilles have a dynasty. Art anchored the Meters for years; Aaron has had a few hits of his own; and the second generation—represented by keyboardist Ivan (Aaron's son, who's also worked with Bonnie Raitt), Charmaine, and Jason—is extending the family tradition. Nonetheless, the Nevilles recognition has lagged behind that of another well-known New Orleans family name—Marsalis—and they are a band hustling to make a hit. And that's after a career that started in 1954 with Art's hit with the Hawkettes, *Mardi Gras Mambo*, still played and sold at every Mardi Gras.

They have no complaints, though. Art, forever optimistic, proclaims, "We comin' out now. Only we got a reason to do it this time. It's just time to do it. The gigs we are doing are real great. The band is tight, and everybody has a good, positive, happy attitude. Something serious is forming."

Part of that feeling can be attributed to the Nevilles' new album, *Neville-ization*, which is being actively promoted and distributed by Rounder Records. Recorded live at Tipitina's by the New Orleans-based Black Top label, *Neville-ization* captures a taste of the energy and

Crescent City ambiance smothered by misguided big-time production on their two previous albums, *Neville Brothers* and *Fiyo On The Bayou*.

Percussionist and vocalist Cyril, who at age 36 is the youngest brother, is equally upbeat, especially when talking about *Neville-ization*. "I think that it's really on our own vibes that the album is doing as good as it is. The time is right. It's been a long time, and we've paid a lot of dues. The zeitgeist done caught up with us."

Charles echoes these sentiments, asserting, "More people are being exposed to the music, and the reaction is the same as we get in New Orleans. Art's talking about getting the opportunity to do another recording, and to get a record together that can get AM radio play. We want to get something that's suitable for what's happening in the marketplace now and do the old shopping-a-deal thing again."

But Aaron, showing more cautious optimism, allows, "It's pretty hip these days, but it ain't as fast as I would like." As Aaron probably knows all too well, fast and New Orleans music are virtually diametrically opposed. Even this celebrated group took over a dozen years to emerge intact as the Neville Brothers. And the first record that included all four brothers, *Wild Tchoupitoulas*, wasn't even under their name. In fact, the leader of the date was probably George Landry, also known as Big Chief Jolly, who is their late uncle. Landry's desire to record his Mardi Gras Indian group dovetailed with the Nevilles ill-fated attempts to form their own group and served as a catalyst which brought the family together to perform in New Orleans.

Art explains, "Our uncle had been working with a Mardi Gras Indian 'tribe' called the Wild Tchoupitoulas from uptown. They had these chants they would sing like *Hey Pocky A-Way*. It came from a traditional thing, and we saw a point where we could use this in our own musical career. My uncle and Cyril wrote some lyrics and we [the Meters—Art, guitarist Leo Nocentelli, bassist George Porter, and drummer Zigaboo Modeliste] put enough tunes together to do an album. It turned out to be a pretty good album, but they told me it only sold 400 units. We never saw any money."

LAUREN DEUTSCH

The Wild Tchoupitoulas

RICK OLIVIER

The Nevilles: from left, Charles, Cyril, Aaron, Art, and Ivan.

Money aside, Art understates his case, because the Wild Tchoupitoulas album is not just the best album by the Nevilles as a group, it's also one of the finest examples of the Meters' production in the last half of the '70s. Modeliste is in top form, spraying percussion accents around an irresistible backbeat, in a manner that's as explosive as Ed Blackwell's more free-flowing rhythmic patterns. In addition, the Tchoupitoulas proved themselves to be the premier Indian group capable of blending street chants, churchy harmonies, and funk.

Charles remembers, "We hadn't done any of the Wild Tchoupitoulas music together, and we didn't have any form that the music was actually to go into. We didn't go into a lot of preliminary stuff, arranging and figuring out. It just gelled. It's some traditional ethnic music that was part of the African and Indian tradition. The [New Orleans] Indians are like a secret society. The people who belonged were just regular members of the community. They don't consider themselves artists, even though they make these beautiful costumes with beads, fabric, and stones. These guys aren't musicians either, so the music is just chants and rhythms and individual expression.

"Now my uncle, Big Chief Jolly, was a musician—a pianist and a singer—so he was able to apply some musical experience to his songs and performances. I remember I saw him one night when I was just out at a bar with a piano. He got high and sat at the piano and started playing, and it just knocked me out."

Landry, whose piano style employed slow drone-like chords and a heavy gravelly voice, collaborated with Cyril to teach the foursome the songs and chants they'd been hearing all through their lives. Cyril was closest to the music because he "used to be at the Indian practices. This thing wasn't born on the stage; it was born on the streets. I used to be with Landry on the streets more than my brothers, so I have a little more firsthand experience. I met a lot of the other Big Chiefs, and I respect it [the Indian tradition] a lot, so when I use Indian chants and dances, I do it from my heart as a dedication to them."

* * *

Prior to 1977, the brothers had traveled divergent and criss-crossing musical paths in their careers. Art and Charles were the first to play professionally in the mid-'50s. Charles left home in 1954 when he was 14. He recollects, "I wanted to play with different musicians, and I wanted to travel. I saw that as a way to get away from New Orleans. Also the music that was happenin' at that time—rhythm & blues and bebop—was still happenin'. I was just following the call of that. The first time out I was with Piney Brown. Then I played the Chittlin' Circuit and the rural areas of the South. We went as far west as Texas and worked in Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

"I also worked in the Rabbit Foot Min-

strel Show. That was like the black equivalent of the circus. We played fairs in these big tents. I wrote a play based on these experiences called *Shangri-La*. I also drew upon places like the Mitchell Hotel and Club Handy in Memphis, the Dewdrop Inn in New Orleans, and a club in Mobile. At that time most of the black artists who were traveling couldn't stay in the white hotels, so the black club owner would have a hotel attached to the club. All the musicians would stay in the same place, so there were some really hip social scenes as well as the hippest jam sessions in the world. My play is basically a glimpse of what life was like under those conditions. We performed it for two years at Jazz Fest and in a club, and now I'm talking to some people in New York."

RICK OLIVIER

THE NEVILLE BROTHERS' EQUIPMENT

Brother **Charles Neville** (pictured) blows both Selmer and King Super 20 altos, a Vito soprano (from Leblanc), and a Conn tenor sax ("the old, big one with a lady's face on the bell"), and his flute is a Gemeinhardt. Brother **Cyril Neville** bops Latin Percussion—two timbales, two congas, wood blocks, and wind chimes. Brother **Art Neville** fingers a Roland Juno-106 synthesizer. Brother **Aaron Neville**, the featured vocalist, joins in the fray on various cowbells, triangles, scrapers, maracas, claves, and tambourines.

Aaron's son **Ivan Neville** sweetens the band's sound with a Roland Juno-106 plus an analog delay and a stereo chorus from MXR. Guitarist **Brian Stoltz** funkifies the brew on a '69 vintage Fender Stratocaster, a circa '70 Fender Telecaster, and a '73 Gibson Les Paul Custom, shot through a Mesa Boogie Mark I amp and an ancient Cry Baby wah-wah. **Darryl Johnson**'s bass is a Kramer, fed into a Peavey 400 double-cabinet amp. Drummer **Willie Green** sizzles on Slingerland—a 22-inch bass drum, 16-inch floor tom, 13- and 14-inch rack toms, and a 14-inch snare—plus Ludwig timbales and a fistful of Zildjian cymbals.

THE NEVILLE BROTHERS SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

NEVILLE-IZATION—Black Top 1031
NEVILLE BROTHERS—Capitol 11865
FIYO ON THE BAYOU—A&M 4866

The Meters

REJUVENATION—Reprise 2200
CABBAGE ALLEY—Reprise 2076
NEW DIRECTIONS—Warner Bros. 3042
TRICK BAG—Reprise 2252
FIRE ON THE BAYOU—Reprise 2228
STRUTTIN'—Josie 4012
SECOND LINE STRUT—Charly 1009
CISSY STRUT—Island 9250
BEST OF . . .—Virgo 12002

Wild Tchoupitoulas

WILD TCHOUPITOULAS—Island 9360

Aaron Neville

TELL IT LIKE IT IS—Minit 24007

Charles moved in and out of New Orleans until 1967 when he settled in New York. He played in jazz bands with Wilbur Ware, Charles McPherson, Lucky Thompson, and various other musicians he met through his friendship with George Coleman. He had met the saxophonist when they both lived in Memphis and Coleman and he were section-mates in B.B. King's band. Outside of Louis Jordan and New Orleans tenorist Nat Perrilliat, Charles named Coleman as his greatest influence. In New York, Charles also worked with salsa bands, Joey Dee (of the Peppermint Lounge fame), and a host of local doo-woppers from Brooklyn. In 1972 Aaron and Cyril joined Charles in New York for a few years. They formed a Tchoupitoulas-style group and gigged around with local blues and r&b bands before returning to New Orleans.

While Charles played the family gypsy, Art and his brothers were edging toward the top of the New Orleans music scene. Starting in the Calliope projects where Art and Aaron sang doo-wop in the park, the Nevilles were constantly involved in music. Aaron was "a cowboy as a kid. I was a yodeler," says Art, "into Nat King Cole, spirituals, anything." But his kid idol was Pookie Hudson, who along with the Spaniels, recorded *Goodnite, Sweetheart, Goodnite*. Art had his own group, the Hawkettes, so he was able to provide leadership and employment opportunities, although he was only 17 when they recorded *Mardi Gras Mambo*.

Cyril recalls, "The neighborhood always had musicians like this guy Clarence Brown who lived next door, and now he's one of Fats Domino's drummers. And this cat Leo Morris, who's now called Idris Muhammad, was one of the drummers with the Hawkettes, and he used to rehearse in our living room. I used to go home with screen marks on my head because I'd peep through his screen when he was practicing.

"When I started playing drums, I was with the group that became the Meters. I shared the drums with Zig. This was back in junior high school. Art had to bring us to the gigs and bring us home early. We all grew up in the same neighborhood, me, and Zig, and George."

Art led a group called Art Neville and the Neville Sounds, which all the brothers agree was the hottest band in New Orleans in the early to mid-'60s. The group, however, disbanded because of economic considerations. Art recalls, "We were all working together at the Nightcap, and we made a move to the French Quarter. I thought it was a good move, but we could only take the rhythm section. Aaron and Cyril formed the Soul Machine and stayed at the Nightcap. That's how the Meters came about, from working the gig at the Ivanhoe in the French Quarter. We did that gig for a year-and-a-half, and that really tightened us up.

"At the Nightcap we wrote a lot of stuff just getting off watching somebody dance. People would be serious, just gettin' down to the maximum. I would pay attention 'cause none of us could dance except for Zigaboo, and he was sitting behind the drums."

Aaron and Cyril's Soul Machine was claimed to be the second best band in New Orleans—second only to the Meters. And Aaron had a minor career of his own with the hit *Tell It Like It Is* in 1966 and some recordings with Allen Toussaint for Minit records in the early '60s. So the family was well represented on the New Orleans scene in the late '60s. But bigger and better was in store for Art as the Meters joined forces with Toussaint and Marshall Seahorn as a studio group. At first they backed artists like Lee Dorsey, Irma Thomas, Betty Harris, and Earl King. Then they cut some tracks in 1969—*Sissy Strut*, *Sophisticated Sissy*, and *Meter Man*—that rocketed to the top of the charts, and the Meters became minor stars.

Art humbly explains, "We were trying to keep the music from sounding monotonous. I was into Booker T and the MGs and Sly Stone-type stuff at the time. I was a Booker T freak; I just dug everything he did. But, we just went in there to the studio and just played it. There wasn't no real strain. It was just improvisation, and we used a lot of different influences from New Orleans."

The Meters stayed together until 1977, which brings us back to the Neville Brothers. Art, who plays the role of older brother to a T, goes on, "In 1977 we did the *Neville Brothers* record. We got a deal through some people knowing each other, but we went around somebody we should have gone through. He came around from the other side, and it didn't work. I had one guy tell me it was great music, but it wasn't black enough. I don't know what it is. Don't nobody know what it is. It's good. And I figure that we're getting through that barrier now."

What Art Neville and the rest of the Neville Brothers also know is that their star is on the rise. The current band, which includes Darryl Johnson on bass, Willie Green on drums, and Brian Stoltz on guitar, has been together for three years. Using some of Art Neville's favorite words, the band is tight. It is serious and on most nights treacherous. And only today are they receiving a portion of the success their soulful sounds deserve. **db**

Scott Hamilton

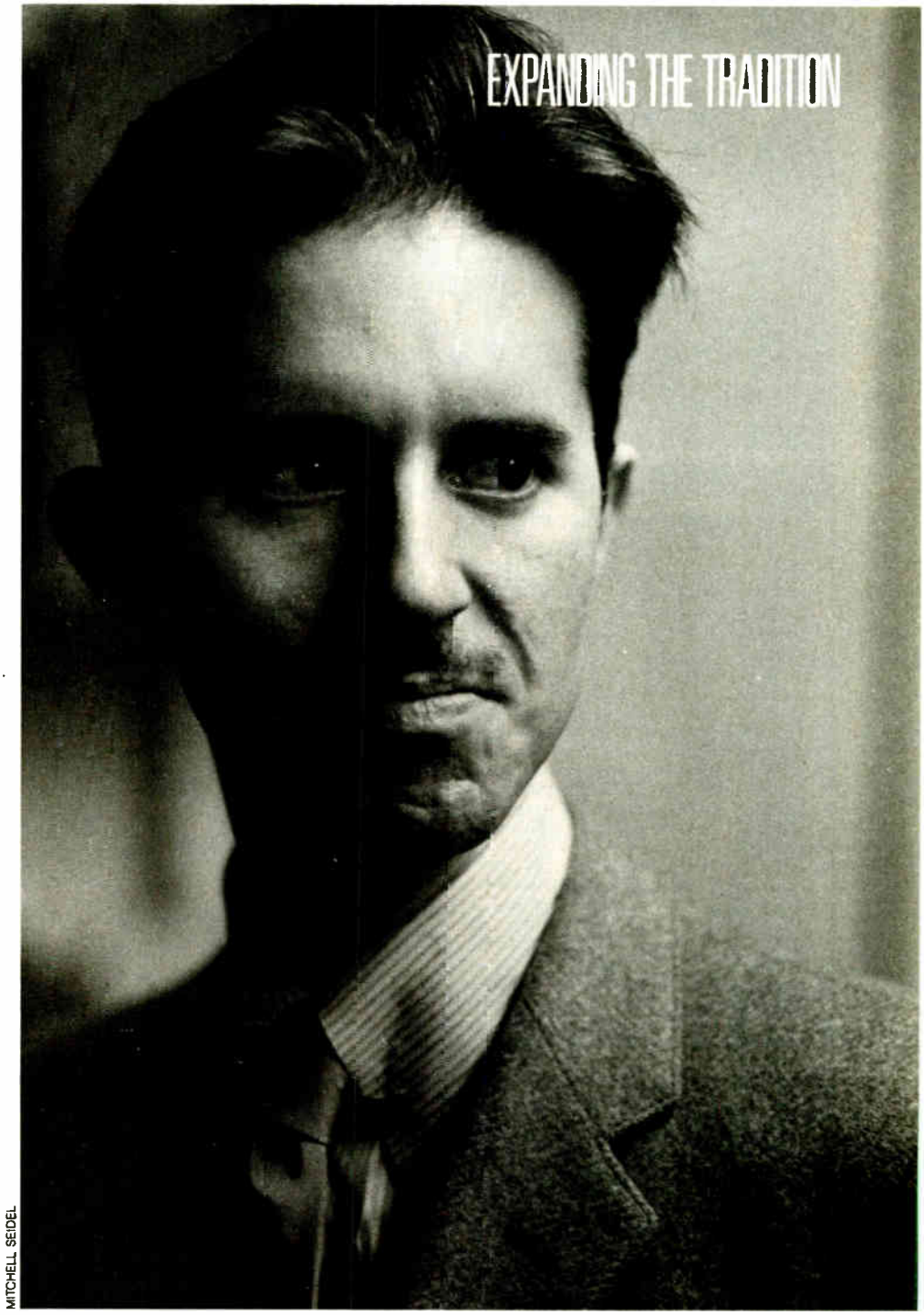
By Chip Deffaa

"He even looks like a character out of the '40s," exclaims a woman filing into New York City's West End Cafe. And indeed, Scott Hamilton does. He has slicked-back hair, a small, neatly trimmed mustache, and is wearing a loosely fitting gray suit with a red tie. Once again he's drawn a packed house, ranging from students from nearby Columbia University to white-haired couples. Many, no doubt, have been attracted by newspaper reviews suggesting he's a major jazz improviser, a Swing Era-styled tenor saxophonist in the tradition of Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins, and Illinois Jacquet. He offers numbers such as *Shine, Don't Get Around Much Anymore, For All We Know,* and *My Romance*—numbers first popularized in the '30s and '40s by the likes of Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and Isham Jones.

In his concert and club appearances throughout the U.S. and abroad, Hamilton has garnered many rave notices. "A sound for sore ears," said Leonard Feather. "Big-toned, deep-swinging, melodic improvising that is the jazz equivalent of a prime steak dinner," wrote Nat Hentoff. Occasionally though, critics have asked why a player so young—for Hamilton is just 30—should be working in a tradition so old. Why, they ask, isn't he trying to stay on top of the latest trend?

One woman in the audience, Alexandra York, a former tv and radio commentator who today writes about art, offers a ready explanation. Rediscovering past traditions, she insists between sets, *is* the latest trend, all throughout the arts. "It's returning to representational styles in painting and sculpture, and to plot in fiction," she says. And there are musicians in New York, such as Bob Wilber, who maintain that the next major development in jazz is the rediscovery and re-appreciation of older traditions by younger players. And that it is beginning to happen now.

What Hamilton offers might best be described as a contemporary *extension* of Swing Era playing, as if bebop had never happened. He is not imitating anyone—no one could mistake a Hamilton recording for one actually made back in the Swing Era—but his playing is clearly rooted in, and expanding upon a tradition more than 40 years old. And Hamilton has found a coterie of inspired players about his own age who have developed along the same lines: guitarist Chris Flory, bassist Phil Flanigan, drummer Chuck Riggs, who work with him regularly, and lyrical cornetist Warren Vaché Jr., who often teams up with him. Is it anachronistic to offer Swing Era-inflected playing in 1985? Hamilton answers, "Most tenor sax players today are influenced by Coltrane. That's been around for 25 years now. I don't see



MITCHELL SEIDEL

much difference in playing in a tradition carried on for 40 years rather than 25." He smiles and, between sips of iced herb tea, adds quietly, "If I could think of a good name for the type of music I play, I might use it."

* * *

Born in Providence, Rhode Island on September 12, 1954, Hamilton grew up listening to traditional jazz. His father had plenty of older records, he recalls, and he was buying plenty of his own as soon as he was able to. (Boxes of records—all types of jazz and big bands and Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett—seem on the verge of taking over Hamilton's apartment today.)

"My father got me listening to Louis Armstrong—Hot Fives, his big band from the '30s, the All-Stars. At age eight I saw him with the All-Stars in Providence," Hamilton recalls. "That was very important to me. He was the first famous person I saw in the flesh. As a little kid I loved Armstrong, Count Basie's band, and the older [circa 1940] Duke Ellington band. I listened to rock when I was 12 and 13, then moved into blues singers. I began playing professionally at 14—harmonica; I didn't play sax until I was 16. I listened to Muddy Waters and B. B. King, and then came back to jazz with those ears.

"And then when I first heard Illinois Jacquet, I *flipped*; he turned me around. I listened to records night and day—the masters: Coleman Hawkins and Don Byas and Ben Webster and Lester Young and Gene Ammons and Ike Quebec—but the ones who had the biggest effect were the ones I saw live." He soaked up Paul Gonsalves playing with Ellington, and Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis playing with Basie, when he caught those bands on tour. "If you watch somebody play, you're taking lessons," he reflects. "I was never given much training at all except when I was a little kid [some clarinet and piano]. I was always terrible about taking lessons."

As for avant garde jazz, "I tried very hard to like it when I was 15 or 16," he says. "It just wasn't me. I never felt it was something I should do."

He originally played strictly hard and fast. "I didn't even try to play a ballad for the first few years. But after I heard Illinois, I said, 'I've got to learn a few ballads.'"

In the meantime, what was to soon become the Scott Hamilton Quartet (and four-fifths of today's Scott Hamilton Quintet) was coming together. Drummer Chuck Riggs of Providence was just a few years older than Hamilton; they teamed up when Hamilton was 18. Guitarist Chris Flory, a year older than Hamilton, came to Providence from New York state. "I've known Chris since I was in high school, although he was in another band at first," Hamilton recalls. Bassist Phil Flanigan (also from New York state), two years younger than Hamilton, landed in Providence, and the four wound up working together. In Providence they developed their sound.

"We had to play mostly for dancing, mostly for younger audiences. We were playing things like we play now, but we'd disguise it a little—put a bigger beat to it, play it louder, play more blues; I still like to play blues. We were fighting a lot of club owners and bookers. We tried to keep a secret of what kind of a band we were, and just hoped we'd go over with the audience," Hamilton remembers.

Gigs were hard to come by. Bookers didn't see the merit in a band playing this older type of jazz. A rock band or a more conventional type of jazz group would have been easier to book. Work fizzled out. The group split up.

When Hamilton struck off for New York in 1976, he says, he had no anticipation of what was about to happen. He didn't know if his band would ever again work as a band. He was hoping he could pick up a job on his own maybe once a week.

He *had* to make it as a jazz musician, he felt. He hadn't had much interest in schooling. And he had never really

MITCHELL SEIDEL

CONCORD TENORS: *Scott Hamilton horns in between Al Cohn (left) and Buddy Tate while Jimmy Cobb keeps the pots on.*

SCOTT HAMILTON'S EQUIPMENT

"This is the best one I've ever had," Hamilton says of his gleaming Selmer balanced-action tenor saxophone, which was made around 1949. "I've never played a new horn that played as well. I know the design on the new horn is not as comfortable for me, and the newer horns don't sound as full. Probably they're looking for something now that's going to execute easily. They get more speed now, a more penetrating sound. With people amplifying things so much, maybe the quality of the sound is less of a concern. I use whatever microphone and p.a. system I'm given. I depend on it—I'm not a loud player—but I try to keep the sound as natural and close to the regular sound of the horn as I can."

Hamilton uses a 10-star Otto Link wide-bore mouthpiece. Two years ago he switched from using a very hard reed to a La Voz medium. "I was knocking myself out using a hard reed. Then I played a gig in Nice [France]. Illinois Jacquet, Arnett Cobb, Budd Johnson—they were all getting a terrific sound without using a hard reed. I said, 'Maybe it's just a myth that I have to work this hard to get a sound I like.' Also, I've been playing longer, so I find it's easier to get the sound that I want just naturally."

SCOTT HAMILTON SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

with Buddy Tate

SCOTT'S BUDDY—Concord Jazz 148
BACK TO BACK—Concord Jazz 85

with Al Cohn and Buddy Tate

TOUR DE FORCE—Concord Jazz 172

with Warren Vaché Jr.

SKYSCRAPERS—Concord Jazz 111
IN NEW YORK CITY—Concord Jazz 70

as a leader

THE SECOND SET—Concord Jazz 254
IN CONCERT—Concord Jazz 233
CLOSE UP—Concord Jazz 197
APPLES AND ORANGES—Concord Jazz 165
THE SHINING SEA—Concord Jazz 159
TENORSHOES—Concord Jazz 127
TWO—Concord Jazz 61
IS A GOOD WIND WHO IS BLOWING US NO ILL—Concord Jazz 42
GRAND APPEARANCE—Progressive 7026

with Woody Herman

A GREAT AMERICAN EVENING—Concord Jazz 220
A CONCORD JAM—Concord Jazz 142

with Rosemary Clooney

SINGS THE MUSIC OF IRVING BERLIN—Concord Jazz 255
SINGS THE MUSIC OF HAROLD ARLEN—Concord Jazz 210
SINGS THE MUSIC OF COLE PORTER—Concord Jazz 185
WITH LOVE—Concord Jazz 144
SINGS IRA GERSHWIN LYRICS—Concord Jazz 112
HERE'S TO MY LADY—Concord Jazz 81
ROSIE SINGS BING—Concord Jazz 60
EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ROSIE—Concord Jazz 47

with the Concord All-Stars

AT THE NORTHSEA FESTIVAL, VOL. 2—Concord Jazz 205
AT THE NORTHSEA FESTIVAL, VOL. 1—Concord Jazz 182
CONCORD SUPER BAND II—Concord Jazz 120
IN TOKYO—Concord Jazz 80
LIVE AT CONCORD '77—Concord Jazz 51

with Ed Bickert

AT TORONTO'S BOURBON STREET—Concord Jazz 216

with Dave McKenna

NO BASS HIT—Concord Jazz 97

with Bob Wilber

BOB WILBER WITH THE SCOTT HAMILTON QUARTET—Bodeswell 13

with Various Artists

A TRIBUTE TO DUKE—Concord Jazz 50
ALL-STAR TENOR SPECTACULAR—Progressive 7019

"I listened to the masters—Hawkins, Byas, Webster, Young, Ammons, Quebec—but the ones who had the biggest effect were the ones I saw live. If you watch somebody play, you're taking lessons."

MITCHELL SEIDEL

KOOL FRONT LINE: George Wein's '84 Festival All-Stars featured the lungpower of (from left) Scott Hamilton, Norris Turney, and Warren Vaché Jr.

learned to read music, and thus wasn't eligible for studio work. ("I'm glad I never learned to read," he comments. "I don't have the temptation to do jingles or anything. I'm forced to do what I really like.")

Almost immediately, Hamilton found top New York players who saw in him the gifts that had gone unrecognized by Rhode Island club owners and booking agents. Trumpeter Roy Eldridge was an important supporter, the man Hamilton would turn to when he needed someone to talk to. Veteran pianist John Bunch (today the fifth member of the Scott Hamilton Quintet) steered Hamilton to his first record date and to working with Benny Goodman. At Eddie Condon's club Hamilton first teamed up with Warren Vaché Jr. Like Hamilton, Vaché had discovered Louis Armstrong and the other giants in early boyhood via his father's old records; his stylistic roots were in the Swing Era too. And he also believed in expanding—not just preserving—that tradition. They found their playing complemented each other; their thinking was developing along similar lines. (They have since worked together in the U.S. and Canada, in Europe, Japan, and Australia, with Benny Goodman and Woody Herman, and on 14 Concord Jazz record albums. Says Vaché of Hamilton: "He's one of the most complete musicians I know. He never stops listening or developing his ear. Working with him's a lot of fun.")

* * *

Hamilton found steady work almost from the week he moved to New York. And it's never stopped since. Whenever he had a chance, he would get Flory, Flanigan, and Riggs to work with him. Soon all four were living near each other in New York and working again as a unit when they could.

"That first year was very fast, maybe a little too fast," Hamilton says. "I was still pretty young. You can handle pressure and heavy work schedules, and handle yourself better when you've had a few years experience." Musicians he had long idolized were now treating him like a peer. He couldn't quite believe it. He was thrilled, he says, to be listening to Benny Goodman, much less playing alongside of him.

When Hamilton appeared in 1977 with the Benny Goodman Orchestra at New York's Avery Fisher Hall, he recalls that he pantomimed all of the sax section parts. He was only really playing, he says, when he was called upon to solo. Why? Two reasons. "I don't really read at all," Hamilton admits. But surely he knew many of those Goodman classics by heart? He smiles and says something about the saxophone player sitting next to him not liking his tone. (He adds that his tone has improved a lot since then.) "So I just faked playing. That was the only concert that I pantomimed, though. When we did big band dates on the West Coast, I just sat there, rather than pretending to play, until it was time for me to solo."

Hamilton toured again with Goodman in '82 "with John Bunch and Chris Flory and Phil Flanigan and Mel Lewis and Warren—that was a hot band. And Benny—I love him; I'd go to work with Benny again immediately." There were dates at various times with Woody Herman and Buddy Tate and Zoot Sims. And since 1978, a steady flow of recording sessions for Concord Jazz.

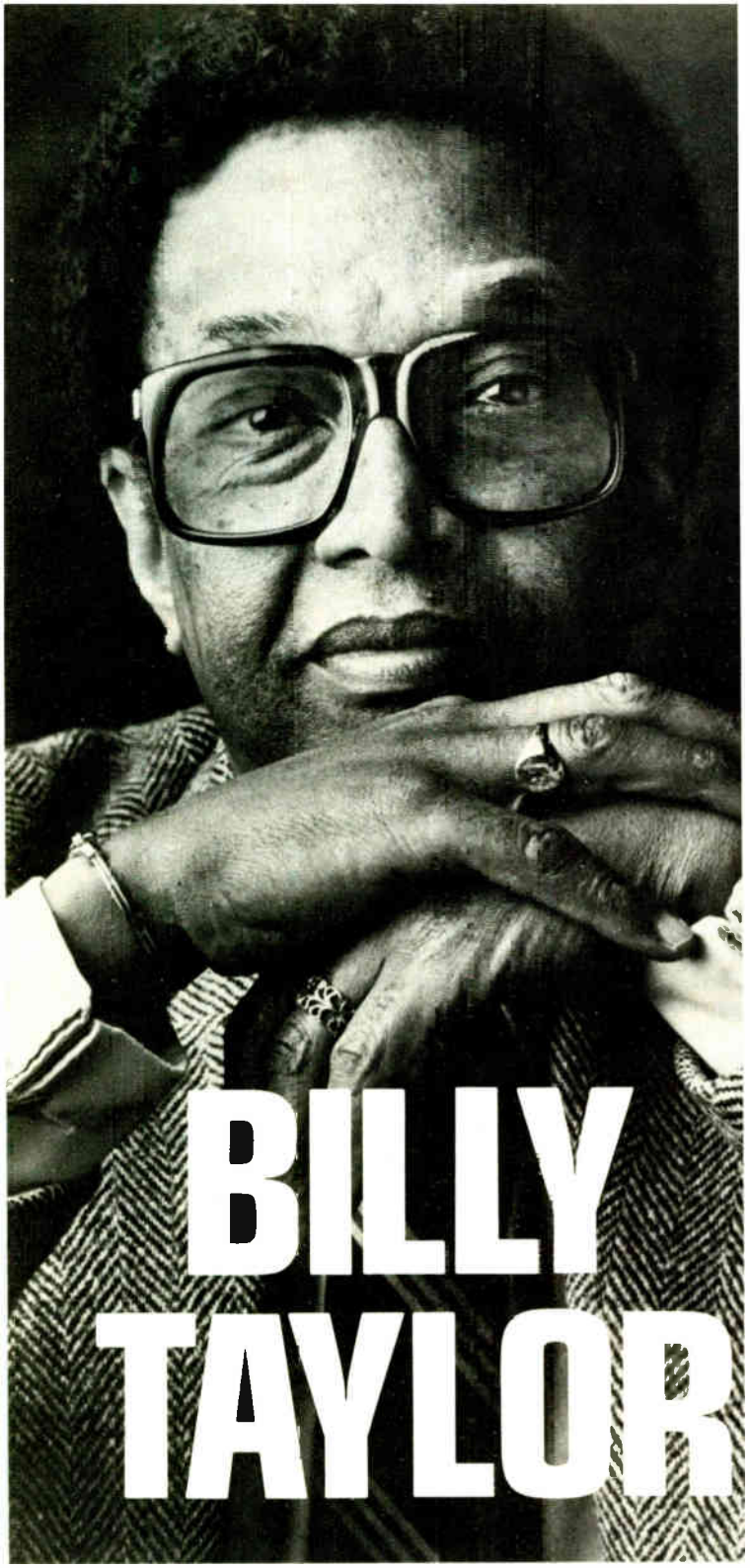
Indeed, Hamilton and Vaché have become the star younger members of the Concord stable. Concord president Carl Jefferson says of Hamilton's playing: "I just thrive on it. His playing is pretty and lyrical—and great. He uses the full range, plays smoothly in the top range, almost into the alto range, then down to the bari range. If there are 10 tenors playing, I can pick him out. He's very good as a leader, too. Men like Buddy Tate, Jake Hanna, Al Cohn, Dave McKenna, Cal Collins—all much older than him—will defer to him to set up a program. I've been all over the world with him for six years. He really wears well—both he as an individual and his music—with most everybody who isn't just green with envy."

What especially pleases Hamilton is the degree to which, in recent years, success has come to his group, not just to himself as a soloist. Hamilton is a believer in the value of organized groups in jazz. Hamilton, Flory, Flanigan, and Riggs (with Norman Simmons, Mike Ledonne, and John Bunch alternating as pianist over the years) have worked together often enough and long enough so that they can work separately for stretches without it seeming to affect their rapport. Sometimes when Hamilton gets bookings on his own, the rhythm section will find a job as a unit, which helps it maintain its cohesion until the whole group gets back together again.

Hamilton's most recent albums—*Close Up*, *In Concert*, and *The Second Set*, all recorded with his quintet rather than with thrown-together "all-star" bands—have given him the most satisfaction. "Being able to work together," he says, "means a lot to us."

When he's not playing, Hamilton likes to read crime fiction or walk around New York. But given a choice, he adds, he prefers working to anything, even if it means living on the road and staying up late night after night in smoke-filled clubs. "I'm a night club player," he says. "I kind of like the worn-out feeling a little bit. What bothers me about vacations is I never get tired. I never do anything."

He holds his 36-year-old sax with pride. "Maybe the fact that I'm successful, doing what I like, might give some people the idea that they can play in that direction and make a living. . . . I think there's a lot of room for a lot of different styles in jazz. When a music is good, it doesn't die." **db**



BILLY TAYLOR

Primarily Piano

By Jim Roberts

Billy Taylor is a great jazz musician. That might seem obvious, but it sometimes gets overlooked in the midst of his many achievements. It would be hard to name a single person who has done more recently to further the cause of jazz than Taylor. As an educator, writer, and radio and television personality, he has spread the word to millions of people all over the world. He holds a doctorate in education and has taught improvisation in countless master classes and, recently, on videotape as well. He founded the Jazzmobile in 1964 and continues as the organization's president. He wrote *Jazz Piano* (William C. Brown Co., 1982), the definitive book on the subject. Taylor is perhaps best known for his role as host of the *Jazz Alive!* series, a much-lamented victim of short-sighted budget cuts by National Public Radio. He was also the musical director of David Frost's '60s television show, and these days he can often be seen on the CBS News program *Sunday Morning*.

But Billy Taylor can *play*, too. He considers himself a piano player, first and foremost. Although his life's work has been acknowledged with numerous awards—including a Peabody, an Emmy, and the **down beat** Lifetime Achievement Award—there has been little recognition lately for his skill at the keyboard. Considering the way his career began, that's a bit of a surprise.

After graduating from Virginia State College with a music degree in 1942, Taylor got his first gig playing in New York City with Ben Webster—certainly an auspicious beginning. Stints with violinists Eddie South and Stuff Smith followed, and during the '40s he played with most of the biggest names in jazz, including Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker. In the early '50s he was virtually the house pianist at Birdland, and his playing attracted a lot of attention. He was named the New Star on piano in the 1953 debut of the **down beat** Critics Poll, but Taylor's career took a different direction after that, and he has not won a poll since then.

Today, Taylor is working hard to do something about that. Without giving up his many educational projects, he has been trying to increase his exposure by playing more dates with his current trio, which includes Victor Gaskin on bass and Keith Copeland on drums. Now in his early 60s, Taylor plays with the vigor of a young man, but the amazing breadth of his expression is proof of his experience. When he's teaching, he can mimic the style of just about any jazz pianist, but when he sits down to really play, it's pure Billy Taylor. His style is strong and deeply rooted, but even the most powerful passages are marked by the unmistakable elegance of the Taylor touch.

Jim Roberts: You're well known as an educator and also as a musician. Why did you take this direction?

Billy Taylor: Well, my training is in education. I was going to be a music teacher when I first came out of college, and then I found out that as a music teacher I made less than I did as leader of the college jazz band. Something was wrong there financially, so I decided to go in another direction. I always wanted to play. I consider myself a pianist/composer, that's what I do first and best. The other things were a natural outgrowth of my interest in music.

JR: You don't feel any frustration as a player and composer, due to the amount of time you've put into teaching?

BT: No, the only frustration that I feel has nothing to do with the educational aspect of it. We live in such a music-business-oriented society that everything is hyped, and if you don't make a lot of records and you don't have a lot of visibility, people are not aware of what you do. So my frustration comes

from the fact that many people around the country don't know how I play. And so it comes as a big surprise to a lot of people that I play well. Considering how long I've been playing, that's kind of a drag. It has to do with the amount of exposure that aspect of my work has gotten, and I'm trying to do something about that now with television, with radio, and with records. I have big problems with recordings because the record business is such a hit-oriented business, and the people who run it are so stupid. I couldn't care less if someone didn't record me because I didn't play well. But for somebody *not* to know whether I play well or not, somebody whose business it is to know those things, I think that's unforgivable. And it's not true of just me, it's true of many of the people whose work I respect. It seems to me to be utterly unforgivable that many of the fine musicians of our time are not really documented to the extent that they should be. I can find the complete Miles Davis, or the complete this guy or that guy, and then there are people like Jimmy Owens or Freddie Hubbard or Frank Wess and others. Part of what they do is on record, but part of them that I know is not available on records.

JR: Along that same line, you can go to Europe and, for instance, buy the complete Count Basie in chronological order on a French record label. You can't do that in this country. You're fortunate to be able to find a few of his early recordings. Do you think that's indicative of a problem with our society and the way that America relates to its own art form?

BT: I think it's more indicative of the greed and stupidity of the music business. There are people who proclaim very loudly that they love jazz and that they want to make sure it stays alive and that the people who are creative in that field are recognized. Nothing could be further from the truth. I mean, records go in and out of print—one of the reasons that Miles Davis is so popular is that his records, for whatever reason, have stayed in print, and so they have sold over the years, and people have recognized him as a marketable commodity. This is not true of Dizzy Gillespie. You can't tell me that Dizzy is not worthy of having all the things that he's done over the years much better recorded. Or Roy Eldridge, or many other artists—I don't mean that they're unrecorded, but there are gaps. And this, to me, is pure and simple the fact that the music business is run by people who are looking for the new Michael Jackson, the guy who's going to save their company by making them millions of dollars.

JR: Do you ever run into the same sort of frustration dealing with educational institutions, trying to get jazz taught in schools? I know there's a certain amount of resistance.

BT: There's great resistance, but that's breaking down, thank goodness. Many people in many areas have had their consciousness raised, and I wish I could have been as successful with the music-business types as I have been with the recalcitrant educational types. At least when you're dealing with people in education, there is some basis for conversation. You may disagree totally on whether jazz is America's classical music, but at least you're talking about music to someone who understands part of the music you're talking about. When

CONTINUED ON PAGE 52

ANDREA BRIZZI

BILLY TAYLOR'S EQUIPMENT

"I prefer the Steinway piano," says Billy Taylor. "I'm more comfortable with the American model because I've played more Americans, but I like the Germans too. I like a couple of the foreign pianos—the Bösendorfer is nice—but I get the most consistent response from a Steinway.

"I've endorsed a couple of electronic instruments, but I haven't been asked to do that in recent years because I haven't been that visible. I own a Rhodes electric piano, which I've had for many years, and I've written many tunes that are for the Moog synthesizer. I'm very interested in the Synclavier, that whole concept. Oscar Peterson turned me on to that."

BILLY TAYLOR SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

WHERE'VE YOU BEEN—Concord Jazz 145
JAZZ ALIVE—Monmouth Evergreen 7089
LIVE AT STORYVILLE—West 54 8008
TOUCH OF TAYLOR—Prestige 7664
SLEEPING BEE—Pausa 7096
TODAY!—Prestige 7762
MY FAIR LADY LOVES JAZZ—Impulse 72
ONE FOR FUN—Atlantic 1329
I WISH I KNEW HOW IT WOULD FEEL TO BE FREE—Tower 5111

MITCHELL SEIDEL

PIANO'S THEIR FORTE: *From left, Jaki Byard, Slam Stewart, Billy Taylor, and Dick Hyman.*

What McHenry offers, you can't buy by mail.

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.

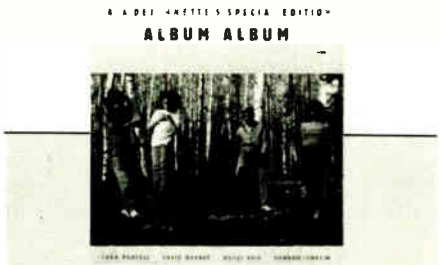
"Together we've made it happen," he's proud to say.

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



JACK DEJOHNETTE'S SPECIAL EDITION

ALBUM ALBUM—ECM 1280: *Ahmad The Terrible; Monk's Mood; Festival; New Orleans Strut; Third World Anthem; Zoot Suite.*
Personnel: *DeJohnette; drums, keyboards; John Purcell, alto, soprano saxophone; David Murray, tenor saxophone; Howard Johnson, tuba, baritone saxophone; Rufus Reid, acoustic, electric bass.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

This is the fourth Special Edition album since 1979 (each with slightly different personnel), and it is a superb continuation (and extension) of a series that may be the most important ongoing saga in contemporary jazz. DeJohnette's innovative music combines respect for the tradition with a sense of daring and a healthy dash of irreverence. It looks both forward and backward at once, so while remembering where we've been, it also shows us where we're going.

Such tunes as *Pastel Rhapsody* and *Ebony* on previous Special Edition albums have inspired comparisons to Duke Ellington, and the Ellingtonian flavor is especially strong here on Howard Johnson's arrangement of *Monk's Mood*, a majestic saxophone choir (augmented by DeJohnette's synthesizer) accompanied by Rufus Reid's bass. But aside from the textural similarity of this one tune to an Ellington tone poem, the album as a whole suggests a deeper parallel.

Like Ellington, DeJohnette has assembled a band of virtuosos (albeit a smaller and more flexible one) to play his music, then he has crafted tunes that subordinate individual technique to the overall architecture of the music. There is no empty blowing—every solo has a purpose—and the elements of composition and improvisation are tightly interwoven. The players' absorption in the music itself is easy to hear, and their satisfaction in playing it is communicated quite clearly.

Originally Special Edition had somewhat looser sensibilities, and the group's evolution is pointed up forcefully by the inclusion here of a new version of *Zoot Suite*. In contrast to the rendition on the first Special Edition album, this one is quicker and shorter (about half the length), but much more concise and more elegantly shaped. On the first version the horns were raw and stood out in rough contrast to each other; here they achieve a sophisticated blend, and the overall color of the piece is strikingly different.

The group's emotional range continues to expand, and DeJohnette is unafraid to program very different numbers back-to-back: for example, the deliciously funky *New Orleans Strut*, a dance tune, as a lead-in to the complexities of *Third World Anthem*. The common denominator is rhythm—hardly surprising in a group led by a drummer—and the vitality of each tune comes from the bottom up. (Significantly, there are no drum solos anywhere, and one tune has no drums at all—virtuosity subordinated to the needs of the music.)

The "album" concept, reinforced by the many snapshots on the sleeve, suggests a glimpse into the past. DeJohnette's music delivers this with its evocation of the jazz and r&b of the '40s, '50s, and '60s, but it also leaves us with a sense of the past as process. Any healthy tradition is always evolving into something new, and we need to look (and listen) no further than the music of Special Edition to see one direction in which the jazz tradition is going.

—jim roberts

ANDY SUMMERS/ ROBERT FRIPP

BEWITCHED—A&M 9-5011: *Parade; What Kind Of Man Reads Playboy; Begin The Day; Train; Bewitched; Tribe; Maquillage; Guide; Forgotten Steps; Image And Likeness.*
Personnel: *Fripp, Summers, Roland GR 700, GR 300 guitar synthesizers, Jupiter 6, JX 3P synthesizers, MSQ 700 sequencer, TR 909 drum machine, acoustic, electric guitars, percussion, tape loops, water bucket; Chris Childs, Sara Lee, bass; Paul Beavis, drums; Chris Winter, saxophone; Jesse Lota, tabla.*

★ ★ ★ ½

On their first outing together, *I Advance Masked* (A&M 4913), Robert Fripp's influence was all-pervasive. The resulting album probably excited King Crimson fans more than Police fans, given the sheer abundance of gamelan guitar patterns and those unremitting tonal clusters which Fripp so wryly christened "Frippertronics."

This project seems to defer more toward Andy Summers' sensibilities. From the outset it's clear that Summers, as producer, took the reigns and steered away from what could have been Frippertronics Revisited or Further Excursions Into The Lofty Realms Of Esoterica. Side one, with its unabashed nod to dance music, is easily more accessible than anything the cerebral Mr. Fripp has done outside of King Crimson, with the possible exception of his League Of Gentlemen avant-punk dance band (which he so wryly christened "Discotronics").

Parade, the leadoff cut, is a bright, upbeat, lightweight pop tune with all the right hooks and cutes. Add some Sting vocals and you've got a hit single. I imagine that Fripp The Serious Artist cringed just a bit on this one. *Playboy* is an excessive (over 11-minute) jam with flailing guitars over a relentless, mechanized beat. The interest here is how each guitarist reveals his personality through soloing. Summers goes first, coming out understated and bent-string blue. Fripp flies in with everything he's got, ripping off a manic fuzz-tinged flurry of notes that recalls his classic frenzied solo on Brian Eno's *Baby's On Fire*. But the interest doesn't sustain, especially with the metronomic drum program that quickly reduces the extended piece to a one-note dirge. *Begin The Day* is a Crimsonesque affair, flaunting heavy metal crunch and more axe brandishing—again, Summers resorting to his more restrained, blues-oriented approach while Fripp goes for the banshee wail. These three tunes, performed with the help of sidemen Beavis, Childs, Lee, and Winter, give the impression of a solid band rather than two accomplished guitarists communing with axes.

Side two is a much more introspective affair, perhaps in appeasement of Fripp's more esoteric inclinations. While *Train* does convey the slickness and futuristic snap of Prince's *Computer Blue*, tunes like *Guide* and *Forgotten Steps* are far more ethereal, both bearing the unmistakable Fripp stamp. *Tribe*, an oppressive two-note vamp, features some very fluid guitar synthesizer lines by Summers, while *Maquillage*, with its eerie ostinato foundation, is a vehicle for some of his sublime acoustic playing. The album closes on a sparse note with Summers ringing gentle harmonics with bell-like clarity over Fripp's soft guitar synth textures.

The full spectrum of dynamics is explored in this schizophrenic package. My guess is Police fans will wear out the first side and pay only token attention to the second, while Frippertronics fans will reluctantly accept this album, waiting eagerly for the next collaboration when it's Fripp's turn to call the shots.

—bill milkowski

GROVER WASHINGTON

INSIDE MOVES—Elektra 9 60318-1: *Inside Moves; Dawn Song; Watching You Watching Me; Secret Sounds; Jet Stream; When I Look At You; Sassy Stew.*
Personnel: *Washington, alto, tenor, soprano, baritone saxohone; Ralph MacDonald, congas, percussion, drum computer; Jon Lucien, vocals; Marcus Miller, bass, Yamaha DX-7, Jupiter 8 synthesizer; Richard Tee, Rhodes electric piano; Eric Gale, guitar; Steve Gadd (cut 1), Buddy Williams, drums; Anthony MacDonald, percussion (3, 5, 7); Anthony Jackson, bass (3); Lani Groves, Yvonne Lewis, Maeretha Stewart, William Eaton, Frank Floyd, Zack Saunders, Hilda Harris, Ullanda McCullough, vocals.*

★ ★ ★

A couple of the nice touches on Grover Washington Jr.'s new album are called Ralph MacDonald and Jon Lucien.

Record Reviews

Let's face it, after a long and successful string of very accessible pop-jazz recordings, Grover's sound is a dependable commodity. He's a master player, his "feel" has appeal, and his published works maintain a consistently high quality. Hence, small touches can make a big difference in the G Man's struggle vs. predictability. Take the opening cut—*please*. Co-written by MacDonald, William Salter, and Steve Gadd, *Inside Moves* is a study in percussive mastery. Nothing brash or blatant, mind you, just subtle rhythmic turns that really make the tune happen. There's an urban alertness to the music, and one can envision Grover's beloved 'Sixers doing their pre-game warmup basketball drills with this one piped over the p.a.

Dawn Song, *Secret Sounds*, *Sassy Stew*, and *Jet Stream* are the kind of light, immediately familiar joyrides that one expects from Washington. *Watching You Watching Me*, however, while not really departing from the easy-listening mode, is another unexpected treat. The reason is hard-to-find Jon Lucien, a singer whose voice is pleasure incarnate. Lucien has a mellow, soulful quality, but a depth that is too infrequently tapped even here. *Watching You* is a nice piece by William Eaton that hints at Lucien's ability, though not always challenging him enough. Even less distinctive is his second featured spot, *When I Look At You*, a rather typical song. Check out Lucien's 1975 *Song For My Lady* (Columbia 33544) for a better display of his vocal dexterity.

Real good album, all in all, but it's hard to call any of Grover's albums a standout at this point in time. Ralph MacDonald and Jon Lucien help provide glimpses of some deeper roots that Washington would do well to re-explore.

—robert henschen

JUNIOR MANCE/ MARTIN RIVERA

FOR DANCERS ONLY—Sackville 3031: *Harlem Lullaby; Girl Of My Dreams; Prelude To A Kiss; Come On Home; For Dancers Only; Run 'Em 'Round; Summertime.*
Personnel: *Mance, piano; Rivera, bass.*

★ ★ ★ ★

THE TENDER TOUCH—Nilva 3405: *The Shadow Of Your Smile; Something; Wave; Emily; I Don't Care.*
Personnel: *Mance, piano; Rivera, bass.*

★ ★ ★

Sackville producer/liner-note writer John Norris points out that Junior Mance "built an enviable reputation as one of the better pianists to grow out of the bebop revolution of the '40s." And it is true that Mance paid some early dues with Gene Ammons, then with Cannonball Adderley and Dizzy Gillespie, and later with his own trio (of which bassist Martin Rivera was a part). But to think of Mance as simply a bebop player is to miss the point.

At his best Junior Mance is a consummate stylist, like Ahmad Jamal or Wynton Kelly (unlike, say, a straight bebop pianist like Bud Powell). On *The Tender Touch* LP Mance slides into *The Shadow Of Your Smile* in a sassy bounce, punctuating skittering runs with plenty of space, knowingly setting up a punchy sock chorus, and flavoring the performance with blocks of common domain blues phrases circa 1955. At their best Mance's phrases and those of his cohort, Rivera, are clean and intelligible. But at their worst they strain no one's musical intelligence. This is most evident in the puffy showpiece *Something*, which is replete with worn neo-classical mannerisms like octave repetitions of simple motifs. This song can't carry the weight of this portentousness, and even a baroque section of the kind George Shearing might whimsically insert is simply too clever to be engaging.

Falling in the middle of these extremes are standards like *Wave* and *Emily*. The former opens with the intriguing kind of pedal point introduction that Wynton Kelly might fashion, then slides into a latin vamp Keith Jarrett might play. *Emily* is appropriately wistful and delicate. Rivera sensitively fills in the harmonic links and supplies thoughtful commentaries on the melody, following Mance with a sharp second sense. Finally, Ray Bryant's minorish *I Don't Care*, this album's most interesting tune choice, brings out fine bits of Mance's blues lore as he slides through choruses of catchy, medium-tempo swing. Rivera again contributes complementary, well-chosen fills and then gets off an energetic solo that jumps out in sharp relief.

Despite its inconsistencies and its tendency to play down to its audience, *The Tender Touch* is a creditable, though not terribly exciting, release. Both Mance and Rivera command seasoned voices well-attuned to each other; working cohesively as a duo, their efforts are hindered mostly by uneven choices of material. *For Dancers Only* features selections aimed less at the real or imagined "commercial" audience for Mance's stylings and as such is a more consistent showcase for this duo's talents.

Mance's *Harlem Lullaby* sets the tone. Rhapsodic sections alternate with a minorish blues vamp, moving into a measured slow grind laced with blues archaisms. Rivera eases Mance into slow-motion preaching, hanging on his every note, prodding him into forceful, felt improvisation. *Run 'Em 'Round*, another Mance original with a gospel tinge, is evocative of Horace Silver's *The Preacher*. The pianist's interlocking question-and-answer phrases are just about as down-home as one might wish. There's a different kind of riffing on Sy Oliver's Swing Era classic *For Dancers Only*. Piano and bass snap out the head in a teasing, offhand fashion. Rivera solos in fat notes. He hustles, then drops into an even four. Mance replies with subtle twists on the *For Dancers* riff. Equally suited to Mance's tastes is Horace Silver's *Come On Home*, a natural for Mance's preaching. But the real showcase for the pianist is the workhorse *Summertime*. Clocking in at just under 12 minutes, it opens with a Tynerish chordal vamp. After much hypnotic repetition, a call-and-response follows, giving way to blues licks; then a bass solo leads into fascinating, light piano/bass unisons; then the return to the opening vamp—a long, eventful musical journey.

It should be evident that Junior Mance has gone far beyond his earned reputation as a competent bebop pianist. He's a player who, when given congenial and appropriate material, should not be overlooked. *—jon balleras*

CHET BAKER

PLAYS THE BEST OF LERNER AND LOEWE—Riverside OJC-137: *I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face; I Could Have Danced All Night; The Heather On The Hill; On The Street Where You Live; Almost Like Being In Love; Thank Heaven For Little Girls; I Talk To The Trees; Show Me.*
Personnel: *Baker, trumpet; Herbie Mann, flute, tenor saxophone (cut 5); Zoot Sims, alto, tenor saxophone; Pepper Adams, baritone saxophone; Bill Evans (2, 6-8), Bob Corwin (1, 3-5), piano; Earl May, bass; Clifford Jarvis, drums.*

★ ★ ★ ½

JUST FRIENDS—Circle 22380/27: *Doodlin'; Just Friends.*
Personnel: *Baker, trumpet, vocal; Nicola Stilo, flute; Dennis Luxion, piano; Ricardo del Fra, bass.*

★ ½

MR. B—Timeless 192: *Dolphin Dance; Ellen And David; Strollin'; In Your Own Sweet Way; Mister B; Beatrice.*
Personnel: *Baker, trumpet; Michel Graillier, piano; Ricardo del Fra, bass.*

★ ★ ★ ½

THE IMPROVISER—Cadence Jazz 1019: *Margarine; Polka Dots And Moonbeams; Beatrice; Gnid; Night Bird.*
Personnel: *Baker, trumpet; Per Husby, piano; Terje Venaas (1-3), Bjorn Kjellemyr (4, 5), bass; Ole Jacob Hanson (1-3), Espen Rud (4, 5), drums.*

★ ★ ★ ★

With the possible exception of the late Art Pepper, Chet Baker has had more career inter-

ruptions and subsequent "comebacks" (and for many of the same reasons) than just about any comparable figure in modern jazz. Despite these difficulties, while the trumpeter has managed to make any number of enjoyable recordings over the last several decades, few, unfortunately, have challenged in any meaningful way his earliest work with the celebrated Gerry Mulligan Quartet of 1952-53, in which group Baker first came to prominence, or the admirable quartet he co-led with the underappreciated pianist/composer Russ Freeman in the years following. It is with these two groups and the recordings they made—happily a large number—that Baker's reputation has been secured. But, sadly, that early promise never has been fulfilled, at least not to the extent that one expected or wished of it.

Four albums, three recorded in recent years in Europe where the trumpeter continues to work steadily, and one reissue of a late '50s Riverside LP, part of Fantasy's valuable Original Jazz Classics series, underscore these remarks vividly.

When the program of Lerner and Loewe showtunes was first released in 1959, it was panned in these pages for its flaccid rhythmic qualities and overall lackluster air. Actually, it's weathered the years rather well, and I find it, all in all, a nicely effective set of performances. The material was just the sort of lyrical fare on which Baker excelled, and he responded to it with generally engaging results. Not only does he play with plenty of warmth and low-keyed ardor, but the set is further distinguished by Herbie Mann's restrained, functional charts and a grouping of top-flight players who turn in fine solos, particularly tenorist Zoot Sims. Most of the soloing falls to Baker and, happily, he was up for the date, playing with great assurance, good ideational flow, and singing lyricism—at close to the top of his form, in short. Not a great or essential Baker album but, within its modest goals, quite successful and which, on more than one occasion, alludes to the distinctive heterophonic Mulligan/Baker sound, with Pepper Adams' baritone essaying the Mulligan role.

The three European recordings document Baker's work of the last few years, with results that range from the sprawling and unfocused performances that comprise the "live" *Just Friends* album to the tasteful, restrained, and generally appealing studio-recorded selections on Timeless' *Mr. B* trio set. They make clear one fact about Baker's work: the unassuming, sprightly charm, more than occasional audacity, and stylistic distinctiveness of his early work is now a sometime thing in his music, and since the late 1950s and early '60s, he has increasingly relied on expressive effects derived from Miles Davis' spare, hauntingly melodic approach of the mid- and late-'50s. These have been grafted onto Baker's earlier playing style, and now his music veers—erratically—between these two poles, lending to it a certain schizophrenic quality that is more than occasionally unsettling.

He's very much into his Davis bag on the *Just Friends* LP, two lengthy performances taped at the Subway Club in Köln in March 1980—shambling efforts in which Baker, alternately, beguiles one with snatches of excellence, then

stultifies with long stretches of aimlessness. His vocal on the title tune is embarrassingly thin and forced, and the several choruses of scatting, while somewhat better, don't come off too well. When he enters on trumpet, Harmon-muted a la Miles, the rhythm goes all mushy and the piece never really recovers. Flutist Stillo plays consistently well but offers little in the way of real individuality or substance.

In contrast the Cadence disc, *The Improviser*, another set of "live" performances (Oslo, August 1983), shows us a fiery, resourceful, totally engaged Baker, playing with sustained inventiveness, real urgency, and near-blistering power, amply justifying the album title. The rhythm section, particularly pianist Husby (who summons up the spirit of Red Garland on more than one occasion), is excellent, and the whole set of performances crackles with bristling excitement. It's difficult to reconcile this purposeful, vigorous, interesting playing with the sprawling musical morass that is *Just Friends*.

The third disc falls midway between these two and, being a studio recording, offers better recorded sound as well as a more "finished" set of performances. The energy level never approaches that of the Cadence set, and Baker's playing is much more thoughtfully restrained in character. If it's not as forceful or abandoned as the Oslo club performances, *Mr. B.* offers in compensation a sober, introspective, and consistently well-focused approach to melodic improvisation that implies great reserves of emotional power. Baker's sound is lovely, and the performances often are quite moving in their quiet intensity and ardor. The trumpeter is perfectly seconded by pianist Graillier and bassist del Fra, both of whom impress. —*pete welding*

RED HOLLOWAY

NICA'S DREAM—SteepleChase 1192: *RESHMA RANI BARNASE; LOVER MAN; LOVE FOR SALE; NICA'S DREAM; GEORGIA ON MY MIND; 369 BLUES; WEE.*

Personnel: *Holloway, tenor, alto saxophone; Horace Parlan, piano; Jesper Lundgaard, bass; Aage Tanggaard, drums.*

★ ★ ★ ★

Instrumentalists who double usually sound more "natural" on one instrument than another. Or maybe that's only an acquired listening habit. Holloway makes a convincing case for the double of tenor and alto (B♭ instrument to E♭ instrument), a more difficult ear transposition for the player than the octave transposition of tenor to soprano or baritone to alto. James Moody does it. Sonny Stitt did it. But not too many others have done it as naturally as Red.

Holloway's alto work falls in a Charlie Parker bag—in the Stitt and "Cleanhead" Vinson line. That means he's boppish, fast, and soulful and has a lean tone. "Hongry," you might say. There's some five-star playing on alto here, especially on *Wee*. The tempo is a finger-buster, and Holloway is inventive and fluid. *Lover Man*, *Georgia*, and his *369 Blues* also feature the smaller horn. His funky emphasis on the opening section of *Lover Man* lets you know which side of the bop street he's coming from—the preaching, blues-drenched side.

This approach gets a less boppish airing on tenor. Things on tenor appear more earthy—the sometimes Swing Era phrasing (e.g., Holloway's *Reshma*, an uptempo blues), the hoarse tone, the jazz cry on the high notes, the weightier articulation, the heavier momentum. Taken on tenor, *Love For Sale* is a five-star chart with a rubato intro and latin-funk alternating with straight 4/4. *Nica's Dream* shows some planning, too.

Pianist Parlan takes an excellent solo on *Lover Man*. He begins with pretty notes, quotes *Day By Day* (he's fond of quotes), and moves to strong single lines and dancing block chords. Like Holloway, he likes the funky licks and intervals, but he displays a dry sense of humor where the saxman projects joy in a more direct way. Bassist Lundgaard and drummer Tanggaard get in their solo licks, too, but mostly they just push things tastefully along.

This set, recorded in Copenhagen, is a well-planned blowing session. There are some repetitious phrases, but everybody puts plenty of feeling into music that leaves you with a good feeling. —*owen cordle*

WAYNE JOHNSON

EVERYBODY'S PAINTING PICTURES—Zebra 5003: *MORNING STAR; EVERYBODY'S PAINTING PICTURES; VILLAGERS; VITIS; SWEET ASYLUM/COMMUNION; MEMORY; GLIS; MARATHON; REUNION.*

Personnel: *Johnson, guitars; Jimmy Johnson, 5-string Alembic basses; Bill Berg, drums, percussion; Tom Kellock, Yamaha DX7 (cut 5); Carolyn, Darlene, Lorraine, and Sharon Perry, vocals (2).*

★ ★ ★ ½

Add another name to the growing list of accomplished young post-Metheny guitarist/composers who combine staggering chops with sublime taste and rock firepower into an appealing blend. Call it fusion, crossover, jazz-rock, whatever. Don't call it jazz, although there are traces throughout. But guitarist Johnson probably owes more to the likes of Al Di Meola and Alan Holdsworth than to swinging jazz players like Wes Montgomery and Tal Farlow.

Johnson's work can be compared favorably to recent outings by John Abercrombie, Steve Khan, Van Manakas, and other guitarists who favor generous portions of digital delay on their axes. His tunes are well crafted, and his clever arrangements create an unusually big sound for a trio.

Sparser tunes like *Vitis* and *Morning Star* are particularly reminiscent of Pat Metheny's first solo outing, *Bright Size Life*, also a trio date (with Jaco Pastorius and Bob Moses). Bassist Jimmy Johnson walks a nimble bass line on *Vitis* before doubling up on melody lines with brother Wayne. Drummer Bill Berg crackles behind the two with sharp snare sounds and colorful fills. He's especially busy on this and on the cascading *Morning Star*, playing Moses to Jimmy's Jaco.

Marathon is an eight-minute romp on an engaging melody hook that rocks into high gear, a la Brand X. Wayne resorts to pitch transposers and octave dividers to fatten up his sound on this high energy offering. *Memory* builds to a frenzied fuzz-inflected solo by Wayne, while *Sweet Asylum/Communion* is a more sedate affair, with Tom Kellock doubling Wayne's acoustic guitar lines with a DX7 for shimmering effect. *Glis* is Wayne's solo showcase, in which he uses a harmonizer and lengthy delay to accompany himself, playing off the rebounded echo.

Villagers is a soft ballad with a nice reggae break, and the album's closing piece, *Reunion*, is a buoyant piece of Police work with Wayne chording the melody on top of Berg's percussive handclaps. The album's centerpiece, though, is the dynamic title cut, which slowly builds to a grand crescendo, a la Jeff Beck's classic *Beck's Bolero*. Special guest appearance by the vocal group Perri lifts this tune to a joyous, energized peak.

Wayne Johnson is a talent to watch. If only there weren't so many other talented guitarists around who got there first, he might have been able to share some of their limelight. Ultimately, Johnson's have-it-both-ways tendencies may help him get over with both the rock and jazz crowds. —*bill milkowski*

JILL McMANUS

SYMBOLS OF HOPI—Concord 242: *CORN DANCE; CLOUD BLESSING; SYMBOLS OF HOPI; ALL THE EARTH TO BLOOM; FROM THE FOUR DIRECTIONS; INNER SPIRIT DANCE; ACOMA.*

Personnel: *McManus, piano; Dave Liebman, soprano saxophone, alto flute; Tom Harrell, trumpet, flugelhorn; Marc Johnson, bass; Billy Hart, drums; Louis Mofsie, cottonwood drum, rattles; Alan Star, bells, rattles.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

For this, her debut album as a leader, pianist Jill McManus has successfully wrought musical beauty from the sensibility and spiritual realities of the Indian Southwest. McManus has

gigged around New York over the past decade and has been active nationally to improve the condition of the female jazz instrumentalist. She possesses an unelaborate style and deceptively light touch, an easy pianistic manner that delights in harmonies of subtle colors, and a single-note approach, recalling early Zawinul or Wynton Kelly.

American Indian music, particularly by way of the southern Plains grass dance songs and rhythms, began making a strong impression with some Midwestern musicians over 50 years ago. Hopi music, however, features shifting rhythms and abrupt stops that make it difficult to stylize rhythmically; but melodically it set the standard for film and tv soundtracks involving Indians. Hence the melodies on this album bear a "familiar" ring, unlike the *49*'s (pop music-inspired pow wow songs) and traveling songs on Creek/Kaw saxophonist Jim Pepper's albums.

McManus arranged two songs each by a pair of Hopi composers who work within their own dance music tradition; she also contributed three originals in the spirit of Hopi and Pueblo music. A jazz album like this appearing at the height of hard bop would have been esoteric and at best would have offered a stereotypically "swinging" solo outing for everyone. But here, Louis Mofsie, director of the famed Thunderbird Dance Troupe, opens Mark Lomayestewa's *Corn Dance* on the cottonwood drum, as McManus and Harrell successively render its melody with its shifting pace. The other three tunes are similarly arranged and are equally rich in pentatonic evocation. Trumpeter Harrell, carrying the leads, is comfortable with their unhurried inspiration. Lomayestewa's *From The Four Directions* and Terrance Honvantewa's *All The Earth To Bloom* make excellent jazz fare, and the leader's title piece and *Inner Spirit Dance* (contrasting Liebman's sinuous soprano against a strutting beat) approach the Hopi tradition from the jazz vantage. Her *Acoma*, less Indianist, is still a weighty gem. Throughout this album, McManus had the good sense to avoid modal improvising, which would have diminished the entire effort to a hackneyed status.

As a footnote, the Tewa flute player and singer Swift Eagle, a fixture at East Coast pow wows and who died two years ago, would have loved this musical effort. —*ron welburn*

WINDS OF CHANGE

FAR EAST SUBWAY BLUES—Muse/Art 337: CONFLUENCE; FAR EAST SUBWAY BLUES; QUIET TIMES; WHAT THE MAN SAID; SIX.

Personnel: *Tim Moran, alto, soprano saxophone, alto flute; Tony Vacca, drums, balafon, talking drum, bells, gongs; David Wertman, acoustic bass; Mikéle Navazio, electric, acoustic guitar, bells, gongs, voice.*

★ ★ ★ ½

The members of Winds Of Change have an experienced traveler's flair for absorbing tidbits of other cultures into their own style. *Far East Subway Blues* conjures up the aural background of the Orient Express; skirling saxophone lines wail with the squalling intensity of an Asian oboe and the low, breathy flute solo recalls the timbre of a simple wooden flute—say, the Japanese bamboo shakuhachi. The ensemble has done well to stop short of overrefining their sound; because of its moments of rawness, they can evoke an atmosphere without turning it into an airbrushed postcard scene.

Tony Vacca, David Wertman, and Mikéle Navazio wrote the tunes for this recording, and the amalgam of styles is so densely interwoven that it's hard to classify the music. It's fair to say that jazz, ethnic sources, fusion, and avant garde approaches all figure in the final product. One of the strengths of this session is that the players sound comfortable with such a diversity of styles. (The diversity of styles displayed is no surprise; Moran and Vacca combined for an ethnically oriented flute/percussion LP on Philo a few years back, and bassist Wertman's own ensembles explore modal and free playing.) The exception is the tune *Six*, where avant garde skitterings get the best of them.

Wertman's tunes (including *Quiet Times* and the title cut) are the best of the bunch. Their long-lined melodies serve the soloists well.

RECORD REVIEWS

Wertman himself has an easy, laidback solo bass style. Tim Moran, on the other hand, takes a no-holds-barred approach; on soprano saxophone he has a powerful tone that he colors to sound reedy or ripe. On Navazio's tune *What The Man Said* Moran's high spirits feed off of the tipsy vamp. This fusion-influenced tune has the charm of one of Carla Bley's romps. With its lurching rhythms it sounds as if someone had suddenly stopped a record and left the players turning to look for their chairs.

The humor in *What The Man Said* succeeds because these performers play smoothly elsewhere; their staggers are clearly a put-on. This sense of humor and an open-minded approach to different styles give Winds Of Change an appealing freshness. Rhythmically, the group is less subtle and innovative than they are in other respects, but this isn't enough to seriously flaw their performance. The nuanced gestures that set players aside as masters may not appear yet on this recording, but the music yields something new with each hearing. —*elaine guregian*

STEVE LACY

SOPRANO SAX—Prestige OJC-130: *DAY DREAM; ALONE TOGETHER; WORK; ROCKIN' IN RHYTHM; LITTLE GIRL YOUR DADDY IS CALLING YOU; EASY TO LOVE.*

Personnel: *Lacy, soprano saxophone; Wynton Kelly, piano; Buell Neidlinger, bass; Dennis Charles, drums.*

★ ★ ★

BLINKS—hat Art 2006: *BLINKS; WICKETS; THREE POINTS; CLICHES; THE WHAMMIES.*

Personnel: *Lacy, soprano saxophone; Steve Potts, soprano, alto saxophone; Bobby Few, piano (cut 5); Irene Aebi, violin, cello, voice; Jean-Jaques Avenel, bass; Oliver Johnson, drums.*

★ ★ ★ ★

Steve Lacy's sojourn is one of the most remarkable in jazz history, as he has progressed from Dixieland revivalist to Monk devotee and, now, avant garde icon. If sweeping change in one's art was the only criterion, Lacy would reside in an elite pantheon with the likes of Miles Davis and John Coltrane. *Soprano Sax* and *Blinks*, recorded almost 25 years apart, set the parameters of Lacy's evolution. Given the unpredictable path Lacy follows, however, these two albums chart his past and present without plotting his future.

Soprano Sax is the most polite of Lacy's early recordings. Considering it was recorded well into his association with Cecil Taylor, the glossy reading of *Day Dream*, taken at a brisk walk, is curious. *Rockin'* and *Little Girl* have spindly, trad-informed heads, but the solos quickly give the pieces heat and heft. Even *Work* is neatly feathered when compared to later, more craggy, Monk interpretations; still, it contains some of the set's finest improvising.

Overall, *Soprano Sax* will merit the attention of Lacy's audience for its pleasures as well as its status as the genesis of Lacy's discography as a leader. The seemingly unlikely pairing of Lacy and Wynton Kelly proves to be an interesting one, as the pianist's quicksilver right hand and smoothly propulsive comping style tends to bring out the legato swing in Lacy's phraseology. Though, for the most part, drummer Dennis Charles keeps a somewhat low, timekeeping profile, he lets loose for a few exhilarating solos that prompt Lacy's hottest timbres. That the quartet's chemistry is at its hard-driving best on *Easy To Love* and *Work*, two of only three cuts running over five minutes, suggests that what the session is lacking most is elbow room.

Space is exactly what the hat labels have afforded Lacy in recent years, and *Blinks*, a two-disc concert date, is the latest example of how well Lacy uses it. His long-standing quintet, which has been recently supplemented by the agile, yet volcanic, piano of the underheralded Bobby Few, liberally spices Lacy's spiky tunes; while saxist Steve Potts grounds the work in the blues, as on *Wickets*, and Irene Aebi's voice and strings add exotic flourishes, drummer Oliver Johnson and bassist Jean-Jaques Avenel stoke the fires. Lacy remains the catalyst, however, as he frequently downshifts the band, as he does on the title piece, and modulates the pulse with staccato phrasing, usually when soloing after Potts. The core of Lacy's band has been together for over a decade; its finely tuned interplay is very much in evidence on *Blinks*. —*bill shoemaker*

MICHAEL COLGRASS/ JACOB DRUCKMAN

COLGRASS/DRUCKMAN—New World 318: *DÉJÀ VU; AUREOLE; LIGHT SPIRIT.*

Personnel: *Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Slatkin (cuts 1-2), conductor; Richard Holmes, John Kasica, Richard O'Donnell, Thomas Stubbs, percussion (1); Catherine Comet (3), conductor; Jacob Berg (3), flute; Thomas Dumm (3), viola; Kasica, O'Dannell, percussion (3); David Starobin (3), guitar.*

★ ★ ★

Jazz seed, sown worldwide, today sprouts at home on plots formerly sacrosanct for dead Europeans: the classical concert halls. Jazz/classical fusion marches steadily forward on many fronts: classical musicians improvising, jazz musicians playing totally written scores, composers straddling both camps in extensions of 1950s Third Stream.

It's not hard to imagine that composer Michael Colgrass grew up playing jazz drums around Chicago; walking bass and Basie brass shouts livened tonal sketches in his composition *As Quiet As . . .* back in 1966 (RCA LSC-3001). Today MJQ-ish blues licks splash vividly early and late in his pastel, evanescent composition *Déjà Vu*, as they might have done in a Gunther Schuller score. Yet the *aggiornamento* is complete, for Milt Jackson vibes licks are replaced often by Walt Dickerson or Bobby Naughton soundalikes, and Connie Kay brushes by hammering timpani and M'boom-ish multi-percussion. There's even a little *buffo* pizzicato bass on the fade-out, a head-nodder that nods to strong influences. *Light Spirit*, too, like Shakespeare's Ariel "flames amazement" in its final minutes, with a free-sounding section reminiscent of Oregon offspring. This chamber sextet flows merrily from the pen of Colgrass' "non-intelligent, unserious, noself," with brief improvised passages for guitar, vibes (and flute, too?).

Percussion figures prominently in former jazz trumpeter Jacob Druckman's *Aureole* as well, in unison outbursts reminiscent of gamelan (and another ex-jazzer, John Harbison's *Symphony #1*, commissioned and just premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra). Druckman achieves more fluid integration of the elements in a more cumulative orchestral sweep; his dramatic string sustains are more like Hindemith's *Mathis Der Maler* or Varese, with Colgrass' serialistic episodes more Webernesque. Recommended for adventuresome improvisers and composers. —*fred bouchard*

BRUCE FORMAN

FULL CIRCLE—Concord Jazz 251: *MARSHALL ARTS; HELEN'S SONG; ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET; SKYLARK; CIRCULAR; GIANT STEPS; DESERT RAIN; SUMMERTIME.*

Personnel: *Forman, guitar; Bobby Hutcherson, vibes; George Cables, piano; Jeff Carney, bass; Eddie Marshall, drums.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

DOUG RANEY

BLUE AND WHITE—SteepleChase 1191: *BLUE AND WHITE; I LOVE YOU; GINGERBREAD BOY; OLD DEVIL MOON; OLD FOLKS; STRAIGHT STREET.*

Personnel: *Raney, guitar; Ben Besiakov, piano; Jesper Lundgaard, bass; Aage Tanggaard, drums.*

★ ★ ★ ★

LARRY CORYELL

COMIN' HOME—Muse 5303: *GOOD CITIZEN SWALLOW; GLORIELLE; TWELVE AND TWELVE; NO MORE BOOZE, MINOR BLUES; CONFIRMATION; IT NEVER ENTERED MY MIND.*

Personnel: *Coryell, guitar; Albert Dailey, piano; George Mraz, bass; Billy Hart, drums; Julie Coryell, vocal (cut 6).*

★ ★ ★

Three recent albums, by three respected young guitarists, have as common elements a

repertoire mix of standards, jazz classics, and various facets of outside-influenced contemporary original works. Raney is the most conservative in his musical stance, Coryell at the opposite end, with Forman spanning both with equal ease, but all three have more in common than one might suppose. Chief of these is a desire to really play, to take chances and risk failure in an effort to respond creatively and fully to the potentials of their material. They *try*, you see, and in most cases they succeed.

Forman's is a prodigious talent, and his recent *Full Circle*, with vibist Bobby Hutcherson guesting, well demonstrates the scope of that talent. The guitarist is just as comfortable and resourceful on such standards as *Skylark*, *Summertime*, or *Sunny Side Of The Street* as he is on John Coltrane's *Giant Steps* or other of the more contemporary originals here—Forman's *Circular*, Eddie Marshall's *Marshall Arts*, and so on. His technique is formidable, but it is always firmly and intelligently directed by his understanding of the proper ends of the music. So, there are no gratuitous displays here, just plenty of solid, purposeful, finely focused playing.

Forman can play with seizing, heated urgency when it's appropriate, spinning out forceful long-lined improvisations that crackle with great urgency and solid, well-developed musical ideas, just as, with equal ease, he can develop spacious, relaxed and tellingly conceived musings on the more reflective ballad fare. He's got it all covered, in fact, and in company with Hutcherson, up for the date, and a crisp, responsive rhythm section, he serves up a tasty, immensely satisfying set of performances that show that he's one young guitarist to watch.

So too is Doug Raney, the gifted son of guitarist Jimmy Raney, whose latest outing is a solid effort featuring fine interactive playing by the quartet he's assembled and, as in his previous SteepleChase albums, displays young Raney's steadily growing gifts to excellent advantage. Like his father, Raney is a thoughtful, intelligent improviser who always thinks as he plays, creating lines of flowing, sculpted beauty and real logical coherence. Too, his woody, burnished sound recalls his father's distinctive guitar tone, one of the warmest in all of jazz guitar. At this stage of his development, Raney's music still is very reminiscent of his mentor's, and while there's not much in the way of true individuality of expression to his work—at least not yet—he is a dependable, thoroughly enjoyable player whose approach to music stresses lucidity of thought, continuity of line, and a knowing grasp of harmony—qualities very much in evidence in this warm, satisfying program. If he keeps progressing the way he has, a personal voice cannot be too far in the future.

While Coryell may be the best-known of the three, his performances are the least interesting, primarily because his solo work is the least focused, consisting for much of *Comin' Home* of change-running and other automatic, under-the-fingers types of playing. That is, while fleet and busy, Coryell's improvisations for the most part possess little of the coherent ideational flow that make Forman's and Raney's so satisfying. On this outing, at least, he's not the thinking improviser they are, and once past the surface excitement of his playing, one is left with little of real substance that would bring him back to the music for further sampling of its merits. If everything on the album were of the compelling quality of Charlie Parker's *Confirmation* or Jim Webb's *Glorielle*, the two most effective performances in the set, this would have been a truly stunning recital. As it is, however, there's just too much meandering in the remaining pieces, and this weakens the overall achievement. —*pete welding*

THE KLEZMORIM

NOTES FROM UNDER GROUND—Flying Fish 322: *Mama; Egyptian-Ella; Call In Your Bets, Son; Betty Boop/Gangsters In Toyland/Sirba Slanic; Song Of The Medina; Tsivele's; The Mooche; Stambul; Negative Nifty; In The Trenches; Yiddisher Charleston; Tatar Tants.* **Personnel:** *David Julian Gray, clarinet, banjo (cut 4), vocal (4), piano (6, 8); Lev Liberman, alto, soprano saxophone; Kevin Linscott, trombone; Stephen Daniel Saxon, trumpet, piano (9); Tom Stamper, percussion; Donald Thornton, tuba; Ray Skjelbred, piano (11); Barbara De Marco, nonsense syllables (4).*

★ ★ ★ ★

Surrealists, rejoice, for here's a beauty. Listen. When David Julian Gray's clarinet laughs itself silly, tubaman Donald Thornton belchs oom pah-pahs as if he'd schooled at the Ringling Brothers' Conservatory of Musical Hijinks, and other musicians join in to feverishly perform fast Yiddish fox trots for dancers Betty and Billy Boop, you'll agree with me that for a few days last year the sanatorium inmates did take over a West Coast recording studio. Nobody's safe nowhere.

The Klezmorim, formed in Berkeley a decade ago, galvanizes East European Jewish folk music, the intricate patchwork of pieces of semi-religious songs, beggars' tunes, paeans, marches, vaudevilles, and numerous other ancient and newer musical forms. Contemporary klezmer musicians further enrich the stew with cartoon music, mariachi, jazz, the kitchen sink. The original klezmorim were roving merrymakers of conscientious nature, and their progeny have a proud legacy to uphold. So the forever-touring revivalist Klezmorim must communicate jocularity to audiences, garner visceral responses, and be wise, reverential jokers, or they've failed in their time-honored duties. Fortunately, this mirthful band serves its progenitors well.

Although the Klezmorim's albums can't hope to rival the immediacy of live performance, their latest (fourth) album is nevertheless fraught with zest, hilarity, smarts, and good schmaltz. Clarinetist Gray is the most noticeable soloist here, and his imperfect glissando spirals are wonderfully daft. Klezmer music is often redolent of New Orleans-style "jass," and Gray in a prior life may well have raised the roof on a Storyville joint or two.

For this album the Klezmorim has selected fine material. From the jazz archives come Ellington's early blues *The Mooche* and Sidney Bechet's *Song Of The Medina*, both treated

respectfully and charmingly. Judaical music libraries have been raided, and several venerable tunes unearthed: *Stambul* is a skewed oriental quasi-march whetted by affecting group playfulness, and *Tatar Tants* takes us on a merry exotic carousel ride. The eight remaining songs are equally pleasing. The keen, sparkling arrangements are by the entire band or individual members. Let's hope this madcap, hightoned circus music sextet crashes the next Republican presidential convention. Yeah. —*frank-john hadley*

JOE WILLIAMS

NOTHIN' BUT THE BLUES—Delos 4001: *Who She Do; Just A Dream; Please Send Me Someone To Love; Alright, OK, You Win; Hold It Right There; In The Evening/Rocks In My Bed; Sent For You Yesterday; Going To Chicago Blues; Ray Brown's In Town.*

Personnel: *Williams, vocals; Red Holloway, tenor saxophone; Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson, vocal (cut 5), alto saxophone; Phil Upchurch, guitar; Jack McDuff, organ, piano; Ray Brown, bass; Gerryck King, drums.*

★ ★ ★ ★

EVERYDAY I HAVE THE BLUES—Savoy Jazz 1140: *It's Raining Again; Detour Ahead; Everyday (Everyday I Have The Blues); They Didn't Believe Me; Blow Mr. Low; Time For Moving; In The Evening; Kansas City Blues; Always On The Blue Side; Safe, Sane, And Single.*

Personnel: *Williams, vocals; Red Saunders Orchestra (cuts 1, 2, 5-7, 9)—Saunders, drums; Sonny Cohn, trumpet; Riley Hampton, alto saxophone; Leon Washington, tenor saxophone; McKinley Easton, baritone saxophone; Ike Perkins, guitar; Earl Washington, piano; Walt Champion, saxophone, bass; King Kolax Band (3, 4, 8, 10)—Kolax, trumpet; Benny Green, trombone; Dick Davis, tenor saxophone; Perkins, guitar; Prentice McCarey, piano; Cowboy Martin, bass; Kansas Fields, drums; vocal choir (10).*

★ ★ ½

Joe Williams radiates authority. There is the triumph of personality over recitation in his singing. The words may reflect bad times and evil women, but Joe's gonna be okay because he's in charge of this story, this audience, these musicians; he's making everyone feel better.

It has been this way for more than 30 years, as these two recordings show. The Savoy album, recorded in 1951 and '53, finds early Joe little different from now. *Nothin' But The Blues*, recorded in 1983, finds the singer's hefty baritone still urbane, unforced, and able to achieve instant rapport with the material and musicians.

Holloway's all-star band has no trouble getting the drift of things on this spontaneous session. No one crowds the singer. Indeed, one of the pleasures of the album is the easy-going commentary of the players, both behind the singer and in solo. Vinson, in addition to his vocal trading and harmonizing with Williams on *Hold It*, contributes fine bop alterations on *Sent For You Yesterday* and *Please Send Me Someone To Love*. Holloway scores fundamental blues points in his several solos. The rhythm section is equally funky, with Upchurch testifying with bent tones and mournful runs and McDuff holding back seductively.

Williams' voice and Brown's bass seem made for each other. The bassist has his own Holloway-penned feature, *Ray Brown's In Town*, but the album is worth a listen just to focus on his ensemble lines, too.

If the recent album is more of a blowing session, the Savoy sides are more concentrated on Williams. Backed by the King Kolax band in '51 and the Red Saunders outfit in '53, Williams sings not only blues but also ballads. He sounds relaxed and natural on the blues. On *They Didn't Believe Me* his exaggerated enunciation and phrasing are unintentionally funny—from the perspective of the '80s. This

CRITICS' CHOICE

Art Lange

New Release: Henry Kaiser, *It's A Wonderful Life* (Metalanguage). The sidelong title track is the most fully realized of the guitar explorer's quests to date; an electronic embroidery of spidery details and moody wails.

Old Favorite: Bob Cooper, *The Music Of . . .* (Contemporary/OJC). Bright writing (re-arranged standards and an original five-part suite) and sprightly playing from Coop's tenor, Frank Rosolino's trombone, et al., make this an especially entertaining Original Jazz Classic reissue.

Rara Avis: Hampton Grease Band, *Music To Eat* (Columbia). Georgian rock quintet circa '70 whose heart belongs to dada; Beefheartian humor, Zappa-esque elliptical songs, early Pink Floyd-type instrumental jams, lotsa wild guitar, you name it.

Scene: Pat Metheny Group jamming with a harder edge than their soft focus reputation might suspect, live at the Bismarck in Chicago.

Charles Doherty

New Release: Various Artists, *Nuggets, Vol. 1-3* (Rhino). 'Sixties garage-band roots of current pop, punk, and metal music, with song selection superior to similar Elektra package (cf Blues Magoos' . . . *Nothin' Yet* vs. *Tobacco Road*); a million memories for baby-boomers.

Old Favorite: Various Artists, *Psychedelic Nuggets* (Elektra). Two-fer eschews the Top 40 formula of the Rhino LPs for jam-packed acid action (cf Amboy Dukes' *Baby Please Don't Go* vs. *Journey To The Center Of The Mind*).

Rara Avis: Various Artists, *WCFL Presents 21 Sounds For The Sun Set* (Take 6). For true nostalgic nirvana this garage-sale find, a compilation of future nuggets by the '60s Chitown AM-rocker, is a goldmine; includes Davie Allan & The Arrows, overlooked by above LPs.

Scene: Kinks at the Pavilion in Chicago. Dave, Ray, and Co. reprised (and refreshed) a few early chunky hits for the oldtimers but mostly presented some of the best contemporary rock around in a passionate show.

Owen Cordle

New Release: Jimmy Knepper, *I Dream Too Much* (Soul Note). The trombonist and his brassy front line make this sextet session one of classic melodic phrases, smooth execution, uncanny tonal similarities, and well-proportioned performances.

Old Favorite: Art Blakey, *Impulse* (Impulse). The Messengers burn on this '61 release, featuring Curtis Fuller, Wayne Shorter, Bobby Timmons, Jymie Merritt, and Lee Morgan as the main torch.

Rara Avis: Zoot Sims/Bob Brookmeyer Octet, *Stretching Out* (United Artists). Kansas City, here we come; Basie veterans plus young (then-1959) soulmates.

Scene: Dannie Richmond Quintet; muscle (Ricky Ford), humor (Jack Walrath), serenity (Mickey Tucker), solid support (Cameron Brown), and electricity (Richmond), rolled into one knockout concert at Duke University.

Ben Sandmel

New Release: George Jones, *Heartaches And Hangovers* (Rounder). This mid-'60s reissue compilation presents the Billie Holiday of country music at his eerie, mournful best.

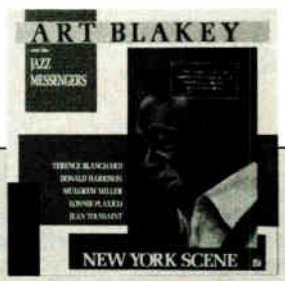
Old Favorite: Bo Carter, *Greatest Hits* (Yazoo). A blues, hokum, and string band guitarist who worked out of Memphis in the '30s, Carter's chops, wit, and enthusiasm equal anything you'll ever hear anywhere.

Rara Avis: Lonnie Mack, *And Pismo* (Capitol). An out-of-print mid-'70s set from a rock guitar pioneer and master of American roots music; though slightly uneven, there are some brilliant cuts and strong support from Stan Szelest, Tim Drummond, and David Lindley.

Scene: Aaron Neville, Irma Thomas, and Allen Toussaint performing Christmas carols with a funky N.O. flavor at the city's Contemporary Arts Center; Wardell Quezergue's horn arrangements were a particularly tasteful local touch.

tendency to fall into a melodramatic pop-vocal style on the other ballads, too, and the inclusion of the novelty tune *Safe, Sane, And Single* are the drawbacks to this album. The band accompaniment leans toward schmaltz on the non-blues and straightahead swing on the blues, with baritone saxophonist Easton interjecting a robust, rocking solo on *Blow Mr. Low.*

Today, Joe Williams is a steady winner in the **down beat** Critics Poll. He has a handsome voice and a gregarious personality. He controls his performances with natural skills and grace: a most likable singer. —*owen cordle*



ART BLAKEY & THE JAZZ MESSENGERS

BUHAINA: THE CONTINUING MESSAGE—Affinity 113: *For Minors Only; Right Down Front; Deo-X; Sweet Sakeena; For Miles And Miles; Krafty; Late Spring.*
Personnel: *Blakey, drums; Bill Hardman, trumpet; Johnny Griffin, tenor saxophone; Junior Mance, Sam Dockery (cut 3), piano; Spanky DeBrest, bass.*

★ ★ ★ ★

UGETSU—Riverside 9464 (Original Jazz Classics OJC-090): *One By One; Ugetsu; Time Off; Ping-Pong; I Didn't Know What Time It Was; On The Ginza.*
Personnel: *Blakey, drums; Freddie Hubbard, trumpet; Curtis Fuller, trombone; Wayne Shorter, tenor saxophone; Cedar Walton, piano; Reggie Workman, bass.*

★ ★ ★ ★

IN SWEDEN—Amigo 839: *Webb City; How Deep Is The Ocean; Sky Lark; Gypsy Folk Tales.*
Personnel: *Blakey, drums; Wynton Marsalis, trumpet; Bobby Watson, alto saxophone; Bill Pierce, tenor saxophone; James Williams, piano; Charles Fambrough, bass.*

★ ★ ★ ★

NEW YORK SCENE—Concord 256: *Oh, By The Way; Ballad Medley (My One And Only Love/It's Easy To Remember/Who Cares); Controversy; Tenderly; Falafel.*
Personnel: *Blakey, drums; Terence Blanchard, trumpet; Donald Harrison, alto saxophone; Jean Toussaint, tenor saxophone; Mulgrew Miller, piano; Lonnie Plaxico, bass.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Back in 1954 when the Jazz Messengers formed as a cooperative, the cognescenti made those little I'm-so-hip-it-hurts smiles. "That co-op stuff's a shuck," the smiles said. "Strong as Art Blakey is, he'll be boss of that outfit." The hipsters may have been wrong about the band (inside accounts affirm that it was a cooperative effort), but they knew the drummer. He *is* strong. He'd have to be to survive the hump and wrassle of maintaining a road band all these years, putting the pots on night after night in joints able to stand up to daylight about as well as Dracula. Blakey has not only survived, he has flourished. Shortly after the original Messengers broke up in 1956, he put together his own group. It was billed as *Art Blakey and* the Jazz Messengers, and he's been hauling that train ever since.

These recent releases, two of them reissues, visit stations along the way from very near the beginning to the first album by his current crew. Unlike the Horace Silver Quintet, the other prime offshoot of the original Messengers, Blakey's band is without the continuity provided by a composer/leader. As personnel changes, so does the music. There are con-

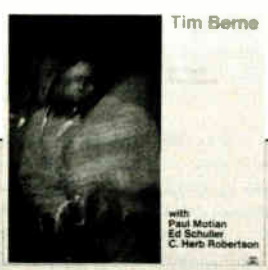
RECORD REVIEWS

larger jazz bands goes back to the early '30s and, as a saxophonist, he has few peers in his long perfected style, an easy amalgam of classic Hawkins and the bluesy Texans. He stomps, struts, moans, and sings (both instrumentally and vocally) with jubilant confidence throughout.

Kelly's front-line mate here, though decades younger, is also no stranger, for his stylistically varied recent records show that Glenn Zottola may well become the brightest new light that mainstream has seen since the emergence of Ruby Braff some 30 years earlier. But as admirable as his already proven talents are for historically founded emulation (Louis, Roy, Cootie, Brownie, Bird, and Cleanhead), I look forward to the day when I can "blindfoldedly" identify Zottola on a record I had not yet heard before. Rhythm-wise, we are on predictably solid ground, as just a glance at the personnel will confirm, but I am also happy to see what is, for me at least, the reemergence of Richard Wyands, a long-neglected pianist of the first stripe.

This record might have been accorded the maximum rating had the production allowed for the sectional (large ensemble) treatment that most of Redman's music seems to warrant.

—jack sohmer



TIM BERNE

. . . THEORETICALLY—Empire 72K: *M.*; *Inside The Brain*; *Preview*; *Carolina*; *2011*; *Perky Figure*.

Personnel: *Berne, alto saxophone; Bill Frisell, electric, acoustic guitar.*

★ ★ ★ ★

MUTANT VARIATIONS—Soul Note 1091: *Icicles*; *Homage*; *Clear*; *The Tin Ear*; *An Evening On Marvin Street*.

Personnel: *Berne, alto saxophone; Clarence Herb Robertson, pocket trumpet, trumpet, cornet, flugelhorn; Ed Schuller, bass; Paul Motian, percussion.*

★ ★ ★

Tim Berne's previous releases reflected a deliberate, if not cautious, development from an engaging newcomer distilling his lessons (from Anthony Braxton and Julius Hemphill, no less) to a seasoned leader. *Mutant Variations* and . . . *Theoretically* are, respectively, a continuation of and, at least, a temporary departure from that process. Though the former is a thoroughly solid effort, it tells us little about Berne that is not known already. The latter, however, is a watershed in Berne's mostly self-produced discography, revealing through a surprisingly empathetic collaboration with guitarist Bill Frisell heretofore unexplicated facets of Berne's creativity.

From Frisell's first somnambular strummings and Berne's gut-wrenching entrance on *M.* to the last overdubbed canonic phrases of the self-descriptive *Perky Figure*, . . . *Theoretically* is a curve-throwing program that never strays from the strike zone. Only Frisell's *Perky Figure* and *Carolina*, a bittersweet adagio, stay within their initially stated parameters; the remaining compositions—all but the collective *M.* are Berne's—have absorbing emotional leaps or structural twists. This is particularly true of *2011*; unaccompanied alto opens the piece with shakuhachi-like solemnity, overdubbed breathy horns back a twangy, muted guitar statement that, in turn, becomes a backdrop to a blues-impassioned Berne solo; inter- and intra-track tensions lead to a catharsis of screaming guitars and mournful altos. The piece's daring is at the core of the album's success.

Comparatively, *Mutant Variations* is steeped in Berne's tried-and-true mix of post-bop blowing vehicles and ballads. His growing tendancy towards non-metric thematic materials is well forwarded on *Icicles*, a seething dirge, and *Clear*, which pivots on an ostinato. *Tin Ear* and *An Evening On Marvin Street* point up Berne's ability to make a quirky line swing wholeheartedly. Still, Berne is most cogent with the slow tempos that allow his bluesiness to drench the canvas, as on *Homage*, which features a striking unaccompanied solo. On balance, the stability of Berne's unit—this is lynchpin Ed Schuller's fourth date with the altoist, Paul Motian's third, and the exciting, if sometimes blustery, Herb Robertson's second—is just beginning to pay off; with slightly tighter editorial reigns and a few more tints on their palettes, they will become a sterling quartet. *Mutant Variations* suggests that it will not be a freak occurance. *—bill shoemaker*

MONTY ALEXANDER

OVERSEAS SPECIAL—Concord Jazz 253: *But Not For Me*; *A Time For Love*; *Orange In Pain*; *F.S.R.*; *For All We Know*; *C.C. Rider*.

Personnel: *Alexander, piano; Ray Brown, bass; Herb Ellis, guitar.*

★ ★ ★

THE DUKE ELLINGTON SONGBOOK—Verve/MPS 821 151-1: *I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart*; *Sophisticated Lady*; *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*; *Love You Madly*; *Eastside, Westside*; *In A Mellow Tone*; *Caravan*; *Just Squeeze Me*; *In A Sentimental Mood*; *C Jam Blues*.

Personnel: *Alexander, piano; John Clayton, bass.*

★ ★ ½

There's nothing particularly wrong with Monty Alexander's playing. This spunky pianist, who's paid his share of dues, has flawless but not inspired technique and a serviceable though limited command of mainstream pianistic

idioms, from Nat Cole (slightly) to Oscar Peterson (largely).

And there's nothing especially amiss in his selection of tunes from the Ellington songbook. True, there's nothing happily arcane about such Ellingtonia as *Sophisticated Lady*, *In A Mellow Tone*, and *Caravan*, but on the other hand these durable vehicles, given the right approach, still provide interesting challenges for the improviser. Further, Alexander has in John Clayton a staunch cohort. A resonant, robust bassist, Clayton backs Alexander with an effortless pulse. What, then, keeps these attractive attributes from coalescing into a meaningful musical package?

The problem Alexander has yet to resolve is how to convincingly shape his technique to definite and viable musical ends. *I Let A Song*, for example, is taken in a sprightly, even cocky, swing, but gets hung up in diddle-de-do triplets, an Oscar Peterson mannerism best forgotten. *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*, the Mercer Ellington line, swings, granted, but is too completely cloned from Peterson's grab-bag of tricks to be convincing. Other selections, too, suggest that Alexander has grasped only the superficialities of such a style. *Love You Madly*, a refreshingly lesser known bit of the Ellington canon, glides by in a solid, confident swing. But Alexander's double-time phrases don't expand the tune and, at worst, seem like empty grandstanding. And the good natured piano/bass give-and-take on *In A Mellow Tone* is similarly blemished by Alexander's longish but cliche-ridden lines. *Caravan*, expectedly, inspires much keyboard exoticism, with jagged chordal clumps and, alas, all the showboating usually associated with performances of this composition.

If Alexander can't breath new life into Ellington, perhaps the solution might be to bring this pianist into harness by joining him with such seasoned professionals as Ray Brown and Herb Ellis. Who, if not these standbys, could temper Alexander's flashiness and prompt him into making genuinely musical statements? But the playing of these mellowed pros only casts Alexander's approach into stronger doubt. Ellis' beautiful guitar tone, delicately inflected phrases, and wonderfully fluent lines leave little doubt as to who is melodically in charge. And Ray Brown, simply, is a bear—a bassist whose solid, thick statements weld together even disparate players like Alexander annd Ellis. Highlights of the date include Ellis' effortless musical communication on Johnny Mandel's *A Time For Love*, his tellingly inflected blues and Swing Era riffs on *F.S.R.* (a *Doxy*-like tribute to Sonny Rollins), and Brown's solos throughout. Inexplicably, Alexander backs every one of Brown's solos with walking lines of his own, as if the bassist needed help in keeping time. And so the date proceeds, with these confused priorities. Let's hope Monty Alexander's next release offers less glitter and more substance. —*jon balleras*

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.)

VERVE

Ella Fitzgerald, '64 sojourn through 13 classic lyrics from THE JOHNNY MERCER SONGBOOK. **Dinah Washington**, soulful songstress surveys '57 varieties of THE FATS WALLER SONGBOOK. **Mel Tormé**, '60 and '61 sessions chronicle obvious and surprising samples of THE DUKE ELLINGTON AND COUNT BASIE SONGBOOKS. **Sarah Vaughan/Billy Eckstine**, the rare pair dare to tackle '57 timeless gleanings from THE IRVING BERLIN SONGBOOK.

ENJA

Franco Ambrosetti, Italian trumpeter explodes into post-bop with strong U.S. support, WINGS. **Bennie Wallace**, individual tenorman plays the blues his way, SWEEPING THROUGH THE CITY. **Heartland Consort**, guitar/bass/drums trio visits pastoral pastures and hot city streets, HEARTLAND CONSORT. **Horace Parlan**, piano vet waxes trio date live from '81, PANNONICA. **Max Roach**, drum maestro fronts a previously unissued quintet inc. the Turrentine brothers, LONG AS YOU'RE LIVING.

CELLULOID/OAO

John McLaughlin, reissue of the infamous Larry Young/Buddy Miles/Billy Cox quartet, DEVOTION. **Brij Bhushan Kabra**, plays slide guitar in Indian fashion, RAGA PURIYA ALAP. **Ronald Shannon Jackson**, "solo" drum performances in conjunction with poetic discourse, PULSE. **Henry Kaiser/Charles K. Noyes/Sang-Won Park**, improvising trio constructs a Korean-American conversation, INVITE THE SPIRIT. **Mandingo**, griot-led group adds Herbie Hancock's keyboards for updated African message, WATTO SITTA. **Toure Kunda**, songs in indigenous African dialects, CASAMANCE AU CLAIR DE LUNE.

WINDHAM HILL

Various Artists, George Winston, Darol Anger, Mark Isham, and Mike Marshall provide the soundtrack music for COUNTRY. **Scott Cossu**, pianist joins familiar names (Dave Valentin, Mark Egan, Danny Gottlieb, Michal Urbaniak, others) and explores outlying ISLANDS. **Nylons**, vocal foursome harmonizes with a smidgen of percussion prompting, ONE SIZE FITS ALL.

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RECORD REVIEWS

COLUMBIA

Wendy Carlos, synth star creates NASA-inspired portraits of outer space, DIGITAL MOONSCAPES. **Roy Ayers**, vibist updates his backing with a techno-funk feel, IN THE DARK. **Spitfire Band**, popular Canadian ensemble brings back swing hits, FLIGHT III.

CRI

Claus Adam, longtime cellist w/ the Juilliard String Quartet composes a *Piano Sonata* and *String Quartet*, MUSIC OF . . . **Ruth Crawford Seeger/Irving Fine**, a pair of works by two highly regarded mid-century composers, SONATAS FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO. **William Thomas McKinley/Ramon Zupko**, three chamber works by two American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters award-winners, MCKINLEY AND ZUPKO. **Noel DaCosta/Howard Boatwright**, Caribbean (via Nigeria) and American composers offer chamber pieces, MUSIC OF . . . **James Ostrynlec**, performs pieces by Lutoslawski, Ives, Shapey, Seeger, and Luening on OBOE. **Matthew Greenbaum/Lee Hyla/Elaine Barkin/Stephen Jaffe**, four lesser-known composers present new pieces of CHAMBER MUSIC.

INDEPENDENTS

B. B. King, previously unreleased instrumental tracks from the vaults of Kent Records, THE UNEXPECTED . . . JUST GUITAR. **Jesse Belvin**, reissue of classic crooner from the '50s, from Kent, . . . BUT NOT FORGOTTEN. **Jimmy Witherspoon**, K.C. shouter presents some of his greatest hits from the past, from Kent, SPOONFUL O' BLUES. **Lawrence "Black" Ardoin**, zydeco squeeze-box playing of the highest order, from Arhoolie Records, AND HIS FRENCH BAND. **Wilmoth Houdini**, no escaping these classic '30s calypsos from Trinidad, from Folklyric Records, WILMOTH HOUDINI. **Lightning Hopkins**, historic recordings from '52-53, from Blues Classics Records, HOUSTON'S KING OF THE BLUES. **Rocket Kirchner**, St. Louis bar band sound translated to vinyl, from Splinter Records, STALKING SALOONS.

Mikel Rouse, percussion patterns permutated through 18 LinnDrum programs, from Club Soda Music, QUORUM. **Daniel Lentz**, composition for solo piano plus eight-part cascading echo system, from Cold Blue Records, POINT CONCEPTION. **Vortex**, the multi-instrumental combo of Ralph Blauvelt and Brad Graves joined by percussionist Daniel Ponce, from Soundscape Records, C ALBUM. **Bruce Novack**, solo piano improvisations "chasing amnesia," from Crevice Records, TIME SLABS. **Trio Sonata**, Mark Goldsbury's reeds, Derwyn Holder's bass, and Charles Braugham's drums, from Neen Records, offer SOME MUSIC. **David Hykes & The Harmonic Choir**, remarkable vocal sounds recorded digitally, from Celestial Harmonies, CURRENT CIRCULATION. **Various Artists**, second in a series documenting contemporary composition from the 10,000-lakes state, from Minnesota Composers Forum, INNOVA.

Manhattan Transfer, coosome foursome revisit their vocal roots, from Atlantic Records, BOP DOO-WOPP. **Fred Waring**, and his Pennsylvanians blend sweet and hot sounds in '28-32 sides, from Stash Records, MEMORIAL ALBUM. **Vivian Lord**, song stylist mans

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

NEW ITEMS

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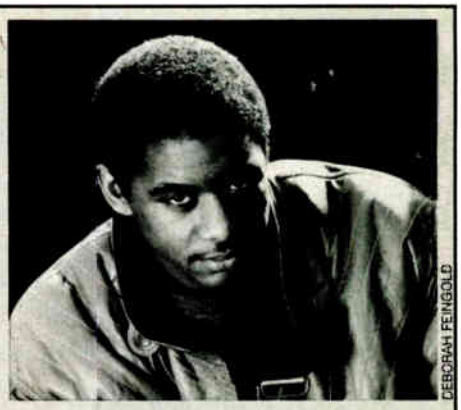
Branford Marsalis

By ART LANGE



Though previously hidden by the overlarge shadow his younger brother Wynton cast, saxophonist Branford Marsalis is beginning to receive the recognition his canny, energetic talents warrant. Like his brother, an alumni of both the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts and the University of Art Blakey, Branford's open-mindedness to a variety of musical styles can also be traced to early training from his father, pianist Ellis Marsalis.

A fixture in the Wynton Marsalis Quintet and leader of his own quartet (including pianist Larry Willis, bassist Charnett Moffett, and drummer Jeff Watts), Branford's post-bop-and-beyond reed work can be heard on LPs under Wynton's name (*Wynton Marsalis*, Columbia 37574; *Think Of One*, Columbia 38641; and most recently *Hot House Flowers*, Columbia 39530) and his own debut (*Scenes In The City*, Columbia 38951). He's also set to appear on a soon-to-be-released Bobby Hutcherson album on Orrin Keepnews' new Landmark label.

This was Branford's first Blindfold Test; he was given no information about the records played.

1 COLEMAN HAWKINS. *THE MAN I LOVE (from CLASSIC TENORS, Doctor Jazz). Hawkins, tenor saxophone; Eddie Heywood, piano. Recorded in 1943.*

That piano intro could be King Cole—he's a bitch! On tenor, my strongest inclination is to go with Don Byas. At first I thought it was Ben Webster, then the more he played, I thought if it ain't him, it's Coleman Hawkins. But when he went into that chromatic tritone with a half-step going up into it . . . Ron Carter played me a tape of Byas playing *I Got Rhythm* changes, and he was doing things like that. *Revolutionary*! God, I loved it. It was really *baad*.

2 STAN GETZ. *BODY AND SOUL (from STAN THE MAN, Verve). Getz, tenor saxophone.*

Somebody likes Lester Young—but it's not Lester. I want to say Stan Getz, but I never heard him play like that. It was nice; it was pretty. It wasn't the way I would do it, but it was nice and logical—not like the first piece you played, though . . . it wasn't *earthshaking*, but it was real good. He was hitting those high notes off the horn like it was nothin'—real easy. I think he felt more comfortable in the upper register than the lower; you could tell when he changed; he sub-tones most of the horn, so when you get down there you have to belt them out.

3 WAYNE SHORTER. *ADAM'S APPLE (from ADAM'S APPLE, Blue Note). Shorter, tenor saxophone; Herbie Hancock, piano; Reggie Workman, bass; Joe Chambers, drums.*

[*Humming along with the head*] That's Wayne. He always picked the best sidemen, and that's the most important thing—on all those Blue Note LPs he picked absolutely the right guys.

Wayne's the guru, 'cause he figured out a way to play the ultimate logic. I think Coltrane was more communicative to people because his music had so much emotion to it, and Wayne's music was so distant from people because it was so damn logical, and people avoid logic if they can.

AL: Does it bother you when critics talk about you being indebted to Shorter?

BM: Hell no, 'cause there is a lot of that. I wish that they would start again, because now it's Coltrane, and a year from now when I start doing some other music, they'll say I sound like Sonny Rollins. Pretty soon they're going to have to make up their minds who I sound like—as long as they don't say I sound like Ace Cannon, it's cool.

4 RICKY FORD. *DEXTER (from INTERPRETATIONS, Muse). Ford, tenor saxophone; John Hicks, piano; Walter Booker, bass; Jimmy Cobb, drums.*

I think that brings out a lot of reasons why people stopped liking jazz. It's totally uncommunicative. The tenor player isn't exhibiting command of his instrument, and the band's not communicating at all—they're just playing. I don't know when this really started; I think in some of those Blue Note sessions of the '70s, cats became session-men, and all the records started sounding the same, like it was guys just making a paycheck, you know, and not really contributing to the music. That became the popular way to play, and "chords" and everything got in the way; everybody was talking about mixolydians, and pentatonic scales, and guys askin', "What are the *chord* changes?" you know? When Bird and those guys were playing, they knew the chords, but the *idea* was the most important part of the music: How were you going to develop your idea? You took the changes for granted; let's make some *music* out of it.

5 BOOKER ERVIN. *204 (from BACK FROM THE GIG, Blue Note). Ervin, tenor saxophone; Woody Shaw, trumpet; Kenny Barron, piano; Jan Arnett, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.*

It was good, sounded like some Blue Note stuff of that time. You could take any 15 Blue Note albums and find a tune like that in it. First it sounded like Herbie's [Hancock] album, *Takin' Off*, but the trumpet player wasn't Freddie [Hubbard]; that was Woody. Their tone is a lot alike, but at that time Freddie was linear—he went straight at it [*sings a line*], and he holds the note and puts a little vibrato at the end of it. Woody goes [*sings*] and cuts the notes off.

Tenor? You got me. He's good, sounded like a lot of guys sounded at the time—or wanted to sound like. This guy was fast; he had some chops. It sounded like Dexter [Gordon] at times. I don't know, I could say Carter Jefferson, but I'd be guessing. Booker Ervin? *Baad*.

AL: What about those who say that Wynton and Branford's band is playing the Blue Note sound of the '60s?

BM: We don't sound like that. A lot of people say the band is derivative—well, hell, it is. Life is derivative. Bird did enough for everybody. I'm 24 years old, not 44. Wayne was just coming into his own at that age—Bird didn't make it to 44, but he was a genius nonpareil. I'm not a genius nonpareil, I'm just a cat trying to play some music. But once you put yourself in a certain position, you've got to accept the responsibility no matter what age you are. So I don't mind the criticism unless they're ridiculous. Like when people say the tunes on *Think Of One* sound like Miles' band [of the '60s]. Show me where! Given the nature of our piano player and bass player and drummer, it's impossible for us to sound like that. Our points of reference are totally different. Our band doesn't even remotely sound like that. Say what? **db**

PROFILE

Andreas Vollenweider

Combining one of man's oldest instruments with modern technology, this adventurous harpist is a messenger for New Age music.

DARRYL PITT

BY BILL MILKOWSKI

The harp is among the most ancient of all musical instruments. Indeed, British musicologist Cecil Forsyth once wrote: "If we could awaken a mummified Pharaoh of the 13th century B.C. in a modern concert hall, he would recognize practically nothing but the sound of the harp."

That same Pharaoh wouldn't know what to make of Andreas Vollenweider's harp, though. Through careful sound modification with electronics and by incorporating some rather unorthodox strumming techniques, the 31-year-old Swiss-born harpist has broadened the role of that age-old instrument. Normally the domain of chamber groups and symphony orchestras, Vollenweider has modernized and redefined the harp, taking it to levels of expression that few classical players ever dreamed of.

His harp is like no other harp. There are 47 pickups on the instrument, one for each string to allow for a variety of textures and colors once he processes the signal through a series of digital delays, harmonizers, flangers, and reverberation systems. All this hardware helps in creating the swirling atmospheric music that has become his trademark.

He's been called "a gentle soundpainter," "a dream-weaver," "a New Age Pied Piper"—all appropriate tags for the creator of this evocative mood music. Pinning him down to a specific genre, though, is problematic. Neither classical nor jazz, his enchanting sound collages are perhaps more influenced by nature than by any particular musical movement. In that sense his free-flowing meditative pieces have more in common with the ambient music of Brian Eno or the organic sounds of Paul Winter than they do with the music performed by other harpists.

While his albums sold exceedingly well in Europe, they received only scant promotion in the States. Yet, his *Behind The Gardens . . .* (Columbia 37793) sold 60,000 copies in America—an unusually large amount for a strictly word-of-mouth product. Vollenweider's most recent release, *Caverna Magica* (Columbia 37827), was a best-selling record in Europe and had the distinction of being selected Album Of The Year by Germany's *Audio* magazine, outdistancing both Billy Joel's *An Innocent Man* and Michael Jackson's *Thriller*. His impressive album sales warranted more promotion in the states, culminating in a recent tour of 14 cities, where Vollenweider unveiled his unique approach to American supporters who had been admiring him from afar for so long. These avid fans, who had been anticipating Vollenweider's stateside debut for three years, heralded the harpist's arrival as a major event.

In concert he demonstrated a close rapport with his sidemen—Walter Keiser on drums, Pedro Haldemann on percussion, Jorg-Peter Siebert on reeds, and Christof Stiefel on keyboards. Stiefel doubled up on melody lines with Vollenweider, creating a shimmering effect. Keiser gave the ensemble a kick with his insistent drumming, taking it beyond the ethereal realms of ambient music and into the rock arena. Siebert added some jazz flavor with freely improvised sax romps on tenor, soprano, and baritone. And Haldemann added an Afro-Cuban flair on talking drum, conga, shekere, and assorted gongs. The music touched all bases and crossed all barriers. Vollenweider laid down bass lines with his left hand while running single-note flurries with his right, at times plucking octaves or strumming ferociously with his long fingernails. The effect was light years away from the "heavenly music" sounds usually associated with the harp, which is precisely what Vollenweider is aiming for.

"There's a big problem with this instrument," he admits. "This image of the harp being so dignified and always associated with angels is not entirely true. That is one side of the instrument. It is probably more than 50 percent, but you can also express yourself on this instrument if you are encouraged to do everything with it. Actually, I don't like so much the sound of classical harp. It's too limited in terms of expression. But what I have done is modified the instrument so that I could find my own way. It's my instrument now."

Basically self-taught, Vollenweider began playing piano as a child in Zurich at the insistence of his musically oriented parents. But he proved to be something of an *enfant sauvage* who rebelled against formal training. "My father, who is one of Europe's preeminent organists, tried to give me lessons, but it didn't work because I was very stubborn. I had to learn it for myself and go my own way."

He had learned a variety of brass and keyboard instruments but remembers being particularly riveted to the sound of harp at an early age. "A friend of our family used to come over to the house and play harp with my father, and I was very much impressed by this. But at the time I knew I couldn't afford to get a harp, and they were impossible to rent, so I started out with a little one, a kind of Celtic harp."

Vollenweider took to the instrument almost instinctively. "I was always after a certain sound, and I tried to develop it with this little harp, but I was not so much satisfied with it. So I bought a bigger one and started using electronics, but very few. It was important to me that it still sound like a harp, so the electronics remained very much in the background. I didn't want it to sound chemical or mechanical. Then one day when I was practicing, I started to sweat, and it

started to groove. And then I knew that I had found the way to express myself physically with this instrument."

In concert Vollenweider abandons himself to the flow, much as Keith Jarrett does at his keyboard. The effect is very visceral. "The harp is my channel now. With other instruments like the guitar or saxophone, I can't say this. With the harp there is no need for a head. I can just think of nothing, which is the best, and it flows. With the other instruments I play, I always have to be thinking about technique. But with the harp it's absolutely not about technique. It's just the approach, the relationship with the instrument that matters. If you find your instrument—the one which is made out of your bones, made out of your soul—you will be able to play that instrument on the same day you find it and do incredible things with it because it's just another part of your body. This is true with me and the harp."

There's a distinct child-like quality in much of Vollenweider's music. Pieces from *Caverna Magica*, like the title cut, *Lunar Pond*, and *La Paix Verde*, have strong visual associations and evoke whimsical images of fairy tales. Other pieces have a world music feel to them—*Belladonna* and *Schajah Saretosh* incorporate bits of East Indian *solkattu* singing into a samba groove; *Angoh!* features an enchanting mix of harp, accordion, and Caribbean steel drums; *Huiziopochtli* has sitar and chanting over a jungle pulse. Each song segues into the next, creating a suitable dreamscape for listeners to project themselves into. These resonant swells and swirling textures, injected with a healthy dose of dynamics and that all-important element of surprise, are quickly winning over a generation of gentle-music lovers, touching the hearts and souls of people who use his soothing sounds as an antidote to these neurotic times. "What I hope to do is give spiritual nourishment," says Vollenweider. "A food for the soul."

He adds, "I'm not offended by those who don't like my music. Some people are besieged with new music, so much that it's difficult for them to react in any way except superficially. When this is so, the fragile soul of what's underneath easily gets lost. But then there are those who really listen. Some write letters, and in those letters they share the vectors of their dreams and needs. So I know my music is felt."

Paradoxically, one of Vollenweider's fondest dreams is to, in effect, make himself obsolete. He speaks enthusiastically of a time when there will no longer be a need for him to make music for people. "I wish to inspire people to make music for themselves rather than relying on a substitute, the pushing of a button and hearing something that is prefabricated."

Vollenweider doesn't limit his creative expression to music. He is also a sculptor, film-maker, and painter. For his current video, shown on both Showtime and HBO cable networks, Vollenweider created the sets, the storyboards, did the filming, the visual effects, and the music. It's a quality production, a surreal excursion into the fantasyland of his imagination. Refreshingly, his video does not rely on violence, fast cars, or leather-clad ladies in stiletto heels. Instead, Vollenweider's video is gentle and ethereal, full of child-like innocence and wonder, just like his music. **db**

Jim Walker

From Brahms to Bird, Faure to fusion, this former Philharmonic flutist aspires to hone his bop chops and expand his musical horizons.

BY ZAN STEWART


TOM COPI

"When I grow up, I want to be a rock & roll star."

For nearly 30 years now, that goal has been almost a cliche, sought after by everyone from the kid who plays bass in a garage band down the street to the friendly editor of your local music magazine. But when you hear it from the mouth of 40-year-old Jim Walker, former co-principal flutist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, your response is more likely to be, "Say what?"

But, when Walker resigned his chair with the Philharmonic last August—a position with a solid five-figure salary he'd held since 1977—he knew just what he was doing. Symphony work had become less than inspiring and lacked the spark and excitement of his front-stage forays with Free Flight, a quartet that knocks out a highly charged fusion of classical and jazz genres which has become his primary focus.

Walker has no regrets about his decision. "Even if I make a ton of dough as a concert artist," he says over a glass of Chardonnay and hot pepper cheese in his San Fernando Valley home, "I can't imagine being any happier than I am now, because I'm getting to play the music that I want to play. In one concert I might play anything from Paganini's *Violin Caprice*, which challenges the hell out of me more than any technical thing I had to play in the orchestra, to trying to play bebop, which is getting better, to fusion pieces like *Sunset Strut*. I love it."

Walker, along with pianist/composer Milcho Leviev, co-founded Free Flight in 1980, when he began to look for a way to expand his career beyond the symphony. There have been several players in the lineup, with the current ensemble consisting of Mike Garson on keyboards, Jim Lacefield on bass, and Ralph Humphrey on drums. In Walker's view, this is the best unit ever. "The band is happening more than it ever has," the hirsute, affable flutist concludes. "Mike Garson is a godsend. He's so smooth, a great communicator. And with the consistently superior support that Jim and Ralph give, I see a very big future for this band.

"One thing I love is that we play for very different audiences, from those who favor classics to more contemporary crowds, and we've been getting the same enthusiastic response from both. There's a spirit when the band plays. True, we play a lot of very impressive, very fast stuff, and there are soft ballads for balance, but it goes way beyond that. A real magic occurs between the band and the audience. People are having a ball listening to us play—that's what I'm addicted to, much more than the spotlight."

The convivial Walker—who, in addition to his Free Flight dates, occasionally appears as a concert soloist, teaches master classes at his home, and makes scattered gigs in L.A. studios—started on the road to high achievement right from the beginning. He was born in Greenville, KY into a musical family. His father was a saxophonist and band director, and his mother played organ and violin. Starting on piano at age six, switching to flute at 10, and adding sax and clarinet at 12, Walker was exposed to both classics and jazz, the latter by his father, an excellent improviser who played in many big bands in his native Cincinnati. Like almost every Kentucky kid, young Walker also played basketball, eventually making varsity as a guard at Center City high, seven miles from Greenville.

Though he was more interested in playing jazz tenor sax than orchestral flute, a moderate amount of practice was enough to garner Walker all-state band honors from eighth grade onward. The addition of summer sessions at the Stephen Foster music camp and clinics at the University of Kentucky enabled him to earn a scholarship to the University of Louisville.

While at the university, a friend told Walker about summer camps conducted by Pierre Monteux, conductor of the Boston Symphony, and it was at this camp that Walker first felt the call to pursue a career as an orchestral flutist. "I got the bug," he admits. "It was the competition as much as anything. I took flute lessons from Pierre's son, Claude Monteux. He tried to get me to give up jazz because my embouchure on tenor was awful. I was biting down something fierce, and that certainly wasn't helping my flute chops. But jazz was fun, so I kept playing, at least for a while [Walker ultimately abandoned his tenor sax] because though I had played in the Louisville Orchestra while in school, I still had no ambition to be a symphony artist."

A tour in the army changed his mind. Upon graduating from Louisville, Walker endured basic training at Fort Benning, GA, then joined the elite Army Service Band at West Point, just a short trek up the Hudson River from New York City. Once again the competition spurred him on. "I was overwhelmed with the level of musicianship," he recalls, "particularly the clarinet players. They knew all the orchestral excerpts by memory."

After a year of hemming and hawing, Walker took advantage of an army offer of free lessons and began studying with Harold Bennett, who was first chair with the New York Philharmonic. "He was a tremendous influence," the flutist fondly remembers. "We had different ways of playing the instrument, but that didn't bother him. He simply put me through the required literature for an orchestral player, which included Ravel's *Daphnis And Chloe*, Debussy's *Afternoon Of A Faun*, the fourth movements from Brahms' first and fourth symphonies, Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite*, and so on."

Even though he was making considerable progress, Walker still felt the odds were against his obtaining a position with a major orchestra. "I suffered from what most of my students do," he says with frankness, "the 'small town attitude,' which says that if you don't start conservatory-type training by age 10, you weren't going to make it. There were so many heavyweights at West Point, I was intimidated.

"So, when I got my first job with the Pittsburgh Symphony in 1969, I was astounded. I wasn't allowed to directly audition because I had no experience. I had to go to New York when the orchestra was in town and play duets with

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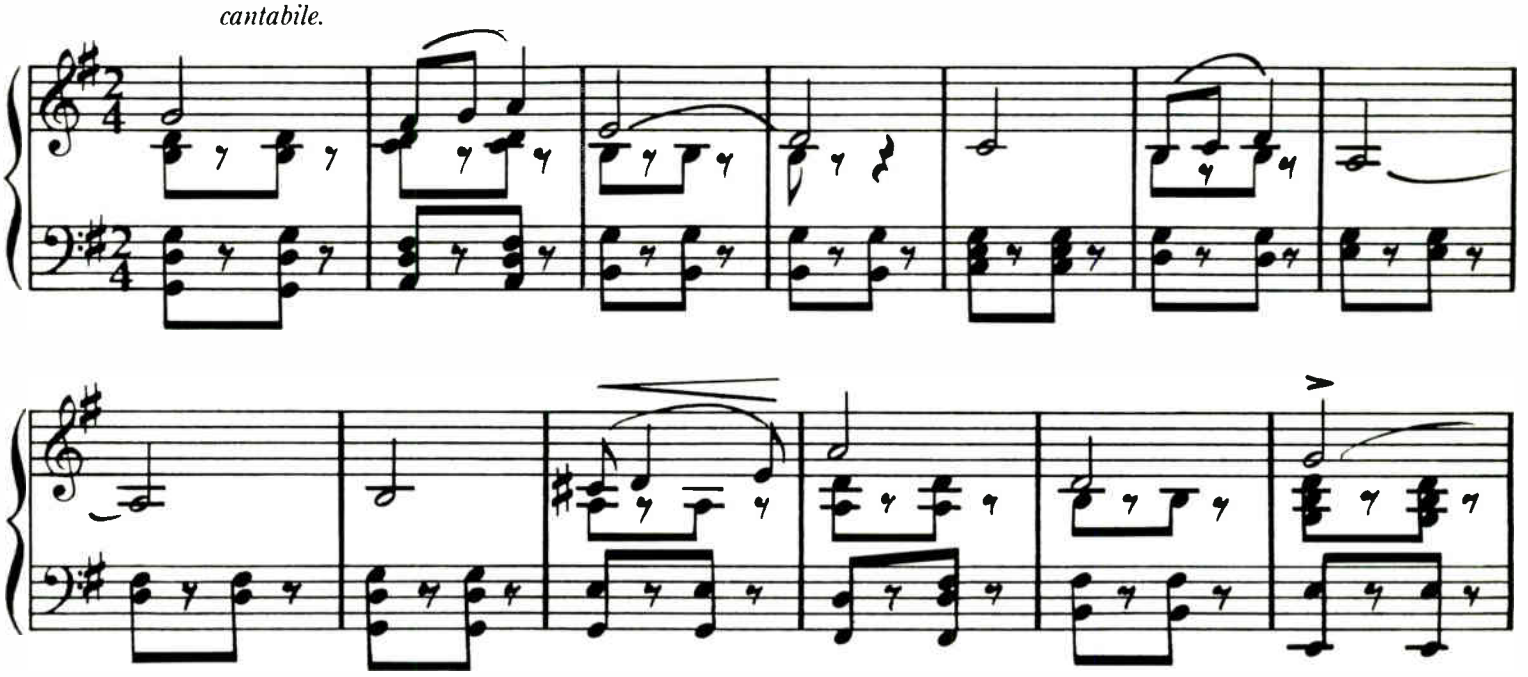

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you're talking to someone in the music business, you are not even necessarily talking to a guy who understands business, much less the music business.

JR: What was your first exposure to jazz?

BT: I come from a musical family, and I had an uncle who was a jazz pianist. He used to play some funky stride piano around the house. He was a self-taught player; everybody else was classically trained and used to play Mozart and Beethoven and all that stuff. I related to Uncle Bob because that stride was swingin' stuff, and I really liked what he did. I used to bug him: 'Show me how to do that.' And he'd say, 'Oh, I just do it.' Finally in desperation he gave me a Fats Waller record. And I wore the grooves off the record. I just loved that one. I went out and bought all the Fats I could get, and learned some of the stuff. I'd go play for him every now and then and say, 'How's this sound?' He'd say, 'It's comin', sounds good.' So finally I was beginning to bug him again, and to get me off his back for real, he gave me my first Art Tatum record. It was a record called *The Shout*. I had never in my life heard the piano played like that, and I just went nuts. I went out and got all the Tatum records—there weren't a lot available in those days, but I got all those that I could find—and just lived and breathed them. That got me off my uncle's back for a long time. Tatum was probably the biggest and most lasting influence on my solo piano playing of any single mentor that I had.

JR: You've played with a lot of great people over the years. Who sticks out in your memory?

BT: Several people. Early in my coming to New York, the first guy that I ever worked with was Ben Webster. Really nobody in the world, before or since, for me, plays a ballad like that. I learned more about that romantic and loving kind of approach to music from him than almost anyone else. On the same lines, from Eddie South I got the same message but in a different context. Whereas Eddie was more European-oriented, Ben—who was a former pianist—was straightahead jazz. It just really made a difference. I play a ballad, and it's highly influenced by the lessons I learned working with him. I worked with Stuff Smith with just a bass, piano, and Stuff's violin—one of the swingingest groups I ever worked with in my life. Very exciting to play with a guy that had that much drive and that much vitality. I learned a lot about rhythms and rhythmic playing from him. Charlie Parker and Dizzy were the two people [that I played with] who were closer to my own age, and that really made such an impression. I was just like everybody else—I mean, I'm playing swing and pre-bop kinds of stuff, and these guys are doing something that's rhythmically quite different. Harmonically and melodically, the kinds of things that they were doing were not that surprising to me. I had heard Coleman Hawkins and Benny Carter and some other guys that were pointing in that direction. Other people say that [bebop] came out of the woodwork, just sprang out—it didn't. But rhythmically, they were coming from somewhere else, and that was fascinating. I mean these guys were playing divisions of the beat—*be-op-um-da-da-da-dat*—and I said, 'Wait a minute, one-two-three-four, where is that?' [*laughs*] It was really a challenge, a very exciting period, to learn this new repertoire that embodied a lot of those techniques, and try to fit it in to what I did.

JR: You were one of the founders of the Jazzmobile. How did that get started?

BT: Well, about 20 years ago we formed a group called the Harlem Cultural Council, and we were looking for a project that would convince the powers that be that music—that is, the arts, not just music—were an important part of the cultural life of the black community. This was a time when there was great

unrest; there were riots; there were a lot of problems with young people. And the governments—city, state, and federal—were looking for a way to cool the summers down. And so we said, 'One of the traditional safety valves in any community, if used properly, is the cultural accomplishments of that community: art, music, dance, theater, whatever.' The people in the community can express themselves in that way, as opposed to having a riot and breaking up everything in sight. So we were able to make the point with the Jazzmobile and other programs over the years. And a lot of excellent things came out of that period, I think. The Jazzmobile and other programs like it have survived because they really do what we had hoped they would do: they make a difference in the community.

JR: I know that a lot of people miss hearing you on the radio now that *Jazz Alive!* is gone, but now you're on tv, on the *Sunday Morning* show.

BT: Yeah, well, if they close the door, I go in the window.

JR: Did CBS call you up? How did that happen?

BT: That was funny. CBS, the *Sunday Morning* show, did a piece on me. They liked what they saw—the producers—in what I was doing, and they thought it would be an addition to the show. I said, 'I'd love to do it; I'm very interested, but I'm an active musician, and I really am reluctant to give up my playing career at this point.' And they said, 'Fine, that's okay; we work in such a way that we can operate around that.' And so they have been very, very good. I do maybe 11 or 12 pieces a year, which makes it about one a month, roughly. And that's about right—and I won an Emmy my first time out. It was just mind-boggling.

JR: And you received the Lifetime Achievement Award from **down beat**, too.

BT: It was very nice.

JR: What goals do you have now? What are the things you want to carry through?

BT: Well, the Lifetime Achievement Award points up something that I've been successful in, and I really want to do as much of that as time and health and everything else will allow. I feel that I have the ear of the people whose consciousness needs to be raised, in terms of the support that jazz should get, so I do what I can in that context. But the most activity and the most ardent pursuing of goals have to do with my playing. I'm writing more; I'm playing more; I'm playing better than I've ever played. And I really want to play for as broad an audience as I possibly can, both television and radio and on records. I haven't done a lot on records because I haven't found anybody who wanted to do what I wanted to do.

JR: In all your playing and your educational work, what would you say is the most important message that you're trying to get across to young musicians?

BT: The most important message, I think, is that those of us who are fortunate enough to be born in America are blessed with a country and a living situation that allows us tremendous personal freedom. And that personal freedom is certainly expressed in the most succinct way in jazz. And so what I try to tell everybody that I come in contact with is that this is a very precious thing. We're in danger of losing it because we have thrown it away by ignoring it. We are in danger of having it redefined because Europeans and other people recognize the value of it, and they're defining jazz on their own terms. But the thing that I'm most anxious to get across, from a personal point of view, is that I really want people to hear me play. I would like people to be familiar with what I do. Many people only know me from my records of the '50s, so they don't know what I've been doing for the last 20 or 30 years. Now, I think, not only is my music much more mature, but I think I've grown as a human being, and I hope I'm expressing that better as a musician. **db**

CAUGHT

PAUL WINTER CONSORT

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

NEW YORK—Winter Solstice is the longest night of the year. I'm not sure about the astronomical gymnastics involved, but it's the time of the year when the sun returns—or seems to. Pagans celebrated the moment—the rebirth of the sun, the renewal of life—and people who love the earth have celebrated ever since.

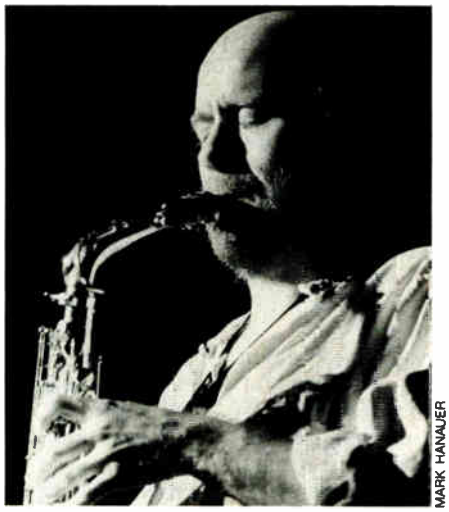
Paul Winter's "Winter Solstice Whole Earth Christmas Celebration" was his fifth at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York. It's a spectacular megalith, the world's largest Gothic cathedral—all high arches and columns, resplendent with tapestries, statues, assorted icons, and altars. More than 3,000 people attended the Consort's concert, an experience that was, hackneyed as the word might be, quite spiritual.

While the sound system was excellent, even more evocative was the music resounding all around that stone as musicians wandered through the cathedral. Winter's soprano saxophone, echoing from the back, first called to the sun. Then, in a golden light, Richard Cooke played a giant African log drum down the center aisle. Ted Moore answered with timpani and Brazilian surdos.

Soon the Consort gathered beneath Winter's emblem, a blue circle (the earth) with a wolf, an eagle, and a whale. Winter and Greenpeace have protested the slaughtering of animals, especially whales, and Winter was pleased that "whale-watching is now becoming a bigger business than whale-killing." As a tape of a whale singing was played, the Consort played a lullaby of the sea.

Winter hopes to record in the Grand Canyon ("the great cathedral of the earth"), and some music from his *Canyon Suite* evolved into the upbeat Ivan Lins song *Common Ground*. I observed that Winter's talk of peace-and-love-and-music still frightens some people, but Winter believes so be it; his music is about his feelings for the earth and the life upon it. It will bother some people all the more that he's become active in talking with folks in the Soviet Union, including satellite broadcasts ("space bridges") to and from the Soviet Union.

Winter appealed to the audience to travel there "to find out that they're not the Dragon, that the Dragon is fear and prejudice." Susan Osborn sang and conducted a sing-along of a Russian hymn, and cellist Eugene Friesen's *Mirror Of*



MARK HANAUER

Peace was a further testament. Winter ended the first half with bird songs, bells, and drums, the horns meandering, and Osborn singing a carol a cappella at the heart of the cathedral.

Everyone was featured in the second half. Glen Velez played a solo on a giant tambourine-like frame drum—but not the usual shakes and rattles. Instead, he caressed the drum in such a way that it purred, even sang. Everyone sang along *The Blue Green Hills Of Earth*.

Winter dedicated the concert to the late Collin Walcott of Oregon (and once of the Consort) and was joined by Paul McCandless—also of Oregon—his first gig with Winter in 10 years. McCandless walked among the audience, his oboe a shimmering light in the darkness. Paul Halley, the cathedral's organist, followed, and when he cranked up the organ full blast, the building shook!

Winter was in the news once for playing music with a wolf, and his *Howlelujah Chorus* was the concert's highlight. As a tape of a wolf howling was played, Winter called upon everyone to howl along—and indeed they howled, whooped, barked, and laughed with joy. Winter turned the howling into a finale of carols, with people walking forward as if to testify.

For an encore everyone sang *Gloria In Excelcis Deo*—but with an Afro-Brazilian upbeat. And we walked out into the longest night—still howling.

—michael bourne

FATS DOMINO

THE ARCHES

MARRERO, LA—New Orleans enjoys a uniquely self-contained culture, and one especially pleasant aspect is the local passion for rhythm & blues. The city's commercial AM stations routinely air obscure material which, if played at all, is relegated elsewhere around the country to FM specialty programming. Moreover, many local r&b legends—including Aaron Neville, Ernie K-Doe, and Irma Thomas—still appear regularly, and are frequently co-billed on spectacular package shows. But the crowning glory of r&b's "Eternal City" is the fact that Fats Domino continues to perform at the absolute height of his powers.

Domino's great wealth allows him complete indifference to current trends. While less successful talents such as Thomas maintain a lounge-like balance of classic and modern material, Domino sticks to his own vintage sound and repertoire. The instrumentation and arrangements are totally unchanged—no young, disco rhythm sections, for instance—and Domino's crack band features many players from his early '50s sessions. Energetic immediacy is amply insured by the vibrant exuberance of the Fat Man's timeless music.

Domino has a childlike, almost asexual stage presence, favoring boyish grins over macho posturing. His unique, declamatory vocal style blends a warm baritone and thick Creole accent with strangely disjointed, hesitant cadences. It's almost as if Domino is at times surprising himself with each successive phrase. This sense of melodrama is at striking odds with his ultra-simplistic lyrics, so that couplets like "I used to walk you home, I used to hold your hand/I used to use your umber-ella, every time it rained" take on a surreal, semi-comic tinge. Domino's fixed, spacy smile and gobs of jewelry heighten the sense of absurdity, as does his total lack of between-song patter. While distant from the crowd, he was obviously quite involved with the music itself; given Domino's local hero status, formal introductions were unnecessary, anyway.

If Domino's vocals and stage persona are charmingly eccentric, his keyboard work is *right there*. Though often underestimated as an instrumentalist, Domino displayed his two-fisted chops in a number of rhythmic settings. On an uptempo version of Hank Williams' *Jambalaya*, he pushed the horn solos with rich, solid chording and off-beat accents. *The Fat Man* found him leading the band in a pounding shuffle, while chorus after chorus of *After Hours* showcased his urbane blues tickling. Domino's trademark triplet chord patterns were prominent on *Blue Monday* and *Ain't That A Shame*. If only he would cut a solo album!

Exciting band solos came from

baritone saxist Roger Lewis (also with the Dirty Dozen), tenorists Fred Kemp and Walter Kimball, and Herb Hardesty, who alternated between tenor and trumpet. Though playing for this dance in a r&b vein, all are equally proficient at straightahead jazz, and Kimball's wild stage antics greatly enhanced the musical energy. Rhythm was nailed down by guitarist Jimmy Moliere, bassist Ervin Charles, and the brilliant second-line drummer, Smokey Johnson.

Domino ended the evening by seguing *I'm Gonna Be A Wheel Some Day* into *Sentimental Journey*, while pushing the piano across the stage with his prominent paunch. As pure entertainment Domino's deceptively simple gems were beyond improvement. That a classic rock originator can still be heard in peak form was even more impressive. *—ben sandmel*

MICHAL URBANIAK

THE BOTTOM LINE

NEW YORK—Since emigrating to the states in 1973, Polish violinist Michal Urbaniak has kept his hand in a number of different musical contexts—spacy electronic experiments in the studio, straightahead gigs with the likes of Ron Carter and Roy Haynes, enchanting acoustic duos with guitarist Larry Coryell (including a recent SteepleChase LP), not to mention his ongoing collaborations with his wife, vocalist Urszula Dudziak.

Urbaniak's latest project, Constellation, is a funk-laden vehicle for his own powerful soloing on voice-activated electric violin. Using a headset microphone attached to the pickup on his specially designed instrument, Urbaniak is able to control the shape and color of notes with his mouth. The effect, not unlike a guitarist's wah-wah pedal, gives him a more expressive, singing quality to work with. And he makes the best use of it, relying on it sparingly to shade a note here or there—no gimmickry or overkill with this new gadget.

For his rhythm section Urbaniak couldn't have picked a nastier bunch of funksters. Marcus Miller may well be the baaddest bassist in the business. Bernard Wright's synth-bass lines on the Yamaha DX7 could fuel even a Funkadelics groove, while his piano and string synth fills are spacious and unpredictable enough to add an air of surprise and mystique to the proceedings. Drummer Lenny White, no slouch in either straightahead or strictly in-the-pocket contexts, held things together—and took them out to lunch when called upon.

Playfully weaving in and out of the funk-and-reggae vamps was the inimitable Airto, shaking, slapping, tapping anything he could get his hands on. The magical Mr. Moreira is simply a joy to watch. His percussive arsenal of metal and wood objects hanging from a huge crossbar frame is like a playground to him, and during his extended solos he becomes like the big kid running amok during recess. There's humor and soul to everything he touches, whether it's a matchbook, a gong, or a duck call. His humorous cuica solo was so expressive and talkative that he had the audience in stitches.

After showcasing the band, Urbaniak ended the set on an ecstatic peak, bringing Flora Purim, Jay Clayton, and Dudziak up to the stage for a wild impromptu scat jam. The three ladies passed a single mic back and forth, challenging and encouraging each other to new heights on each solo before taking it out as a chorus doubling on Urbaniak's melody line. Burnt the house down.

Opening the double bill was an adventurous new group formed by acoustic bassist Marc Johnson, a frequent collaborator of John Abercrombie. For this gig, dubbed Bass Desires, he assembled a stellar crew—guitarists Bill Frisell and John Scofield and drummer Peter Erskine. Johnson, a ferocious player and inventive soloist, organized a number of tuneful heads that served as springboards for open-ended jams. Guitarists Frisell and Scofield seemed to have a special affinity together, even though their respective styles are widely divergent. Frisell, playing a Roland GR-303 guitar synthesizer, took his solos to the stratosphere, wringing the edgiest and wackiest sounds out of his axe. Behind Scofield's trademark bop and blues soloing, he filled in organ-type chords, utilizing the Roland's infinite sustain capability like a Jack McDuff. The group hit its peak on a pulsating rendition of John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*. Keep your eye on this band. An ECM album is expected soon. *—bill milkowski*

PRO SESSION

Scott Hamilton's Solo On *Ham Fat*—A Tenor Saxophone Transcription

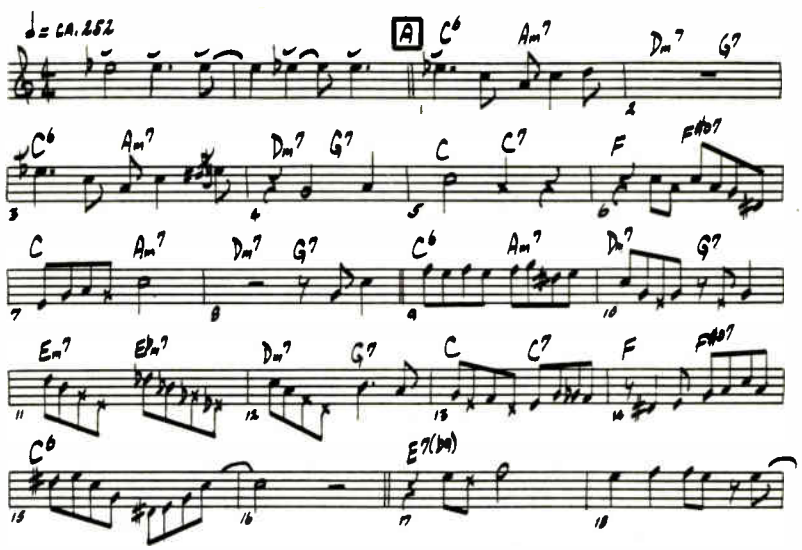
BY TRENT KYNASTON

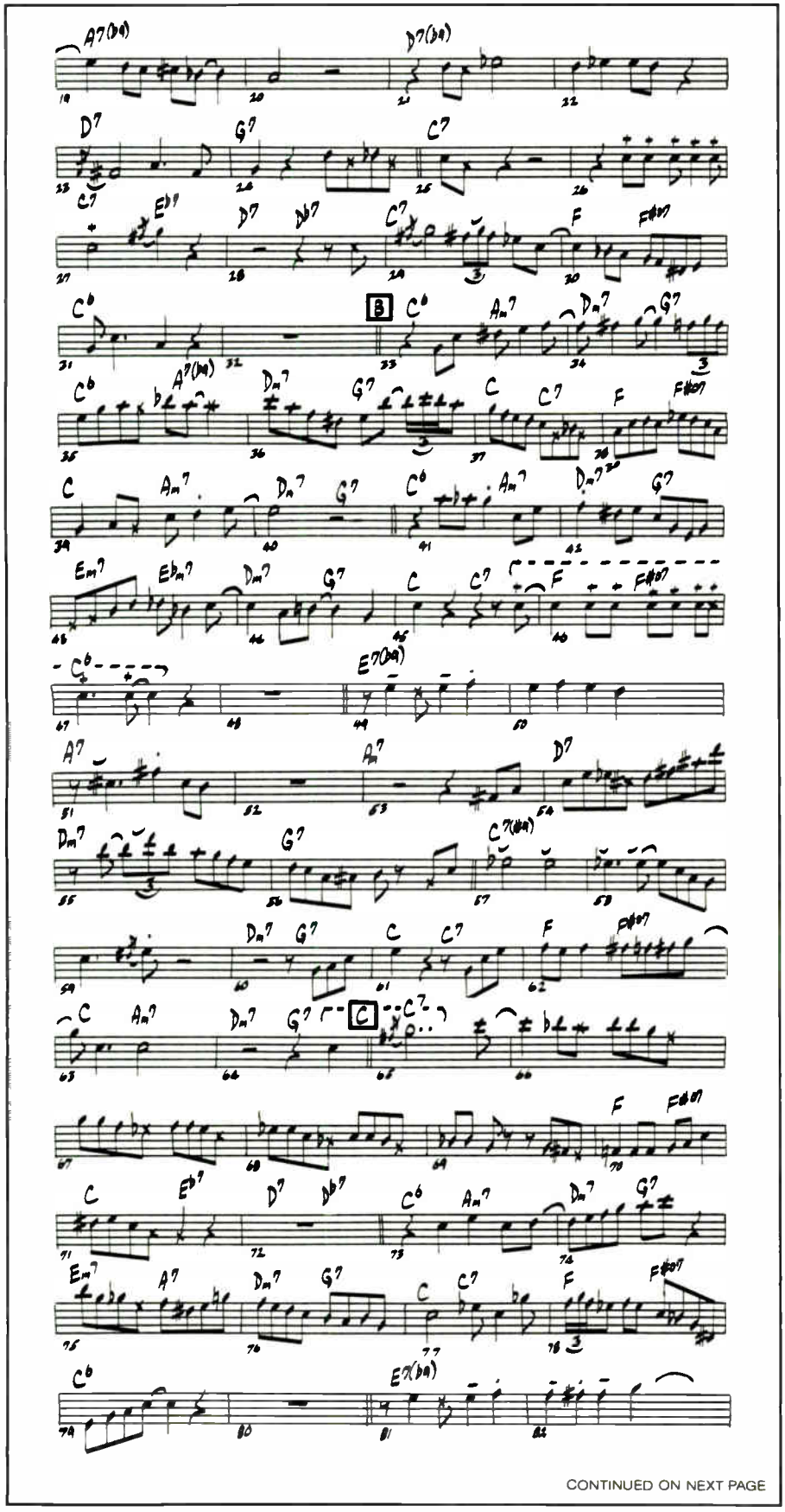
Trent Kynaston *teaches saxophone and directs the jazz ensembles at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. He has published numerous books of solo transcriptions—including* Phil Woods Solos, Stan Getz Solos, *and* Michael Brecker Solos*—each published by Studio P/R. Kynaston plays in the Western Jazz Quartet, a faculty ensemble in residence at the School of Music.*

Scott Hamilton's solo on *Ham Fat* (by Scott Hamilton, Edson Publishing Co./ASCAP) is transcribed from his album *Apples And Oranges* (Concord Jazz 165), recorded in New York City, January 1981.

Performance Notes:

- 1) *Ham Fat* is a 32-bar A-A-B-A tune based on *I Got Rhythm* chord changes; Scott blows four choruses.
- 2) It is no secret that Scott's stylistic models are great swing masters like Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster, and Lester Young. Aside from the obvious sound and swing concepts that can only be gotten from listening to the cut, we can note many other similarities by looking at and playing this transcription: a) phrase lengths are all even—two-, four-, and eight-bars long; b) the basic rhythmic unit is the quarter note, with the eighth note used for double-time feel (as compared to bebop players whose basic unit is the eighth note, with sixteenths used for double-time); c) all phrases begin in the first measure of each eight-bar phrase (usually on the second beat—i.e., bars 17, 21, 33, 41, 73, 97, etc.) and usually end in the seventh measure (bars 7, 16, 24, 31, 40, 47, 63, 71, 79, 87, etc.) never overlapping the double bar line; d) in the last eight bars of each chorus, Scott "routines" (as Louis Armstrong would say) by using the C blues scale over all the changes with lots of repeated notes, growls, and alternate fingerings; e) the same basic melodic/harmonic material is used each time the bridge is played; f) the solo is rather diatonic, using both Hawkins change running and Young linear lines; g) harmonically, the most adventurous playing occurs in the bridges where he regularly uses the flatted ninth in the first four bars and occasionally a sharped fifth over the D7 chord.
- 3) The mark (▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬) over a series of notes indicates the use of a growl in the sound.
- 4) A plus sign (+) over a note indicates the use of an alternate fingering, i.e., finger low C but play middle C.





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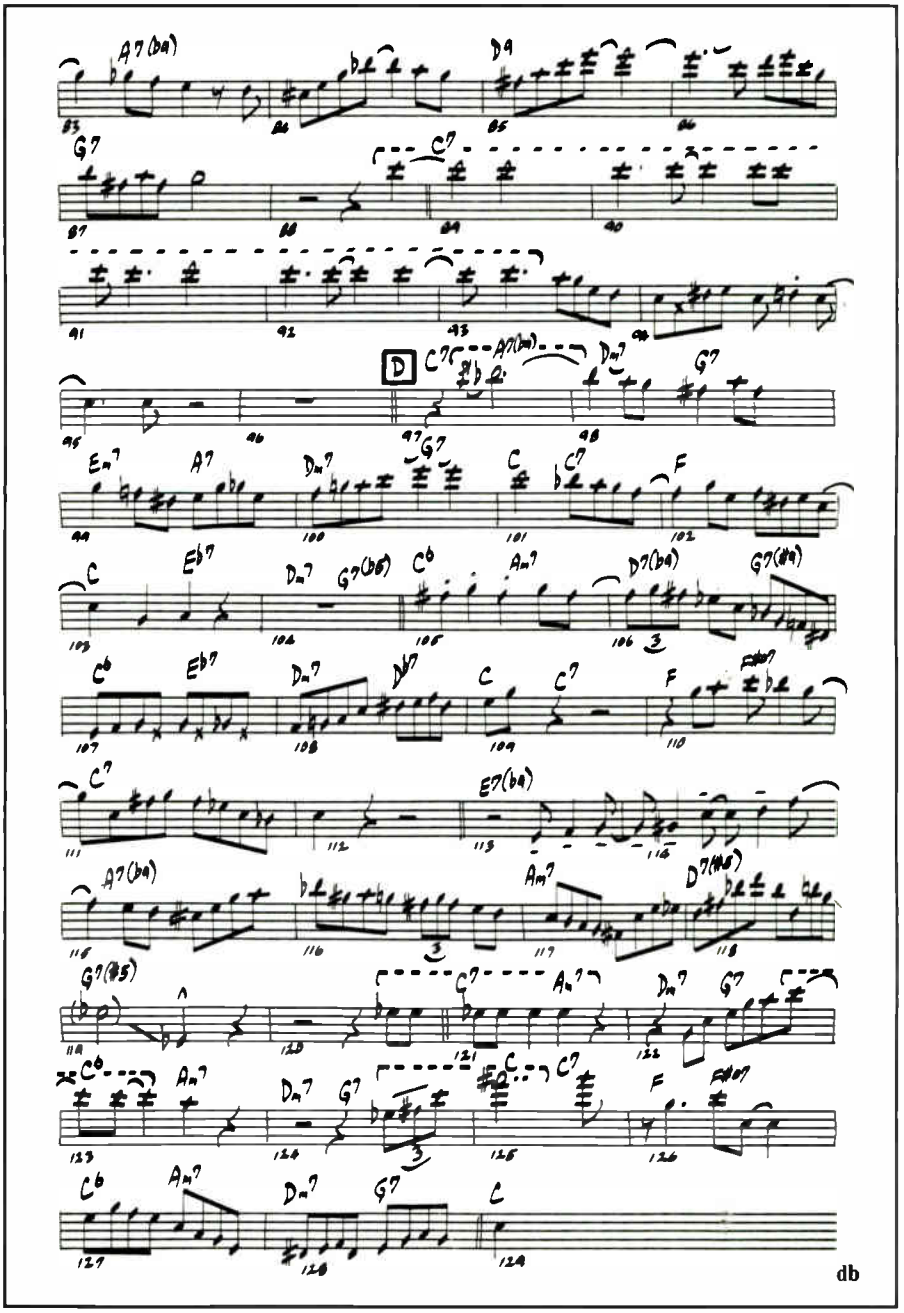
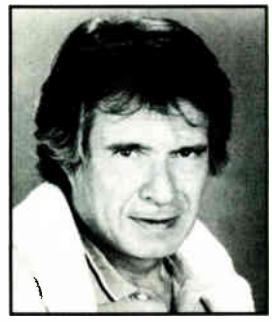


Film Scoring: An Inside Look

BY DAVE GRUSIN (with Gene Kalbacher)



***Dave Grusin** is a man of many hats: recording artist (multi-keyboards), composer (recordings, television, and film), Grammy-winning arranger, producer, and record label executive (co-owner of GRP with Jon Rosen).*

Dave Grusin's motion-picture credits include almost two-dozen scores, four of which have been nominated for Academy Awards (*Heaven Can Wait*, *The Champ*, *On Golden Pond*, and *Tootsie*). In his office at GRP—adjacent to the label's small in-house recording studio, the Review Room—he discussed various audio-visual aspects of his film scores over the past two decades.

* * *

Gene Kalbacher: If you were to record a film score in the Review Room, what adaptations, if any, would you have to make in the room?

Dave Grusin: We really wouldn't have to make any. We have a video setup. The only thing we'd have to get is a synch-pulse generator to make sure we're running at speed when we mix and transfer. We have everything else there. We have a four-track that we could mix to, so that we could go to mag from that with a sync-tone.

GK: I understand that you basically work from a rough cut of the film when you do the score. How often does the director specify *where* in the film music should be added?

DG: It's kind of a communal decision. I like to see the film a couple of times by myself. If I can get a cassette of it, for instance, and sit with it, I can figure out what my instincts or impulses tell me. And the producer and director have preconceived ideas, too. There are a lot of obvious places [where music should be added]. In the final mixing process, they make a lot of changes anyway. A lot of times we do what we call "speculation cues." Even if the director says, "I don't want any music here," sometimes I feel we might as well try something, even if we abandon it later.

GK: Can you give me an example of a film segment for which you added music when none was called for, a segment whose cinematic appeal was enhanced by music?

DG: I can give you examples of the film I recently did [*The Little Drummer Girl*]. When I first saw the film, there were two or three places where it was obvious that music would be terrific. But [director] George Roy Hill was willing to try to score the whole film with source music and not have a score. We talked about it at length. My point about trying a score for the picture was solely the entertainment value. If the picture tends to be documentary-like, which this did a little bit, you really don't have to load it with music. If you've read the book [by John le Carré], you know it's a very convoluted story, and the realism was there already. But in certain places I thought music would underscore some of the romance, which there wasn't a lot of, and also some of the action. I went ahead and built a program to score it in that way. It's hard to explain this point concisely, but I think a successful score must have the same kind of exposition and development and recapitulation that a successful script has, and if you take out elements along the way or leave out exposition, then it doesn't work quite as well. As it turned out, most of the music was used in the film.

GK: You mentioned certain obvious places where music is helpful. What, in general, are those places?

DG: For example, if there's a long sequence of a guy delivering a laugh line at the door, leaving and then walking the street for a minute or so with no dialog, that's an obvious place for music. You can fill it with effects, but traditionally that is the kind of scene where people expect to hear music and where film-makers expect to put it. And montages: montages in film sometimes are done for aesthetic reasons, but most of the time they're done to move the story along; you can tell an awful lot of a two-week story in two minutes with a montage. The accompanying score is kind of neat because an audience gets a chance to enjoy it [as entertainment]; you don't have to listen to every line of dialog. There are things that film can do that other media can't. You can't do that in theater too easily, but theater is, by and large, dialog; film doesn't need to be dialog all the time. There are other good uses for film music, including songs. Songs don't work well over dialog—the lyric takes your attention away from what you're supposed to be listening to. But if you have a wide-open space, with no dialog, it can be a great place for a song in a film. Those are elemental things. Sometimes sound effects can be so exciting that music wouldn't be nearly as effective, and should be left out. The [car] chase in *The French Connection* is a prime example of what music can't do as well as realistic sounds.

GK: You referred earlier to "source music." What exactly is that?

DG: Source music is something that comes directly from a visual source on the screen—if a guy turns a radio on, or puts a needle on a record, or a band is playing.

GK: After you composed the score for *The Little Drummer Girl*, how did you go about recording it?

DG: I composed everything, and we used an acoustic orchestra with strings, woodwinds, percussion, and some electronics. It was a traditional scoring session. We recorded to the picture, and everybody was basically in the same room at the same time, instead of overdubbing.

GK: After you've seen the film all the way through and start to conceive the score, do you assign particular motifs or patterns to the characters or do you let the story line, the narrative, determine the music?

DG: I think a lot of film composers, in the beginning, look at film like Wagnerian opera, where leitmotifs were assigned to characters and each character had a theme. The reason I think that might be true is that I've had a lot of directors talk about character themes to me—"This should be for him; this should be for her." I've never understood that and never worked that way, unless really forced to, and I can't recall anybody ever insisting. What happens is that during the evolution of writing a score, if a theme emerges that is useful in certain situations where the same character keeps appearing, then that can be construed maybe as a character theme. But I never start from the other end and do it on a conscious level. Nor do I particularly think about the story line in terms of inspiration. The emotional response I get mostly is not from what it's about—it's what it looks like and feels like. It could be something as simple as lighting or a nice shot or some surprising visual thing that happens or an optical

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PRO SHOP

MUSIC and SOUND PRODUCTS

KEYBOARD COUNTRY

Fender's Chroma Polaris Synthesizer

Described as a price/performance breakthrough, FENDER MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS (Fullerton, CA) has announced the availability of the Chroma Polaris keyboard synthesizer. Combining six-channel polyphonic analog tone generators with sophisticated digital control, the instrument is said to combine the superior characteristics of both technologies. Some of the Polaris' advanced capabilities include storage and instant recall of 132 complete voice programs, 61-note velocity sensitive keyboard, programmable keyboard splitting, and MIDI, Chroma (eight-bit parallel), and Apple IIe computer interfaces, plus the ability to store, chain, and loop up to 12 separate sequences. The Polaris is said to be "player friendly," meaning most musicians can play it immediately using just their intuition.

ELECTRONIC GEAR

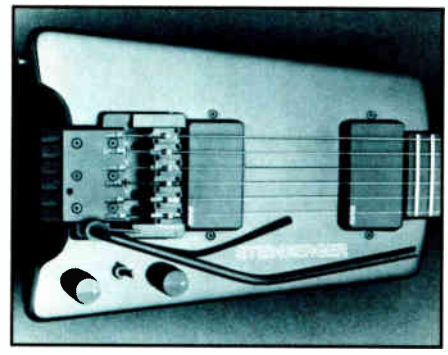
Roland's Sync Box

Thanks to the SBX-80 Sync Box from the ROLANDCORP US (Los Angeles), multi-media artists working in the fields of film, video, audio, and electronics can put it all together in time. The SBX-80 is a multi-timebase, SMPTE (Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers), MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface), and audio click-track compatible clocking device. As a master controller, the Sync Box can read a variety of signals (including live performance cues) while sending synchronizing information to other devices that use different time codes. The SBX-80 can also accept input from its manual Tap buttons, which allow the user to establish or change tempo in real time.

Ibanez' HD1500 Harmonics/Delay

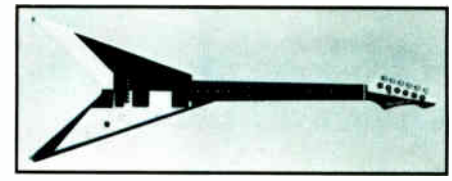
New from IBANEZ (HOSHINO USA INC., Bensalem, PA) is the HD1500 harmonics/delay with the PC40 preset controller. The HD1500 shifts the pitch of any material over one octave (up or down) with a reduced processing time of 30 milliseconds and enhanced feedback capabilities. The optional PC40 provides three presettable settings for real-time melodic harmonies, plus mode selection and effects bypass. The HD1500 also provides full-function digital delay with up to 504 ms. of delay. Included with the HD1500 are an LED readout with level LEDs, "easy-touch" front panel switches, and multiple input/output configurations.

GUITAR WORLD



Steinberger's Transposing Tremolo

Just unveiled by STEINBERGER SOUND (Staten Island, NY) is the world's first transposing tremolo. Dubbed the Trans-Trem, the mechanism is the first ever made for an electric guitar which permits an individually controllable change rate so all strings can be set to maintain pitch relationships throughout tremolo travel. Tremolo movement can be quickly and easily locked into place by a simple rotation of the tremolo arm. In addition to the normal key of E, lower locking positions of B, C, and D tuning and higher ones of F♯ and G can be set with simple arm rotation. An adjustable counter-spring allows the guitarist to set the tremolo to any desired center pitch between D and F♯. A bass model is on the way.



Aria's Michael Schenker Model

The latest addition to the ARIA MUSIC INC. (City of Industry, CA) Celebrity Series of guitars is the XX-MS, the authorized version of well-known rocker Michael Schenker's graphic-designed instrument. Standard features on the XX-MS include alder body, rosewood fingerboard, two protomatic V humbucking pickups, vintage tremolo system, and Schenker graphics.

PERCUSSION SHOP

Trak's Cymbal Crane

The System 4 hardware from TRAK DRUMS (via PRIMO INC., Marlboro, MA) offers state-of-the-art design (quick-lock clamps, memory locks, heavy-cast leg joints, double-braced legs, wide base, etc.) at popular prices. Among their unique innovations is the Cymbal Crane, the heaviest-of-duty cymbal boom-stand, which features an added fourth leg for extra stability and an adjustable angled leg to allow you to position that extra-heavy cymbal exactly where you want it.

Maxwin Drums

New Product Erratum: MAXWIN DRUMS (featured in the Jan. '85 Pro Shop) are a budget line manufactured by PEARL of Japan and distributed stateside by the WESTHEIMER CORP. (Northbrook, IL); Maxwins are not affiliated with PEARL INTERNATIONAL (Nashville, TN). **db**

effect. I'm kind of a sucker for that. That, for me, is the magic of film. Otherwise, you can have a guy standing on the screen telling the story. I get my kicks, and probably my first emotional excitement in terms of inspiration, from what it actually *looks* like.

GK: Might the sense of space—be it an expansive shot or a closeup, or maybe even colors—enter into it?

DG: Sure it enters into it. And mood as well. It enters into everybody's response, the audience's response. Think about a film like *Klute*, which I didn't score. Just in terms of its atmosphere and mood, it had so much to do with the way you got absorbed in that picture. That kind of dark, mysterious thing. I think Michael Small scored that picture, and he took advantage of this stuff that was very mysterious and obscure, and musically he managed to do some surprising things that kept you on the edge of your seat. I don't know if you remember that film.

GK: Yes, I seem to recall the sounds of tinkling glass as Donald Sutherland is tracking the murderer in a warehouse or something.

DG: That's the magic of film-making. We're all dealing with atmosphere, and we try to enhance it for an audience. They don't have to be aware that, "Oh, he just used a square wave and modulated it with eight LFOs." They shouldn't be aware of it; they should just be made to feel, in some kind of [*laughs*] manipulative way.

GK: Returning to the suspenseful scene in *Klute* for a moment, how often does a director tell you, "This is where I want the viewers to be gripping the arms of their chairs, and this is where I want them to jump"?

DG: Sometimes they say it, if it needs to be said. Most of the time those places are obvious. You talk about them in terms of your own response, and you know what he's looking for, and you try to accomplish it in some musical way. More often they say, "Look, this didn't quite come out the way I wanted it to, but I need people to feel this. Can music help enhance that?" And that's one of the jobs of music.

GK: In a very suspenseful scene, when something is about to happen but the audience doesn't know when, timing must be crucial.

DG: Yes, and also what precedes it, so you don't give anything away. I just worked with a director [Ulu Grosbard on *Falling In Love*] whose main concern was *not* manipulating the audience, either in his cutting or the music. We were not supposed to tell people what to feel. It was kind of a strange experience. He may be right. I appreciate the ethics of that, and I hope he's right and it works; I hope that, ultimately, people do get to feel all the depth that film was capable of generating.

GK: Who are the film composers you respect the most? Do you have discussions with any of them directly and what, if anything, have you learned?

DG: I don't sit around with other people too much and discuss the field. I never have. I have one or two people I lean on all the time, and one of them is Quincy Jones, who no longer is scoring films. We talk endlessly about it. But in terms of who I've learned the most from, in terms of watching, I'd say Henry Mancini early on. Musically, so many wonderful things have come out of David Raksin and Hugo Friedhofer. And before, the giants like Erich Korngold and Max Steiner. The person I admire most in a contemporary sense is Jerry Goldsmith; he's a consummate film composer. I'm not inspired to try to musically get into their stuff. I am inspired by their technique in terms of their approach to film. The first time I was aware of Georges Delerue was a picture called *King Of Hearts* with Alan Bates. It's a kind of cult film that keeps coming back. Georges wrote a score that is almost a ballet from one end to the other. It's a fantasy, kind of an anti-war film. His balletic approach to it was incredible.

GK: How and when did you first get into film scoring?

DG: The first one was called *Divorce American Style*. I think I did it in 1965. I had done variety television with Andy Williams prior to that, and some film television prior to that. The producers were Bud Yorkin and Norman Lear, and they actually gave me my first shot at a feature.

GK: Of the many film scores you've done, which was the most satisfying?

DG: It's hard to pick one. *On Golden Pond* was very satisfying because there was space in the picture for music, and there was space for it to breathe. In the sense of having a comfortable home for a score, that was one of them.

GK: You say that *On Golden Pond* had space for music. Was this fortuitous or was music designed to play an important part?

DG: It wasn't planned to be an important part of the film. It's just that the nature of the story dictated the areas where music could help, and it was the breathing room in the picture that allowed the score to have some kind of life.

GK: If *On Golden Pond* was among the most satisfying scores, which were the hardest and easiest ones?

DG: They're all difficult. There's nothing easy about any of them, and they don't get any easier. Even something that sounds so simplistic in its final version, I promise you, is full of doubt and angst [*laughs*] in trying to get there. I don't think that's true of everybody who scores films, but it's true of me. I couldn't tell you one was harder than another. They all have their ups and downs, and they all have stone walls that you run into in trying to satisfy both your own sense of musicality, the director and producer's sense of drama, and the studio's sense of commerciality. It's not easy. Most of it isn't even about composing, most of it isn't even about music—most of it is about the needs of the picture. And to translate that into musical terms is probably the toughest thing for me. **db**

dards by Jobim, Valle, and Menescal—*The Girl From Ipanema, Meditation, Wave, Quiet Nights Of Quiet Stars, Desifinado, Once I Loved, How Insensitive, Little Boat, Summer Samba,* and *One Note Samba*—each complete with lyrics in English and separate lead sheets for transposing and non-transposing instruments, including those in bass clef.

As usual in the Aebersold play-along records, the left channel includes only bass and drums, while the right channel includes only piano and drums. Play-along melodic instrumentalists or sing-along vocalists can combine the channels to hear the complete rhythm section; play-along pianists can first hear Hal Galper's comping, then replace it with their own; play-along bassists can first hear Steve Gilmore's bass lines, then replace them with their own. And Bill Goodwin's bossa drums beat will always be there to keep the time straight.

Pianists will find two sets of chord progressions for each song. The more traditional set appears on the lead sheet, while a more challenging, faster-moving set appears on the record. The latter, which often substitutes several chords for a single chord on the lead sheet, should benefit keyboard players interested in advanced harmonic concepts and willing to devote a lot of listening time towards recognizing them all.

To achieve the true bossa nova nuances, improvisers should find a less incisive syncopation than that of straight-ahead jazz, float along melodic phrases, melt chromaticism into diatonic lines, flow through quarter-note triplets, and move harmony through substitute chords, particularly those with altered ninths, augmented 11ths, and added 13ths. The melodies, chord progressions, and rhythms demonstrated in Aebersold's new set can be a valuable aid in assimilating the bossa nova style.

—dr. william l. fowler

the principal flutist to qualify. Then I took the audition with about 25 others and got the job. I was there eight years."

In 1977 Walker jumped when he heard about the co-principal position opening up in Los Angeles. "I wanted to come here for every reason possible," he declares emphatically. "Zubin Mehta was the conductor then, and I thought he was fabulous. The climate was ideal, outdoor sports were available, the co-principal system—which gives you so much time off because you share first chair duties—was perfect. Then there were the studios and the jazz scene. So I started practicing as hard as I ever have in my life, about three-to-four hours a day, to get ready."

An audition for a second chair post with the New York Philharmonic primed Walker for the L.A. audition, where he got the nod over approximately 125 other prospects. Once in the West, he started hanging out in jazz clubs after symphony rehearsals and concerts, and began rebuilding his jazz chops playing along with Jamey Aebersold records. Though he admits he's not the world's greatest bebop player, he's making progress.

"It's getting more comfortable," he's pleased to report. "I'm getting more oriented toward really crafting a solo, toward telling the story, not just running over the changes playing zillions of notes. It's like writing a story with some thought to the architecture of it, having rises and falls, a dramatic flow. I have such a desire to be good at what I'm doing that I tend to overtry, and then I overdo. My strongest suit is that I can make a nice sound on the flute. However, sometimes when I improvise, I forget that more than I should." A listen to Free Flight's latest album, *Beyond The Clouds* (Palo Alto 8075), produced by Stanley Clarke, shows Walker to be a musician with more than a little talent for jazz improvisation.

Walker's reputation outside of his role in Free Flight continues to grow. He has numerous solo appearances set with symphonies across the U.S., he plays an occasional concert with Hubert Laws (which Walker calls "jazzical" affairs), he's a featured soloist on John Williams' score for the film *The River*, and he plays duets on Gershwin tunes with Jean-Pierre Rampal on the latter's most recent pop-based album.

But Jim Walker doesn't want to spread himself too thin, and considers Free Flight his first priority. "My thing is really this band," he states. "That's what being out of the orchestra has shown me. I'm so lucky to have so much fun and get paid for it. After a two-hour concert, I'm on a high you could never duplicate with all the drugs in the world." **db**

db music shop

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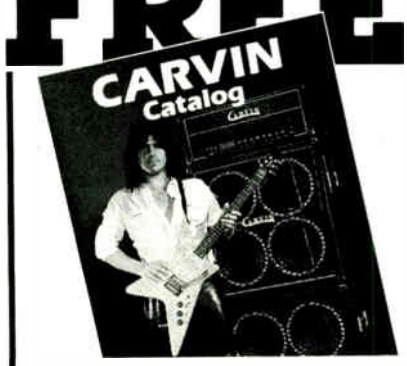

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BOOK REVIEWS

SINATRA: AN AMERICAN CLASSIC by John Rockwell (New York: Random House, 1984, 251 pp., $29.95, hardcover).

For all the hoopla attending its publication, and coming as it does as something of a commemoration of its subject's 50 years in the limelight, both as performer and public figure, John Rockwell's *Sinatra* is a curiously lifeless and uninvolving work that adds little to our understanding of the man or his accomplishments. There can be little doubt that Sinatra is the single greatest interpreter of American popular song we have had the pleasure of hearing, the one performer who has raised what he deprecatingly refers to as "saloon singing" to a high art and who, over a long and distinguished career, has enriched American music with countless superior recordings of many of the idiom's finest songs. His influence on popular singing has been enormous: he has had legions of imitators, and every singer since his time has been influenced in one way or another by his ravishing, diffident artistry.

Sinatra, of course, is *sui generis*. Bing Crosby, following in Louis Armstrong's trailblazing wake, may have been the first to show the way, developing the basic style and enriching American popular music in the process; Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald may have swung more effortlessly; Sarah Vaughan may have had a greater range of technical resources; others may have been "hipper" or taken more audacious interpretive liberties, but no one has sung popular song as well as, let alone better or more convincingly than has Sinatra. He's done it, with grace and style, and made it seem effortless, for five decades now.

In that time he's seen far-reaching changes in the fabric of popular music: some of which he spearheaded; others he sought to accommodate himself to; while others, by far the greater number, he found trivial and demeaning and made no attempt to ally himself with—in one celebrated instance going so far as to sever his relationship with a record company rather than knuckle under to strong pressures to record what he felt were inferior songs. Through all of this, he has followed his own star, maintaining the high standards of craft and musicianship that always have marked his work, choosing the best available song materials, and in interpreting them giving of his best, stubbornly resisting any and all efforts to trivialize or otherwise compromise his musical integrity. American music has, of course, been the richer for his having done so.

CBS ARCHIVES

Frank Sinatra in his bobby-sox days.

Since his career has spanned so many decades during which a number of significant changes have occurred in popular music, Sinatra is a particularly rewarding subject for a book. This, however, is not that book, for while Rockwell touches on various of the topics that an intelligent, thoughtful assessment of those changes—technical, musical, socio-cultural, and the like—and their implications should give rise to, he doesn't take any one of them quite far enough. An analysis of the formation of Sinatra's singing style and the influences that impacted upon it—Crosby, Rudy Vallee, Holiday, Mabel Mercer, trombonist Tommy Dorsey, and others—would have been mandatory, one feels, in a book dealing with a singer who best personifies the art of popular singing, but one looks in vain for such analysis here. Then too, an account of American popular song and its development over the 50-year period during which it flourished (roughly 1910-1960) would have been helpful in placing Sinatra and his accomplishments in proper perspective, as would a discussion of the big band scene from which he emerged in the early '40s. Rockwell, it's true, alludes to these and similar matters—he's too solid a researcher not to—but never really delves into them as deeply or as trenchantly as one would like. And for a singer whose success has been so firmly based on recording and the innovations in singing style its technology permitted and then fostered—an interrelationship particularly meaningful in Sinatra's case—there is virtually no discussion, let alone penetrating analysis, of his recordings and what they signify.

But the chief defect of Rockwell's book is its distance from its subject. It's a well-researched synthesis of much that's been printed about the singer and, as such, succeeds quite nicely in bringing together all the published data. Wholly the product of library research, it gives us the public Sinatra—the Sinatra of record—not a personal or intimate portrait. And it tells us nothing new about the man or his art—never once gets behind the singer's public mask to reveal the inner workings of his art, the compulsions that drove him, his thoughts on his own accomplishments and those of his peers, his comments on popular music and the changes he has witnessed and been party to in its evolution—nothing, in short, we didn't already know or have explicated for us in earlier writings on the subject.

But then, Rockwell appears never to have interviewed Sinatra or any of his associates, relying solely on his reading of prior publications to put this biography together. It's a solid, even admirable piece of research work, well written and buttressed throughout by Rockwell's interpretation of events and their significance in the singer's career. However, in failing to gain access to the singer and those who know him well, *Sinatra* suffers from its distancing from its subject, inevitably lending the book a flat, objective tone. For those unfamiliar with the singer and his accomplishments, the book provides a good, solid introduction, but will be of little interest to aficionados. It's a handsome production, with more than 100 photos from every stage of the singer's career—and generally well reproduced to boot—and the documented highpoints of his career (charted singles and LPs, and film appearances) listed in an "Artistic Chronology" appendix. For the stiffish price asked, however, one might reasonably have asked for a more substantial text. —*pete welding*

BOSSA NOVA: PLAY-A-LONG BOOK AND RECORD SET, VOLUME 31 by Jamey Aebersold (New Albany, IN: Jamey Aebersold, 1984, $9.95 book and LP).

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