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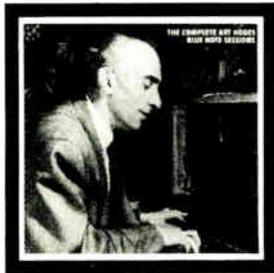
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ANDY FREEBERG

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DONNA PAUL

Sadao Watanabe



Dexter Gordon



H. L. LINDENMAIER

Peter Brotzmann/Han Bennink

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The guitarist tells **Bill Milkowski** he's finally cured his fusion/bop/funk schizophrenia—pulling those influences together to discover that it's the blues that really matters.

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A multi-media superstar in Japan, saxist Watanabe has cranked out 60 albums ranging in style from bebop to pop. **Gene Kalbacher** reveals how this reedman's managed to sell so well, without selling out.

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Finally, a jazz film featuring real jazz. **Howard Mandel** gives us the story, the background, and shows why this film—and its long, tall star—stands head-and-shoulders above what's come before.

24 HAN BENNINK/ PETER BROTZMANN: NEW ENTRANCES AND LAST EXITS

These European free music stalwarts have been a dynamic duo for 20 years now, but they also have active careers apart—saxist Brotzmann with the electric quartet *Last Exit*, and percussionist Bennink co-leading groups with pianist Misha Mengelberg. In this joint interview, **Bill Shoemaker** gives us a glimpse of what keeps them moving.

Cover photograph of John Scofield by Andy Freeberg; Sadao Watanabe by Donna Paul.

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down beat

For Contemporary Musicians

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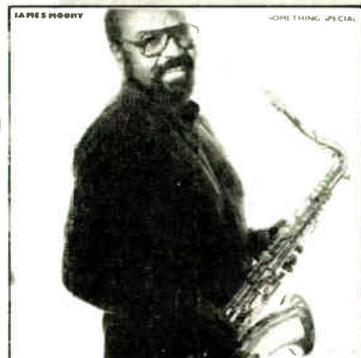
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by Michael Bourne

NOW'S THE TIME

Every several years there's a "renaissance" in jazz. All at once, it seems, jazz (not that it's ever died) is born again. Dexter Gordon's homecoming in the mid-'70s symbolized the last extensive rebirth. Ironically, just as Dex is starring in *Round*

Midnight (about jazz expatriates in Paris), jazz is "happening" again.

"This is definitely an up cycle," said Steve Backer, now heading RCA's new jazz sector. "The down cycle began in '79-80 when every major record company cut back or cut out its jazz roster. The national economy was going into a depression, and that really impacted on the record business. Also, mismanagement on the pop level caused people to react out of

panic. The more aesthetic, less commercial things were cut out, and jazz was one of them."

RCA is but one of several corporate labels now showing a revitalized interest in jazz. But is this re-commitment to jazz only, again, a phase? I talked with representatives of six "majors"—Richard Seidel of PolyGram, George Butler of Columbia, John Snyder of Atlantic, Ricky Schultz of MCA (now reviving Impulse), Bruce Lundvall of Capital/EMI (now reviving Blue Note), and Backer. They all agreed that now's the time, again, for jazz.

"The economy at this point has turned around," says Backer, "and profits are on the way up again. Now the major companies can think more logically, and think in terms of being full-line record companies, which means classical, country, jazz—almost every type of music." They all have similar high hopes but the bottom line, as always, is business.

"I wouldn't be foolish enough to suggest that this isn't show business," adds Ricky Schultz, "but the potential is great. Part of my mission is demonstrating that jazz can be an extra profit center, that it should be part of the mix of any major record company. What that comes down to is that a fusion act can sell maybe 50,000 and you can pay them X amount, but straightahead or avant garde artists, regardless of how great, might sell only 10-20,000, so you can't pay them as much or spend as much recording them. That becomes awkward and occasionally painful. How do you put a price tag on Ornette Coleman? He's a national treasure. But as a businessman, what I'm seeing for the long haul is that if I can make the company see that we're getting acclaim and we're making money, if we can deliver in years One and Two, that will parlay into increased liberty and creative freedom in the years beyond—and also be more fun. If we can make a couple of million dollars behind jazz and fusion, it increases the potential so that if I say, 'I want to sign a great artist; we won't make money but we won't lose money,' there will be more receptivity to that."

One frustration all of these executives have faced is dealing with advertising and accounting personnel used to Big Bucks. "I have to make records that will satisfy the sales people," offers John Snyder. "These guys sell Genesis and now we're giving them jazz. They've never heard of Ornette Coleman, but you need them to be excited, so you must give them something to be excited about."

While they're all hopeful, none of them expects jazz to ever become as commercially profitable as Top 40. "I don't expect to be reaching a pop audience,"

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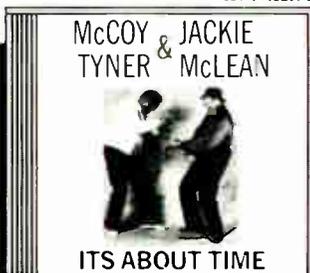
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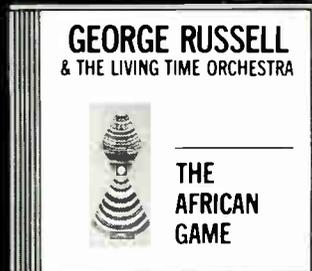


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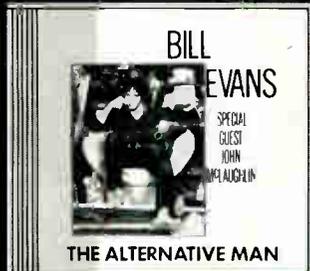
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When I noticed our band's name listed among those albums chosen by Bill Milkowski for review under the heading "Fusion or Confusion?" (Oct. '86), I (being a faithful **down beat-er**) couldn't wait to read his comments about our combo. As I began the opening paragraph, I sensed that perhaps Bill had been a reluctant "designated listener." Then I noticed his cute (mis-)spelling of L.A. (El-Lay?), and I knew we were in trouble. Very few of us were going to escape this mind-set alive. "Grab your axes, boys, and run for the hot-tubs!"

As I gingerly removed the darts and continued soaking, a few thoughts crossed my mind. For myself and the other members of Wishful Thinking, the term "fusion" has outlived its usefulness as a descriptive musical label. We don't play fusion; we play jazz. Regardless of the groove or the style, we play the head and then we improvise. Granted it's "calculated" and "formulaic," but it's also the essence of the jazz tradition, and it works from any musical style from which we choose to approach jazz. Beyond this premise, all labeling is at the listener's discretion.

As difficult as this simplified perspective may be to accept, I would ask Mr. Milkowski to give our music another listen, without the preconceptions that come with *any* attempt to label music beyond "Good" and "Bad" (Ellington's criteria). I'd like to get our "yawn" upgraded to at least a "sigh."

Tim Weston
Wishful Thinking
Los Angeles

EXPANDING ELECTRONICS

As an amateur electronic musician and **down beat** subscriber, I would like to thank you for your ongoing coverage of the expanding electronic music scene. Although there is much controversy over the use of electronics in jazz, it is to your credit as a responsible music publication that you present profiles and features on some of today's best electronic musicians. A standout piece that comes to mind is John Diliberto's editorial on "space music." This article answers some very important questions about the nature of electronic music. It also offers some insightful criticism of the so-called New Age music that is currently flooding upscale

bookstores and record shops across the country.

We in the Philadelphia area have indeed been fortunate to be able to hear Mr. Diliberto present the finest in electronic music for many years on WXPB-FM. He has also been a major force and source of inspiration in the flourishing local electronic music scene. **down beat** exhibits excellent judgment in publishing articles by this truly experienced electronic music broadcaster/critic. I am looking forward to seeing more from him in future issues. Keep up the good work!

Christopher P. Renna
Cherry Hill, NJ

FAN MAIL

Thank you so much for your fantastic magazine! I could kick myself for not subscribing many years ago, but I am truly glad that I did subscribe last year. I must commend you on your editorial policy of covering all types of music; the lack of snobby and snotty attitudes (for the most part) is refreshing. The interviews are my main interest, but I end up reading just about every single article.

Bob Oberg
Compico, CA

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NOTE All tapes will be adjudicated, and only those who perform at a National Standard will be invited to compete at the Nationals.

Application and tape deadline January 3, 1987

Notification of results January 30, 1987



NOW'S THE TIME
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

says Richard Seidel. "I expect to be reaching as much of the jazz audience as I can, and the black audience. Occasionally some project might break through into the pop market." PolyGram markets jazz through the classical division. PolyGram Classics now includes international imports from Europe and Japan, plus a new Brazilian Wave label, along with the Verve catalog. They'll record new albums this year under Verve's Vine Street logo; also, ECM is now part of PolyGram. "One advantage we have within a classical division is that we don't have to go up against the numbers of a pop record company. If you're careful and you don't overspend and you think about the long run, then you can be around."

Though none of them foresee jazz overwhelming the marketplace, they're all encouraged that there's a greater audience for jazz than ever before—an audience spending money. "The market for jazz has grown," suggests Bruce Lundvall, "not as a percentage of the music business, but in terms of actual unit sales. There's more tv exposure for jazz artists because of cable. And there's an opportunity to market new artists and catalog on compact disc. Jazz seems to be a music that's doing well on CD, as is classical music, with the more sophisticated upscale buyer, and also with the somewhat older buyer."

All these labels have extensive CD programs in the works, especially music from their catalogs, the lifeblood of a jazz record company. "The CD is drawing attention to quality music," says Schultz, "and creating a free-standing marketplace beyond stuff that's played on the radio. At the same time, as high as I am on the CD, it's not a panacea." One problem is that, while the CD player is more affordable, the actual discs cost too much. "There are still a lot of people hedging because of the high cost of building a CD library." Also, with so many titles being released on CD, the marketplace is flooded and, because of the cost, stores and buyers both have become more selective. "I'm still very bullish on CD," said Schultz. "It's a great time for jazz of all kinds."

That there is so much "jazz of all kinds" is another positive factor. "I see a lot of boundaries blurring," says Backer, "and that includes jazz and classical music, cross-cultural music, ethnic music, and New Age. My approach will be to try to present a spectrum of contemporary instrumental music that includes jazz and other different types of music—the common denominator of which will be quality." Backer's initial RCA/Novus release, the first of 35 albums he's



Freddie Hubbard: Back to Blue Note.

TOM COPEL

intending to issue this year, includes music from the "pure jazz" of James Moody and Adam Makowicz to New Age pianist Liz Story—with the "O" on the Novus logo red for jazz, blue for "non-jazz or less-jazz." Backer hopes the new upscale (dare I say Yuppie?) audience turned on by New Age will also turn to more traditional styles of jazz.

Lundvall and Snyder, meanwhile, will have nothing to do with New Age. "Blue Note is a pure jazz label," says Lundvall, though he's not at all against crossing over. "We can make commercial records, but they've got to be in the spirit of what Blue Note is all about." Lundvall is delighted with the success of Bobby McFerrin and Stanley Jordan (whose first Blue Note record seems destined for gold) and hopes to record at least 20 new albums in the next year, music by "the most important new artists and the most productive of the master players." Many of the greatest of the Blue Note artists—Joe Henderson, Freddie Hubbard, Kenny Burrell, et al—have returned to the label, and he's signing some of the generation that followed, including James Blood Ulmer. Al Di Meola and other fusion artists will record for another Capitol/EMI label, Manhattan.

Snyder will likewise release 20 new albums this year, a variety of jazz from Wild Bill Davison and Mel Lewis to David Newman and Mike Stern—a variety he hopes will be appealing beyond the usual jazz audience. "Atlantic has a great history. They've made some masterpieces. But the times are not the same. I'm going to try to sign some people who'll appeal to those who've never heard of John Coltrane. We're talking about good records that will work on the radio and are good records. It's my job to maintain Atlantic's reputation for doing music that's going to live for a long time, and at the same time will live for the short time and get over big."

Seidel expects Verve to release a dozen new albums, including a singers series under the Vine Street logo, plus "the whole kit and kaboodle" available from PolyGram's international division, highlighted by the Brazilian Wave albums and new Bach albums from John Lewis and Ron Carter. "I think the audience is ready. Pop music is more eclectic now than it's been for a long time. World Music is slowly creeping into the picture. And we'll still do real jazz records. I'd like to think these projects can co-exist and some can help the others."

Schultz is concentrating on younger musicians like Henry Butler and Henry Johnson, and expects to release 30 new albums this year on Impulse, Zebra, and MCA itself—again across the spectrum from jazz-rock to bop. "There's going to be so much coming out it's going to scare you."

One name not mentioned yet is Wynton Marsalis, who's become both the most popular young jazz musician of all and a successful classical artist. George Butler convinced Columbia to record Wynton's classical albums, and other classical projects with jazz musicians have followed, including soon-to-come classical recordings by Ramsey Lewis and Herbie Hancock. Columbia's commitment to jazz, meanwhile, includes a massive CD program from almost 70 years of catalog and new recordings of young artists. Butler and the others I talked with agreed that much of the new interest in jazz is because of the new artists.

"I embarked four years ago to build a young roster of artists," says Butler. "I started with Wynton and his brother Branford. I was concerned about the music having sustaining power, and I thought one way of doing that was to bring in new talent who had a complete mastery of their instruments and were familiar with the different periods and styles of jazz. I thought the only way for them to be innovative was to know what their predecessors did, but not simply to duplicate what they've done. I wanted new artists with refreshing ideas and originality. I'm not neglecting veteran jazz artists, but my focus right now is the new jazz artists. They're going to afford us the opportunity of keeping the music alive and introducing new musical directions." Since the brothers Marsalis, he's signed, among others, Terence Blanchard and Donald Harrison, Jane Ira Bloom, and Harry Connick, an 18-year-old Butler considers "the most innovative pianist since Bill Evans. These young artists have been the incentive of all of what's happening now."

And whatever happens in the record business, it's the young musicians who'll be, after all, the future of the music. **db**

WYNTON DEBUTS JAZZ IN CHICAGO CLASSROOMS

CHICAGO—Wynton Marsalis starred as guest speaker at Chicago's Whitney Young Magnet High School recently to help launch a three-year jazz education program in the city's schools. Sponsored by the Chicago Public Schools, the Jazz Institute of Chicago, and WBEZ-FM, the "Jazz Express" will feature live jazz concerts in combination with lectures, classroom instruction, and post-concert quizzing to promote students' appreciation of jazz as a unique American art form.

Live concerts are planned for every other Tuesday morning at 15 high schools throughout the city, with a year-end concert scheduled for June at the Field Museum. Performing will be the Jazz Institute

All-Stars: Jimmy Ellis, reeds; George Bean, trumpet; John Young, piano; John Whitfield, bass; and Wilbur Campbell, drums and vibes. The music is tailored to grab the teenagers' attention, with swinging arrangements of tunes by Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, George Benson, Stevie Wonder, and even *The Flintstones* tv theme.

The Jazz Express series, with performances and curriculum designed by the Jazz Institute's Education Committee, had its instigation in the enthusiastic response received in the schools in 1983. These presentations "highlighted the need to give school-age children the opportunity to learn more

about the rich heritage of one of America's indigenous music forms," according to Carole Nolan, director of the Chicago Public School's Bureau of Telecommunications and Broadcasting.

Though he didn't officially perform as part of the program, Wynton's spoken message obviously meant a great deal to the assembled high-schoolers. "The music doesn't serve me—I serve the music," he responded to questions from the audience. "And jazz is important, not only as entertainment, but as an opportunity to bring people together. The appreciation of this music reaffirms our cultural heritage and gives us a positive direction for the future."

—bill beuttler



JAZZ EXPRESS: Wynton Marsalis and Wilbur Campbell serenade high-schoolers.

Hotpourki

Jazz legislation: identical resolutions designating jazz as a national treasure have been introduced by Michigan Congressman **John Conyers** and California Senator **Alan Cranston**; additional House and Senate co-sponsors are being sought, and jazz lovers are urged to press their representatives to support the resolution when the 100th U.S. Congress convenes this month. The resolution reads in part: "That it is the sense of the Congress that jazz is hereby designated as a rare and valuable national American treasure to which we should devote our attention, support, and resources to make certain it is preserved, understood, and promulgated" . . . speaking of preservation and promulgation: **Billie Holiday** and **Count Basie** were recently inducted into the National Jazz Hall of Fame at the fourth annual ceremony honoring American musicians; past honorees include Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Art Tatum, Charlie Parker, Bessie Smith, and Benny Goodman. Black crepe will be draped over Goodman's plaque to commemorate his death last year; Goodman had served as an NJHF director . . . Berry b-day: rock legend **Chuck Berry** celebrated his 60th birthday recently with a concert at New York's Felt Forum; backing Berry was an all-star lineup featuring fellow guitarist **Dave Edmunds**, keyboardist **Chuck Leavell**, bassist **John Entwistle**, and drummer **Max Weinberg** . . . benefit binge: **Bruce Springsteen**, **Tom Petty**,

Neil Young, **Don Henley**, and **Nils Lofgren** topped the bill at a recent all-acoustic charity concert in San Francisco, held to raise money for an educational program for handicapped children; **Joe Jackson**, **Yoko Ono**, **Nona Hendryx**, and **Stanley Jordan** were among those on hand at a Save The Beacon benefit concert in New York (trying to prevent the Beacon Theater's conversion into a Manhattan nightclub); **Al Hibbler**, **Buddy Tate**, **Sweets Edison**, **Hank Jones**, and **J. C. Heard** all showed up in the Detroit suburb of Troy for a benefit concert aimed at restoring Detroit's Orchestra Hall; and the **Modern Jazz Quartet** performed in Pittsburgh (with a Pittsburgh all-star ensemble directed by Nathan Davis opening) to raise money for Ronald McDonald House . . . AJO tributes: the **American Jazz Orchestra** launched its first full concert season with a tribute to **Benny Goodman** featuring classic arrangements by Fletcher Henderson, Edgar Sampson, et al, and a clarinet concerto by Bob Brookmeyer; a second concert featuring the work of Gil Evans, Claude Thornhill, and Henry Threadgill followed 12/1, and a tribute is now being planned for Thad Jones. Jones' widow, Lis, incidentally, has established the **Thad Jones Society** to raise money for a gravesite monument, with long-range plans calling for the formation of a complete library of Jones' compositions, arrangements, and recordings;

those wishing to join (a \$40 contribution is requested) or learn more about the organization should write Lis Jones, Bavnebaergspark 65, DK-3520 Farum, Denmark . . . Hamp honored: **Lionel Hampton** was recently honored as BMI's first One Of A Kind Award winner at a Manhattan luncheon; the supercharged vibist joined a trio of pianist Mike Renzi, bassist Jay Leonard, and drummer Terry Clarke onstage, and was soon joined by such audience members as Milt Hinton, Max Roach, Benny Powell, and Gary Burton . . . disc data: two discographies of saxophonists have appeared recently—*Like A Human Voice*, an updated and revised **Eric Dolphy** disco compiled by Uwe Reichardt is available for \$7.50 plus \$1 postage from Norbert Ruecker Bookshop, Postfach 14, D-6384 Schmitt 1, West Germany; **John Tchical** On Records is a third edition compiled by Gustave Cerutti, available from Mr. Stu, 1716 Ocean #9L, San Francisco, CA 94112 (no price given, but it's a very limited edition, so order quickly) . . . pleasant ending: **Maynard Ferguson** recently had a Holton pocket trumpet that had been stolen from him in 1977, two weeks after he'd received it, returned to him at a gig in St. Charles, IL; a note accompanying the missing trumpet said, "Maynard, without your permission, I borrowed your trumpet (about 10 years ago). I was 17 years old and just could not believe you could do all that triple-octave screaming without

some magic in the design of your 'MF Horn' or funnel mouthpiece. Being a pretty good trumpet player myself, I found that playing the world's greatest trumpet player's horn did *not* increase my range at all. So now I know it's 100 percent pure talent, and you're far greater than I originally thought. Thanks for coming home so I could return your horn. Signed a real #1 Maynard Fan" . . . foreign affairs: a group of Washington, DC, musicians and dancers spent a week in Beijing recently as part of a cultural exchange program sponsored by United Airlines and Sister Cities International; included were singer **Lisa Rich**, the **Howard University Jazz Ensemble**, and the group **Dance Union** . . . comp competition: the 35th annual **BMI Awards to Student Composers** will award \$15,000 to young composers, but entry forms must be in by 2/10; for rules and entry forms, write Barbara A. Petersen, Director, BMI Awards to Student Composers, 320 W. 57th St., New York, NY 10019 . . . jazz video debut: Video Arts International, a leading supplier of home performing arts videos, has introduced "**The VAI Jazz Video Collection**;" the initial releases will include *The Coltrane Legacy*, an hour-long compilation of tv clips and interviews featuring the sax great and his assorted ensembles, and *The Trumpet Kings*, an overview of great trumpeters hosted by Wynton Marsalis (performers include Bunny Berigan, Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, Roy Eldridge, Marsalis, et al) . . .

LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR AND GRILL

NEW YORK—Billie Holiday lived a tragedy. Often called the greatest jazz singer ever, she was abused—by some of the men in her life and by racism—and she abused herself with alcohol and drugs. Whatever her musical gifts as a singer, what comes through her voice most often is the hurt. Nobody sang—and lived—the blues quite like Billie Holiday, especially toward the end of her life.

Lady Day At Emerson's Bar And Grill, a new play by Lanie Robertson at the West End Theater, presents Billie near the end: a midnight show at Emerson's, a South Philly bar. It's the spring of 1959, four months before Billie's death. William Barclay's design re-creates the appropriately close (and claustrophobic) feeling. Most of the scenery is realistic, but it's partly abstract. So is the play.

Lonette McKee—whom you might have seen in the films *The Cotton Club* and *Round Midnight*—plays Billie, singing familiar Holiday songs (*What A Little Moonlight Can Do*, *Don't Explain*, et al) haunted by memories, in particular the voice of a child reciting poetry, as if from a nightmare. But the memories confuse and

interrupt the performance. McKee re-creates the nightmare of Billie's life enough all by herself.

Robertson's play, as directed by Andre Ernotte, isn't really a play. It's a performance. There's no beginning other than Billie walking on stage, no end other than a fade-out. What happens in-between is Billie singing and remembering moments from her life: being on the road with Artie Shaw and being denied service in white restaurants in the South, being jailed for drugs and denied a cabaret license. There's no dramatic continuity, but the rambling reminiscing is nonetheless involving.

Billie sings, laughs, then rages in sudden bursts of anger. When she talked about men, the women in the audience responded with laughs and shouts, testifying along with Billie. Between the laughs and the anger—and there's plenty of both—most of the play is bittersweet.

McKee never affects to sound like Billie when she sings. She's acting the life of—not impersonating the vocal style of—Billie Holiday. And, as accompanied by Danny Holgate's trio, she's wonderful. —*michael bourne*



MUSIQUE ACTUELLE: Guitarist Fred Frith and drummer David Moss appeared with Moss' Dense Band recently at the fourth annual Festival International de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville, held in a small, French-Canadian community 100 miles to the east of Montreal. Also on the five-day program of concerts, which attracted about 10,000 to the local community center, a church, and several schools, were the Rovo Saxophone Quartet, A Little Westbrook Music, the Semantics, the Anthony Broxton/Derek Bailey and Ralph Towner/Gary Burton duos, the Johnny Dyani Quintet, Cossiber, and the Lost Poets. Many Montreal musicians also participated, among them guitarist Rene Lussier, who collaborated with Frith, a regular FIMAV visitor, on an in-concert recording to be released in 1987.



GUEST MAESTRO: Thomas L. Beckman, president of Roland Corp US, leads the Los Angeles Philharmonic through the National Anthem as special "Guest Conductor" at the Music Center Mercado, a biennial fundraiser for the Music Center Unified Fund. Beckman earned his opportunity-of-a-lifetime "Maestro for the Night" honor with a generous contribution to the fund. John Williams, Conductor Emeritus of the Boston Pops, followed Beckman to the podium to take the 17,500 people in attendance that night at the Hollywood Bowl on a nostalgic trip through classic movie themes.

PAN-DEMONIUM

PORT-OF-SPAIN, TRINIDAD—The National Steelband Music Festival, held once a year for two weeks as a competition of 40 orchestras, marching ensembles, and virtuosic "pan" soloists, is Trinidad and Tobago's indigenous cultural manifestation, comparable to the U.S. World Series or Pamplona, Spain's running of the bulls. Thousands of steel drum players from dozens of pan-yards across these southern Caribbean islands off Venezuela participate in events that capture the nation's attention, culminating in six-hour finals at the football stadium-like Jean Pierre Complex.

There, eight steel orchestras ranging from the nine-piece family ensemble Samaroo Jets through the 35-to-50-member WITCO Desparados Pamberi, Catelli Trinidad All-Stars, Phase 11 Pan Groove, Mat Securities Merrytones, Blue Diamonds, and the National Quarries Cordettes, demonstrated the astounding evolution of a musical tradition only 40 years old. Steel drums weren't known here until oil barrels arrived with World War II, and some imaginative rhythm-maker cut and hammered their surfaces into a tuned sequence. The drums excited competition early on: outlawed due to the violence of their players, only in the mid-'50s were pans recognized as a medium for channeling youthful energy, like break-dancing in the U.S.

Several of the orchestras in the finals boast 30-year continuous histories; the festival clearly requires year-round preparation and rehearsal. Pan music: is unscored,

and taught by rote—no mean feat considering Mendelssohn's *Symphony No. 4*, Tchaikovsky's *Romeo And Juliet Overture*, Stravinsky's *Rites Of Spring*, Dvorak's *Carnival Overture* and Borodin's *Polovtsian Dances* were works of choice in a three-part contest program during which each orchestra played Winston Devine's test piece *Fire And Steel* and a locally composed calypso. Each steel pan orchestra has its own conductor and arranger; no two orchestras share a common constitution or number of drums. The WITCO Desparados, led by Robert Greenidge (who works with Taj Mahal and collaborates with keyboardist Michael Utley on the MCA LP *Mad Music*) won the 1986 competition, which was broadcast on island tv and radio.

Trumpeter Wynton Marsalis was a competition judge, along with Easley Blackwood of the University of Chicago, British composer Roger Nichols, and Merle Albino-De Coteau of Trinidad-Tobago. Marsalis and his quartet, along with his pianist father Ellis Marsalis and trumpeter Donald Byrd, performed in the first Pan/Jazz festival, concurrent with the Steelband fest. Local fans appreciated Marsalis' set at the Trinidad Hilton Hotel, but were more enthusiastic about his duet with pan player Len "Boogsie" Sharpe. Also exciting were the hometown Calypso Jazz Workshop quintet led by Michael "Toby" Tobas and featuring tenor pianist Sydney Joseph, and the play of veterans guitarist Fitzroy Coleman and pianist Clive Zanda.

—*howard mandel*

CARLA BLEY

Carla Bley likes to keep inching along in her funny, mysterious way. Few artists have shown such varied musical abilities or exerted such subtle influence on today's jazz scene as the slender, still-gawky composer/keyboardist/bandleader. Her catchy compositions—of a rare simplicity and expressiveness—make you sit up and listen. Ms. Bley—leader of many medium-to-big bands since co-founding the Jazz Composers Orchestra with trumpeter Mike Mantler in 1964—plays her array of keyboards (lotsa organ lately) with humor, color, and great sensitivity. And she takes pains to keep her band sounding fresh and new.

She recently premiered her first-ever no-horn band (a percussive sextet) at two Massachusetts clubs due east of her home near Woodstock, NY: the Iron Horse in Northampton, and Nightstage in Cambridge. Then they played a Paris tv spectacular and toured Europe briefly.

No horns? After the way her scores have utilized guys like Gato Barbieri, Steve Slagle, Gary Valente, Don Cherry? I was skeptical, but all was cool and delectable. The dream rhythm team squeezed the essence from her elegant, sometimes languid lines; they were able to reach below the surface of her smoky, svelte sambas to tap a core of deep feeling. In a waggish and whimsical mood both on- and off-stage, Bley was found schmoozing



DONNA PAUL

with daughter Karen (herself a composer) backstage, where she explained how she hired percussionist Don Alias. She did it by blind vote, asking both drummer Victor Lewis and pianist Larry Willis separately who they'd most like, and each said Don.

"Yeah," joshed Bley in her offhand way, "we were sick of the horn players getting all the solos. Steve [Swallow, bassist extraordinaire of long association with Bley bands] and I wanted to get a few choruses, you know? Don doesn't solo all that much,

but he gives visual excitement like the horn players would."

And the players soloed with light heart in response. Swallow fused incandescent lava lines throughout *4/4 Under The Volcano* (written after Bley read Malcolm Lowry's seething novel) and the title track from Bley's most recent album, *Night-Glo* (WATT/ECM); guitarist Wayne Krantz played beautifully integrated solos on the insinuatingly latin *Girl Who Cried Champagne* and the hard-sock slow blues *Healing Power*.

There were some problems with blending and pacing, but the band was new together, and the mutual delight in each other's playing seemed infectious. *Sex With Birds*, a 5/4 romp featuring circular harmonies and loop patterns, had the drummers making bird calls: instant fun and drama. Bley's music itself may conjure visions: on a haunting *Brooklyn Bridge* she reached for the top span on a keening organ solo; *Lawns* was a flat, green, expanse of minimalist funk as well as a loving pun on featured Willis' drawled Christian name.

Above all, Bley has a woman's touch for extended family, and her bands become like brothers. "The deeper I feel about something," she observed, "the less I say about it. Let's say that our relationship is unspeakably deep. But, a simple way that the relationship evolves is with recordings. I wrote *Night-Glo* to feature Steve's bass; now we're recording his new album *After-Glo* [for XTRA-WATT], and he's featuring me on organ."
—fred bouchard

THE LEADERS

The Leaders originally formed in 1984, in the great jazz tradition of the stellar thrown-together aggregate.

Reedman Chico Freeman and percussionist Don Moye had been bandying the idea of bringing together an ensemble of kindred players for the festival circuit in Europe. Alto saxist Arthur Blythe, trumpeter Lester Bowie, bassist Cecil McBee, and pianist Kirk Lightsey were brought on board. Given the prominence of the lineup, the moniker was politically apt. No leaders, all leaders.

But unlike most ad hoc acts of limited perseverance, the Leaders stuck it out and watched the entity evolve. Now, with a well-received spate of live dates across the country underfoot and a debut album, *Mudfoot* (BlackHawk 52001), the question of transience is moot. The Leaders are a bonafide, card-carrying band.

Still, each player reserves the right to maintain his separate career. "We're not going to become a steady working unit, because we all have other things," says Freeman. "This is a very special group that has fortunately worked out in a different way than the normal all-star group. The group is an all-star band. It really is. But it's an all-star musical group. It's not a group of all-stars."

The distinction—collective ethos over ego—could be an axiom carried over from the AACM code of musical conduct; Bowie and Moye from the Art Ensemble of Chicago and the younger Windy City musician



ANTHONY BARBOZA

Freeman have held high the banner of collaborative exchange and stylistic flexibility. Blythe's elastic background—from the loft scene avant garde to more commercial enterprises recently—McBee's all-around adeptness, and the emerging Lightsey's estimable reputation around New York add further grist.

Thus, the band's music might seem especially mercurial. In fact, the maiden voyage LP is a highly accessible melc of post-swing, New Orleans and Caribbean

pulses, hard-bop heat, and playful whimsy. Though the tunes are mostly culled from past work of the respective "leaders," two group-composed tunes and a cheeky version of (yes, Sam Cooke's) *Cupid* suggest a band definitively on the move.

"I wouldn't call it eclectic," Freeman surmises. "Eclectic involves isolated examples of things. It's very integrated; there's a wide scope, but it's a unified scope. And, serious as it is, it's lighthearted. We're having fun."
—josef woodard

FLORA PURIM/ AIRTO MOREIRA

"I don't know if they're totally ready for *this* trip," said singer Flora Purim of Concord Jazz, the company she and percussionist Airtto Moreira record for. Concord's new subsidiary label, Crossover, was created for them. *The Magicians* (Crossover 5001) is the label's first release. "Concord is a traditional jazz label," she said, "but crossing over is a different ballgame, with different radio stations." Flora's song *Bird Of Paradise*, featuring Top 40 singer Kenny Loggins, is already crossing-over with pop stations. "Flora played the song for Kenny and he flipped," Airtto said, "and he wanted to record with us." Flora was all the more pleased that "he sang like a true jazz singer. Instead of pushing his way, he respected our way."

They've been playing music their own way since they moved to the U.S. from Brazil in the latter '60s. Airtto, a master of the rhythmic spectrum, was a sensation right away, working and recording with, among others, Cannonball Adderley, Miles Davis, and the original Weather Report. Flora joined him for sessions with George Duke, Carlos Santana, and Chick Corea's Brazilian-flavored *Return To Forever*. That flavor was Flora's and Airtto's. Since then, together or apart, they've spiced hundreds of LPs with Brazilian feeling. And now that Brazilian music—and performers



VILMA SLOMP

like Milton Nascimento, Ivan Lins and Djavan—is more and more popular, they feel at last fulfilled.

Ironically, it was singing the blues that earned Flora her first Grammy nomination—on last year's *Humble People* (Concord 3007). "The blues reflects the soul of the people here," she said, "and I came from a foreign country. It took me many years to feel I had the right to sing the blues. I thought people wouldn't believe in me."

"Big record companies didn't know what to do with our music," Airtto said. "We're not jazz. We're not born here. At the same time we're not Brazilian anymore. We've lived in this country for so many years. But now, all of

a sudden, after so many years, there's a music called Flora's and Airtto's music."

It's a music the audience crowded into New York's Bottom Line enjoyed recently. And the new Brazilian-American band smoked—Marcos Silva at the keyboards, Ricardo Peixoto on guitar, Gerry Brown on bass, Celso Alberti at the drums, and a burning New Orleans saxophonist, Rick Margita. Flora sang her best on Silva's new Brazilian songs and when cuddling Jeannie Cheatham's *Sweet Baby Blues*. "When we go onstage," Airtto said, "the people can see we play something we like. We look at each other and smile. What we like is this music!"

—michael bourne



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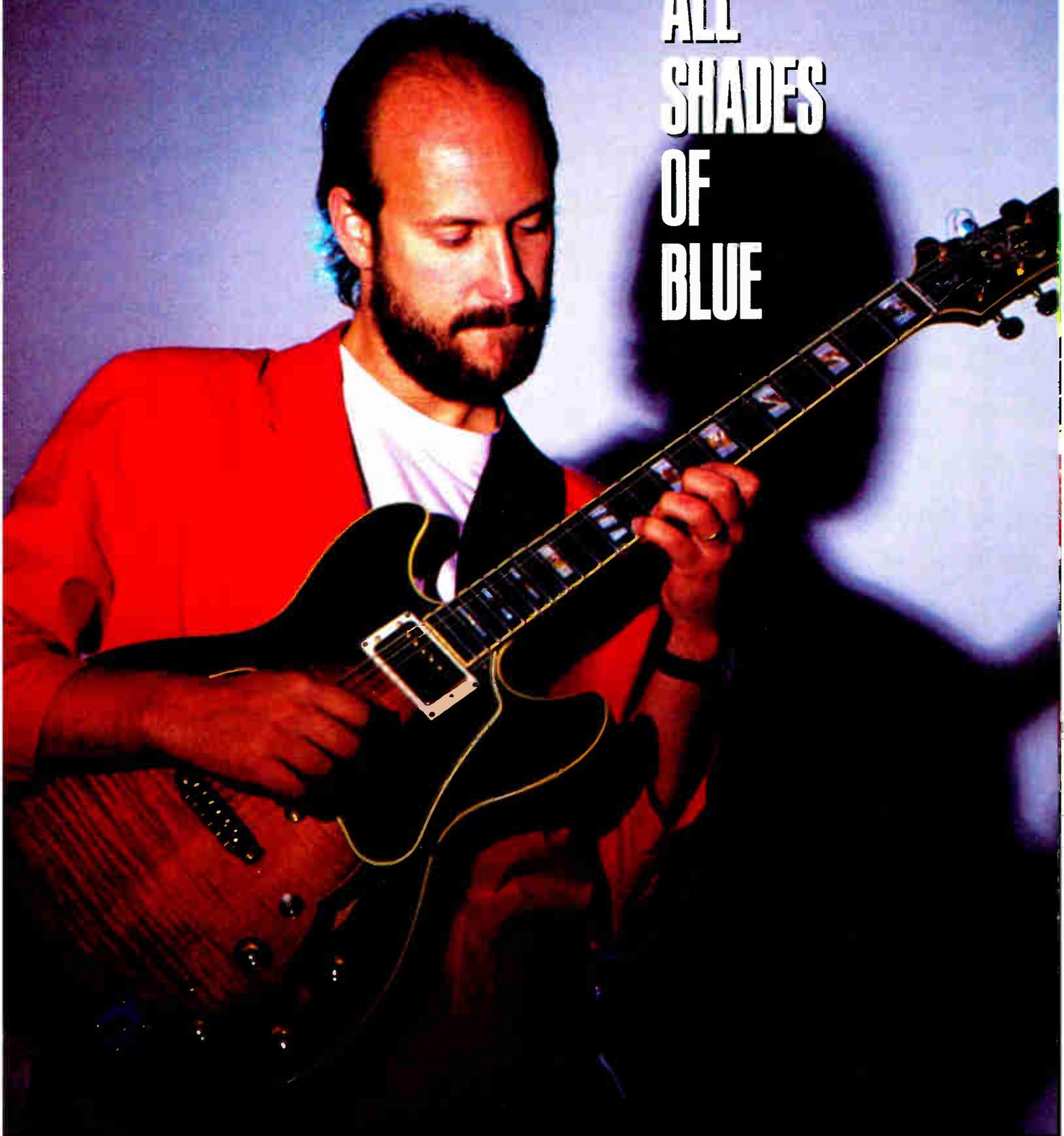
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JANUARY 1987 DOWN BEAT 15

john Scofield

ALL
SHADES
OF
BLUE



He was one year out of Berklee when he got the call to replace John Abercrombie in Billy Cobham's powerhouse band. It was 1975, the fusion movement was alive and kicking, and the record-buying public (mostly young white males) was clammering for fast, fast, fast guitar heroes. So for a two-year period, John Scofield was cranking out hot licks on a solid-body Les Paul Junior and gaining a rep as the hot new fusion kid on the block, though it wasn't a role he particularly relished.

"Billy's band was really hot when I got the call," he recalls. "So all of a sudden I started getting national exposure. And all this time, ironically, I was trying to learn how to play bebop. I guess I was a little reactionary in that band.

"I mean, here I was in this great fusion band, making good money, playing all over the world, and people were diggin' it. And I was saying things like, 'Hey, man. Miles' *ESP*, *Sorcerer*—that's the shit! Trane's *Live At Birdland*—check it out.' It was very schizophrenic. I'd play all this rock stuff onstage with big amplifiers and effects and everything, then after the gig I'd go back to my hotel room and listen to Joe Henderson tapes. It was a very weird time for me."

Immediately following his tenure with Cobham, Scofield immersed himself in a bop bag. Hooking up with drummer Adam Nussbaum and bassist Steve Swallow, he pursued a more subdued muse, cooking on a lower flame in more intimate settings. The trio's three Enja albums—*Bar Talk*, *Shinola*, and *Out Like A Light*—are superb offerings in the spirit of Jim Hall with rhythm section.

As Scofield told writer Sam Freedman in his previous *db* feature (Sept. '82): "Hey, why am I killing myself? I'm a Jim Hall-oriented player. Just do it. Play what you hear instead of what you think you hear." Later in the article he added, "It is possible to play this music I play for audiences that are not incredibly sophisticated. But let's face it, it's a connoisseur's music."

Also that year, Scofield recorded *Solar*, a fine duet album of bop standards with fellow Connecticut-bred guitarist John Abercrombie. He seemed to resign himself to the connoisseur confines of bop-oriented jazz. Little did he know that just a few months after that *db* article appeared he would be jumping back into the marketplace in a big way with the *electric* Miles Davis.

Scofield's contribution to Miles' band during his three-year stay ('83-'85) was considerable. His presence is first felt on *It Gets Better*, the 10-minute, sparsely arranged lowdown blues from *Star People*. His aggressive solo on *Speak* from that same LP features a melodic riff that later became the basis for *That's What Happened*, a tune from *Decoy* on which Scofield shares co-composer credit with Miles.

In fact, Scofield's stamp is all over *Decoy*. From his Pete Cosey-esque wah-wah babbings on the title cut to his signature riffs on the 11-minute, molasses-slow blues of *That's Right* to the quirky melody line on his co-composed *What It Is*, Scofield grabs Most Valuable Player honors on that album. He even adds Nile Rodgers-type rhythm fills on covers of Cyndi Lauper's *Time After Time* and Michael Jackson's *Human Nature* on the album *You're Under Arrest*. Clearly, Sco was far from the realm of bop during his tenure with Miles. Bop in the connoisseur sense, that is. And it was during that period that he resolved his schizophrenic feelings on the bop vs. fusion issue.

"Now I don't feel that way," Scofield says. "I don't put this kind of music over here and that kind of music over there. Now I feel it all lives together and you can do whatever you want with it. At one point I thought all I really wanted to play was bop or post-bop or whatever you call it.

Now I feel like all my influences have come together, so I don't feel schizophrenic at all anymore."

One quality that has always come out in his playing, no matter what context—fusion, bop, Miles, or his post-Miles solo career—is an authentic feeling for the blues. Be it *King For A Day* (his homage to B.B. and Albert on his first Gramavision album, *Electric Outlet*), *High And Mighty* (the gospel-ish cut from his Gramavision followup, *Still Warm*) or *Heaven Hill* (from his recently released third Gramavision album, *Blue Matter*), the conversational style of his bent-string approach is heartfelt and full of conviction. And for more examples of Scofield's blues tendencies, check out his soulful playing on Bennie Wallace's *Twilight Time*.

"You can never get away from the blues," he says. "And I'm feeling it more than ever now. As a matter of fact, I'd like to get that sort of thing B.B. has. If I could ever get the vocal quality that he has and Miles has and Paul Desmond had—to me, the real singers on their instruments—that'd be the ultimate for me."

Ironically, Sco does affect the haunting, vocal quality of Miles' muted trumpet on much of his new album, *Blue Matter*. And he'll be the first to admit it. "Definitely. It's Miles to the max," he acknowledges while listening back to a rough mix of the title cut. "It's the sort of thing Miles would like to play on this groove. It's true, I do emulate Miles' horn. He's my man, you know?"

Scofield has always been attracted to lyrical players and musicians who orchestrate their solos. Hence, Miles has been a towering influence. "I can't remember the first time I ever heard Miles. It seems like I've been listening to him ever since I could think. His classic work has always been some of my favorite music ever. And even now. I mean, maybe he doesn't play as much as he did in the '60s, when his trumpet chops were at their peak. It is possible to go hear him today when his chops aren't up to form. But I played with him for three years and, man, he can still do it when he's on. He's just a giant.

"But you know, it's always interesting for me to hear what musicians do when they get a little older. There's a certain pathos or feeling that some guys get, even when their chops aren't up. Like, for example, I heard Benny Goodman play *Memories Of You* on tv just before he died. And I was really kind of touched by it, you know? I mean, here's somebody who really had virtuoso technique, playing as an octogenarian. And he really didn't have to have all that technique to make a statement. I heard him. And Miles always comes through with a statement, no matter what condition his chops are in. There's always something in his playing. Or the way Dexter Gordon plays in the movie *Round Midnight*—not up to his best, but he's reaching, and it's touching in a way. That's beautiful, and that always registers in me when I hear Miles play today."

Whereas Scofield's *Electric Outlet* was recorded quickly in the studio while he was still gigging with Miles, *Still Warm* represented his first band album since leaving Miles' group. Drummer Omar Hakim (Weather Report, Sting) and bassist Daryl Jones (Miles Davis, Sting) provided the guitarist with the kind of muscular funk rhythm section that he likes to play with, while keyboardist Don Grolnick added sweetening on synths. Now with *Blue Matter*, Scofield has put together yet another formidable funk rhythm section in drummer Dennis Chambers (George Clinton's timekeeper in various Parliament/Funkadelic aggregations for 10 years) and bassist Gary Grainger (formerly of the pop-funk band Pockets, which frequently opened concerts for Earth, Wind & Fire). Mitch Forman plays synths on the album, but keyboardist Robert Aires will be making the tour with Scofield and company when they go out this spring.

After witnessing a couple of nights during their weeklong engagement at Fat Tuesday's in New York, it's easy to understand

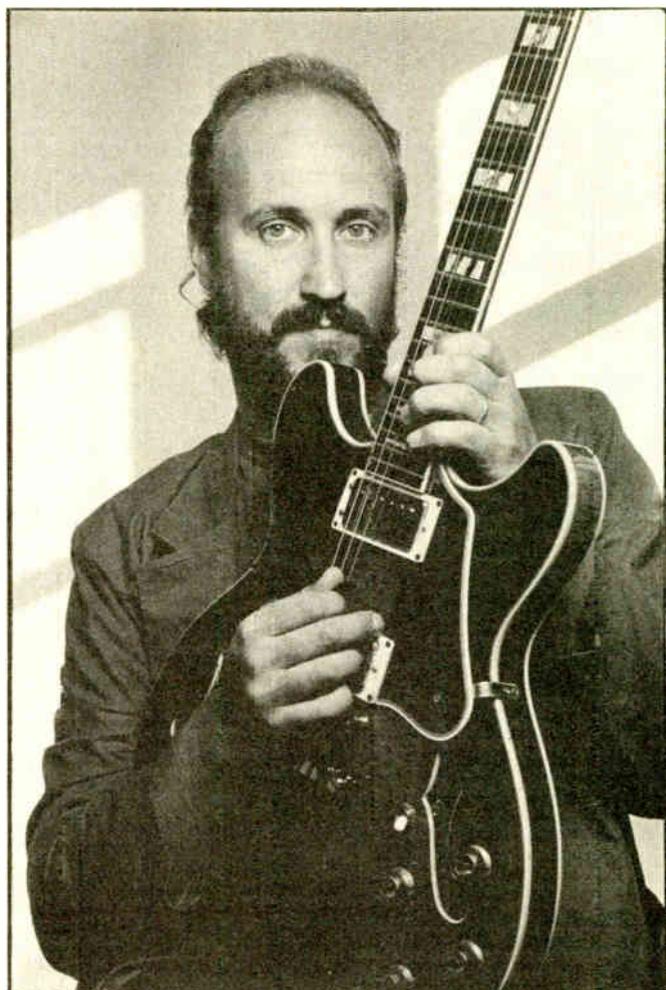
why Sco is so excited about his new rhythm tandem. "They're unbelievable. I'm just completely knocked out by them. I put them in the league of Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones. I really do. They grew up together in Baltimore, and they just have this telepathic thing between them. Gary is a remarkable musician with great ears. He learns my tunes pretty much after playing them twice. He's a great groove player, he's got the slap thing down, and he's got a natural harmonic feel. He can play jazz standards, funk, rock. He's knows all the changes on pop tunes by Stevie Wonder and Dionne Warwick. He's in that generation of musicians who is checking it all out. And Dennis is a monster. He kills me. His funk is so thick, his time is so perfect, and he can jazz-out with the right hand on the cymbal. It's really hard to find someone who can combine the heavy funk with the subtle jazz thing. The same type of criteria that you would use on a jazz rhythm section you can use on these guys and they come out just as exciting and magical. Because jazz, to me, is really about a group playing telepathically together, rising and falling, playing off each other and on each other and all those little variations, which is sometimes lacking in some of the more popular bands. But these guys can play. They both kill me. I'm like at the beginning of—like when you're falling in love with a girl."

His ongoing band is just one of the activities that Scofield has been involved in lately. Last summer was a particularly busy schedule. Not only did he tour Europe with his band but he also found time to play gigs with the Don Pullen/George Adams Quartet (with Cameron Brown and Dannie Richmond), perform as guest soloist with the French National Orchestra, and sub for Woody Shaw in McCoy Tyner's superband. All that, plus being named number one guitarist in the *db* International Critics Poll, made 1986 a memorable year for Sco.

"It was hard, but I jammed it all in somehow," he laughs. "The gig with McCoy came down at the very last minute. I was on tour with my group. We had just played the Northsea Jazz Festival in Holland, and I had a day off before I was to go and play with George Adams and Don Pullen. I get a call from the promoter who says, 'You've got 40 minutes to get to the airport and catch a plane to Switzerland.' So I grabbed a bag of clothes and my gear and zoomed to the airport. I arrived in Montreux and met McCoy just before the gig. No preparation, no rehearsals. I didn't even really know what was going to be played until I got on the stand. Luckily, it was a blues, an *I Got Rhythm* sort of thing, *Caravan*, and a McCoy original that was kind of similar to *St. Thomas*. So I faked it. It was really loose. I comped a little bit, but to follow McCoy—you know, it would be impossible to play the same chords he's playing, so you throw in rhythmic things once in a while. But I was filling in for a trumpet player, so I left the comping up to McCoy and just stuck with the horn lines."

That horn-line approach is partly what gives Scofield his distinctive voice. His fluid legato lines almost make you forget that he's a guitar player. That is, until he launches into a biting, bent-string blues attack. With pianist Paul Bley, whom John gigged and recorded with in '85, he takes the saxophone route, while with saxist Bennie Wallace he plays more traditional-sounding guitar lines. The guy can go either way, and through it all he still manages to sound like himself. And he's evolving a distinctive voice as a composer as well.

"I have a couple of bags. The funk bag, the slow melodic bag, the jazz bag, the blues bag. And you keep coming up with different variations on the same themes. Certain chords work with certain rhythms so you keep writing the same stuff over and over. I like that. I don't think there's anything wrong with it. People tell me that they can recognize my tunes. I think everybody has about three or four tunes in them—Beethoven included. And you just keep writing them over and over again, trying to get them right."



ANDY FREEBERG

JOHN SCOFIELD'S EQUIPMENT LIST

John Scofield's main axe is an Ibanez AS-200, which gives him his signature warm, resonant sound. "The semi-acoustic feels great to me, and when I play a solid body it feels funny," he says. "I played an Ibanez Strat-type solid body for a couple of months with Miles, and with Billy Cobham I was playing a Les Paul Junior. They sounded okay, but they felt funny. I just couldn't get comfortable with them." He plays his semi-acoustic through Sundown amplifiers and treats the signal with an Ibanez stereo digital reverb, an Ibanez stereo chorus, and a Pro-Co Rat distortion pedal. Occasionally he will kick on his Boss Octave pedal for a particularly aggressive attack. He uses D'Addario strings.

JOHN SCOFIELD SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

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|---|--|
| <p>as a leader
 <i>BLUE MATTER</i>—Gramavis on tba
 <i>STILL WARM</i>—Gramavision 18-8508-1
 <i>ELECTRIC OUTLET</i>—Gramavision B405
 <i>OUT LIKE A LIGHT</i>—Enja 4038
 <i>SHINDLA</i>—Enja 4004
 <i>BAR TALK</i>—Arista/Novus 3022
 <i>WHO S WHO</i>—Arista/Novus 3018
 <i>ROUGH HOUSE</i>—Enja/Inner City 3030
 <i>LIVE</i>—Enja/Inner City 3022</p> <p>with Miles Davis
 <i>YOU'RE UNDER ARREST</i>—Columbia 40023
 <i>STAR PEOPLE</i>—Columbia 38657
 <i>DECCOY</i>—Columbia 38991</p> <p>with Billy Cobham
 <i>LIFE AND TIMES</i>—Atlantic 18166
 <i>FUNKY THIDE OF SINGS</i>—Atlantic 18149</p> | <p>with Cobham/Duke Band
 <i>LIVE ON TOUR IN EUROPE</i>—Atlantic 18194</p> <p>with Marc Johnson
 <i>BASS DESIRES</i>—ECM 25040-1</p> <p>with John Abercrombie
 <i>SOLAR</i>—Palo Alto 8031</p> <p>with Bennie Wallace
 <i>TWILIGHT TIME</i>—Blue Note 85107</p> <p>with Charles Mingus
 <i>3 OR 4 SHADES OF BLUES</i>—Atlantic 1700</p> <p>with Jay McShann
 <i>BIG APPLE BASH</i>—Atlantic 90047-1
 <i>LAST OF THE BLUE DEVILS</i>—Atlantic 8830</p> <p>with Paul Bley
 <i>THE PAUL BLEY GROUP</i>—Soul Note 1140</p> <p>with Don Pullen/George Adams
 <i>LIVE AT MONTMARTRE</i>—Timeless 219</p> |
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CONTINUED ON PAGE 59

Sadao Watanabe and Bill Cosby have a few things in common: each is a major celebrity in his country, each endorses a multitude of products, and each has used his fame to promote a passion for jazz.

The major difference, of course, is that Cosby is an actor/comedian, while the 53-year-old Watanabe is a Japanese jazz musician, a reedman with 60 albums to his credit. Neither has used jazz as a springboard to superstardom (in fact, the converse is true), yet each is genuinely ecstatic about jazz, proving, continents apart, that jazz and commerce can coalesce artistically and profitably. Watanabe has been a favorite of Japanese jazz fans for nearly three decades, but it would be misleading to say that he has become a national hero *because* he is a jazz musician. Only when his round, slightly ruddy face began appearing on billboards, in magazine ads, and especially on television commercials, did he become a mass-appeal celebrity. When he hasn't been hawking Coca-Cola, Wrangler jeans, and Bravas cologne, he's been endorsing coffee, formal wear, even a housing construction company.

But before you dismiss Watanabe as an unregenerate huckster, an opportunist using fame to legitimize his art (again, the converse is more likely), consider his credentials in, and contributions to, jazz. The readers of Tokyo's *Swing Journal* have voted him number one native alto saxophonist every year since 1959, and Jazz Man of the Year 11 times since 1968. His weekly radio program, *My Dear Life*, has presented jazz performance by Japanese and visiting foreign jazz musicians for 15 years. In 1980 he was the first jazz player to headline at the Budokan, the 10,000-seat, government-owned arena; for his three sellout performances he teamed up with the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra and a crack American rhythm section. In 1985 he produced Bravas Club '85, a 23-day jazz festival in Tokyo, now an annual event underwritten by the Bravas cosmetics company, which featured groups from around the world; for his efforts he came away with a live quartet album, the bopping *Parker's Mood* (with James Williams, Charnett Moffett, and Jeff Watts), and a Ministry of Education Award.

As a saxist, Watanabe's cachet is melody—simple, catchy melody—purveyed by a semi-sweet alto tonality and a fluid delivery. That he retains this signature sound in settings ranging from jazz-rock fusion to bebop, from samba to reggae, from Mozart to Masai tribal music, testifies to his insistence on authenticity. This globetrotter believes, quite simply, in “going to the source”—to Brazil for samba, to Jamaica for reggae, to New York City for street-smart funk and, soon, to Zaire for pygmy rhythms. And in each place he hooks up with the right people—the Jimbo Trio in Brazil, Sly Dunbar

SADAO WATANABE'S

bop/pop
chops



SHIMPEI / ASAHI

and Robbie Shakespeare in Jamaica, Ralph McDonald or Dave Grusin and fusion's finest in Manhattan.

Like Chuck Mangione, perhaps his closest pop-jazz counterpart in the States, Watanabe confounds the critics. Last fall the fedora'd trumpeter offset his slickly commercial, studio-funk LP *Save Tonight For Me* by re-forming the Jazz Brothers, his hard-bop combo of the mid-'60s, for a cross-country club tour. Watanabe, in similar yet reverse fashion, followed his all-acoustic ode to Parker with the pop-styled *Good Time For Love*, an album of outright commercial tunes—several of which have served as jingles for tv commercials in Japan.

Nabesada, as he is affectionately known in his homeland, sells plenty but manages to keep from selling-out. He makes sure that LPs showcasing his bebop chops (including, in addition to *Parker's Mood*, *Bird Of Paradise* and *I'm Old Fashioned*) share shelf space with his more popular outings. And his commercialism isn't the by-product of compromise. "This is actually my new songbook," Watanabe says about *Good Time For Love*. "I checked out my old commercial songs—jingles, you know—and my first idea was to put on [the album] all commercial songs," he noted. "But I just picked out three or four songs I liked." The title track, *When We Make A Home* (with vocals), and *Pogo* had surfaced earlier in tv commercials for coffee, a housing company, and cosmetics, respectively. Yet the reedman hastened to add—in somewhat faltering English, this being only his third U.S. tour as a leader—that the tunes were not *composed* as tv jingles, merely chosen for that purpose after the fact. "After I write a piece or song," he explained, "then I find what commercial it will fit." Sometimes he matches tunes from his stockpile to prospective titles offered by advertising agencies. Having ultimately decided against releasing an entire album of commercial songs, Watanabe composed several new compositions, though two were rejected as "too jazzy" for the project.

Considering his early exposure to jazz and his ample opportunity to play it, Watanabe's eventual career as a jazz musician reads in retrospect like a foregone conclusion. Watanabe was born in Utsunomiya, a city 90 miles north of Tokyo, in 1933, the son of an electrician who also played and taught the biwa, a four-stringed Japanese lute. Any inclination the young Watanabe may have had about following his father's career and musical path was dashed when as a 15-year-old he saw Bing Crosby wailing on the clarinet in the movie *Birth Of The Blues*. His youthful, post-war awe of America, birthplace of the blues, was still fresh in his memory three years after the tanks and soldiers of the occupying American forces had marched into his city.

"During the war," Watanabe recalled, "we learned from school that Japan is the God country, so we will win finally. When we lost



DOWN PAUL

the war, a week later the American army came to the main street of my city with a parade. The soldiers looked so nice to me, so *hip*, not like the Japanese army. They gave us chewing gum. When I saw Wrigley's gum, the [wrapper's] bright color was so beautiful to see. We never saw that kind of design and packaging."

Blissed out on Bing and the licorice stick, Watanabe convinced his father to buy him a clarinet. Before long, further enraptured by the jazz he heard on Armed Forces Radio, he began working jobs at U.S. Army bases. Gigs were so plentiful, he remembers with a laugh, that "you had a job even if you couldn't play. You could just hold a bass and stand onstage." To play jazz full-time became his ambition, so upon graduation from high school and with the permission of his father ("I asked him to give me two years to prove myself"), he took off for Tokyo with his new instrument—the alto saxophone. Within the allotted time he formed what he termed a "Jafro" band, a combination of jazz and African music (and a portent of his later fusions), and began jamming after hours with Japanese pianist Toshiko Akiyoshi, whose Cozy Quartet he would soon join.

When Akiyoshi earned a scholarship to the Berklee School of Music and departed for the States, Watanabe assumed leadership of the quartet. Akiyoshi, today an acclaimed composer/arranger and leader of her own jazz orchestra in New York, had an enormous influence on Watanabe. "She lives for music," the altoist affirmed. "When I joined her group, she had a concert with a symphony orchestra playing *Rhapsody In Blue*. I saw how hard she worked to prepare,

and I thought I should practice like her. Through her I learned a lesson about giving all your energy to music." In 1962, when she returned home, Akiyoshi in turn recommended her altoist (who had by then worked with George Kawaguchi and the Big Four Band, earned his first best-alto citation from *Swing Journal*, and cut his first album as a leader) for a scholarship to Berklee. After studying for three years in Boston, the altoist moved to New York and began roadwork with bands led by Chico Hamilton and Gary McFarland, the latter association exposing him to the graceful strains of bossanova that would infuse his music, off and on, for the next 20 years and counting.

Returning to Japan in 1966, Watanabe formed a quartet with pianist Masabumi Kikuchi and started a small jazz school in his own home. The following year saw a spate of recording by the altoist and additional recognition from *Swing Journal*, setting the stage for 20 years of whirlwind recording, touring, and world traveling.

Though hardly a jazz purist—his most recent albums sport strong backbeats, electronic sweetening, and occasional pop vocals—Watanabe's recording procedures adhere to the straightahead ethic of his earliest sessions. The sensibility, if not always the substance, of his music is acoustic jazz. Explained the reedman, who self-produced his last two albums: "I prefer to record everything in one session, though that's often impossible. So I record with just the rhythm section [including guitar and keyboards] and me to make a basic track. When I have to overdub my solos later, it starts to lose freshness, and I start copying myself."

Far from copying himself, Watanabe plans to do a video project—he's also a well-regarded photographer—with pygmies in Zaire or Uganda in March. "I'm very much interested in African tribes' music," he said, citing his appreciation for the music of King Sunny Adé in particular, and highlife music in general, and his hope to record an album one day with an African rhythm section. "I'm very interested in the music of the Masai. They have very original music, and even the way they talk is very musical. Also pygmies. They *live* with songs. Playing music for them is not like playing the music on the stage. It's a very natural thing. When they're working on farms, they sing, and going to school, they sing."

Having studied at one of America's foremost schools for jazz, and having later operated his own short-lived jazz school, Watanabe was asked to comment on the state of higher education for jazz in Japan. "There are many jazz schools right now in

Japan, especially in Tokyo," he answered, "but they're too commercially oriented. Also, in Japan we don't have room to have [jam] sessions; that's a big problem. Musicians get together with each other to play, but there aren't places to play. You have to pay too much money to rent the room."

The Japanese love affair with jazz, which Watanabe traces to Armed Forces Radio, Jazz at the Philharmonic concerts, and the late-'50s appearance by Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, is profound, though slightly exaggerated, he believes, because the national definition of jazz is overly inclusive, frequently extending to pop and rock. But in Japan "there are many jazz maniacs," he confirms. "They want to hear [American jazz] records in good condition. Many Japanese of my generation started listening to jazz with bebop, and for them jazz is bebop only, nothing else; they stick to Blue Note and Prestige [recordings]." Overall, he noted, the Japanese respect for tradition, at home and abroad, and filial piety helps account for the national popularity of jazz. Watanabe's music, according to his business associate and occasional translator, Hisashi Ikagami, seated nearby during the

interview, is popular with all segments of Japanese society: middle-aged bop buffs, in addition to large numbers of younger listeners, buy the reedman's recordings, be they homages to Bird or potpourris of pop and funk-jazz. The reedman's visibility as "a natural treasure" of Japan, Ikegami added, is part of the reason.

Why, with the exception of himself, Akiyoshi, and a few others, Watanabe was asked, have so few Japanese jazz musicians risen to international prominence if the music is revered so highly? Pretending, it seemed, to misunderstand the question, the reedman sloughed it off to Ikegami. Pressed to answer for himself, Watanabe replied, after a sigh and a nervous laugh: "They're not trying, I think. They should try to work more, try to work with better musicians and get more experience. Most Japanese musicians, if they do studio work and some club dates and get enough of a living, they're satisfied."

With that, perhaps mindful of his remark, Watanabe excused himself to prepare for a personal appearance to promote his number one product—himself, onstage in the jazz capital of the world. **db**

SADAO WATANABE'S EQUIPMENT

Sadao Watanabe's main axe is a Selmer Super 80 gold-plated alto, for which he uses a Meyer M5 mouthpiece and a Vandoren select medium reed. He's been using this reed, available only in France and Japan, he says, for 10 years. "It's a reed for classical music." His custom-made, gold-plated alto, he points out, "works hard, but once I played gold-plated, I couldn't go back to a lacquer horn. It has more tone center and sounds different; it's thicker than the regular horn, so for playing jazz it's a little bit hard. You'd better have a soft reed for that to ring the saxophone. I just talked with Wayne Shorter a few months ago. He's using a Mark VII gold-plated saxophone. He said, 'Coleman Hawkins said you've got to have a gold-plated saxophone.' I recommended it to Ernie Watts, and he got one."

Watanabe's soprano, which he believes is a Mark VI, is a new instrument with an F# key. "The high register used to go only to E. Now it has a two-note higher register. Also, they're better made." When his alto doesn't sound right in the higher registers, he may try the soprano in a lower register, though the latter's sound is thinner and less loud.

His first flute was a Haynes model, then he switched to a Powell, and ultimately to a Brannen-Cooper, which offers him a "delicacy to the sound," a "middle" between the other two flutes.

SADAO WATANABE SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

GOOD TIME FOR LOVE—Elektra 60495
 PARKER'S MOOD—Elektra 60475
 TOKYO DATING—(Japanese) Warner-Pioneer 13219
 MAISHA—Elektra 60431
 RENDEZVOUS—Elektra 60371
 FILL UP THE NIGHT—Elektra/Musician 90297
 ORANGE EXPRESS—Columbia 37433
 HOW'S EVERYTHING (LIVE AT BUDOKAN)—Columbia 2-36776
 MORNING ISLAND—Inner City 6060
 CALIFORNIA SHOWER—Inner City 6062
 MY DEAR LIFE—Inner City 6063
 BIRD OF PARADISE—Inner City 6061
 I'M OLD FASHIONED—Inner City 6015
 SWISS AIR—(Japanese) CBS-Sony SOPN 159
 MBALI AFRICA—(Japanese) CBS-Sony SOPW 27/28
 KENYA YA AFRICA—(Japanese) CBS-Sony SOPL 233
 AT MONTREUX JAZZ FESTIVAL—(Japanese) CBS-Sony SONP 50378J

with Lee Ritenour

AUTUMN BLOW—Inner City 6064

with Dave Grusin & GRP All-Stars

LIVE IN JAPAN—Arista/GRP 5506



DONNA PAUL

BY HOWARD MANDEL



ROUND MIDNIGHT

Round *Midnight* is the first jazz fiction film that *listens*. "For many years, I had been struggling to make a totally free, genuine, and uncompromising film that would testify to my passionate love for jazz, especially bebop," says *Round Midnight's* French director Bertrand Tavernier, and he's succeeded where so many American directors have failed—not just by casting musician-actors like Dexter Gordon, Herbie Hancock, Bobby Hutcherson, and Billy Higgins as expatriate players in the Paris of 1959, but by featuring the music they made live with bassist Pierre Michelot, acoustic rhythm guitarist John McLaughlin, Wayne Shorter, vocalist Lonette McKee, and others, so that honest mistakes as well as unplanned epiphanies are heard clearly from the film's beginning to end.

"Bertrand wanted a movie where the jazz is real, where you get a sense of creation, not some studio stuff," explains *Round Midnight's* musical director Herbie Hancock, who portrays Eddie Wayne, house pianist of the Parisian Blue Note jazz club, which becomes Dexter Gordon/Dale Turner's home away from home in the film. "To do that, and make sure we were open to inspired playing, Bertrand wanted the music done live. That's rare in movies, 'cause it's hard; but that was an essential criteria."

Set designer Alexandre Trauner was up to the task, building an authentic-looking and -sounding jazz club on a studio lot. So Gordon, whose character combines aspects of Lester Young's life with the circumstances of Bud Powell's sojourn in Paris, including the pianist's relationship with French graphic artist Francis Paudras, blows querulous and tentative in his initial music scenes, just as a bleary, booze-battered past master of the saxophone in exile *would*. And as the devoted fan Francis (actor Francois Cluzet) adopts the irresponsible, self-destructive Turner, dries him out, shelters him, and rebuilds



(Top): Herbie Hancock, Dexter Gordon, bassist Pierre Michelot, John McLaughlin, and Billy Higgins jom at the Paris version of the Blue Note. (Above): Sandro Reaves-Phillips, as Buttercup, sings the blues. (Right): Herbie and Ron Carter toke five.



his self-respect, Gordon/Turner regains his instrumental skills, essays more confident solos, picks up the soprano sax again, composes a few more songs. While in Europe, his music takes on a nostalgic, mellow lyricism; upon returning to New York, where he's booked into Birdland with Freddie Hubbard, in front of Cedar Walton, Ron Carter, and Tony Williams, the rhythms tighten up, the horns become more combative. An aural reality of jazz—so subtle audiences unfamiliar with the music may not notice its effect—is preserved.

Directors and screenwriters have often been attracted to jazz, because it offers the essential ingredients of drama: colorful characters struggling in difficult, even dangerous milieus. But where are the great jazz films? Most of the movies feature vital innovators of American jazz in contrived bit roles, out of context, or are watered-down, pseudo-biographies that use music as a background for melodrama. Typically, movies sacrifice jazz to big name actors and suspenseful plots.

Shirley Clarke's independently produced *The Connection*, with Jackie McLean and Freddie Redd, was about strung-out drug abusers, not creative artists in professional eclipse. Most recently we suffered through *The Cotton Club*, Francis Ford Coppola and novelist William Kennedy's offensive fiction about the Harlem nightspot of the '20s, where Richard Gere playing very weak cornet incredibly upstages the black actors meant to represent Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington; look closely at the extras, and you'll see some of Manhattan's hottest young cats merely going through the motions of playing.

There were good scenes in *New York, New York*—as when Liza Minnelli steps in to sing and save an audition for Robert De Niro, her boyfriend, who (with offscreen help from George Auld) rips through some racy post-World War II tenor and wins the gig. *Lady Sings The Blues*, the Billie Holiday biography, was mostly an opportunity for Diana Ross to record the jazz singer's greatest hits. *Paris Blues*, with Paul Newman and Sidney Poitier as Duke Ellington sidemen, is kind of a liberal buddy-buddy travelog. Ever see *Young Man With A Horn* on late night tv? Kirk Douglas, as a character based on Bix Beiderbecke, with trumpet parts dubbed by Harry James, is destroyed by drink because he wants to play the impossible note in the perfect solo, and can't decide between two women, a good blonde and a bad brunette. Then there's *New Orleans*, in which the great Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday had to be cast as amateurs and domestics, in deference to second-rate actors. Woody Herman appears for the anachronistic finale. This was the well-spring of triumphs to come?

In *Round Midnight*, jazz history gets juggled, true, but if you've never been to

a smokey dive where jazz is played, this film will take you there, and the European attitude toward great black musicians is represented convincingly, too. "I needed to identify with a character in the film, to allow me to approach a subject whose roots were very far from mine, in a completely different culture," Tavernier admits. Whereas American aficionados may be impatient with the cloying hero worship of Francis for Dale Turner, musicians seem to feel Cluzet's depiction of a fanatic follower is just right. It's not coincidence Gordon/Turner's musical mentor is a fellow saxist named Herschel (Evans?); Gordon calls everyone Lady, tells the tale of Lester Young's court martial as his own, and receives a visit from a striking singer who wears gardenias in her hair. His manager, like Bud Powell's wife, is named Buttercup; he's abandoned a daughter named Chan in the States. (With Francis Paudras, Charlie Parker's widow Chan created the luxurious book *To Bird With Love*.)

Of course, Gordon has, at several intervals in his long career, been an expatriate; nicknamed Long Tall, he's been more of a romantic figure than Prez or Powell. Now 63 years old, Dexter's actually in precarious health. "Watching him come into the room, I had the impression he was going to fall down and die on the spot," Tavernier recalls. "He has no liver, a case of diabetes, and the percentage of alcohol in his blood is absolutely confounding." Yet if *Round Midnight* does nothing else, it immortalizes Dexter Gordon.

"He never had any problem remembering his lines," Tavernier continues. "He was aware of everything, including lights and camera angles. . . . He knew where to stand, even how to match a shot." Gordon's hands, as he talks, wave to conjure something just beyond his grasp. At ease with Francis and Francis' daughter Berangere, Gordon/Turner waxes philosophic, and on the bandstand Gordon the player-actor strips the schtick from his routine sets of the late '70s. As is heard on the film's soundtrack, which has been issued by Columbia (additional performances have also been issued on Blue Note), Gordon's forays are sometimes whispery and cracked, but they make up in emotional power what they lack in technical



World Radio History



Lonette McKee as Darcey Leigh.

finesse. If you understand the feeling in this music, you come to care for Dale Turner as the Frenchman Francis does—the music shows depth and wisdom the script can only hint at.

Removing jazz from the U.S. almost entirely isolates the musician characters—an important move in the case of the protagonist, focusing the viewer on his dissolution and rehabilitation, but less useful for secondary roles such as Hutcherson's Ace, a vibist who mostly stays in his hotel room cooking up soulfood cuisine. Jazz, the American music, has developed in response to its American surroundings, and a film that placed sexy adults like Gordon/Turner and Lonette McKee's vocalist on a bus tour through the Depression-era South (Diana Ross and Richard Pryor suffered this briefly in *Lady Sings The Blues*), or before white audiences slumming uptown (somewhere like the Cotton Club), or even trying to hold their own in the contemporary music business rife with rock, funk, and the younger generation of "pure" jazz players, remains to be made. There's no sex, no violence, not even a car chase in *Round Midnight*; it's that rare contender for the U.S. audiences' dollars, a quiet character study. But the very limits of its action allows us to learn more about the music—and those who create it—than most other films involving jazz.

An American director's film might move more swiftly—Tavernier shuffles time, laps music over scene changes, his camera roams the band's audience, drifting as one's concentration does when listening to dreamy music. But his point of view is always reverent, and his subject is crystal clear. A genuine artist, Gordon/Turner/Powell/Young retains his genius through age and troubles. As playwright Arthur Miller wrote of a quite different American Everyman: "Attention must be paid." db

HAN BENNINK/PETER BROTZMANN

First ENTRANCES AND *Last* EXITS

By Bill Shoemaker

Dutch percussionist Han Bennink and West German saxophonist Peter Brotzmann have been central to the evolution of European free music for 20 years. Throughout the late '60s and early '70s, Brotzmann and Bennink's trio with Belgian pianist Fred van Hove (trombonist Albert Mangelsdorff was a frequent guest artist) epitomized the unremitting energy and expressionist abandon of the genre. In addition, the duo collaborated in such pivotal aggregations as Globe Unity Orchestra and Instant Composers Pool Tentet/Orchestra, as well as small groups featuring a veritable who's who of European free music—Derek Bailey, Misha Mengelberg, Evan Parker, Alexander von Schlippenbach, ad infinitum. They have made records with children, recorded duets in forests, and have used (as Bennink's instrument credits on one of his solo discs are listed) "everything/anything" available to them to create.

A Bennink/Brotzmann concert borders on performance art, as the duo provides a stark visual contrast that reinforces the quirky power of their music. For all his reed-splitting intensity, Brotzmann offers stoic concentration and a Gibraltar-like stance. Bennink, however, is everywhere, dampening his floor tom and snare with his feet, drumming everything from the floor to a piano (keys, strings, and all) with



H. L. LINDENMAIER



H. L. LINDENMAIER

blinding speed and dazzling articulation, and balancing chairs, cymbal stands, and anything else he can get his hands on on his drum kit, slowing down only occasionally to play a surprisingly lyrical and facile C melody saxophone. Within this context, they create a groundswell of sound that, in breaking down one's learned attitudes about music, provokes very traditional responses from their audiences—awe, laughter, satisfaction.

Recently, Bennink and Brotzmann have made noteworthy contributions to critically acclaimed endeavors that have gained them access to new audiences. As a member of Last Exit, Brotzmann has teamed up with Ronald Shannon Jackson, Bill Laswell, and Sonny Sharrock, an exciting quartet that may shape electric improvised music for the late '80s. Bennink is the pulse of the repertory group that includes Steve Lacy, Mengelberg, and others which, on two excellent outings for Soul Note, has revived interest in the music of Herbie Nichols (Bennink convincingly argues that the ICP Orchestra's Extensions Red, White, And Blue—ICP cassette 025—which features freer interpretations of Nichols' compositions, deserves as much exposure and praise). But, as is made apparent from this conversation, their mercurial sensibilities keep them moving.

Bill Shoemaker: *What are your respective senses about the evolution of free music in Europe, generally, and how did that mesh with your personal development?*

Peter Brotzmann: Well, there is no special event or date that started free music in Europe; but, about the same time in Holland, Germany, and a little later in England, musicians began working with the same material—which was the mid-'60s, the same time free music was really happening in the States. But, of course, it took me some time to come to that. At that time I was more busy with the art business, with painting and things like that. I had, from '60 to '65, a lot of contacts with the Fluxus movement—Nam June Paik, Dick Higgins, [Joseph] Beuys a little bit. At the same time I was making music, too, but I didn't take it so seriously. But these people changed my mind more and more toward music and the idea that it really should develop a little more freely and more radically, taking more risks than I had until that time. There was a special situation during those years in Germany, a political and social situation that forced me into more radical thinking, so both sides came together quite well. And, of course, I heard a lot of American music like Coltrane, Mingus, Dolphy, people like that.

Han Bennink: How about Albert Ayler? You almost forgot him.

PB: Of course, Albert. I met Albert when he was stationed in Heidelberg and would play in the clubs. Mostly, he's forgotten now by too many people, but he's one of the most important people.

BS: *During this period, Han, you were . . .*

HB: Playing jazz, yes. But I was going to art school, too. In high school, jazz was really in. Of course, it is American music, but we tried to do it. And it turned out that I played with a lot of great American players; but there's a difference—the same thing happened in art school—it's not interesting to make the same drawing every day, or playing the same song all the time. Also, I think jazz, which I really like, is American music; I come from Europe, so my cultural background is completely different. I steal a bit of this and a bit of that.

BS: *Were you comfortable playing both free music and more traditional forms of jazz at that time, as free music was a polarizing issue, at least in the States, at that time?*

HB: Yes. I was working in '64, for example, with Eric Dolphy, but before that I had played with the New York Art Quartet, and I've played a lot of concerts with John Tchicai since then. In '67, I played with Sonny Rollins for 14 days, so I was more or less on both fields. I would play different things with Misha Mengelberg—we played at Newport in '64—but they would still use me as a jazz drummer. I still like to play time. I don't see any difference at all in the new music. To me, Big Sid Catlett is as new as Milford Graves and Sunny Murray are.

BS: *So there was an effort made by Europeans to make a European free music as opposed to being Europeans playing American music?*

PB: Yes, you can generalize that. But I was always, like Han was, interested in American music, in jazz music. I still am. We always tried to find contact with touring American musicians. I played with Steve Lacy, Don Cherry a bit at that time, Carla Bley, Mike Mantler, people like that. Of course, there was a time, from the late '60s to the early '70s, when it was a quite modest thing for European players to say that we are making our own music, and not affected by Americans. I don't think that was my thinking. These people existed. I think for the self-conscious of the European movement it was, at some points, important, but that's been over for some time.

HB: We think it's over.

BS: *Because of the prolific FMP catalog and the vast festival scene in Europe, I have the impression that there is a large audience for free music in Europe. Is that the case?*

PB: It's hard to say because it changes from year to year. When we played in Berlin in the late '60s—that really burning time—we would have 1,400 people in the house and people waiting outside. That number was normal when we played big places. After that, it lowered, but if you do festivals it will be thousands. I don't know how many are coming for the music and how many are coming for the amusements that are around at festivals. If you have a clever promotion and a good program the audience is there. It's better in Europe for both European and American musicians. There are reasons for that. In Germany, we have about 12 radio stations that

usually have live jazz things three times a week. You can work and get paid for these programs. You don't find that here. You have some student stations, but we are able to reach our audience in a more direct way in Europe. And we have a younger audience, I think, than in the States. I just saw Cecil Taylor at Sweet Basil's in New York, and there were very few people there and they were all my age—40 to 45—and older. I think it's very sad that you don't find younger people at these events. Cecil just played a few weeks ago in Berlin at the Academy of Arts, and there was at least 500 people there, and there were a lot of young people there.

HB: It's a tragedy that this happens in the States. I mean, I don't know who comes to listen to our concerts, but when it's just guys that age it's sort of weird.

PB: Our audience is getting younger because the people our age, who grew up with our music, stay at home and buy a record from time to time, because they're married and have kids and have to work hard. It's interesting. I've played in places where usually some other kind of music is happening—punk, rock & roll—and the young kids are really interested because they haven't heard this before and it's new to them, and they come and ask questions and stay.

BS: *Is this an audience your quartet with Laswell, Sharrock, and Shannon Jackson is trying to reach?*

PB: Not just that audience. Obviously, this is a quartet that will draw a younger audience. But, if Han and I play someplace that's not a jazz club, we have a younger audience, too.

BS: *You've been working together for 20 years now, so you have spanned a generation.*

PB: It was very funny. We had a broadcast up at Columbia University, and this very nice lady played a lot of old stuff from '69 and '70. We couldn't remember a lot of it because you make a record, listen to a test pressing, say "f**k it," and go on to the next one.

HB: We make records and don't listen to them.

PB: There was a lot of interesting music on them.

HB: I was quite surprised.

PB: It would take a long time to look over this period of 20 years and say, "It started here," and, "Here we are now."

HB: You can't say we've been nowhere.

PB: A lot has changed, but it's not concrete.

HB: I'm glad I can't say what the changes are. Tonight is the main thing, and after tonight, tomorrow. You have to do it all over again each night.

PB: Of course, we're 20 years older. For myself, I can say I'm more conscious of the things I play than 20 years ago.

BS: *Is experience a liability for an improviser?*

HB: It is for life, so it is for music.

BS: *Do you sense an information lag between the two continents?*

PB: I'm so busy working that it is hard to say. I'm really not informed anymore about what younger people are doing. On the other hand, when I have a chance to work with somebody, I come back to the old guys, not because I know what they're doing, but because I haven't met many younger people. I would like to.

HB: There are some. When we started, John Zorn wasn't there. Steve Beresford wasn't there. But we need more.

PB: When I play in Berlin, I take a train that takes eight hours to arrive. It takes eight hours to fly here. There is a mixing of European, Japanese, and American musicians, so I can now play with Andrew Cyrille, Ronald Shannon Jackson, Han Bennink, Cecil Taylor, here and in Europe and Japan. What you refer to is not as bad as it used to be.

BS: *What happened to FMP? It suspended releasing records and all seemed lost for awhile.*

PB: We had a crisis that we survived. We stopped making records for a while, but FMP continued giving concerts. We are making records again, but there are things, like re-pressing, that are going to be done differently. The important point here is that behind FMP there is one crazy person that has been working for it since the beginning, Jost Gebers. Without him, FMP would have died as a record company like ICP died as a record company.

HB: We didn't die. We have a new item out.

PB: Oh, come on.

HB: We didn't die at all. FMP means "Free Music Production." With us, documentation was just a small part. But I agree with Peter, we



H. L. LINDENMAIER



HYOU VIELZ

always had a lack of distribution. When I did the first record with Willem Breuker, there were 500 copies, and I drew all the covers by hand. Now they're worth a fortune. No, but we started the same year as Peter and FMP, and we only have 25 items. Or is it 26? Anyway, I never liked the whole production thing very much. We just made very cheap covers and 1,000 copies and that's it. Now that more of a market has been developed for it they run after them like special stamps. I had 10 records with me last night and I sold them in a minute.

BS: Have you ever received government support?

HB: Never.

PB: What FMP gets is for concerts, but not for records.

HB: That would be like Ronald Reagan giving Ornette Coleman money. I've got a personal grant, but it's not enough to live on. They give ICP money for five theater plays by Misha for a bunch of improvisors and some money for the ICP Sextet, but you have to spend a certain amount of it to put on the event and you have to write things about it.

PB: It's completely different in Germany. I never get personal grants from anybody. The grant for the concerts in Berlin is different

HAN BENNINK/PETER BROTZMANN'S EQUIPMENT

"My snare is a concert model Sonor," says Han Bennink, "bass drum is an old Premier or WFL or Leedy (I have several models and I like to change). On the hi-hat I use a pair of Tibetan cymbals I bought in Kathmandu from a Tibetan monk—they are very old and rare. I have many cymbals and I like them all—different sizes, Chinese, Turkish. I'm very fond of a cymbal I got as a present in Allentown, PA, a very old Constantinople, heavy. I like to use Chinese tom-toms, and I also use timbales, divided, sometimes old Leedy timpani. All this stuff looks pretty old-fashioned. I am fond of using a soft woolen beater for the bass drum. I screw all the dampers out. I prefer to play on real heads and use Rohema 10W *trommelstucke* [drumsticks]—they come from East Germany. I play a C melody Buescher saxophone—Otto Link mouthpiece and soft reeds. Since I travel a lot in Europe I have trained myself in playing any drum kit—tables, chairs, windows, doors, glasses, stairs, so on. I also use a megaphone, metronomes, Chinese temples blocks, tins, and so on. It is not all so important. It is about how you do it anyway."

Peter Brotzmann's tenor is a Selmer; he also plays a Buescher baritone, and a Mayer E⁹ clarinet. His Hungarian taragato is made by Schunda.

HAN BENNINK/PETER BROTZMANN SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as co-leaders

BALLS—FMP 0020
ELEMENTS—FMP 0030
COUSCOUS DE LA MAURESQUE—FMP 0040
THE END—FMP 0050
OUTSPAN NO. 1—FMP 0180
OUTSPAN NO. 2—FMP 0200
TSCHUS—FMP 0230
EIN HALBER HUND KAHN NICHT PINKELN—FMP 0420
SCHWARZWALDFAHRT—FMP 0440
3 POINTS AND A MOUNTAIN—FMP 0670
GROUPCOMPOSING—ICP 006
FREE JAZZ UND KINDER—FMP S-1/2
EINHEITSFRONTLIED—FMP S-3

Bennink as leader/co-leader

SOLO—ICP 011
WEST OST—SAJ 21
TEMPO COMODO—Data A 23
MISHA MENGELBERG/JOHN TCHICAI/HAN BENNINK—ICP 002
MISHA MENGELBERG/DEREK BAILEY/JOHN TCHICAI/HAN BENNINK—ICP 005
TOPOGRAPHY OF THE LUNGS—Incus 1
INSTANT COMPOSERS POOL—ICP 007/008
MIDWOUND—ICP 013
EINEPERTIETTISCHENNIS—ICP 014
COMPANY 3—Incus 25
A EUROPEAN PROPOSAL—Moro 35/36
YO LE—ICP 021
COMPANY 6—Incus 29
CALLING DOWN THE FLEVO SPIRIT—Snipe 7678
COMPANY 7—Incus 30

with Misha Mengelberg

REGENERATION—Soul Note 1054
CHANGE OF SEASON—Soul Note 1104
DUO—ICP 010

with Eric Dolphy

LAST DATE—Limelight 82011
EPISTROPHY—ICP 015

with Don Cherry

ACTIONS—Phillips 6305 153
ORIENT—BYG 245

with Dexter Gordon

LIVE AT THE AMSTERDAM "PARADISO"—Catfish 5C188 24 356/57

with Marion Brown

PORTO NOVO—Arista/Freedom 1001

with Paul Bley

IMPROVISIE—America 30 AM 6121

with J. R. Monterose

J. R. MONTEROSE IS ALIVE IN AMSTERDAM—Heavy Soul 1502

with Noah Howard

PATTERNS—Altsax 1

with Globe Unity Orchestra

HAMBURG '74—FMP 0650

with ICP Tentet/Orchestra

TETTERTET—ICP 020
IN BERLIN—SAJ 23
JAPAN JAPON—DIW 1014

with Steve Lacy

LUMPS—ICP 016

with Willem Breuker

BAAL BRECHT BREUKER—Bvhaast 003
NEW ACOUSTIC SWING DUO—ICP 001

with Leo Cuypers

HEAVY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN—Bvhaast 037

with Alexander von Schlippenbach

THE LIVING MUSIC—FMP 0100

with Manfred Schoof

EUROPEAN ECHOES—FMP 0010

with Keshavan Maslak

HUMANPLEXITY—LEO 101

Brotzmann as leader/co-leader

FOR ADOLPHE SAX—FMP 0080
MACHINE GUN—FMP 0090
NIPPLES—Calig 30604
BROTZMANN—FMP 0130
SOLO—FMP 0360
THE NEARER THE BONE, THE SWEETER THE MEAT—FMP 0690
EDELGARD . . . MAAR HELAASI—FMP 0800
OPENED, BUT HARDLY TOUCHED—FMP 0840/50
ANDREW CYRILLE MEETS BROTZMANN IN BERLIN—FMP 1000
ALARM—FMP 1030
PICA PICA—FMP 1050
TRIOS BY COMPANY—Incus 51
LAST EXIT—Enemy 001

with Globe Unity Orchestra

GLOBE UNITY '73: LIVE IN WUPPERTAL—FMP 0160
HAMBURG '74—FMP 0650
PEARLS—FMP 0380
JAHRMARKT/LOCAL FAIR—Po Torch 2
IMPROVISATIONS—Japo 60021

with ICP Tentet

TETTERTET—ICP 020
IN BERLIN—SAJ 23
JAPAN JAPON—DIW 1014

with Alexander von Schlippenbach

GLOBE UNITY—MPS 15016
THE LIVING MUSIC—FMP 0100

with Manfred Schoof

EUROPEAN ECHOES—FMP 0010

because a lot of money is pumped into the cultural business in Berlin because it is a special situation. On the other hand, we have the so-called Goethe Institute, which helps from time to time with tickets.
HB: They do give a lot of money, not for us, but for Albert [Mangelsdorff] and other guys.

PB: I'm quite happy with the situation that I can deal without them.

HB: I think it's better for the music. db

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



MILES DAVIS

TUTU—Warner Bros. 25490-4: *TUTU*; *TOMAAS*; *PORTIA*; *SPLATCH*; *BACKYARD RITUAL*; *PERFECT WAY*; *DON'T LOSE YOUR MIND*; *FULL NELSON*.

Personnel: Davis, trumpet; Marcus Miller, bass, guitar, soprano saxophone, clarinet, synthesizers; Paulinho Da Costa (1, 3-5), Steve Reid (4), percussion; George Duke (5), Bernard Wright (7), synthesizers; Michal Urbaniak, violin (7); Omar Hakim, drums (2); Jason Miles, Adam Holzman, synthesizer programming.

★★★★

Just as Gil Evans was hailed for his work with Miles on *Sketches Of Spain*, so should Marcus Miller be acclaimed for his work with Miles on this album. In fact, the two projects are very similar.

Now, before all you curmudgeons out there begin crying "heresy," consider this: both projects were basically conceived by other minds and presented to Miles as a foundation on which to add his own individual voice. Both projects were intended to cross over into a more commercial market. Neither project was jazz, per se.

And not only does Marcus lay the groundwork, he plays nearly all the instruments himself as well. Basically, *Tutu* is the finest Marcus Miller album to date.

Side one is even a good Miles album, full of the dark, sinister, mysterious qualities that have graced his music all through the years. The brooding title cut may even satisfy old-school Miles fans, as he acquits himself beautifully on muted trumpet on a sparse, spacious arrangement. They may also accept *Portia*, a somber, haunting work in the tradition of *Sketches Of Spain*. But then it kicks the bombastic funk of *Splatch*, with its many sampled sounds, thumb-heavy bass line, and catchy hooks. And forget about side two. Much too poppy for anyone still stuck in a *Milestones* timewarp.

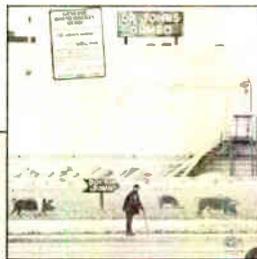
I'm not so hot on side two myself, but I admire Marcus' production values. The cat is subtle. Hear how he weaves Count Basie's voice, uttering the classic "one mo' time," from *April In Paris*, into the bright fabric of *Perfect Way*. Not to mention all the near-subliminal pieces happening in that pop puzzle. And dig all the weird electronic dub sounds in *Don't Lose Your Mind*, or his clever use of clarinet to double the bassline on that tune. He makes sure there's plenty happening, both in the pocket and in the fabric, before he summons the maestro to add his voice to the proceedings.

Bass players will like this album. Young fans (those who consider *Bitches Brew* his early period) will dig it. Prince fans may even groove to *Full Nelson*. Fellow producers will drool over

this album. And big-name pop stars should take note: with *Tutu*, Marcus Miller may have established himself as "the new Nile Rodgers" of production.

As for Miles, who knows what might be next for the man who keeps moving? Since re-emerging onto the scene in 1981 with *The Man With The Horn*, his projects have been getting increasingly commercial. And yet all the while he's still playing Miles. Skeptics may dismiss *Tutu* as hip muzak. But if they would forget about the labels, ease up on the jazz fascism, and listen to his horn, they'd hear that the man is still blowing. And more power to him.

—bill milkowski



DR. JOHN

GUMBO—Alligator 3901: *Iko Iko*; *Blow Wind Blow*; *Big Chief*; *Somebody Changed The Lock*; *Mess Around*; *Let The Good Times Roll*; *Junko Partner*; *Stack-A-Lee*; *Tipitina*; *Those Lonely Lonely Nights*; *Huey Smith Medley (High Blood Pressure, Don't You Just Know It, Well I'll Be John Brown)*; *Little Liza Jane*.

Personnel: Dr. John (Mac Rebennack), piano, guitar, vocals; Melvin Lastie, cornet; Sidney George, Lee Allen, David Lastie, Moe Bechamin, saxophones; Harold Battiste, saxophone, clarinet; Streamline, trombone; Sidney George, harmonica; Ken Klimak, Alvin Robinson, guitars; Ronnie Barron, electric piano, organ, piano; Jimmy Calhoun, bass; Freddie Staehle, drums; Richard "Didimus" Washington, percussion; Shirley Goodman, Tami Lynn, Robbie Montgomery, Ronnie Barron, Alvin Robinson, Moe Bechamin, Jesse Smith, vocals.

★★★★★

This classic album, originally released on Atco Records in 1972, is the first in the new "Rockback" series on Alligator Records. It's the perfect choice for inaugurating a reissue series dedicated to albums of "timeless value"—even after 14 years, *Gumbo* still sounds fresh.

Dr. John (Mac Rebennack) started out as a New Orleans studio musician but achieved notoriety in the '60s for his weird "Night Tripper" character. Dressed up in garish robes, Rebennack heaved gris-gris around the stage and muttered lyrics about gilded splinters. Then he made *Gumbo*, a no-nonsense album that introduced a whole generation of psychedelic listeners to the delights of New Orleans r&b. For his "picture of the music New Orleans people listen to," Rebennack picked some great tunes from the '50s and rounded up

many of the musicians who played on the original records. He didn't try to recreate the old versions note-for-note, though. Like a great New Orleans chef, Rebennack whipped up his *Gumbo* by creating his own recipe.

New Orleans r&b is a unique combination of ingredients: jazz, blues, jump, calypso, latin, creole, and cajun flavors. The powerful rhythms hold it all together, and *Gumbo* is chock full of the best New Orleans grooves: the thundering Bo Diddley beat of *Iko Iko*; the loping swing of *Stack-A-Lee*; the slow, grinding rock of *Let The Good Times Roll*. Best of all is *Junko Partner*, with the bass laying down a solid, imperturbable oom-pah over a strutting parade beat on the drums. In his liner notes, Dr. John describes Freddie Staehle's "second line" drumming on the tune as "relaxed licks all around the beat but with perfect time." Indeed.

Rebennack's gravelly vocals may be an acquired taste, but his phrasing is uncanny and he has the mysterious cajun patois down cold. His piano playing is the real story, though. He pays tribute to all his heroes: Professor Longhair mostly, but also Ray Charles, Archibald, and Huey Smith. You can hear his estimable synthesis of these influences—later documented on the superb *Dr. John Plays Mac Rebennack* (Clean Cuts 705) and *The Brightest Smile In Town* (Clean Cuts 707) albums—taking shape. He plays some wonderfully raw guitar on *Let The Good Times Roll*, too, "based off Guitar Slim."

Those of us with original copies of *Gumbo* may lament that the liner notes have been condensed a bit, and that the gatefold cover has been pared down to a conventional jacket. (The wonderful portrait of Rebennack in front of the Yudda's Yummy stand is gone.) That's okay, though, because it's nice to hear the songs without all the scratches—and the music is still essential listening for rhythm section players, r&b buffs, American musicologists, and all the "New Orleans people" out there—no matter where they live.

—jim roberts



FRANK MORGAN

LAMENT—Contemporary 14021: *Ceora*; *Until It's Time For You To Go*; *Perdido*; *Ana Maria*; *Lament*; *Half Nelson*.

Personnel: Morgan, alto saxophone; Cedar Walton, piano; Buster Williams, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

★★★★½

Bebop alto players. Bird got 'em hooked on the notes and, against his will, something else.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30

SOUNDING THE KEYNOTE

by John McDonough

The past decade has seen any number of "complete" multi-disc collections issued, but to date all have been devoted to a specific artist or style of music. *The Complete Keynote Collection* (PolyGram 830 121-1) is the first collection in my experience to offer the total output of an entire label—on 21 LPs comprising 60 recording sessions (333 performances) from March 1941-May 1947. That's because Keynote Records came to stand for something in the mid-'40s jazz scene. There was diversity in its output, but it was mostly guided by the vision and taste of a single producer. Harry Lim—who today produces Famous Door Records—has his say about his Keynote years in a brief introduction to the companion 40-page booklet (half-English, half-Japanese). But perhaps too little is said about Eric Bernay, founder of the label. In the '30s he was associated with *The New Masses*, a radical left monthly that had been an unofficial, somewhat freewheeling voice of the American Communist party. It was Bernay and *The New Masses* that sponsored the famous "Spirituals To Swing" concert in 1938. Keynote was founded two years later, but more for political than musical reasons. Its catalog leaned heavily toward leftist folk songs and labor doggerel. Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger recorded for the label, as did certain Soviet artists. In 1943 the non-political Lim persuaded Bernay to let him record a series of jazz dates for Keynote. Today, as annotator Bob Porter writes, of "all the recordings done by Keynote, virtually the only ones that are remembered are the jazz records." And only they are included in this astonishingly good collection.

If you wanted to take the pulse of the jazz establishment in the middle '40s, the beat was loud and clear between Washington Square and 52nd Street in New York. It was one of those rare moments in the jazz past when musicians, critics, and audiences were of nearly a single mind. This consensus is what Lim managed to capture on his many Keynote sessions, and this is the principal theme that dominates these records. There is a subtext, too. As the consensus begins to crack, the new accents of bebop begin to seep into the mainstream of post-war small group swing. The confluence, which begins to emerge in some of the **Woody Herman** contingents and breaks through in the **Red Rodney** and **Lennie Tristano** sessions of records 20 and 21, is not violent or hostile, but evolutionary and natural.

The reissue has been organized superbly by Kiyoshi Koyama, who conceived the project. For instance, all known performances from a given session are included. This has yielded 115 previously

unheard cuts—meaning that one-third of the collection's total content is new. Finds include two **Lester Young/Count Basie** collaborations, a new *Young Sometimes I'm Happy*, along with numerous fresh **Coleman Hawkins**, **Earl Hines**, and **Tristano** sides. Moreover, each session is complete on a single LP, with no overlapping from record to record. In a couple of cases this means that as many as 12 complete cuts are squeezed onto one side of a 12-inch record, but no compromises in sound are apparent. This holds out the possibility that the albums could be issued individually or as two-fers in the future. The booklet (by Porter and mostly Dan Morgenstern) also offers a complete index of titles and musicians.

As for the individual sessions, some may be familiar through previous LP issues. I first came upon the two **Lester Young** dates, for example, as a young fan reading a **down beat** review by Don DeMicheal in 1965. Don said he first heard them in 1944, when they were originally issued. "At 16," he wrote, "I was familiar with the records King Oliver made 21 years before; to me, they sounded hopelessly dated" compared to Lester. But 21 years later, in 1965, he found the Young Keynotes still alive and utterly transcendent. "Now I wonder," he said in his 1965 review, "if today's 16-year-olds will have the same reaction to Young in relation to, say, Coltrane [as I had to Oliver in relation to Young]." Twenty-one years after *that*—and 42 years after they were made—I can only say amen to Don's judgment that they "are among the greatest performances" Lester ever cut.

The Keynote's also contain many specimens of Hawkins, Hines, **Buck Clayton**, and **Teddy Wilson** that are as fine as anything these artists ever recorded. And some of the best work on record of less seminal players such as **Charlie Shavers**, **Jonah Jones**, and **Joe Thomas** is sprinkled throughout the first two-thirds of this collection. Many of these (*Make Believe*, *Beyond The Blue Horizon*, *Bean At The Met*, *I Only Have Eyes For You*) have been fairly consistently in-print over the years.

So let me concentrate instead on some of the sessions that have been virtually unavailable since the '50s or before. Some of the most chilling **Roy Eldridge** of the period was with a trumpet section of Roy, Emmett Berry, and Joe Thomas backed by an ensemble including drummer Cozy Cole. The simple, headlong ensemble on *I Want To Be Happy* has the power of a charging bull, and Eldridge's solos are electric. Some of the best Hawkins (*Battle Of The Saxes*), **Harry Carney**, and **Don Byas** (*Three Little Words*) is wrapped up in the lifting reed ensembles of a four-sax lineup from May 1944. Four sessions featuring Ellington sidemen include a couple of beautiful **Johnny Hodges** remakes of *Finesse* recorded anew under the title *Night Wind*, and some typically surly and provocative **Rex Stewart** in an Ellingtonian atmosphere. **Barney Bigard**

also has a fine quintet session. **Juan Tizol**, with a non-Ellington group, still carries in his horn a major Ellington-period trademark.

There are also some swinging traditional dates, and the best of them are a trio of **Bud Freeman** get-togethers that produce versions of *Blue Room*, *I Found A New Baby*, and *Town Hall Blues*. They are very, very Commodorish (save for a modernistic *Inside On The Southside*). Dave Tough, Wild Bill Davison, and Ed Hall, whose clarinet pierces the ensembles with a searing sting, are among the Condon regulars on hand. Another session about the same time is a fair showcase for a superb clarinetist, **Irving Fazola**.

The last six LPs contain music that probably will be unfamiliar to most without access to the old 78s. They were to me. There are sessions by **Chubby Jackson** (bassist in the 2nd Herd), **Manny Klein**, **Babe Russin** (both top studio players and big band vets), and **Clyde Hurley** (a Glenn Miller trumpet soloist). Russin plays a good Hawkins-derived tenor. Hurley's dense trumpet suggests a kind of sterile, passionless Wild Bill Davison. Much of the music on these later LPs is conventionally peppy and/or lyrical, but without originality or a bold personal signature. The exceptions are a series of **Nat Cole** piano numbers accompanied by a restrained Willie Smith, and a totally unknown **Benny Carter** date that is consistently dazzling.

Aside from this, though, the sessions grow increasingly erratic. There are a couple of forgotten vocalist dates (a first for Keynote) and some uninteresting cocktail piano. There seems to be a casting about for new talent playing in an idiom that was rapidly yielding to bebop. Keynote's consistency was faltering badly. The best players were looking to Parker. The only way back to form was through standbys like **Joe Thomas** and **Hilton Jefferson**, who play a sweet requiem to Keynote's halcyon days that must have seemed almost nostalgic, even in late 1946. A vocal bebop session with **Dave Lambert** and **Buddy Stewart** emphasizes, in retrospect, the most stylized and dated aspects of the new music. A 1947 first-rate Rodney date brings Keynote into bebop, but too late to revive the label's fading presence. Keynote's final two sessions pointed in a direction few could gauge in the throes of bebop. Lennie Tristano built dense harmonic mazes on simple premises in a way that wouldn't be recognized fully until the rise of Bill Evans nearly 20 years later. Here is Tristano in his first session as leader—and what was to be the last session for Keynote.

But the uneven tone of the label's final year-and-a-half was—like Keynote's prime period of 1944-45—a reflection of the time. And in this complete summation of the company's total output, the great music far outweighs the marginal items; no doubt because those were great times in jazz history, and Keynote captured it as few others did.

db

The notes lived while the player died.

The heroin almost got Frank Morgan. There were long stretches in prison between *Introducing Frank Morgan* (GNP 9041) in 1955 and *Easy Living* (Contemporary 14013), recorded last year. The followup, *Lament*, indicates growth—and *Easy Living* was no getting-it-together act, either.

The first thing to hit you is: here's an alto player with the dexterity of a Cannonball Adderley or a Phil Woods. He has that Benny Carter timbral touch—that alternating coloration of each note—but it's less exaggerated than Cannon's or Phil's adaptation. Within the placement of the line, he scatters accents irregularly to vary the basic eighth-note delivery.

Wayne Shorter's *Ana Maria* shows where Morgan might go. A strange tune with a '60s feeling, it inspires Morgan in the blowing direction of its composer. Like Cannonball, he uses his vibrato to sustain motion during static harmonic periods. He doesn't run out of ideas. *Perdido* and *Half Nelson* represent the vocabulary of bebop, of course. Morgan negotiates the fast-moving changes fluidly, with a little JATP shouting on the former. He really does possess commanding chops.

Chops facilitate but do not dominate this album's integrity. This is a record of imagination and moods, with the rhythm section setting up Morgan—and each other—bountifully. Walton's taste and historical awareness, Williams' resilience, and Higgins' unclipped crispness—these resources move you.

Morgan arrived out of the same Los Angeles milieu as Dexter Gordon and Art Pepper,

among others. In the liner notes, he talks about the jazzman's big-fish-in-a-small-pond status in prison. The jazzman worries about his possible anonymity in the bigger pond when he's released, Morgan says. He shouldn't worry. *Lament* is a very distinguishable wail in the world of jazz.

—owen cordle



JOHN FOGERTY

Eye Of The Zombie—Warner Bros. 25449-1: *GOIN' BACK HOME; EYE OF THE ZOMBIE; HEADLINES; KNOCKIN' ON YOUR DOOR; CHANGE IN THE WEATHER; VIOLENCE IS GOLDEN; WASN'T THAT A WOMAN; SODA POP; SAIL AWAY.*
Personnel: Fogerty, vocals, guitars, keyboards; Alan Pasqua, keyboards (3); Neil Stubenhaus, bass; John Robinson, drums, percussion; Bobby King, Willie Green, Jr., Terry Evans, vocals.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Lately John Fogerty's been grouching about being put in a roots box; seems he wants his

music placed in a more contemporary light, whatever that may mean. Now, the Old Man can hardly escape the weight of his own musical past even if he wanted to. Echoes from all over have always resounded through his music with brilliant reworking, from Creedence's cover of Dale Hawkins' *Suzy-Q* on up. Maybe what he's complaining about, then, is being pigeonholed as a rock & roll neocon, a keeper of some pristine (and therefore non-existent) flame. For unlike too many of the prefab roots bands that have been sprouting ever since the major labels discovered that they fit a possible marketing configuration, Fogerty—like any intelligent and thoughtful musician—puts the past to his own energetic and idiosyncratic uses, folds it into his own voice rather than simply recycling old riffs.

Eye Of The Zombie demonstrates once more how a master does that, and just happens to be a terrific rock & roll record as well. Last year's *Centerfield* dished up an inviting array of musical treats heavily spiced with Creedency touches, serving as a kind of recap and re-intro after Fogerty's long silence. *Eye* is clearly more ambitious, offering a broader socio-political vision in the fashion of Vietnam-era Creedence; you could call it a concept album except that it lacks the fussy pretensions that term evokes.

The kickoff instrumental cut, *Goin' Back Home*, blends synth washes with a highly compressed guitar that fairly implodes with Stephen Foster melodies of yearning, then segues into the swampy title track's generalized sense of impending doom ("Time has

UPDATING THE MAINSTREAM

by Owen Cordle

Call it post-Wynton and Branford, neo-Jazz Messengers, or the aftermath of arrested development during the '70s, but the new acoustic mainstream jazz is mostly the '60s updated. Miles' mode, soul Trane, Buhaina's delight, Hub tones, Silver's serenade—these are a few of the references.

On *Nascence* (Columbia 40335), **Donald Harrison and Terence Blanchard** refer to '60s Miles and Blakey plus New Orleans funk and antiphony and '80s Wynton. Blanchard is more basic with respect to the blues and the New Orleans tradition of dirty brass than Wynton. Harrison's alto, like Branford's tenor and soprano, seems the equivalent of a trumpet style. (In the '60s, the trumpeters were copying Trane.) Harrison and Blanchard phrase alike. They complete each other's lines in a telepathic counterpoint. The rest of the quintet includes pianist Mulgrew Miller, bassist Phil Bowler, and drummer Ralph Peterson Jr., with percussionist Jeff Haynes added on one cut. The dazzling conversations of the hornmen almost leave the pianist behind, but Miller responds with solid public domain Tynerisms—not as

original as the trumpet and alto voices, but appropriate. Peterson is a firebrand. Is it new? Well, it's not revolutionary, but it's a good summary of a lot of post-bop sounds filtered through the entire history of New Orleans music. And Harrison and Blanchard do get around their horns. "Updated" as distinguished from revisited.

Drummer **Alvin Queen's Jammin' Uptown** (Nilva 3413), which features Blanchard, is more visceral and directly Jazz Messengers-ish than *Nascence*. In the hard-top tradition—again updated for modern angularities and better technique—this is an excellent record. Manny Boyd's saxophones convey that Texas tenor and soul Trane spirit, and newcomer Robin Eubanks locks into the J. J. Johnson/Curtis Fuller/Slide Hampton slip-stream on trombone. The tunes, all originals from the sextet, are voiced with Messengers-like urgency, with an occasional hint of Jazztet-like coolness. Pianist John Hicks stars in the rhythm section, honing an exciting rhythmic edge over Ray Drummond's flat-footed bass walk and Queen's hard-driving beat. The entire sextet is on.

Where Queen's band mixes young and slightly older personnel, **Out of the Blue**, heard on *Inside Track* (Blue Note 85128), is strictly young blood. This second album by the Blue Note sextet spreads the updated Message, but the writing and soloists do not reach the maturity of *Jammin' Uptown* or the current Messengers. Tenor

saxophonist Ralph Bowen, a hip combination of Trane and Mike Brecker, and Ralph Peterson Jr., who explodes as trenchantly here as he does on *Nascence*, are the most consistently rewarding players. Alto man Kenny Garrett, however, uncorks the album's best solo—a raw, compelling tirade on Peterson's *Nathan Jones*. Trumpeter Michael Philip Mossman and pianist Harry Pichens haven't quite worked out all the technical kinks yet, but Bob Hurst, who doubles as Wynton's current bassman, is a fine timekeeper and soloist out of a Paul Chambers bag. Altogether, not a bad album (the horn harmony is nice), but there's still room for growth.

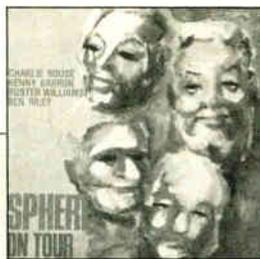
Trumpeter **Tom Harrell's Play Of Light** (BlackHawk 50901), recorded in 1982 (pre-Phil Woods days), is a continuation of old roots rather than a replanting like *Nascence*, *Jammin' Uptown*, and *Inside Track*. Tenor saxophonist Ricky Ford and guitarist Bruce Forman are the youthful entries here, with bassist Eddie Gomez, drummer Billy Hart, and the late pianist Albert Dailey. Harrell's solos make the Hubbard/Shaw/Byrd (out of Brown and Dorham) connections, and they're more jagged than Blanchard's on the other albums. This record also has an occasional melodic coolness that the others lack. Harrell, though, is more tender and cliff-hanging in person. The tunes and voicings echo Horace Silver, Benny Golson, and . . . Tom Harrell, whose pre-Woods identity is well-served by this date.

db

come again . . . again/The moment of truth/The terror is at hand/And there's nothin' you can do") with its swooping and searing axework. *Headlines* does a hard-edged shuffle as it specifies some of the sources for that dread ("Some freakin' deacon/Wearing military shoes . . . He's gonna drop the Big One/And there's nothin' I can do"), while the running-through-the-jungle-style pessimism of *Change in The Weather* laces its apocalyptic vision with raunchy guitar and huffing gospel vocals. And the arms dealers who market their wares to Hendrix-y bursts of bombs and machine guns (*Violence Is Golden*) are paralleled by pop-star vendors of bubbly treats (*Soda Pop*) who sell themselves and their nostalgic images to a funkier beat.

Not that this LP is locked into the jeremiad mode. The Stax-derived *Knockin' On Your Door* personalizes the larger disjunctions of the other tunes, rendering them in terms of romantic loss and return, as does the good-humored, funk-powered *Wasn't That A Woman*. But overall it seems that the Age Of Reagan looks pretty bleak when you're staring at the *Eye Of The Zombie*—in fact, the closing cut depicts a Close-Encounter-style escape from the torn and frightened world Fogerty has surveyed. In a nutshell, this ain't no roseate neocon nostalgia pitch, and Fogerty's unique and powerful voice is as welcome—and needed—as ever.

—gene santoro



SPHERE

ON TOUR—Red 191: *DUAL FORCE*; *BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP*; *SCRATCH*; *TAYAMISHA*; *SPIRAL*; *WELL YOU NEEDN'T*.

Personnel: Charlie Rouse, tenor saxophone; Kenny Barron, piano; Buster Williams, bass; Ben Riley, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

STAN GETZ

VOYAGE—BlackHawk 51101: *I WANTED TO SAY*; *I THOUGHT ABOUT YOU*; *YESTERDAYS*; *DREAMS*; *FALLING IN LOVE*; *VOYAGE*.

Personnel: Getz, tenor saxophone; Kenny Barron, piano; George Mraz, bass; Victor Lewis, drums; Babatunde, percussion (cut 4).

★ ★ ★

Novelist John Gardner once made the distinction between Primary Literature, which deals with life, and Secondary Literature, which is concerned with language. To the extent that this construct can be applied to jazz—Anthony Braxton refers to many of his compositions as language music; certainly, anyone who aspires to jazz purism would say the

subject of their music is life—*On Tour* and *Voyage* are solidly Primary, and exemplary of how such jazz artists are incrementally incorporating what the purist would construe as Secondary elements into their improvisational vocabulary. A strongly textured aside inserted into a saxophone solo or an unorthodox set of chord changes are, in themselves, nothing new; but it is these very devices that indicate continued growth in the music of Stan Getz, the longtime Lesterian, and Sphere, who have shed the cocoon of being a repertory quartet honoring Monk.

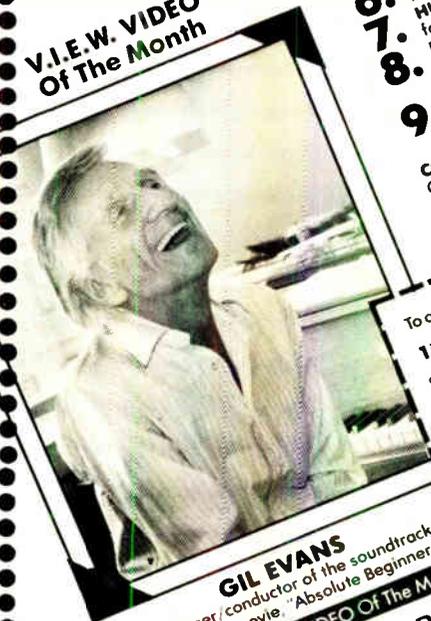
The lynchpinning of these two recordings by Kenny Barron is especially noteworthy, as the pianist's technical and expressive breadth is honed towards conveying the complexity of

the storyteller's mind without losing sight of the story's simplicity. On standards such as *I Thought About You* and *Beautiful Friendship*, Barron's supple phrase-turning never sacrifices concision and cogency for baroque detail. His forte is a recombinant brand of hard-bop that compares favorably to the chestnuts of Hancock (particularly the development of the chordal underpinning of his angular solo on his own *Scratch*, which culminates with powerful octaves) and, compositionally, Shorter (the recasting of mid-period-Coltrane harmonic studies on *Voyage* and Monkish blues cubism on *Scratch*). While his presence is a high common denominator between the two recordings, the vivid live ambiance of *On Tour* especially suits Barron's crisp attack and



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prodding comp style.

The contrasts between the two quartets may be traced through the respective styles of Getz and Charlie Rouse. Although both saxophonists favor thematic, rather than harmonic, solo development, Rouse's harder timbral edge and relatively sparse, staccato phrasing is, for the most part, more propulsive—his solo on Barron's *Spiral*, a piece that segues between balladic musings and vamp-anchored intensity, shows more diversity than his Monk-playing-sax reputation implies. Ballads and mid-tempo pieces remain the strongest venues for Getz's legato lyricism and feathered tone, which *Voyage* serves up amply. Getz meets the challenge of Barron's title composition, which demands considerable dramatic sweep from a soloist, but his admirable instincts for subtlety and understatement have a slightly dampening effect in his improvisation.

It is not surprising, then, that the interplay of Sphere uses broader, bolder strokes than Getz's quartet, attributable to concert versus studio settings for the respective recordings. Getz's cohorts are all top-drawer players who are playing at par; though the sparks fly only occasionally, a mellow glow persists. *On Tour* makes the case that a working unit should be recorded in concert whenever possible, as such a setting makes for jazz's most vivid life studies.

—bill shoemaker



THE LOUNGE LIZARDS

BIG HEART—Island 90529-1: *BIG HEART; HAIR STREET; FAT HOUSE; IT COULD HAVE BEEN VERY VERY BEAUTIFUL; THEY WERE INSANE; THE PUNCH AND JUDY TANGO; MAP OF BUBBLES.*

Personnel: John Lurie, alto saxophone; Evan Lurie, piano; Erik Sanko, boss; Douglas Bowne, drums; Curtis Fowlkes, trombone; Roy Nathanson, soprano, alto, tenor saxophone; Marc Ribot, guitar.

★ ★ ★ ½

What started out as a joke has evolved into something beyond the "fake jazz" of their early years. The current edition of *The Lounge Lizards* is considerably more versatile and accomplished than that first lineup from 1979 featuring the Luries, Arto Lindsay on skronk guitar, Anton Fier on drums, and Steve Piccolo on bass. Yet they've lost none of the irreverent fun of that upstart band.

Principal composer John Lurie still digs dissonance (*Fat House*) and film noir soundtracks (the dark, stark *It Could Have Been Very Very Beautiful*), but he's picked up some other influences along the way. The title track, for example, comes right out of the

Decoding Society school of Afro-cacophony, with drummer Bowne laying down a muscular Ronald Shannon Jackson-type tom-tom groove and guitarist Ribot providing the insane Vernon Reid-type riffs. And the tongue-in-cheek blues of *Hair Street* recalls one of the organic jams of Gil Evans and his group on a typical Monday night in the Village at Sweet Basil's.

The addition of two horns to the band has given Lurie a wider palette of harmonic pos-

sibilities. And not only do saxist Nathanson and trombonist Fowlkes help fatten up the sound, they turn in some fine solos as well. Fowlkes' extended solo on *Punch And Judy Tango*, an Astor Piazzolla-influenced original by Evan Lurie, is particularly noteworthy.

While this album may be more sophisticated in many ways than past efforts, it's still got that edge to it that makes it appealing to the rock-noise crowd. Granted, Marc Ribot is not Arto Lindsay in the nerve-jangling department, but

THE PULSE OF IMPULSE

by Jon Balleras

Here's the first wave of digitally remastered discs from the sizeable Impulse catalog. Pressed by MCA/Impulse on premium virgin vinyl, no less, the 12 records in this series feature innersleeve reproductions of the releases' original liner notes and photographs, and contain, by and large, some important work by major artists. Recorded mainly between 1960-63, on the whole these records make up a block of always interesting, sometimes provocative music, happily now back in circulation.

Ahmed Jamal's *The Awakening* (MCA 5644) may become my favorite record of his. Never trite or vapid, and belonging to no easily discernable pianistic school, Jamal could be a one-of-a-kind original. He's a master of subtle, strikingly original voicings and sonorities, and his well-planned intros, interludes, and codas lead the songs to intuitively logical climaxes and semi-climaxes, all woven together by this pianist's delicate, deft lines—the work of a first-rate musical imagination. Jamal's sympathetic cohorts, bassist Jamil Nasser and drummer Frank Gant, are equal partners in these crafty etudes in pretty color and form.

The tunes in **Oliver Nelson's *Blues And The Abstract Truth*** (MCA 5659) are celebrated formal exercises in a more rigorous, academic sense than Jamal's seemingly intuitive structures. Indeed, all of Nelson's compositions here are based on reworkings of the blues and *I Got Rhythm* changes, an attempt to expand these harmonic structures to "let musical ideas determine the form and shape" of musical compositions. The seven-piece group that Nelson assembled for this date includes some stellar performers of the '60s, including Eric Dolphy, Freddie Hubbard, Bill Evans, Paul Chambers, and Roy Haynes. Yet one might wish that these players had had more than a passing chance to become familiar with the design of Nelson's work, for while the ensembles here are flawlessly executed, solo space is used ineffectively, with each of these players trotting out variant upon variant of the archetype of his own favorite solo. The result is well-crafted improvising—perhaps

too much so.

The 15-piece **Gil Evans Orchestra** evidences no such difficulty in melding soloist and form on *Out Of The Cool* (MCA 5653). This is the kind of music in which one squeezed, dark tone from Jimmy Knepper's trombone opens a lane into an entire ominous harmonic spectrum, in which poignant riffs are treated in progressive shades of chilling brass dissonance, in which insidious background rumbles swell to complex orchestral climaxes. Throughout are other masterful sweeps of timbral resourcefulness: low-voiced trombone tones support Johnny Coles' trumpet colors, a trombone intones the bass line of George Russell's *Stratusphunk*, a delicate piano/guitar/flute segment gives way to torrid low-brass colors. Need it be said that this is the work of a master arranger/orchestrator, one who unerringly mixes the colors of the jazz orchestral palette?

One obvious influence on Evans is, of course, **Duke Ellington**, and the Duke's scores for his *Duke Ellington Meets Coleman Hawkins* (MCA 5650) are done with a truncated version of the 1962 Ellington band and contain, not unexpectedly, some fine passages of octet tints and shadings, including Johnny Hodges' full-throated, easeful alto textures, Ray Nance's brittle harmon mute and violin sonorities, and Lawrence Brown's vocal-like plungered trombone. But Hawkins is the standout. A leviathan musician, his tweedy, natty tenor tone is so large that you seem to be able to pick it up and squeeze it. On *The Jeep Is Jumpin'* Hawkins foils Hodges' crystalline alto sax work with a swelling solo that bulges outside itself. And note his lush ballad stylings on Ellington's *Self Portrait (Of The Bean)*.

Hawkins also appears on the **Benny Carter Orchestra's *Further Definitions*** (MCA 5651). Although calling the musicians here an "orchestra" stretches the point a little—this is a session with four saxophones plus rhythm—multi-instrumentalist/arranger Carter penned some fine, challenging charts, which are lightly, fleetingly executed by his fellow reedmen. There's a revived *Cottontail* and featherweight *Doozy*, plus an all-hands-on-deck *Body And Soul*, which features a monster coda in which Hawkins nearly tops his famous 1939 outpouring on this tune. This saxophone summit's challenges of thought and feeling are backed by a rhythm section that includes Jo Jones and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 57

he gets off a pretty good skronk himself on *Fat House*. And his work on *They Were Insane*—a soundtrack for the deranged movie in John Lurie's mind—only enhances the sonic chaos.

Jazz fans may find this one more listenable, more credible. But beware: it ain't exactly Eltingtonia, folks.

—bill milkowski



SHEILA JORDAN

THE CROSSING—BlackHawk 50501: *INCHWORM; SHEILA'S BLUES; LITTLE WILLIE LEAPS; IT NEVER ENTERED MY MIND; THE CROSSING; YOU'D BE SO NICE TO COME HOME TO; YOU MUST BELIEVE IN SPRING; SUITE FOR LADY AND PREZ; UNTIL TOMORROW.*

Personnel: Jordan, vocals; Tom Harrell, trumpet; Kenny Barron, piano; Harvie Swartz, bass; Ben Riley, drums.

★★★★★

ABBEY LINCOLN

TALKING TO THE SUN—Enja 4060: *THE RIVER; WHISTLING AWAY THE DARK; TALKING TO THE SUN; YOU AND I; PEOPLE ON THE STREET; YOU'RE MY THRILL; PRELUDE (A WEDDING SONG).*

Personnel: Lincoln, vocals; Steve Coleman, alto saxophone; James Weidman, piano; Billy Johnson, bass; Mark Johnson, drums; Jerry Gonzalez, percussion; Arlene Knox, Bemshee Shiner, Naima Williams, vocals.

★★★★★

CASSANDRA WILSON

POINT OF VIEW—JMT 860004: *SQUARE ROOTS; BLUE IN GREEN; NEVER; DESPERATE MOVE; LOVE AND HATE; I AM WAITING; I WISHED ON THE MOON; I THOUGHT YOU KNEW.*

Personnel: Wilson, vocals; Steve Coleman, alto saxophone, percussion; Grachan Moncur III, trombone; Jean-Paul Bourelly, electric guitar; Lonnie Plaxico, bass, electric bass; Mark Johnson, drums.

★★★★½

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The oldest of these vocalists (at 57), Sheila sings with the most girlish enthusiasm, contemplating how nice you'd be to come home to. She loses herself in AmPopSongs—faltering only on a stagey Billie/Prez medley—but Jordan's best when finding herself, reliving rites of passage without confessional dreariness. Wailing a milestone in jazz autobiography, *Sheila's Blues*—about singing *You Are My Sunshine* in Pennsylvania coal-country, and chasing the Bird through Detroit—exuberance takes over. But she'll bring her voice down to a whisper where less prudent singers would try to slay you. An affirmation of rebirth, the title tune is a stark duet; bassist Swartz strums rather like some Ozark flatpicker, underscoring the simple chords and plaintive hymnal melody. Like Charlie Haden, Jordan draws on the folkier, mountain-side of American music, giving this flawed but stunning recital breadth to match its depth.

Like Jordan, Abbey Lincoln long ago earned the right to sing material she can believe in, but 1984's *Talking* is the first set over which she's had total control. Abbey can croon *You're My Thrill* without a hint of Holiday, or inhabit Wonder's *You And I*, but her originals are most arresting. The celebratory *Talking* runs on trans-African can, pitting two against three; the gospel *River* transforms a freeway ride into a baptismal rite. Lincoln's delivery has always been brashly brassy, full of persuasive conviction. It would have to be, to stand up to the stellar bands she's fronted, this working unit included. Steve Coleman shines on a lustrous *You And I* solo and *Thrill's* doubletime break.

Coleman (and Mark Johnson) back Cassandra Wilson, too, and it's surely no accident that her best recording yet (with Steve's Five Elements, on JMT 860005) is her take on Lincoln's *Little One*. Cassandra's command of shading, speech-song, and dramatic low notes suggest she's learned from Abbey, yet she's blessed with a smokier, sexier voice. Where other young singers succumb to runaway kitsch,

Wilson cools down for Miles' *Blue And Green*. She can be irresistibly aloof, despite hot backing. (Coleman's dancing improvisations just keep getting better; the dusky smolder of Bourelly's bluesy guitar reinforces the singer's.) Like Lincoln, Wilson saves her Saggiest enthusiasm for what's really important: political anger (*Desperate Move*) and fearless confessions of love (the funk-tinged *I Thought You Knew*). She has the wisdom of her elders. And her career's only beginning.

—kevin whitehead



DON PULLEN/ GEORGE ADAMS

BREAKTHROUGH—Blue Note 85122: *MR. SMOOTHIE; JUST FOOLIN' AROUND; SONG FROM THE OLD COUNTRY; WE'VE BEEN HERE ALL THE TIME; A TIME FOR SOBRIETY.*

Personnel: Pullen, piano; Adams, tenor saxophone, flute; Cameron Brown, bass; Dannie Richmond, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LIVE AT THE VILLAGE VANGUARD, VOL. 2—Soul Note 1144: *SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE COSMOS; CITY GATES; THE GREAT ESCAPE; BIG ALICE.*

Personnel: Same as above.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

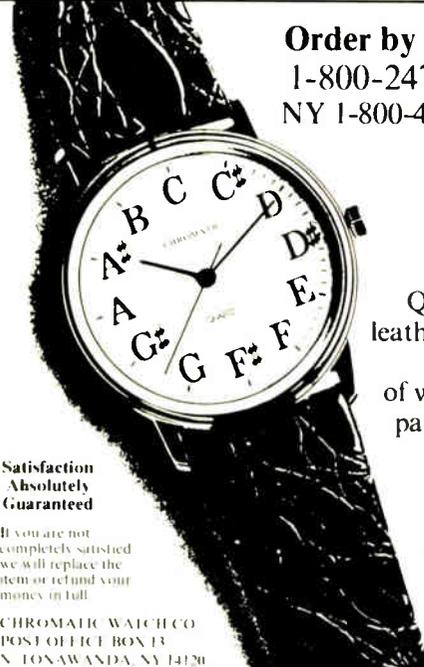
Not long ago, I saw the Pullen/Adams Quartet in a tiny nightclub. The stage was so small it barely held Dannie Richmond's drums, and the dinky spinet piano provided for Don Pullen was off to the side, on the floor. By the end of the second set, Pullen had nearly dismembered the piano, having attacked it with everything but his forehead trying to get some sort of sound out of it. George Adams, with no place to stand, roamed up and down the aisles of the club, a gleam in his eye. He roared out his solos right under the noses of some of the startled patrons. Bassist Cameron Brown, wedged in next to the drums, was the hub for the furious musical machine whirling around him.

And the Quartet ripped up the joint, leaving more than a few listeners wondering why they hadn't heard more about them. I wonder too. This is an exceptional jazz band—one with talent, taste, imagination, a sense of humor, and tremendous mutual empathy. Maybe these records will help to spread the word.

Live At The Vanguard, Vol. 2, recorded in 1983, gives a sense of what the Quartet sounds like live, although you can't quite hear the piano splintering. Three of the four tunes make up a "mythical trilogy" of Pullen's devising: a story about an imaginary fan named Big Alice and her adventures. *Saturday Night In The Cosmos*, our introduction to Big Alice, is a bouncy, melodic 5/4 piece with Adams on flute for the head. After a rippling Pullen solo, Adams picks up his tenor sax. The sax solo gathers force like an onrushing storm—things must be getting complicated for Alice—then the tune eases back down to the flute melody. *The Great Escape* is furiously uptempo, with a herky-jerky melody, a crisp solo by Richmond, and an Adams solo with a snippet of the *William Tell Overture*. The album closer, *Big Alice*, is a funk send-up (Adams quotes *Willie And The Hand Jive*) that crunches r&b and the avant garde together like Mingus used to do back when Pullen, Adams, and Richmond were in his band.

Breakthrough is just that: after seven years together, the Quartet finally got a deal with an American record company. They made the most of it. This is a very fine album: beautifully recorded, thoughtfully sequenced, and—most importantly—passionately played. Pullen's explosive playing is full of surprises, and his "searching bluesiness" (as Amira Baraka says in the liner notes) gives the group a solid foundation for their forays, one that makes their work richer and more accessible. The tunes here are shorter and more tightly focused than on the live album. Adams tempers his feverish outbursts with more space throughout. On *Song From The Old Country*, he gives a rundown on the history of the tenor sax, from Coleman Hawkins to Dexter Gordon, John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, and . . . George Adams. On *A Time For Sobriety*, he displays a ballad sensibility I'd never heard before. There's no sense that he's holding back, though—if anything, Adams is taking more chances. So are Pullen and Brown and Richmond. Over the last couple of years, it seems, the Pullen/Adams Quartet has increased their range while honing their style to a fine edge. They've cut away the excesses in their music and left us with the essence. And that's very fine indeed.

—jim roberts



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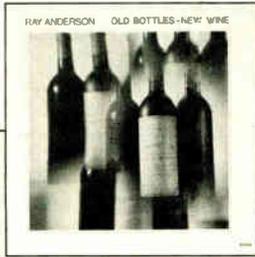
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RAY ANDERSON

OLD BOTTLES-NEW WINE—Enja 4098: LOVE ME OR LEAVE ME; BOHEMIA AFTER DARK; LA ROSITA; OW!; IN A MELLOTONE; LAIRD BAIRD; WINE.

Personnel: Anderson, trombone, vocal (cut 7); Kenny Barron, piano; Cecil McBee, bass; Dannie Richmond, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

YOU BE—Minor Music 007: QUESTION MARK; YOU BE; PUMBUM; BOXCARS; STOLE STROLL; EDWARD'S DANCE; MUDDIE ANTHEM.

Personnel: Anderson, trombone; Mark Helias, bass; Gerry Hemingway, drums, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SLICKAPHONICS

HUMATOMIC ENERGY—Blue Heron 705-1: HUMATOMIC ENERGY; BACK IN TIME; LEGEND IN MY LIVING ROOM; TRANSPOSED HEADS; DON'T JUMP; BIG BROTHER; I'VE HAD IT; CLOSE THE DOOR.

Personnel: Anderson, trombone, vocals; Steve Elson, saxophone, keyboard synthesizers; Allan Jaffe, guitar, vocal (3); Mark Helias, bass, vocal (4, 6); Jim Payne, drums, digital drums.

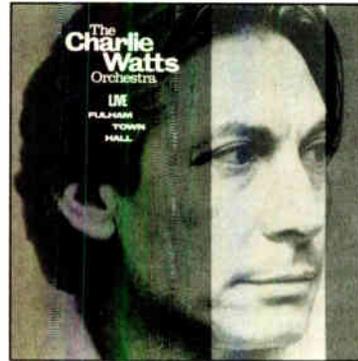
★ ★ ★ ½

Ray Anderson is a magnificent musician, with authority, expertise, and wit among his qualities. This commanding player has three recent additions to his discography: the two feature recordings give cause for jubilation and the third, credited to the Slickaphonics co-op, is merely enjoyable.

Old Bottles-New Wine will surprise listeners who know Anderson for his new music explorations with Anthony Braxton and Barry Altschul. Here the young lion charges straightahead, addressing himself to seven venerable tunes and giving forth signs of ardor for the playing of Vic Dickenson, Trummy Young, Jimmy Knepfer, the Ellington trombonists, Sonny Rollins, other worthies. Still, Anderson remains Anderson always, and his extraordinary control in the high register, his mighty tone, his deep soulfulness, to name but a few particulars, keep the proceedings fresh and compelling. Anderson negotiates Dizzy Gillespie's *Ow!* and Charlie Parker's *Laird Baird*; makes wondrous use of a plunger on Oscar Pettiford's *Bohemia After Dark* and *La Rosita*, a favorite of Coleman Hawkins; and treats *In A Mello-tone* with all the regal respect it deserves. Kenny Barron, Cecil McBee, and Dannie Richmond are marvelous in support roles.

You Be finds Anderson back in the new music camp, on a stunningly effective program

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of original pieces. Frequent collaborators bassist Helias and drummer Hemingway are on equal footing with the trombonist: each trio member contributes compositions and no single instrumental voice dominates. Anderson's title piece pivots on a delightful bass line that trombone and drums either nudge or blandish, and his *Stole Stroll* achieves its agitated mood through reciprocal action. *Edward's Dance*, a suite designed by Hemingway in homage to free drumming pioneer Ed Blackwell, has the musicians riding an emotional roller-coaster; Hemingway, as would Blackwell, keeps fluid time and avoids clutter. Helias' *Boxcars* is somewhat diffuse despite the players' uncanny interaction while, on the other hand, the bassist's *Mudpie Anthem* is musically and emotionally direct in its evocation of tender sorrow. A second excellent record.

Anderson and Helias are part of Slickaphonics, a New York avant-funk quintet that is popular on the European concert circuit. The band's third album, *Humatomic Energy*, consists of the expected dance floor-directed musical mania, an appealing stew of rock, r&b, and jazz that also can be appreciated standing still. Anderson makes an outstanding impression due to his screwy, parched-throat lead singing on several songs. The funk bubbles around him as he advocates opposition to nuclear energy (the title track), confronts troubled love (*Don't Jump*), and expresses frustration over his present lot (*I've Had It*). Anderson's exaggerated vocals are at once persuasive and amusing. Slickaphonics are very much a group and the other wise guys also figure mightily in the zaniness. Move over, Defunkt.

—frank-john hadley



JAMES NEWTON

WATER MYSTERY—Gramavision 18-8407-1: *STAR CROSSED LOVERS; LONE HILL; THE CRIPS; WATER MYSTERY; ONE FOR STRAYHORN; DANCE STEPS.*

Personnel: Newton, flute; April Aoki, harp; Anthony Brown, percussion; Red Callender, tuba; John Carter, clarinet; Allan Iwohara, koto; Greg Martin, oboe; Roberto Miranda, bass; John Nunez, bassoon; Charles Owens, english horn, soprano saxophone.

★ ½

James Newton's decision to sit out for much of the time on this recording was a bad plan no matter how you look at it. When he plays, he sounds so good he makes the other musicians sound weak by comparison; when he doesn't play, you wish he'd come back and pull things together.

With the exception of the free-jazz composi-

tion *The Crips*, Newton followed two themes in his choice of works for this recording: tunes paying homage to the Ellington/Strayhorn style, and ones bowing to Japanese music. The first is most promising, but lush Ellingtonian scoring isn't enough to turn a group of ad hoc musicians into a swinging ensemble; with some momentary exceptions, it sounds like these players needed more rehearsal time to familiarize themselves with the music at hand.

Asian-flavored jazz has appeared in other recordings; Newton is not alone in his taste. But this album fails to convince me that jazz and Japanese music are compatible. After all, jazz relies on strong rhythms—even free-jazz swings. Bar lines are hazy in Japanese music, and across the board, the increments of change are smaller than in jazz. It's like pairing Willem de Kooning with John Singer Sargent; the size of the brush strokes just don't match. Compositional style aside, the players' laborious approach to the beat on *Lone Hill* defies the notion of timelessness that the koto presumably was supposed to establish.

The title tune, a pensive duet for Newton and koto player Allan Iwohara, comes closer to succeeding, yet it still lacks subtlety. When a melody returns it's like hearing a tape loop repeating the original material. Once again, the finely nuanced variations of Japanese music are missing.

One performer who stands up well next to Newton is clarinetist John Carter. His lines on *The Crips* say a lot for his nerve as well as his chops. For a few happy moments Newton builds on Carter's heat, the time swings, and we get a taste of what this group could do. But the demonstration is all too brief.

—elaine guregian



ART TATUM

20th CENTURY PIANO GENIUS—EmArcy 826-129-1: *BEGIN THE BEGUINE; SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME; BODY AND SOUL; WILLOW WEEP FOR ME; TOO MARVELOUS FOR WORDS; DANNY BOY; SWEET LORRAINE; TENDERLY; YOU TOOK ADVANTAGE OF ME; YESTERDAYS; I'LL NEVER BE THE SAME; WITHOUT A SONG; LITTLE MAN, YOU'VE HAD A BUSY DAY; LOVE FOR SALE; MY HEART STOOD STILL; JITTERBUG WALTZ; MR. FREDDIE BLUES; OVER THE RAINBOW; IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD; THERE WILL NEVER BE ANOTHER YOU; JUST LIKE A BUTTERFLY; SEPTEMBER SONG; WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS; I COVER THE WATERFRONT; MOON SONG; MEMORIES OF YOU; DON'T BLAME ME.*

Personnel: Tatum, piano.

★★★★★

GEORGE SHEARING

LULLABY OF BIRDLAND—Verve 827 977-1: *SEPTEMBER IN THE RAIN; GOOD TO THE LAST BOP; BOP, LOOK AND LISTEN; NOTHING BUT D. BEST; SUMMERTIME; EAST OF THE SUN; CONCEPTION; I'LL REMEMBER APRIL; JUMPIN' WITH SYMPHONY SID; CHANGIN' WITH THE TIMES; STROLLING; TENDERLY; (GENEVA'S) MOVE; PICK YOURSELF UP; INDIAN SUMMER; THEY ALL LAUGHED; MINORATION; BRAIN WAVE; TAKIN' A CHANCE ON LOVE; YOU'RE DRIVING ME CRAZY; SWEDISH PASTRY; GHOST OF A CHANCE; LULLABY OF BIRDLAND; UNDECIDED; DRUM TROUBLE; TIEMPO DE CENCERRO, Pts. 1 AND 2; COOL MAMBO; GET OFF MY BACH.*

Personnel: Shearing, piano, accordion (cut 2); Marjorie Hyams (1-14), Don Elliott (15-18), Joe Roland (19-23), Cal Tjader (24-26), George Devins (27,28), vibraharp; Chuck Wayne (1-18), Dick Evans (19-22), Dick Garcia (23), Jean Thielemans (24-28), guitar; John Levy (1-17), Al McKibbin (18-28), bass; Denzil Best (1-22), Marquis Foster (23), Bill Clark (24-28), drums; Candido Camera (26), Catalino Rolan (26), Armando Peraza (25-27), percussion; Billy Eckstine, vocal (19, 20).

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

It was the British critic Benny Green, I believe, who first likened Art Tatum's command of jazz piano to James Joyce's mastery of the English novel. Not a bad comparison, if you think about it. Tatum had all the grammar, syntax, and

conventional expressions of jazz piano at his command, knew its history inside out, and drew freely upon all of it in the creation of a keyboard style of astonishing, nuanced complexity and total, spellbinding virtuosity. Add all-but-limitless resources of imagination, and you have a music of prodigious melodic fertility, harmonic ingenuity, and effortless rhythmic power. His playing was so densely packed with phrase after phrase of stunning, purposeful invention that it was literally bursting at the seams.

There can be little doubt that the so-called 20th Century recordings are among the very finest, most significant, and valuable of all Tatum performances we have been left. What makes them so is neither the repertoire—pretty much standard for the pianist—nor the recording quality—which is adequate for the mid-1950s, with a fair amount of conversation and other party noise running through the performances (they were recorded at the Beverly Hills home of Ray Heindorf, then musical director of Warner Bros. film studios). No, what commends them to our attention are the many glimpses they afford us of the great originality and fertility of the pianist's playing in unfettered circumstances; the spontaneous, unflaggingly brilliant inventiveness of his handling of many of the pieces from his standard repertoire, some of which—*Willow Weep For Me*, *Too Marvelous For Words*, and the astonishing *Body And Soul* are good examples, though others could as readily be cited—deviate sig-

nificantly from his usual set-piece approach. As a distillation of Tatum's nonpareil keyboard abilities and the singular musical intelligence that directed them, this set cannot be faulted, making it a wonderfully satisfying introduction to the work of this titanic, vastly influential musician.

If we compare Tatum to Joyce, we can liken George Shearing to, say, Noel Coward—that is, producer of music of a different order yet thoroughly satisfying on its own terms. Certainly the early recordings of the Shearing quintet collected in the two-LP Verve set—spanning the years 1949-54—are eminently listenable, ingratiating in character (and often much more) and in their more modest way historically important as well. Along with those of the Red Norvo Trio, they take their place with the finest small group jazz performances of the period—imaginative, witty, harmonically knowing, and possessed of a natural, easy-sounding rhythmic grace that still compels our admiration.

The original group, which set the standards of style and substance for all subsequent editions the leader fielded, was a formidable one indeed, boasting the fine bop-influenced guitarist Chuck Wayne, the underappreciated Margie Hyams on vibraharp, John Levy on bass, and Denzil Best providing the deftest of pulsation, often using only brushes. From the outset the group was a truly collaborative venture, the guitarist and vibraharpist sharing most of the solo honors with the pianist, and all

STEVE REICH

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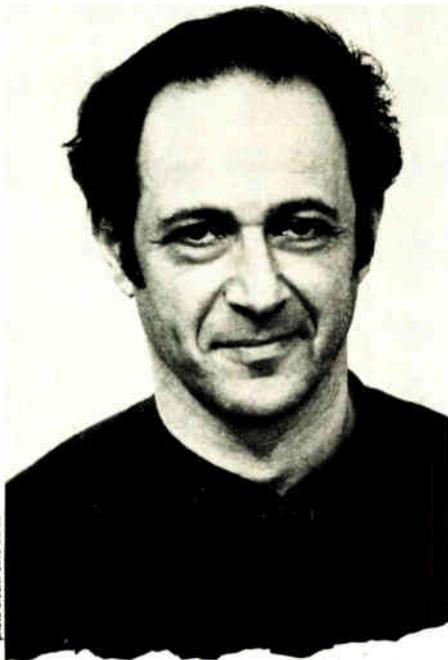


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(*Chicago Tribune)



contributing original compositions, arrangements, and other ideas to its repertoire. Much of the freshness of the quintet's sound and style undoubtedly stemmed from these collective activities. Still, there was no mistaking Shearing's leadership, for his was the dominant voice in the group, his solos the most compelling (and most frequently heard), and his compositions bulking largest in its book.

If anything, the recordings show what a fine pianist Shearing was, his solos beautifully shaped by a keen lucidity of conception that owed not a little to the major bop horn players of the time. In the earliest recordings reprised here, the most arresting of his improvisations are almost wholly linear in character, tumbling with inventiveness, shot full of the joyous exu-

berance of discovery—graceful and muscular at the same time. The twin piano solos on the very first track, *September In The Rain*, are paradigms of Shearing's lithe, probing approach, and there are many others of equal merit scattered through the 28 performances. Nor is the pianist's romantic side scanted either, with *Summertime* and *Tenderly* especially noteworthy examples of his lyrical, ruminative style.

Even with the gradual breakup of the original quintet under the mounting pressures of success and touring (Hyams was the first to depart, followed shortly thereafter by Levy and then Wayne), a strong line of continuity was maintained in the group's sound and style, for replacements were of comparably high levels

of musicianship and creativity. It was in the later versions of the quintet that Shearing began successfully introducing Afro-Cuban rhythmic elements into the group's music, possibly as a means of injecting new vitality and color into and countering what was becoming something of a predictable ensemble approach. These efforts are represented here by *Drum Trouble*, the two-part *Tiempo de Cencerro*, and *Cool Mambo*. Then, too, on occasion the group accompanied vocalists, and two of these meetings, with the popular Billy Eckstine, from the fall of 1951, have been included.

Overall, there's a great deal to please and surprise one here: the still refreshing, elegant, beautifully surfaced ensemble sound—the very epitome of “hip”—the invigorating delicacy and subtlety of the group's collective playing, the attractive originals devised for the group by its members, and the large amounts of spirited, focused, genuinely creative improvising, primarily by Shearing but by the others as well. In all, it makes for a splendid introduction to the work of this immensely and deservedly popular small group, in which the spirit of jazz always ran strong.

—pete welding

Critic's Choice

ART LANGE

new release: Sonny Rollins, *Alternate Takes* (Contemporary). A sax fanatic's dream come true—previously unreleased (in the States) outtakes from *Way Out West* and *Sonny Rollins Meets The Contemporary Leaders*; arguably, the period of his greatest creativity in a lifetime of great creativity.

old favorite: Sunnyland Slim, *Slim's Shout* (Prestige). A Chicago treasure, now in his ninth decade and still rockin', the blues pianist and former Muddy Waters sideman struts his stuff on this mid-'60s session, enlivened by King Curtis' slashing sax, which aims right at your jugular.

rara avis: Kadri Gopalnath, *South Indian Music On Saxophone* (Oriental). For those who think Indian music is all incense and Ravi Shankar, these modal-based ragas are not all that far from mid-period Coltrane or the lyrical side of Braxton.

scene: The late Johnny “Mbizo” Dyani's Witchdoctor's Son (John Tchicai, Harry Beckett, Pierre Dørge, and Makaya Ntshoko) brought an intense musical message—alternately uplifting and harrowing—from South Africa via Europe to Link's Hall in Chicago just three weeks before the bassist's death.

MICHAEL BOURNE

new release: Bobby McFerrin, *Spontaneous Inventions* (Blue Note). McFerrin, the most original singer of the '80s, scats and blats alone unto himself in concert, jams with Hancock and Shorter, and goofs a blues with Robin Williams, altogether a curiuser and curiuser amusement.

old favorite: John Coltrane And Johnny Hartman (MCA/Impulse). Still the masterpiece of jazz and song, and now available again, Trane and McCoy Tyner never sounded more romantic; Hartman's voice was all heart.

rara avis: Dexter Gordon in Bertrand Tavernier's jazz movie *Round Midnight*. As he ambled along a street, tall but oblique, his fingers playing the air, and when he spoke, with that voice so full of dust and delight, Dex was walking, breathing, living music.

scene: Sonny Rollins sitting, his busted foot in a cast, nonetheless playing his brains out (and his butt off) on a Musicruise around New York harbor, with Lady Liberty looking on (and grooving).

FRED BOUCHARD

new release: Steve Lacy, *Futurities* (hat Art). Poetry and jazz have not had so ripe a pairing in some time, as Lacy puts notes to Robert Creeley's words. More earth and fire live in these lines than in Steve Swallow's transcendental Creeley (*Home*, ECM), and Irene Aebi is a harsh Sybil to Sheila Jordan's wild seer.

old favorite: Ellington/Roach/Mingus, *Money Jungle* (Blue Note). Gathers the unique triumvirate of Duke, Max, and Charles—giants rewriting in stone the book on collective improvisation. Blue Note damn near doubles the tracks of the original 1962 release. Now hear this!

rara avis: Harry Partch, *U.S. Highball* (Gate 5). Partch, America's granddaddy of homemade instruments and homespun composition, hit the rails in depression America and wrote these songs with texts from graffiti on boxcars and billboards. This rough, tough, affectionate chronicle is a panhandler's paean.

scene: Cambridge round the clock: WHRB-FM's (Harvard U., 94.5) exceptional jazz shows 6 a.m.-noon; at Eero Saarinen's exquisite brick keep of an MIT Chapel for the Really Eclectic String Quartet playing Monk and punk at noon; outdoors in Charles (Hotel's) Square for an exuberant pre-Regattabar set by Milt Jackson with Cedar Walton at six; Abdullah Ibrahim's uncharacteristically solemn Ekaya at Nightstage featuring Sonny Fortune's alto and Charles Davis' bari; finally Joe Lovano and Billy Drewes' hot five at 1369.

Old Wine, New Bottles

OJC Ltd.

To supplement its budget-priced Original Jazz Classics line (now 270 titles strong), Fantasy has reissued 25 Limited Edition OJCs—the 1700 series. Like the three-digit OJCs, these are facsimile editions of vintage LPs from Prestige, Riverside, and associated labels. Unlike them, these list for \$8.98, are pressed on virgin vinyl, limited to 3,000 copies, and in nearly all cases are digitally remastered from master tapes by Gary Hobish. Given the tab, you might assume they're more musically valuable than regular OJCs. In fact, these reissues are higher-priced because their limited appeal doesn't justify budget reissue; there are more solid or curiosity-worthy sessions here than real blockbusters.

There are a number of star-studded obscurities in the batch. Yet such a series may be most valuable not for LPs you've sought out for years, but records you never knew existed—or styles often overlooked. One case in point is the thoroughly invigorating genre of small band swing, that vigorous blend of '20s combos' economy with a hot big band's pulse. (Those little outfits were boppers' teething grounds, too.) Small band swing's well-represented on Riverside's roundups of varied sessions recorded just before and after WWII for the H.R.S. (Hot Record Society) label. Most of

these older recordings were remastered for LP release in 1960, and lack the clear sound of the series' later recordings.

Lawrence Brown, Barney Bigard, Otto Hardwick, and Harry Carney turn up in the quartet and octets assembled—despite the nominal leader's absence from two cuts—as **Rex Stewart** and *The Ellingtonians* (OJC-1710). Like the best of the Ducal spin-off combos, these honor Ellingtonian virtues (melody, sophisticated swing, and jungle colors), though here one misses Duke's ingenious pen and piano. Cornetist Rex by turns toots sweet, growls hot.

Amiable looseness and pleasurable relaxation continue on two volumes of blowing on blues, ballads, and corn by *Giants Of Small Band Swing* (OJC-1723 and 1724). Headlining the midsize 1946 units on Volume 1 are **Dicky Wells**, pianists (and H.R.S. mainstays) Jimmy Jones and Billy Kyle—featuring a soulful Budd Johnson—and Ellington freshman **Russell Procope** (with Shorty Baker and John Hardee). On Volume 2—where 'bonists **J. C. Higginbotham** and **Sandy Williams** are among the leaders—the garrulous Williams' Big Eights offer a choice of Johnny Hodges or soundalike Tab Smith on alto, affording a peek at prime Hodges outside the Ducal camp. Some of these polyglot bands may seem everywhere at once, like the era's style-setting JATP squads (themselves heir to these ad hoc units). But flaws aside, these an-

thologies are invaluable: casual sessions with high spirit.

Back-to-back prewar dates by **Jack Teagarden's Big Eight**/**Pee Wee Russell's Rhythmmakers** (OJC-1708) represent the genre's '20s heritage. Yet the swinging Tea set is drawn from the same swing giants cast—Billy Kyle strides again—plus a Hawkish, hoarsely hollering Ben Webster. Pee Wee's crew is as diverse if more traditional in feel. In a stomping trio with Zutty Singleton and stride monarch James P. Johnson—filled out by five, among 'em Max Kaminsky, Dicky Wells, and Freddie Green—the blessedly whimsical clarinetist blows hot, careening in the upper register. His soprano-bright sound, and expressive wavering in and out of known harmony, tell why he's admired by post-moderns, despite his rep as a naif.

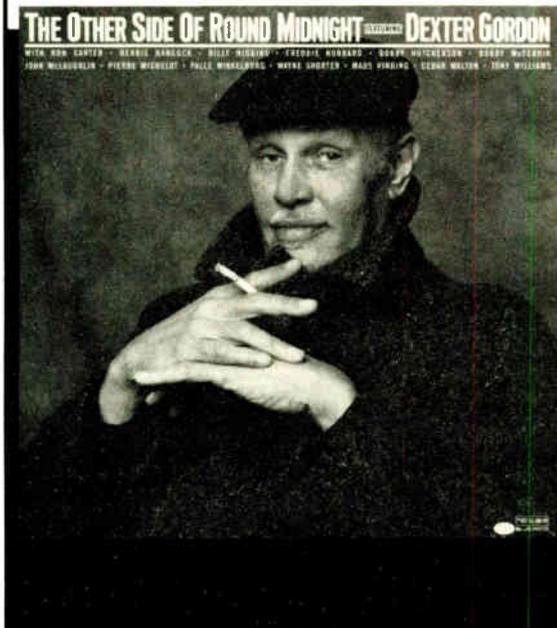
Most spy and forward-looking of the H.R.S. sets is *The Classic Swing Of Buck Clayton* (OJC-1709). Buck's Big Four and Trummy Young's Big Seven betray influences of new thing bop, on the more peppy, lightly stated heads—such as *It's Dizzy*—and in George Johnson's Bird-fleet alto. A postscript to the series, the **Budd Johnson Quintet's** 1960 Swingville date *Let's Swing* (OJC-1720) backs Budd's Prez-ish tenor with older brother Keg Johnson's second-line trombone (his stints spanned Armstrong, Gil Evans, and Ray Charles), and the swing-meets-bop rhythm of Flanagan, Duvivier, and Persip.

Like Pee Wee's smears and Webster's growls, **Ernie Henry's** searing tone anticipated avant garde developments, specifically Eric Dolphy's then-developing style. Henry's 1957, posthumously released *Seven Standards And A Blues* (OJC-1722)—follow-up to OJC's essential *Presenting Ernie Henry*—has been derided as an overly unruly effort. Curiously, however, Henry's somewhat exaggerated squawk here reinforces his links to Dolphy. Inadvertently though it may be, his alto stands out from his backing like mustard on a white linen—more remarkable when the support's from Wynton Kelly, Wilbur Ware, and Philly Joe. Ernie's arresting sound may well have pointed out to open-eared Dolphy the possibilities inherent in stark, broad brush-strokes; it's not hard to hear this *Sweet Lorraine* or *Like Someone In Love* in Dolphy's acerbic *Stormy Weather* with Mingus.

Even more neglected than Henry, and arguably the find of the series, is baritonist **Gil Melle**, whose angular quartet music (and stuffy liner notes) on *Primitive Modern* (OJC-1712) have earned comparisons with Anthony Braxton. The rhythm section's role is conventional enough (Ed Thigpen's the drummer). Over the top, however, Melle—whose bari sound marries alto, tenor, and bassoon—and guitarist Joe Cinderella criss-cross each other's lines, jump on each other's solos, and overlap in arcane harmony. Their manner's recognizably rooted in fugal chamber jazz, but

“**L**ong Tall Dexter has a rare, debonair screen presence—a noble face and a voice whispering about kindness, wit and dignity. It's not surprising that his character is the screen's first realistic bebop musician, a true American hero. That's precisely what Gordon is.”

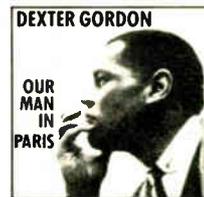
—Eric Pooley, *New York Magazine*



THE OTHER SIDE OF ROUND MIDNIGHT with **DEXTER GORDON**
WITH RON CARTER • HERBIE HANCOCK • BILLY HIGGINS • FREDDIE HUBBARD • BOBBY HUTCHERSON • BOBBY MCFERRIN
 JOHN McLAUGHLIN • PIERRE MICHELOT • PAUL MINDENBERG • WYNTON KELLY • BARI HARRIS • CEDDIE WELTON • JOE WILLIAMS

From the film so rich in music that it couldn't be contained in a single soundtrack comes **THE OTHER SIDE OF 'ROUND MIDNIGHT**. The nine unedited performances on this album represent a veritable summit reunion of Blue Note artists past and present with Dexter Gordon, Freddie Hubbard, Tony Williams, Bobby McFerrin, Bobby Hutcherson, Billy Higgins, Ron Carter and John McLaughlin among others. Included are three very special performances recorded for but not used in the actual Warner Bros. film 'ROUND MIDNIGHT.

Also available on Blue Note Records:
DEXTER GORDON
 BST 84077—"Doin' Alright" with Freddie Hubbard
 BST 84112—"Go" with Billy Higgins
 BST 84176—"One Flight Up" recorded in Paris
 BST 84204—"Gettin' Around" with Bobby Hutcherson and Billy Higgins
 BST 85112—"Nights At The Keystone"
HERBIE HANCOCK
 BST 84109—"Takin' Off" with Dexter Gordon, Freddie Hubbard and Billy Higgins



Dxeter Gordon's role in "ROUND MIDNIGHT" is based largely on the life of Bud Powell in Paris in the early sixties. Blue Note revives the real thing with the re-release of Dexter Gordon's **OUR MAN IN PARIS** with Bud Powell's house trio at the Blue Note club with Pierre Michelot and Kenny Clarke. Hailed as a masterpiece when it was originally issued, that assessment holds true to this day.



ON BLUE NOTE RECORDS AND HIGH QUALITY XDR CASSETTES
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like George Russell, Melle was quick to understand the close relationship between polytonality and dissonance in the then-incipient avant garde. Despite his boppish sound, Cinderella's jittery attack and lines that end spinning into the upper partials look ahead to harmolodic pickers like Blood Ulmer and Bern Nix.

Collectively, the '50s and early '60s LPs here betray the tastes of an age. **George Wallington's** Ike-era *Jazz For The Carriage Trade* (OJC-1704), for example, sports a tune called *Foster Dulles*, and informs that George is "interested in sports cars but doesn't own any." Even in 1956, though, the set was an agreeable throwback: title aside, it's unadulterated bebop. The pianist's balladry on *What's New* reveals a subtly Monkish undercurrent—like Bud Powell, early bopper Wallington learned Monk's lesson: how to use space in a busy aesthetic. But it's Donald Byrd's trumpet and Phil Woods' alto that give the date most presence; even then, you wouldn't mistake Woods for Bird, though Bird influences every altoist on these '50s sides.

But period record sleeves don't always give clues to the drama enacted in the music within. *Jackie's Pal* (OJC-1714) brings together **Jackie McLean** and punching trumpeter **Bill Hardman** for attractive close-harmony heads and alert, splendidly spirited blowing. (This is, by the way, a rare Prestige McLean not already out on a two-fer.) I hear in Jackie's singing horn no clue that this is one of dozens of dates he cut in an attempt to support a family and a habit—while, by his account, sinking deeper into debt on the books. Philly Joe, Mal Waldron, and Paul Chambers (tossing in a little nasal arco) provide the textbook Prestige rhythm.

The era's record bins were rife with gimmick albums: items like *The Joe Blow Bluetet Plays Waltzes From Oscar Hammerstein Musicals*. Many such special projects were by pick-up bands, such as *Outskirts Of Town* (OJC-1717) by the **Prestige Blues Swingers**—a tentet including Art Farmer, Jimmy Forrest, Pepper Adams, Ray Bryant, and Osie Johnson. Though arranger Jerry Valentine gets a tight ensemble sound, leaning heavily on the second Basie band, this is a misguided attempt to gussy up the country blues. Hard-socking, glossy, and overwrought, it's notable mainly for a couple of twangy, backwoods/Memphis cameos by guitarist Tiny Grimes. Far better is the **Prestige All-Stars' Earthy** (OJC-1707), a relaxed septet blowing date mixing Al Cohn with Art Farmer, Mal Waldron, and Kenny Burrell. Light-toned altoist Hal McKusick wrote the low-key charts, in which gentle use of dissonance looks ahead to Oliver Nelson's classic early '60s dates.

New Orleans clarinetist **George Lewis'** 1954 *Jazz At Vespers* (OJC-1721), recorded in an Episcopal church, is a collector's item because it's said to be the first LP documenting the then-topical mix of jazz and religion. Still, it's a disappointment. The spiritual repertoire, containing such familiar fare as *Closer Walk* and *The Saints*, is given standard revivalist treatment, and it's all rather stiff and uninspired. Age, the road's rigors, and pandering to audiences had by this time taken their toll on George's faltering Ragtime Band.

Webster Young's set of tunes associated with Billie Holiday, *For Lady* (OJC-1716), shows how a seemingly good idea can trip up a project; it's as hard to get Billie's classic versions out of your head while you listen as it is not to measure these nicely swinging readings against them. *God Bless The Child* and a brisk *Good Morning Heartache* only skim the surface of the emotions Holiday could plumb; *Strange Fruit's* drama is stilted. Though the sextet includes Vice-Prez Quinichette and Billie's pianist, Mal Waldron, Young himself comes closest to the heart of her music; on a ploddy *Don't Explain*, he displays the same coiled tension one hears in Miles Davis (whose cornet Webster plays) and Billie herself. Young's original *Lady* evokes her happy-sad ambivalence as well as offering a peek at Mal's emerging style.

Pianists are at the center of most of these sessions. Even units thick with vibes and/or guitar wouldn't do without a piano—often, as we've seen, Mal Waldron's. A Prestige regular at the time, Mal also turns up on *Teo* (OJC-1715), designed to cash in on such recent good press **Teo Macero** had received as a classical cat hip to jazz, dig? Despite billing—Teo Macero with the Prestige Quartet—this is another pickup session, with Mal contributing two tunes to Teo's one. Macero plays cottony, alto-weight tenor here (he's an "enervated Warne Marsh," in Brian Priestley's phrase), making the expressive most out of fairly limited saxophone technique. Vibist Teddy Charles' comping reveals a more open version—rhythmically, harmonically, spatially—of Milt Jackson's style, foreshadowing Bobby Hutcherson's wide-open work on '60s Blue Notes. In 1957, Mal had yet to develop his repetition-drenched, gospel/minimal style, though here as on Webster Young's date you can hear him inching toward it.

Bud Powell's influence was pervasive in the '50s, but a few pianists managed to evade it. On *Piano: East/West* (OJC-1705)—one side of 1955 **Freddie Redd** trio, one of 1952 **Hampton Hawes** quartet—Redd sounds like Bud, but Hawes sounds like Hawes (while Hawes' vibist Larry Bunker sounds like that other Hampton, playing milk bottles). Hawes' piano chords are big and dense, yet so lightly delivered, his style just escapes clunkiness. Though **Hazel Scott** occasionally drums up some Bud-bobbing chords, overall *Relaxed Piano Moods* (OJC-1702) was an unlikely offering from Debut Records, even with Mingus and Roach supplying the rhythm (and nearly taking over Duke's *Jeep Is Jumpin'*, among others). The classically trained Scott's ballads are a hair schmaltzy; her florid and filigreed ruminations, intercut with hard-bopping, strangely presage Michel Petrucciani. **Elmo Hope** is less his own man than Powell disciple on *Hope Meets Foster* (OJC-1703)—that's tenorist Frank of course, sharing the front line with trumpeter Freeman Lee. This is appealing '50s bop to be sure, but Hope's playing lacks the full-blown idiosyncracies that, at his best, peg him as a Monk-inspired maverick. (But note that this is the best seller in the 1700 series' initial release. If you covet it, get it before it's too late.)

Jimmy Raney's 4tet and 5tet dates from '54 and '55, *A* (OJC-1706)—both with Hall

Overton's arranger's piano—are startling reminders of how fully Raney personified the bop guitar, in the years before Kenny Burrell's roost-ruling at Prestige—or Wes Montgomery's ascendance, forecast by Jimmy's judicious slinky octaves. A mature, commanding statement that, given wide exposure, would likely prompt Raney's reevaluation.

Belgium's **Rene Thomas** was an early Django-associated guitarist, having been encouraged by the gypsy, according to the notes. Unlike Django, though, he babies his axe on Jazzland's 1960 *Guitar Groove* (OJC-1725). This session is timeless in its espousal of classic virtues, yet also quaintly naive, placing all its bets on polish and momentum, and none on innovation or eccentricity. It's graceful but faceless. Mellow tenorist J. R. Monterose shows a Coltrane influence, particularly on Monk's *Ruby*. Also under Trane's sway, in 1959, is **Benny Golson**—now one of our more distinctive tenorists—on a New Jazz date shared with **Lem Winchester**. *Winchester Special* (OJC-1719). The late vibist's easy swing and melodic invention are out of Bags' bag.

Finally, four releases chronicle women singers, three all but forgotten. Best known is ex-Ellingtonian **Betty Roche**, *Singin' & Swingin'* in 1961 (OJC-1718), with help from arranger/guitarist Bill Jennings, Jimmy Forrest, Jack McDuff, and Roy Haynes; their support tends to be more subtle than the average organ group's. Similarly, Roche has the full-throated power to knock you down, but exercises admirable restraint, saying more with an understated growl (*Come Rain Or Come Shine*) than she might with a shout. To strut her stuff, she indulges in animated scat, on *A Foggy Day* and *Billie's Bounce*. Debut's **Ada Moore** (OJC-1701) is notable for John LaPorta's penetrating alto as well as Moore's detached nonchalance, reinforced by her off-mic placement. A hint of a lisp adds vulnerability to her sturdily assured alto delivery, which looks forward to Abbey Lincoln and Cassandra Wilson; Tal Farlow and Oscar Pettiford help her along. On OJC-1711, big-voiced Sacramento matron **Claire Austin** sings "When Your Lover Has Gone" and other classic ballads (*Someone To Watch Over Me*, *Melancholy Baby*). Backed by Frisco revivalist Bob Scobey, Barney Kessel, and Shelly Manne, Austin combines a Hollywood torch singer's studied emotionalism and Alberta Hunter's close vibrato with a touch of Billie's irresistible insouciance. More refreshing is the voice of **Barbara Lea**. The liner of her eponymous 1956 LP (OJC-1713) quotes raves from Bing Crosby and Harold Arlen—testimonies to her smart, buoyant yet sensible handling of such American treasures as *Blue Skies*, *Baltimore Oriole*, and *Gee Baby, Ain't I Good To You*. The exemplary backing is by warm-toned trumpeter Johnny Windhurst's lightly swinging quintets. An enduring recital that, like Gil Melle's LP, leaves one wondering where such engaging performers went.

A final note on OJCs in general: Fantasy's sensitive to popular requests in deciding what to reissue. If your favorites are still in the vaults, drop them a line—and mention those Kenny Dorham and Matthew Gee dates with Ernie Henry, while you're at it. . . .

—kevin whitehead

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.)

JAZZOLGY/CIRCLE/AUDIOPHILE: Bob Wilber & Bechet Legacy, *Recorded Live At Bechet's New York City and Ode To Bechet*. Bob Haggart, *A Portrait Of Bix*. Jimmy McPartland, *One Night Stand*. Kid Sheik, *In England*. Art Hodes, *The Trios and One Legendary Quintet*. Chicago Rhythm, *'Round Evening*. Hot Cotton Jazz Band, *Take Your Tomorrow*. Harry (The Hipster) Gibson, *Everybody's Crazy But Me*. Richard Carr, *String Vibrations*. Les Paul, *Feedback*. Les Brown, 1946. *Red Nichols, Syncopated Chamber Music*. Richard Himber, 1940. Dubby Spivak, *Swings Lightly*. Jan Garber, 1944. Woody Herman, *First Session 1937*. William Roy, *When I Sing Alone*. Marlene VerPlanck, *Sings Alec Wilder*. Lee Wiley, *Sings The Songs Of Rodgers & Hart/Harold Arlen*. Ronny Whyte, *Something Wonderful*. Jonah Jones, *Butterflies In The Rain*.

MOSAIC: Benny Morton/Jimmy Hamilton, *The Blue Note Swingtets*. Buddy DeFranco, *The Complete Verve Recordings With Sonny Clark*. Bud Powell, *The Complete Blue Note Recordings 1949-58*. Art Hodes, *The Complete Blue Note Sessions*. Chet Baker, *The Complete Pacific Jazz Live Recordings With Russ Freeman*.

SEABREEZE: Jackie Coon, *Jazzin' Around*. Las Vegas Jazz Orchestra, *The Music Of Raoul Romero*. Warne Marsh/Susan Chen, *Marsh & Chen*. Sammy Nestico, *Night Flight*. Lew Anderson, *All-American Big Band*.

VEE JAY/SUITE BEAT: Wayne Shorter, *Introducing...* Mel Lewis & Friends, *Gettin' Together*. Django Reinhardt, 1910-53.

LEO: Akemi Kuniyoshi-Kuhn/Marcio Mattos/Eddie Prevost, *Handscapes*. Anatoly Vapirov, *Macbeth*. Vladimir Chekasin Big Band, *New Vitality*.

FLYING FISH: Eric Thompson/Alan Senauke, *Two Guitars*. Doug Dillard Band, *What's That?* Bertram Levy/Peter Ostroushko, *First Generation*. Tom Dahill, *Irish Music From St. Paul To Donegal*. Kristin Lems, *Born A Woman*. Tony Trischka & Skyline, *Skyline Drive*. Chuck Suchy, *Much To Share*. Commander Cody, *Let's Rock*. Country Gazette, *Bluegrass Tonight!*

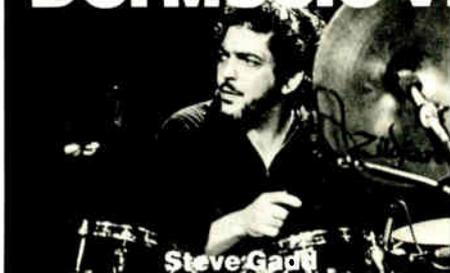
FANTASY/LANDMARK: Terry Gibbs, *The Latin Connection*. Mulgrew Miller, *Work!* Cannonball Adderley, *Quintet At The Lighthouse* and *And The Poll-Winners*. Sonny Rollins, *Alternate Takes*.

SAVOY JAZZ: Oscar Pettiford, *Discoveries*. Herbie Mann/Bobby Jasper/Seldon Powell/Frank Wess, *Flutin' The Bird...* *Bird Lives!* Duke Jordan, *Flight To Jordan*. Art Pepper, *Rediscoveries*.

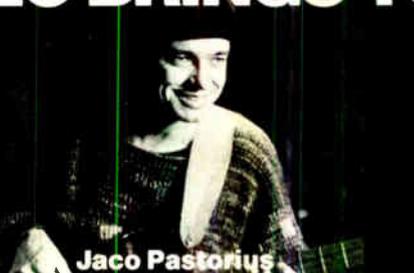
INDEPENDENTS: Dick Berk & Jazz Adoption Agency, *More Birds Less Feathers* (Discovery). Sue Raney/Bob Florence, *Flight Of Fancy* (Discovery). Nat Adderley, *Blue Autumn* (Theresa). Cecil Payne, *Casbah* (Empathy). Eddie Bert Duo, *One Bone, Four*

CONTINUED ON PAGE 49

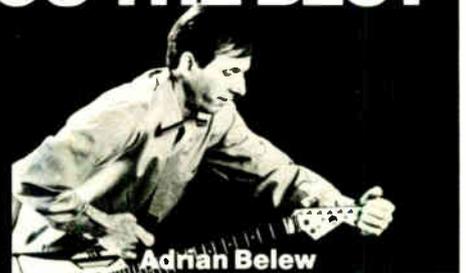
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CD-ENRICHED JAZZ

CD quality hooked me one evening at Tower Records. *Kind Of Blue* came over the jazz department sound system and Coltrane, blowing a solo I knew by heart, seemed more profoundly peaceful and determined than he ever had before. I began to long for recent Ornette, Cecil, and Miles on CD, the real power and sweep of Ellington, Basie, Hines, and Gillespie big bands, the intimate touch of late, lamented pianists, more hint how much bite Bird actually had, a truer taste of Charlie Christian's early amplified guitar. . . .

Despite years of loving used and abused LPs often recorded in low-fi, I'm not immune to desire for ever more tangible perceptual data, and with a CD if you look away from the stereo focal point of your speakers you'll swear favorite musicians are standing in your rooms. The CD format offers obsessive listeners sensual refreshment comparable to that provided by a virgin copy of a familiar album. Best of all, the thrill remains. These gleaming discs presumably don't scratch, warp, or wear out, and they can contain much more music than a side of vinyl.

Because many of the finest recordings of the late '50s and '60s were meant to be high-fidelity luxury items, or simply because aficionado-producers took pride in their product, today we can enjoy classics on CDs that improve upon near-perfection. True, digital playback also reveals what imperfections existed in the first-generation recording, and imbalances seem more glaring when you expect something perfect. But these examples from PolyGram and Impulse catalogs (addressed almost chronologically) are without exception transfers that enrich, rather than diminish, pleasure in jazz that was great as originally documented.

Clifford Brown With Strings (PolyGram/EmArcy 814 642-2) realizes a dream: improvising over an ensemble of six violins, two violas, and a cello, plus a rhythm section—guitarist Barry Galbraith, pianist Richie Powell, bassist George Morrow, and Max Roach—the trumpeter emphasizes romance and casts modernist bop in a most genteel setting. Brownie's tone, richer than anyone's, and American ballads including *Yesterdays*, *What's New*, *Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man*, *Embraceable You*, *Memories Of You*, *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes*, *Where Or When*, and *Stardust*, could hardly be better suited to each other. The incredibly warm, vibrant trumpeter (25 years of age, in the last six months of his life) is sincere and substantial, never bending his comments to glib or spurious seduction, and the CD brings him close. Neal Hefti's late-night, low-light charts, though sweet, never get too sticky or in Brown's way. The music's so



Sonny Rollins: "... audacious, sardonic, and assertive."

MICHAEL WEINSTEIN

sophisticated it could be today's, except for the short tracks. Brown's statements are consistently complete and coherent, but the takes are under four minutes, brief by current standards, and some songs end as he seems about to reveal a secret of significance. Total CD time: 40:44 for 12 tunes.

Lester Young And The Jazz Giants (PolyGram/Verve 825 672-2)—Roy Eldridge, Vic Dickenson, and Teddy Wilson with the Basie rhythm trio Freddie Green, Gene Ramey, and Jo Jones—had a little jam session, captured by Norman Granz. Lament swing and doleful blues mark the date, with Lester in his characteristic late, soft, and sorrowful mode—you can hear a bit of leakage in his embouchure. Prez's intonation is strongest on the *Gigantic Blues*, pleading on *This Year's Kisses* and *You Can Depend On Me*: trombonist Dickenson responds with gentle burriness, while Eldridge answers with irrepressible pungency. Three of the five songs are more than nine minutes long (there's vintage Wilson on the 10-minute *I Didn't Know What Time It Was*), all arranged as head/string of solos/riffing ensemble out. The bass and drums are set back from both front line and the mics, but when Jo Jones gets some measures, the CD almost flashes his grin.

Louis Armstrong Meets Oscar Peterson (PolyGram/Verve 825 713-2) presents the incomparable Satchmo at his most avuncular, singing and (briefly) trumpeting on 16 tracks, 12 of them from the original Verve album, four the solo vocal performances from *Ella And Louis Again* (recorded live, in mono—another CD presents all the Armstrong/Fitzgerald duets). I prefer lighter-hearted swingers (*Let's Fall In Love*, *Blues In The Night*, *I Get A Kick Out Of You*, *Just*

One Of Those Things, and *Let's Do It*) to torch songs like *What's New*, *I'll Never Be The Same*, *How Long Has This Been Going On*, or *Willow Weep For Me*, where Armstrong's voice strains; but Louis makes each performance memorable with his enthusiastic, distinctively nuanced vocalisms. And the show is all his; pianist Peterson, guitarist Herb Ellis, bassist Ray Brown, and drummer Louie Bellson are models of self-effacing support, flexible enough to field Satchmo whimsy like the second high-register trumpet chorus on *Moon Song*, embellish the blues, add tags immaculately. Seventy minutes of Armstrong (or your favorite uncle) singing in your living room is a bit much, but remember: most CD players are programmable to skip songs you needn't hear again.

Coleman Hawkins Encounters Ben Webster (PolyGram/Verve 823 120-2) might have been a cutting contest, but backed by the Oscar Peterson trio plus drummer Alvin Stoller the tenor titans essayed mellow cooperation rather than rip-snorting competition. The fullness of both Hawkins' and Webster's sounds is evident throughout seven moderately paced numbers and, as with Armstrong, Peterson's group provides subtle accompaniment instead of trying to prod inspiration. On *Rosita*, the tenorists merge in pseudo-south-of-the-border romanticism, and this is where the CD shines: hear the ultra-low harmony Webster finds under Hawkins, carrying the melody. Reverb drenches the horns, and though bassist Brown's pitch isn't always captured, his throb is clear. A striking aspect of this recording is the utter ease with which the veteran jazzmen go about their job; they lift horns like longtime soulmates, and work to satisfy their own high standards on

chestnuts (*Shine On Harvest Moon!*) rather than break new ground or keep up with the youngsters.

After all, **Sonny Rollins/Brass Trio** (PolyGram/Verve 815 056-2) was recorded less than a year later and was an ambitious, expensive undertaking that pits a faster yet muscular tenor in balance with Nat Adderley, Clark Terry, Reunald Jones, and Ernie Royal's trumpets; Billy Byers, Jimmy Cleveland, and Frank Rehak's trombones, and Don Butterfield's tuba, as arranged by Ernie Wilkins (the rhythm team is pianist Dick Katz, Belgian guitarist Rene Thomas, bassist Henry Grimes, and drummer Roy Haynes). Today, the charts sound like very hip and detailed tv material, but as Sonny blows freely against the bold outlines of *Who Cares?*, *Love Is A Simple Thing*, his original *Grand Street* (which foreshadows *Alfie's Theme*), and Wilkins' *Far Out East*, the music is irresistible. The brass melds into one diamond-faceted, glossy sound which Rollins pierces like a chisel with a razor edge. On CD you hear the hard surface of the brass but also Rollins' non-stop threading and accents by Thomas, Katz, and Haynes. Rollins' virtuosity is even more gloriously displayed in trio with Grimes (what happened to him?) and drummer Charles Wright. The CD ends with a four-minute unaccompanied *Body And Soul*, so Sonny could prove he played the tradition. He did and does.

But Rollins also takes daring liberties with tradition, as is obvious in the opening cadenza of *On Green Dolphin Street* from **Sonny Rollins On Impulse!** (MCA/Impulse 5655 JVC 458). Did ever a tenorist mean to slur tonality so? The CD enforces the center of Rollins' tone, as well as how extremely he mauls it. Mickey Roker's brushwork is worthy of an etching, while pianist Ray Bryant and bassist Walter Booker do exactly what they should. Rollins' thematic improvisations are more fragmented here than in his date with brass, as could be expected during the height of the New Thing; overall he's more audacious, sardonic, and assertive, a tenor of his times with affection for genres like calypso (*Hold 'Em Joe*), but also able to invent from the inside of song forms out (*Three Little Words*)—and unable to quit.

Variety within familiar forms and faithfulness to subject matter was personified by **Count Basie** who, with *The Kansas City 7* (MCA/Impulse 5656 JVC 457), maintained the essence of his contemporary sound while looking back to the 1936, '39, and '44 pared-down instrumentation he'd enjoyed. Actually, here are two Kansas City 7s: Thad Jones and Frank Wess and Eric Dixon playing flutes before Basie, guitarist Freddie Green, bassist Ed Jones, and drummer Sonny Payne on three Wess and Jones charts; Jones, Frank Foster on tenor, Dixon on tenor and flute, Basie adding organ, and the same rhythm core on *Lady Be Good*, *I*

Want A Little Girl, *Shoe Shine Boy*, and two others, head-arranged by the Count. Rudy Van Gelder's engineering for Impulse frequently seems more vivid than what he did for Prestige or Blue Note, and Basie's dry, swinging, bluesy wit is amplified by the close, clean sound. The flutes, horn ensembles, and rhythm section are especially well-served by this CD. Sole flaw in most of the Impulse reissues is cover and inside photography, which, merely reduced, blacks out.

Basie notwithstanding, few composer/arranger/performers made such beautiful and committed use of a septet as did **Oliver Nelson** in *Blues And The Abstract Truth* (MCA/Impulse 5659 JVC 468). The alto and tenorist gathered Eric Dolphy, Freddie Hubbard, and bari saxist George Barrow, pianist Bill Evans, bassist Paul Chambers, and Roy Haynes in a program of originals that has become unforgettable. *Stolen Moments* is a standard of bittersweet glow, while *Hoe Down* spins individualistic bop from a barn dance intro. To hear Dolphy's unique flights on flute and alto over Evans' quiet voicings is sublime, but all the players and their parts are enhanced by the hiss-less CD; Hubbard is fluid, Chambers implacable, Haynes spry and sprightly, Nelson himself solid and soothing, Barrow (who plays support only) consistent thickening the heads and riffs. From dissimilar players and a sure sense of self, Nelson drew an album with every note in place.

In *Out Of The Cool* (MCA/Impulse 5653 JVC 459) the 15-piece **Gil Evans Orchestra** created an improvisational masterpiece: the 15-minute *La Nevada*, which pianist/arranger Evans concocted from a notated trombone theme and pulsating rhythm by guitarist Ray Crawford, tubaist Bill Barber, percussionists Charlie Persip and Elvin Jones. Budd Johnson's solo is memorable, as is Johnny Coles', but what sticks longest is the iridescent orchestra leading to a satisfying final statement. The varying dynamics and sectional depths Evans conceives are accurately reproduced via CD, not flattened as on vinyl; while Crawford solos, and the 'bones growl, one now hears distant duet fluting, and a muted horn. Look for CDs of Evans' *Priestess* and soundtrack for *Absolute Beginners*; this format is the best way to listen to his studio productions. But there are colors aplenty in *Where Flamingos Fly*, the Brecht/Weill *Bilbao Song*, George Russell's *Stratusphunk*, and Evans' own *Sunken Treasure*, inspired tone poems all.

Charles Mingus, on *The Black Saint And The Sinner Lady* (MCA/Impulse 5649 JVC 462), composed a dense and dramatic album-long work for 11 pieces, including his perennial drummer Dannie Richmond and favorite pianist Jaki Byard, with Jerome Richardson, Charles Mariano, Dick Hafer (reeds), Quentin Jackson ('bone), Rolf Ericson and Richard Williams (trumpets), Jay

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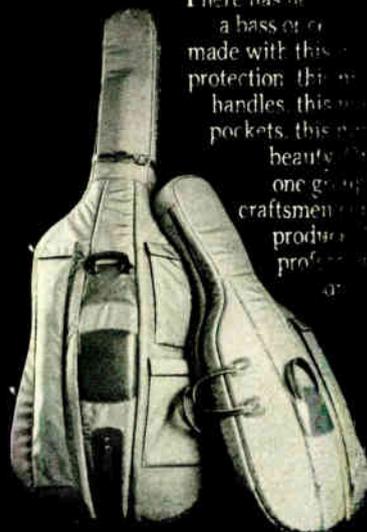
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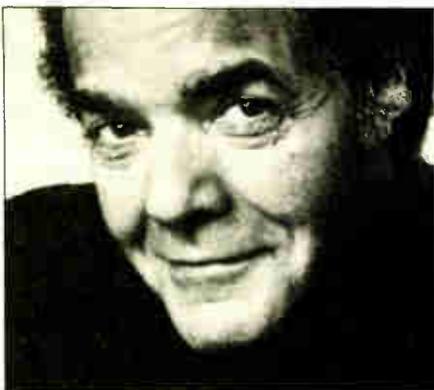


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Berliner (guitar), tubaist Don Butterfield. Liner notes by Mingus' psychologist refer to the bassist/sometimes pianist/composer's ingenuousness, his sufferings, his intensity, and perceptiveness; these qualities roil, in turns lyrical and angry, in six sections penned as complex dances, fully annotated by Mingus himself (but what tiny print!). Music so rawly emotional is not often polished with such self-conscious energy; Mingus did it here as nowhere (and no one) else.

The Stan Getz Quartet of *Sweet Rain* (PolyGram/Verve 815 054-2)—pre-electric Chick Corea, Ron Carter, and Grady Tate—is fleet and instantly responsive to the tenorist's changes of pace and mood. The playing at first seems restrained—Corea, for instance, sounding like he's always footing his soft pedal—but Getz is a canny leader, continually contrasting slow and fast-flowing sections, the quartet's gentle backing, and his own thoughtful phrases with rearing squeals. The tenorist by this date has moved beyond his successful bossa nova phase, though Dizzy's *Con Alma* has a samba head, and the set includes Jobim/DeMoraes' *O Grande Amor*, with Corea's *Litha* and *Windows*, and Mike Gibbs' title tune. Getz's sound can send shivers up one's spine; has Columbia issued *Captain Marvel* in CD?

John Coltrane, *Master Tapes* (MCA/Impulse 204 MCAD 5541) is one CD release created specifically for the format; it exists in no other form. Collecting performances as dissimilar as Mal Waldron's ballad *Soul Eyes* (by the quartet, with an inventive interlude by McCoy Tyner, and Elvin brushing sensitively), and the rousing, orchestral *Song Of The Underground Railroad* (from *The Africa Brass Sessions, Vol. 2*), *India* with Dolphy on bass clarinet, Garvin Bushell on oboe, Ahmed Abdul-Malik on oud (from *The Other Village Vanguard Tapes*), a thoroughly reverent *Dear Lord*, a 15-minute *Spiritual*, *Big Nick*, and the upbeat *Vilia*, the anthology is five minutes short of an hour, with coherent sound quality due to Van Gelder's refined recording techniques. Curiously, Tyner is sometimes in the background of the aural image, perhaps to bring Jones to the front of the sound. There's a disappointing lack of annotation for this production, but one can't quibble with the selections; MCA knows there's much great Coltrane on Impulse, and will keep issuing his albums on CD, as they've done with *Coltrane And Johnny Hartman*, and *A Love Supreme*. May they not neglect opportunities: the Archie Shepp/Art Taylor sections of *A Love Supreme* remain in some canister, unheard. And if you're CD-equipped, don't miss the opportunity to return to albums you've always adored. You'll probably discover a wealth of more music hidden behind the shiny faces than your needle might find in those old, worn-out grooves. —howard mandel

blindfold test

1 DIZZY GILLESPIE/ ARTURO SANDOVAL.

FIRST CHANCE (from *To A Finland Station, Pablo*). Gillespie, Sandoval, trumpets; Gillespie, composer.

Randy: It sounds like Dizzy and Arturo Sandoval, my good friend from Cuba. Not enough can be said about Dizzy. Arturo is also an amazing player. Was this done in Cuba? It had a nice feel, kind of a corny tune, but it was playful. Three stars. You couldn't call this a battle, you could hear a lot of love between the guys. I always like hearing two trumpets play. The trumpet never ceases to amaze me. There's so many ways to play it, so many sounds you can get out of it.

2 JOSE BERTRAMI. DREAMS ARE REAL

(from *DREAMS ARE REAL, Milestone*). Bertrami, keyboards, composer; Paulinho Olivera, flugelhorn; Nico Assumpção, bass; Robertinho Silva, drums; Zizinho, Laudir de Oliveira, percussion.

Eliane: That was Marcio Montarroyos [on flugelhorn]. It was definitely Brazilian the way the drummer came in. It's hard to say who could be the drummer, it's so authentic a Brazilian beat. Maybe Nico on bass. The keyboards I don't know. Three stars.

Randy: Marcio has a sound and a style you can pick out in two notes. Brazilian trumpet players have their own peculiar, different way of playing, a certain way of tonguing and phrasing that's really different, and amazingly interesting to me. I've been trying to get it, and I can't quite cop it. I love Marcio's records. This particular tune was oriented more to percussion. He's more into coloring. Four stars.

3 TAMBA 4. O MORRO

(from *We AND THE SEA, CTI*). Luiz Eça, piano; Antonio Carlos Jobim, composer; recorded 1967.

Eliane: It was a Brazilian trio, probably from the '60s. It could be Luiz Eça on piano, one of those trios like Tamba or Zimbo. Too many ideas they're trying in one tune. It was typical of that time, dynamics and real strong stuff, not really just swinging. If it's a record from that time, three stars. Something to day, two stars.

4 MAX ROACH. GARVEY'S GHOST

(from *PERCUSSION BITTERSWEET, Impulse*). Roach, drums, composer; Abbey Lincoln, voice; Booker Little, trumpet; Clifford Jordan, tenor saxophone.

Randy: It doesn't quite sound like anybody you think it is. It sounds like people influenced by people, but I think it's Max Roach,

RANDY BRECKER/ ELIANE ELIAS

by Michael Bourne

Randy Brecker is one of those names (and sounds) that shows up on record after record. He's been a regular presence in studio trumpet sections since the latter 1960s, often alongside his brother, saxophonist Michael Brecker. In the '70s they recorded several albums together as the Brecker Brothers. Both played early on with Horace Silver; Randy also matriculated through that other jazz "school," the Jazz Messengers of Art Blakey. For the last several years, he's played his own music with his own groups, now co-leading a new band with his wife, keyboardist Eliane Elias.

After working around Brazil (she's from Sao Paulo), playing bistros or with Vinicius de Moraes and Toquinho, among other Brazilian stars, Eliane moved to New York a few years ago.

Randy and Eliane met during her first NYC demo session. "I brought my horn," he said, "but her tunes were the



MITCHELL SEIDEL

hardest tunes I'd ever seen. I just kept the horn in the case." When they played together on a gig with Bob Moses, Randy often walked Eliane to her nearby home. "And the next thing you knew..."

They now have an electric band together and a daughter, Amanda (which happens to be the name of the band's newest recording, on Passport Jazz 88013).

Abbey Lincoln, Booker Little, and maybe George Coleman. The trumpet player sounds like he was influenced by Booker, the way he got over the horn. He had a lot of technique and flexibility, and his tone sounded like Booker, but some of his ideas didn't sound like Booker Little ideas. The tenor player sounded like early George Coleman. I'd say three stars. It wasn't really much of a composition, but it was interesting—the latin against the 3/4.

5 WYNTON MARSALIS.

J MOOD (from *J MOOD, Columbia*). Marsalis, trumpet, composer.

Randy: It sounds like Wynton's new record. I heard it on WBGO. If I may say so, it's nice to hear Wynton play something a little more harmonically inside, like a blues—a little more, if I dare say it, accessible. It sounds really relaxed. Four-and-a-half stars.

6 TOM HARRELL. MOOD SWINGS

(from *PLAY OF LIGHT, BlackHawk*). Harrell, trumpet, composer; Ricky Ford, tenor saxophone; Albert Dailey, piano; Eddie Gomez, bass; Billy Hart, drums.

Eliane: Eddie Gomez on bass. I love the way he plays. That was nice. Four stars.

Randy: I think Tommy Harrell is the trumpet player. It also sounded like something Tommy might write, a difficult compo-

sition harmonically. The other players I'm not too sure of. It might be Cedar Walton or Kenny Barron, maybe Ai Foster on drums. It was very well executed, nice solos. Four stars.

7 FREDDIE HUBBARD/ WOODY SHAW. BOPERATION

(from *DOUBLE TAKE, Blue Note*). Hubbard, Shaw, trumpet; Kenny Garrett, alto saxophone; Mulgrew Miller, piano. Fats Navarro, composer.

Eliane: Mulgrew Miller. He has a touch more or less like McCoy.

Randy: That was two trumpet players I've spent many hours studying—Freddie Hubbard and Woody Shaw. The whole idea of this record was something I was very glad to see happen. I think they're ideally suited to do a two-trumpet record, Woody being kind of an outgrowth of Freddie. Freddie was obviously a big influence, but Woody drew upon Freddie's conception and added to it. I'd say that Woody is still the last in the line of trumpet players that really added something new to trumpet jazz. Wynton's great in his own way, but he still has a way to go before he develops a completely original style. When you analyze Woody's solos, they're completely original, even though they're coming conceptually from Freddie. He really invented a new language on the trumpet. Overall, I'd say five stars. db

ANSON FUNDERBURGH

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN AND THE FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS COMES ANOTHER TEXAS R&B ROCKER.

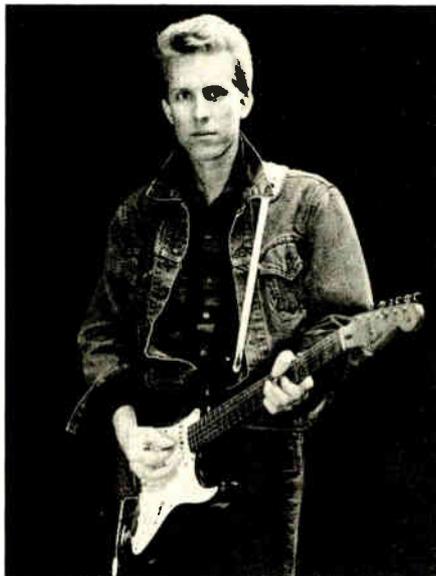
by Tim Schuller

It was embarrassing.

People were downright graceless in their rush to board the progressive country bandwagon of the late '70s. White blues acts were as "in" as a stone axe, as queues formed to laud good ole boys who affected three names and sang about armadillos. In another camp, disco had turned a slew of black r&b vets into conk-wearing fossils.

And that's what happened to the blues in Texas, so it seemed dumber than dumb, when Dallas guitarist Anson Funderburgh quit a warm berth in a rock group, the Bee's Knees, to form a blues band. The Bee's Knees did rock sharp enough to shave with; they made records and played all over town. Anson quit them anyway. He and harmonicist/vocalist Darrell Nulisch headed up a quartet called the Rockets and obtained a Monday night residency at a dinky folkspot, Poor David's Pub. The Rockets personified the term "straightahead." They did solid, stirring versions of songs by bluesmasters, with none of the narcoleptic boogies or saga-length solos that had helped to give Anglo blues bands a bad name. Anson had listened hard to the heavy caliber solos of his fellow Texans Freddie King and Albert Collins, but he'd paid *very* close attention to the Chicagoans Robert Lockwood, Jimmy Rogers, and Eddie Taylor, whose rugged chord-work had provided propulsion to some of the best blues records ever made. No factor contributed more to the acceptance of the Rockets than Anson's *completeness* as a guitarist, meaning his ability to solo excitingly *and* play assertive, supportive rhythm. Progressive country sputtered into the sunset even before the wane of disco presaged an r&b revival, while Anson Funderburgh gained a rep as an uncompromised bluesman whose music was stronger than that of the myriads who'd pandered to trends.

Check his work on indie vinyl, such as 1985's *My Love Is Here To Stay* (Black Top 1032) with singer/harmonicist Sam Myers, who, in June of '86, replaced Nulisch in the Rockets. Rockets albums—including 1981's *Talk To You By Hand* (the debut LP for both the band and Black Top, a New Orleans label), and 1983's *She Knocks Me Out* (Black Top 1022)—have been reviewed enthusiastically by biker mags, blues newsletters,



BILL CRUMP

music publications in Europe and America, and even the British skinbook *Mayfair*. Anson also accompanied ex-Jimmy Buffett harmonica man Fingers Taylor on Red Lightnin's *Harpoon Man*. So, Anson's more than a Dallas homeboy now. He's played Colorado (where Texans are traditionally disliked), the San Francisco Blues Festival of '83 and '84, and the Louisiana World Expo of '84.

Born in teeming Plano, some miles north of Dallas, Anson's first guitar playing was done when he was a youngster and strummed along with c&w acts who did local tv broadcasts from Fort Worth's Panther Hall. (Bill Anderson hosted such a show, and Anson remembers a then-obscure Willie Nelson was among its unheralded regulars.)

He bought his first real guitar in his early teens, when a pal of his Mom's sold him a cheapo and threw in a box of 45s for grins. "There was a lot of junk in there," recalls Anson, but amid the swill was satori—*Hideaway* by Freddie King, and another great blues instrumental, *Sno-Cone* by Albert Collins. "I'd never heard guitar like that before," affirms the soft-spoken Texan. "I knew I'd found my niche."

By age 16, Anson was playing north Texas beer joints. He played rock, he played country. He packed his sets with Jimmy Reed material because Reed was crossover decades before the term "crossover" became part of music biz vernacular. When he formed his first flat-out blues band, he named it Delta Road.

"No one'd hire us," says Funderburgh. "So I got out one day and drove all over South Dallas, where the black clubs were. I guess I looked a little crazy over there. But we'd made us a little demo, and hit different bars, looking for work. There was this place called the Jade Room; I don't think they'd ever had live bands, but we convinced 'em to hire us, and it became like our home. This was in '74,

'75. We played there every Sunday for about a year, and once in a while they'd give us a weekend. Jade Room was all black, mostly people in their 40s, 50s. Seems like young blacks will accept blues somewhat now, but they sure didn't back then. We played there about a year, doing Muddy Waters, Sonny Boy Williamson, Little Walter. It was great experience."

After Delta Road ran its course, Anson joined the Nightcrawlers, which in a prior year had featured Steve Ray Vaughan. In late '77 Anson joined the Bee's Knees, but if you'll fast-forward a year or so you'll be right on the scene when the Rockets began their Monday night residency at Poor David's Pub. These days, people don't smoke tobacco as much as they did in '79, and there were nights in Poor David's when the air was so smokey and thick you could have stirred it with a spoon. Anson and company held forth on a tiny stage, blasting out with lots of Little Walter and Sonny Boy Williamson, swamp blues by Lazy Lester and Slim Harpo, and songs by West Side Chicagoans Anson liked, Otis Rush and Magic Sam. Anson and Darrell didn't leap about onstage, or hire hotdog sidemen, or do much of anything to gussy up their blues. They just played it straight.

As the Rockets became established, they took to the road, playing Shreveport, Baton Rouge, Houston, Port Arkansas, etc. At a gig at Clarity's in New Orleans, they met Doug Rynack, who signed on as pianist, and Hammond Scott, who founded Black Top and recorded them. Rhythm & blues had entered one of its periodic resurgences, and Funderburgh had emerged as the most musically interesting Rocket. Lots of blues bands sport a guitarist who can play good leads, but there was something about Anson's chord-work that was everything good about the word *rhythm*.

"If you can't play rhythm, you're only half the player you should be," asserts Anson. "Take Robert Lockwood. The things he did on *Cross My Heart* by Sonny Boy, and his work on so much of that Little Walter stuff—phenomenal! And I love the rhythm stuff Jimmy Rogers did behind Muddy Waters. Most people don't even know who those guys are because they're not 'up front' enough. But to learn to play like Robert Lockwood, Jimmy Rogers, Louis Myers—hey, if you don't know who those guys are then you can't play behind a harp player."

The newest Rocket, Sam Myers, is a harp player who benefits considerably from Anson's well-rounded playing. A veteran bluesman with several records under his belt (most notably, his Ace 45 of 1957, the original *My Love Is Here To Stay*), he's enhanced his career substantially by moving from Jackson, Mississippi, to team with Anson in Dallas.

With regard to what makes a good rhythm section, Anson's comments could serve as

his artistic credo. "You can't have everybody beatin' and bangin'," he insists. "You need a good solid bassist who can do what I call that double-fisted shuffle. Drummer can't be real busy. Some drummers like Fred Below can be jazzy, put in rolls and fills, and not step on anybody's toes. Most try that and lose the groove. Bass drum needs to be steady, not herky-jerky. See, the whole blues thing is a groove, and if the average player gets too busy up there—they lose it!"

"It's best to be a team player," concludes Anson. "Rather than someone who jumps in and tries to tear the doors off." db

LESLIE DRAYTON

THE DESIRE TO "DO IT HIMSELF" FUELS THE SUCCESS OF THIS TRUMPETER/BANDLEADER.

by Eliot Tiegel

Leslie Drayton had already experienced the excitement of big-time show business playing trumpet with Earth, Wind and Fire and being Marvin Gaye's musical director, when a medical crisis forced him to change career directions—and form his own orchestra.

A bothersome pain in his right palm, which had plagued him for years, was diagnosed as a low-grade malignant nerve tumor at the end of 1977. Leslie, then 25, had left Gaye after three years and was working to re-establish himself in Los Angeles as a trumpet player. But the tumor stopped his musical career and required surgery. After the operation, Leslie was told there was a chance the tumor could return within 18 months and he could lose the use of his right thumb.

"That's when I decided to document my music," he says. He promptly formed the Leslie Drayton Orchestra in 1978. "I thought a big band was the perfect way to go, because I felt it was a race against time. The surgeon told me he got it all out, but just in case, I decided to write as much music as possible."

This sense of urgency has resulted in five LPs by Drayton on his own Esoteric label since 1980. For a small company without major promotional support, Drayton's music has gained remarkably strong acceptance from jazz radio stations around the nation, and sold phenomenally well for an independent, self-produced label, appearing regularly on the *Billboard* jazz charts.

His story is the kind a screenwriter

dreams about. His late father Charles was a bass player with Lena Horne, Benny Carter—who gave Leslie his first trumpet at age 11—and Louis Jordan, who also played with Norman Granz's touring "Jazz At The Philharmonic" packages. His mother was a jazz fan who frequented local area clubs, started her son on piano lessons when he was five, and took him along to hear the likes of the Gerald Wiggins band featuring Harry "Sweets" Edison. She was also Pearl Bailey's hairdresser for seven years, so Leslie traveled with his mother during school breaks, and saw the backstage side of show business, coming into contact with the greats of the music world.

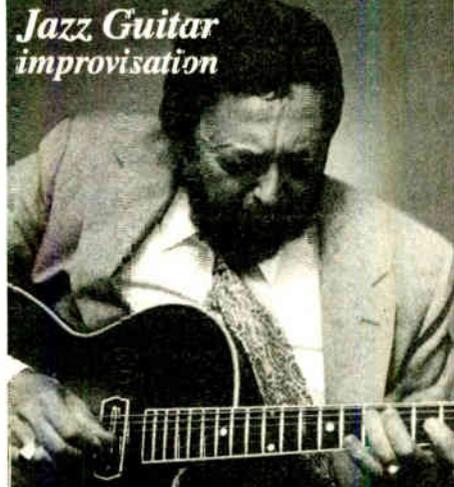
As a student at Los Angeles High School, Leslie realized that "if you took band, you didn't have to take gym." So he started studying trumpet and eventually got into the band "as simply something to do. I had planned to be an architect, but getting involved in band work changed that." Members of the band told him about a rehearsal band at Grant's Music Center, led by owner Henry Grant. Leslie checked it out and became a member. And when he was given a Russell Garcia book on arranging, "that got me interested in the subject. I always liked Gerald Wilson's band, and he became a natural influence on my writing, as were Oliver Nelson and Gil Evans."

While a student at Valley College, majoring in music, Leslie began playing with rhythm & blues groups. "That's when I learned you could make money playing music." He listened to an amalgam of jazz and r&b, including Horace Silver and Art Blakey, James Brown and Sly Stone.

He also met the greats of show business at Pearl Bailey and husband Louie Bellson's house. "I didn't know the kind of education I was getting at that time." But it began to pay off. Between 1965-69, Bellson hired him to play trumpet with his group at Donte's. And Gerald Wilson, who lived across the street from the Draytons, hired 19-year-old Leslie for his trumpet section in what was becoming a very hot band. That association lasted two years. "It was like I had died and gone to heaven," Leslie says.

In 1969 he was a substitute trumpet player for the socially conscious play *Hair* during its Hollywood run. The next year he joined Earth, Wind and Fire to record its first two Warner Bros. LPs. As he was in his last year of studying elementary music education at Cal State/Los Angeles, he chose not to go on the road with the soul/funk group. He met Melba Liston, and together they formed a band which stayed together from 1970-71. When she went back to New York and Jamaica, Leslie began working studio dates as trumpeter/arranger, meeting Marvin Gaye in 1973. One year later Gaye called him to write some charts, and then signed him as his music director.

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"It was probably the best thing that happened to me," says Leslie of his touring with the soul singer from 1974-76. "He had a good musical mind for arrangements. He couldn't write the notes down, but he'd sing what he wanted. And he'd give me plenty of music to write overnight." In 1976 Leslie realized he wanted to do something else. "I wasn't playing my trumpet, just arranging and leading the orchestra. So we had a mutually agreed parting. I decided to re-establish myself in town" and that's when the pain in

his palm became severe enough for him to finally seek medical aid.

In 1978 he started putting together his dream band, numbering between 20-30 players, including big names like Snooky Young, Jerome Richardson, Al Aarons, Thurmon Green, Jackie Kelso, and Patrice Rushen. He'd rent rooms at hotels and put on Sunday dances because the local clubs wouldn't hire him.

Where did his experience writing for a big band come from? He listened to lots of rec-



NANCY CLENDANIEL

ords, learned instrument transposition at Grant's Music Center, and worked as a music copyist where he tried to figure out what the authors were doing. "Arranging," he says, "is the thing I have to work at least."

On his initial LPs he applied Duke Ellington's concept of writing for individual soloists. His clean charts, uncluttered ensemble passages, and inclusion of contemporary influences also left plenty of room for solos. His first four LPs—*Our Music Is Your Music*, *Turning A Corner*, *Close Pursuit*, and *Love Is A Four-Letter Word*—indicate an awareness of jazz's past and its future. The fifth LP, *What It Is, Is What It Is* (Esoteric 1004), is a dramatic shift to nine pieces plus vocalist. The band is called Fun, and there are funk and West Indian influences and quasi-rock tempos augmenting the jazz elements.

Why the change? "I wanted to reach another audience," answers Leslie, ever the businessman. The band was costing too much to maintain and his taste and direction were changing. "I wanted to deal with contemporary music more, so the need for all the horns wasn't there."

The new music is directed toward the 30-50 age group, which "grew up listening to Motown hits and John Coltrane jazz." So far, Leslie claims, this newest album is the biggest seller of them all. Last September he planned recording a second LP with Fun, calling his sound now "contemporary instrumental music."

Although he admits he's still struggling (mainly due to a lack of major record company affiliation and proper management), Leslie Drayton acknowledges "there are some sacrifices I'm willing to make, including monetary [ones] and not getting married. But I'm doing what I want to do—and I can smile every day."

db

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NEW RELEASES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41

Strings (Molshajala). Classic Jazz Quartet, *MCMLXXXVI* (Stomp Off). Courtney Pine, *Journey To The Urge Within* (Island). Phil Upchurch, *Presents The L.A. Jazz Quintet* (Paddle Wheel). Vin Mitchell Band, *Out Of The Blue* (Blue Crescent). Thilo Von Westernhagen & Band, *Pleasureland* (Lifestyle). Latitude, *Latitude* (Lifestyle). Omar Hill/Art Webb, *Caribbean Breeze* (Gaslight).

AMM, *Generative Themes* (Matchless). Eddie Prevost Quartet, *Continuum* (Matchless). Neighbors, *Movements* (Graz Kult).

Karin Krog, *Freestyle* (Odin). Masqualero, *Masqualero* (Ocin). D.M. Visotzky/Francois Volpe, *Blue Moon's Fall* (Black Moon). Kvar tetten, *Kvartetten* (Stunt). Allan Botschinsky Quintet, *Allan Botschinsky Quintet* (Stunt). Karsten Houmark Quintet, *Karsten Houmark Quintet* (Stunt). Niels Thybo Quintet, *Songs For Sascha* (Stunt). Jorgen Emborg Quartet, No. 2 (Stung). Jamaha!, *Extended Nose* (Circulacione Totale). Nathan Davis, *Such Pretty People* (BRT). BRT Big Band, *She's Got Style* (BRT).

New Emily Jazz Orchestra, *Tenor Line* (Centrotre). Per Husby Orchestra, *Dedications* (Hot Club). Yggdrasil, *De Fire Tårne* (Tuti). Matt Jazz Quintet, *Sharp Blues*

(Splasc(h)). Paolo Freso Sextet, *Inner Voices* (Splasc(h)). Cappelletti/Ottaviano Quartet, *Samadhi* (Splasc(h)). New Old Way Quintet, *Waxing On* (Splasc(h)). Gruppo Jazz Marca, *Mitteleuropa* (GJM). The Unrepentant Ones, *The Unrepentant Ones* (Italian Jazz Club). **db**

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X (The Life And Times Of Malcolm X) NEW YORK CITY OPERA/NEW YORK

Yes, opera can be a relevant musical theater form in the late 20th century, embracing (gasp!) jazz-like improvisation and idiomatic American English as well as serialism, contemporary social issues, and advanced stagecraft. *X*, the long-awaited first opera by composer Anthony Davis and librettist Thulani Davis, based on a story by Christopher Davis, with the composer's ensemble Episteme and the City Opera's orchestra conducted by Christopher Keene, succeeded in dramatizing a man's urgent search for his identity, evoking pity, fear, and enthusiastic applause from audiences for four sold-out nights after grant support and development through workshop performances in Philadelphia and Boston over more than a year.

Despite the mystified response of critics like the *New York Times'* Donal Henahan, the Davises' *X* held much closer to classical conventions than such avant garde works as the Robert Wilson/Philip Glass collaboration *Einstein On The Beach* or revived "folk-operas" such as Gershwin's *Porgy And Bess* or Scott Joplin's *Tremonisha*. Provocative in its contents but not didactic in its politics, *X* portrays the passage of Malcolm Little from his relatively middle-class Omaha childhood through his loss of innocence in Boston and Harlem, his imprisonment, rebirth as a Nation of Islam organizer, his alienation from the Black Muslims, journey to Mecca, and assassination, ordered by unidentified forces.

As devised, directed, and choreographed by Rhoda Levine, the three-hour-plus opera revolved around baritone Ben Holt, whose Malcolm grew in complexity and ironic self-awareness through the three acts. Scenes shifted smoothly before one backdrop by Romare Beardon; simple props were used economically, and locales changed with a minimum of narrative mechanics. Tenor Thomas Young, whose voice cut through the rich orchestrations more clearly than Holt's, portrayed the dual, quite different roles of Street and Elijah Muhammad. Priscilla Baskerville (as Malcolm's mother and his wife, Betty Shabazz) and Marietta Simpson (as Malcolm's Boston-based half-sister and a Muslim woman) also sang well.

A most gratifying aspect of Davis' music was his seamless inclusion in the orchestral score of jazz-related rhythms (less swinging than pulsating) and improvised passages by soloists Ray Anderson, Marilyn Crispell, Marty Ehrlich, J. D. Parran, and Abdul

Wadud, for effects that couldn't be achieved through standard notation. Conductor Keene and his traditional instrumental complement must be commended for their confidence in Davis' innovation. But it's Anthony Davis himself who deserves greatest kudos for his accomplishment, which may be recorded by spring, and should be attempted by other opera companies looking for valid modern work, as a test of its place in the enduring repertoire. —*howard mandel*

DICK GIBSON JAZZ PARTY FAIRMONT HOTEL/DENVER

The 24th annual bash, staged by Dick and Maddie Gibson, illustrated how far this event has progressed since its inception. At the original party, held in Aspen in 1963, there were 10 musicians; this year there were 63—almost all world-class soloists. Instead of 210 patrons paying \$50 each, there were about 600 shelling out \$210 per person to attend some 30 hours of music.

The trombonist George Chisholm was again flown in from England. Ed Thigpen, one of 10 first-timers performing this year, came over from Copenhagen. Many of the customers, too, flew in from one of a dozen countries. It is doubtful that anyone, on- or off-stage, was disappointed, since the musical level was as high as it has ever been.

In addition to Thigpen, this year's newcomers were trumpeter Glenn Zottola, who always maintains a sensitive balance between Armstrong and various later influences; Haywood Henry, in an effective solo appearance on baritone (but having intonation problems on soprano); Nick Brignola, whose baritone vitalized several sets; Dick Johnson—given much more room to stretch out than he could find as leader of the Artie Shaw band—distinguishing himself on both clarinet and alto; Gene Harris, the Idaho-based pianist who played the blues as if he had just arrived from New Orleans (he even gave Jay McShann a run for his money); Georgie Auld, whose tenor sound and style are even fuller and more mature than in his Benny Goodman days; also Bill Berry on cornet, and Richie Pratt and Mickey Roker on drums.

With Gibson switching the men around into kaleidoscopic permutations, there was a constant sense of surprise. Because he had booked Frank Capp and Nat Pierce along with quite a few members of their Juggernaut ensemble, the pair lined up a few ringers from New York, rehearsed a little, and put together two swinging big band sets

in their customary Basie groove. The second of these, in which their perennial singer Ernie Andrews offered a blues montage, was extraordinary: so uproarious was the reaction that the band stayed on, and Ernie coaxed them into a head arrangement for the final uptempo blues. The spirit and spontaneity was unlike anything I've heard since the original Basie band, when head arrangements were the order of the day.

There were too many other golden moments to cite them all here. Roger Kellaway played *Night Train* in 7/4 and actually made it swing. Herb Ellis and Joe Pass were reunited for the first time in 10 years, interacting magnificently on *Confessin'* and *Seven Come*



Bucky Pizzarelli and Bob Cooper.

Eleven. The other guitarists this year were, again, the father-and-son team of Bucky and John Pizzarelli, who amazed the crowd by condensing the entire Benny Goodman orchestral version of *Sing Sing Sing* into a two-guitar extravaganza. On one number, Sweets Edison went into a muted fade so gradual, sly, and subtle that it took him almost five minutes to reach total silence.

During one hourlong set on the second evening, there was a trombone interchange by Urbie Green, Bill Watrous, Al Grey, and George Masso; a saxophone set with Flip Phillips, Bob Wilber, and Kenny Davern; and a trumpet exchange with Snooky Young, Sweets Edison, Joe Newman, and Joe Wilder.

As always, Benny Carter, Phil Woods, and Marshal Royal distinguished themselves, all carrying the banner for pure, ungimmicked improvisational virtuosity. The pianists, in addition to those mentioned, were Dick Hyman, dazzling in every conceivable setting; Ralph Sutton, with some delightful Wallerisms; Roland Hanna; Paul Smith; and Ross Tompkins. Bob Wilber and Kenny Davern, though they never work together

anymore except here, were as close as fraternal twins in their duets on *The Mooche* and *If I Could Be With You*. Green and Watrous traded off exquisitely on *When Your Lover Has Gone*. George Chisholm told an off-color joke with his Scottish accent, but followed it with a superb solo on *Just Friends*.

The party has acquired a much less antiquated caste over the years: there were several jazz waltzes, touches of bossa nova and, despite Gibson's professed dislike of bebop, numerous jams on compositions by Gillespie, Parker, Monk, and Tadd Dameron. Still, one problem persists in the repetition of certain tunes. Perhaps a moratorium should be declared on *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*, *Lady Be Good*, *In A Mellotone*, and a few others that seem to keep cropping up.

What matters perhaps as much as any other aspect of the party is the sense of good vibes, the bear hugs exchanged by New York musicians meeting their California counterparts for the only time this year, and the truly generous gestures made by Gibson, who more than once has invited the widow of a musician who was a party regular. This time it was Louise (Mrs. Zoot) Sims.

Another of his personal guests was Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, who had been battling cancer for the past year and was under doctor's orders not to play. On the final night, during the closing set, Jaws borrowed a tenor from Red Holloway, took to the bandstand, and closed the evening with an incredibly strong workout on *Shiny Stockings*. The ovation accorded him was overwhelming. Then, just as he has every year, Dick Gibson walked Maddie up to the mic and, as they stood there together while the applause died down, announced very simply: "This party is over."
—leonard feather

CLAUDE BOLLING/ SLIM GAILLARD

VARIOUS SITES/PARIS

The French love things American: jeans, jazz, Stetsons, peanut butter, words. Lots of little jazz clubs have been doing pretty well around Paris for years, and a recent visit found us making the rounds on the hopping little Rue St. Benoit.

The best club on the block was Au Montana, a long, dark *boîte* (box) with a brightly mirrored stage, where the beefy, bespectacled Harold Singer was holding forth on his tenor saxophone. The Oklahoma expatriate was in good middle-Coltrane voice and repertoire, playing amiable renditions of *Bye*



Slim Gaillard

ROGER FARRINGTON

Bye Blackbird, Lazy Bird, Stella By Starlight and the like, accompanied by a sturdy French trio. Harold says he's been living in Paris for 25 years—not nearly as long as his compere Benny Waters, that irrepressible octogenarian saxophonist, who also hangs at Montana.

Next day, following open-air muted trumpet bebop, Rasta reggae, and Caribbean calypso percussion by street musicians outside the Pompidou Centre and ultra-hip Cafe Costes, we Metro-ed to Le Petit Journal (tiny St. Michel edition), where we heard pianist/composer Claude Bolling fill the 75-seat poster-covered cellar room with as much music as he could tickle out of his chipper upright. Tightly backed by bassist Pierre Yves Sorin and drummer Vincent Cordelette (members of Bolling's Big Band

that played the larger Journal—200 seats at Montmartre—the previous night), Bolling played James P. Johnson, vintage Ellington, and other expansive, floral melodies of jazz's golden age, such as a tidy, comic *Little Rock Getaway* and some lively, circular originals. *St. Louis Blues* was boundlessly energetic and smart, with all manner of vamps, rolls, boogie left, trill right. His ideas come thick and fast, yet neatly packaged; like Bobby Short, he's a little hard to keep up with. The admiring audience contained several youngsters, but they were not the ones eating hot fudge sundaes at Bolling's elbow. Two, in fact, took to the bench on the break and played some pretty fair boogie and blues themselves. Children have been excluded from clubs in the States since the Birdland and Storyville days; the expression on those kids' faces made me remember what a damn shame it is.

Slim Gaillard ruled the roost in white beret at the Hotel Meridien's handsome and spacious Lionel Hampton Bar, but the pianist who made quite a pair with bassist Slam Stewart (Slim and Slam in 1938-9) was more into exuding *bonhomie* and hanging out than in playing his spare blues piano; he left most musical chores to his hard-driving band of young French musicians, recreating Kansas City-vintage Basie, among whom the stand-outs were altoist Daniel Huck—showing a bit of Woods and Stitt on quick stuff, but emulating Wilber and Hodges on slow blues—and guitarist Patrick Diaz. Slim, living in London for 30 years, keeps young audiences enthralled with his *panache*, and epitomizes the gaiety of the French scene.

—fred bouchard

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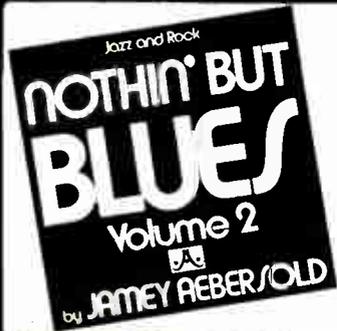
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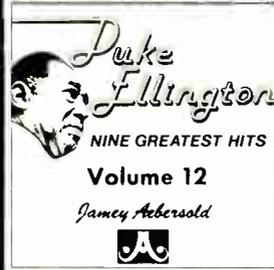
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PLAYERCISE: PRACTICE THROUGH DISCOVERY

by Eric Kloss

Eric Kloss is a much respected alto saxophonist, flutist, composer, and clinician based in Pittsburgh. He performs frequently with his vocalist wife, Candee, and his album Sharing (Omnisound 1044) received a five-star review in these pages in 1983.

There seems to be an unfortunate split in music today between improvised and non-improvised music. This gap is narrowing, however, as classical composers and musicians become increasingly interested in improvised music. By the same token jazz, rock, country, and Indian musicians are drawing from "classical" forms and concepts. The concept of a musical "tone row" was introduced to classical music early in this century by innovators such as Charles Ives in America and Arnold Schönberg in Europe.

The unnecessary schism between improvised and non-improvised music has carried over into basic methods of practice and improvising. Play scales and long tones for technical mastery, standard practice theory goes, and then improvise. Perhaps we can combine the two concepts into one. The concept of "playercise" that I am offering combines technical practice with ear-training, and these with improvisation. Through this method one can learn and discover simultaneously.

Traditionally, musical development happens in three stages: beginning, intermediate, and advanced. Much of the beginning work on any instrument is, of necessity, fairly mechanical. Proper fingering, correct touch or intonation, and a host of other fundamental procedures must be mastered. When this is accomplished, the musician has reached the intermediate level. Reaching this plateau is not an easy feat. There are those gifted musicians who have a God-given ability to translate these seemingly separate learned skills into music. However, many talented and gifted players cannot make this leap. Perhaps these playercises will help to bridge this gap.

Most woodwind or brass players begin their practice day with a series of long tones. These develop embouchure and breath control, but they are often tedious. The following is a long-tone exercise that introduces a freely constructed intervallic row.

Begin with a favorite note in your middle register (for example, middle C). Start constructing an interval row by moving either a half-step above (C#), or a half-step below (B). To continue this process, move either a whole-step above or below this second note, for example, D# or B, using C# as a point of departure being derived, as explained, from C, one half-step below which is the start of the row.

If one chooses, on the other hand, to move a half-step below the beginning note C to start the row, one will move either a whole-step up to C# or a whole-step down to A. Continue this process moving a minor third above or below this note. Continue, gradually widening the intervals: Major third, perfect fourth, tritone, perfect fifth, minor sixth, Major sixth, minor seventh, Major seventh, and octave. Reverse the process until reaching the half-step again, moving from Major seventh, to minor seventh, to Major sixth, to minor sixth, to perfect fifth, to tritone, to perfect fourth, to Major third, to minor third, to Major second, to minor second. Example one shows one possible row constructed in this way. As you will notice, it begins and ends on the note C. The row itself expands and contracts. This is an excellent warm-up exercise for the individual musician. It can also be practiced communally, with one person hitting a given pitch and another attempting to match this pitch. This is an excellent form of ear training. The row will come out differently just about every time.

EXAMPLE ONE



The playercise in example two deals with the five basic seventh qualities. Play a C Major seventh chord in an ascending and descending two-octave arpeggio. Play the C dominant-seventh arpeggio in the same fashion. Compare the Major and dominant-seventh arpeggios, playing them first separately, then together. The only difference between them is the flatted seventh. Play a minor seventh arpeggio, flattening the third

of the dominant seventh arpeggio. Play a minor seventh flat five or half-diminished arpeggio, flattening the fifth of the minor seventh arpeggio. Then play the final chord in the series, the diminished-seventh arpeggio, flattening the seventh of the half-diminished arpeggio. This diminished-seventh is a chord with a symmetrical intervallic structure consisting of three consecutive minor thirds.

EXAMPLE TWO

Break down the other four chords in example two to see their intervallic structures. For example, Major seventh is made up of one Major third and two minor thirds. Now play all five chords in example two in succession. You can practice this in all 12 keys.

How do chords and scales relate to each other? Let's take a Major seventh arpeggio and select three possible scale choices that could fit over this chord (example three). We see that the Major, Lydian, and Lydian-sharp-two scales can relate to this Major Seventh Chord. Play these scales until mastered. Now play the Major seventh arpeggio and improvise on the Major scale. Then play the arpeggio and improvise on the Lydian and

EXAMPLE THREE

CONTINUED ON PAGE 56

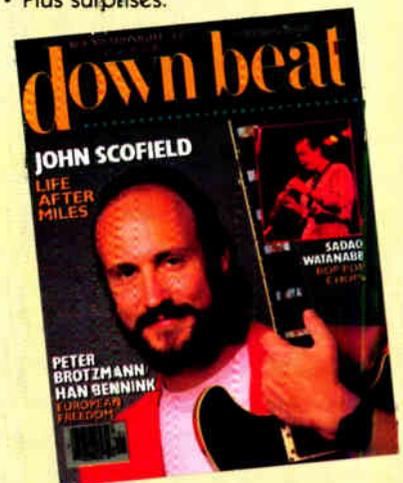
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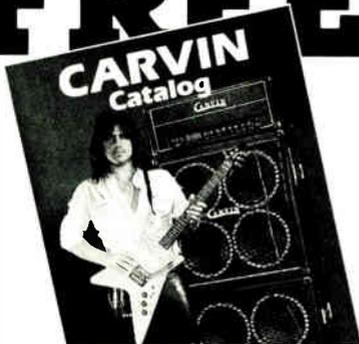


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LYDIAN #2

Lydian-sharp-two scale forms consecutively. Notice that the Lydian differs from the Major scale because of its raised fourth. Likewise, the Lydian-sharp-two differs from the Lydian scale by virtue of its raised second scale step. You can vary the chordal aspect of this exercise by beginning the chords on the third, fifth, or capital seventh degrees of these chords.

Try to make your improvised chord-scale units into four-bar phrases, landing on the first beat of the fifth bar on the same note on which the chord begins. Transpose this up in half-steps, eventually covering all the keys. When you encounter Major Seventh Chord you'll automatically know what to play if you do this exercise properly.

Keyboard, guitar, and bass players can play all the playercises listed above. The expansion and contraction in the interval rows can help both the reach and flexibility of the hands.

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IMPULSE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32

Jimmy Garrison and lends light, well-lubed support throughout.

Although some may prefer the earthy looseness of the earlier versions of **Count Basie's Kansas City Seven**, *Count Basie And The Kansas City 7* (MCA 5656) a reincarnation of one of Basie's small groups, is nevertheless a snappy, infectiously driving outing. The pithy Count was the slyist piano in town, and there are buoyant, good-natured solos from Thad Jones, Frank Wess, and Frank Foster. Not unexpectedly, the ensemble passages are flawless in this well-mitered, genial session.

From the first notes of **Quincy Jones And His Orchestra's Quintessence** (MCA 5728) it's evident that this assemblage is the work of a gifted arranger and finely honed collection of musicians, a jazz orchestra that includes Clark Terry, Joe Newman, Phil Woods, Freddie Hubbard, Oliver Nelson, Curtis Fuller, and Milt Hinton. These players' one-of-a-kind attention to details of phrasing produces a clarity of interpretation on a high level indeed. Yet the eight tunes present run all in the three-five minute range, allowing little space for the soloists to get started, much less to swell to fruition. Moreover, with the exception of Thelonious Monk's *Straight, No Chaser*, the themes are inconsequential, emphasizing deftness rather than substance. True, Jones pens some nice blends of french horns, brass, and reeds, and the ensembles all swing, but these qualities, alas, do not in themselves a memorable album make.

Turning to the **Art Blakey Quartet's A Jazz Message** (MCA 5648), we encounter an entirely different breed of jazz, one which places great emphasis on the fire and drive of the soloists, relies only slightly on nuances on instrumental color, and sidesteps intricacies of musical form in favor of holding compositions together by straightahead, shirtsleeves-rolled-up blowing. Here Sonny Stitt—who's good even when he's being merely facile—favors a large, gutsy horn sound; Blakey's well-oiled drive and signature rim clicks egg the soloists on; and McCoy Tyner burns in a cool blue flame. But, except in the relatively harmonically interesting *The Song Is You*, the quartet never passes the stage of being merely competent.

Complacency is certainly not a problem with **Sonny Rollins' On Impulse!** (MCA 5655). Like Hawkins, Rollins has examined the tenor saxophone inside-out, and, like Hawkins, he loves to engage in Joycean dialogues with his inner-self so that it is difficult to imagine a musician more in tune with his subconscious melodic stream. One of his favorite postures is sardonic lyricism. He ventures happily on the outskirts of uncertainty, giving every tone a customized, tentative twist. Yet his music

has depth and resonance, the sonic equivalent of perusing a dense passage from Eliot or Yeats. Rollins loves to revitalize old standards, and there's a calypso also, evidencing his ongoing concern with West Indian music. His rhythm section, made up of Ray Bryant, Walter Booker, and Mickey Roker, is companionable and fetchingly lopsided.

John Coltrane may be the only tenorist who can successfully follow Rollins, and his *A Love Supreme* (MCA 5661), dedicated to God, stands as a consummate act of intense purification and celebration, equalled in jazz only by Ellington's *Sacred Concerts*. Like Rollins, Coltrane doesn't merely play, he looms, becoming a gigantic musical presence intent on twisting and turning into every possible variant of this ritualistic dance. Then there's the haunting paradox of Coltrane's tone, at once hard and warm, compressed, yet expansive—there's simply no other saxophone sonority like it. We have, then, a drama more of spiritual searching than fulfillment, music dedicated to one passionate entity. It's easy to understand why Coltrane's music of this period was called anti-jazz, for it makes incredible, unworldly demands on its listeners—and 'or this we should give thanks.

Moving, strictly speaking, from the sublime to the ridiculous, we have *John Coltrane & Johnny Hartman* (MCA 5661), a fluke of a record that joins Hartman, the bebop crooner who rose to attention when he was with the band of Dizzy Gillespie, with Coltrane's classic quartet. Hartman's only redeeming virtue may be that his enunciation is clear, but his sleepy, offhand delivery conveys little, if anything, about the substance of the ballads collected here. Coltrane and his men stay in the background, wisely.

We come finally to **Charles Mingus' The Black Saint And The Sinner Lady** (MCA 5649), devil music of the highest order and a work of profound inner torment, Mingus' "living epitaph from birth," a work filled with wonderful creaks, groans, cries, and noises of the otherworld. The 11-piece group which Mingus assembled to render this music contains the likes of Jaki Byard, Charles Mariano, Quentin Jackson, and Dannie Richmond, among others, and Mingus' wonderful arrangements allow these voices to breathe, so much so that the solos grow out of the ensembles and then, miraculously, the ensembles seem to grow out of the solos—the perfect melding of soloist and form. These are Mingus' passions, and he's shaped textures, density, tone colors, grades of dissonance and tempi to blend passages of sustained lyricism with those exploding with inner despair. This is a work of loving pandemonium, the Sturm-und-Drang of an unrested soul, a continuous challenge to reexamine one's expectations of musical excellence, a tantalizing look at the dark side of Mingus' moon. —db

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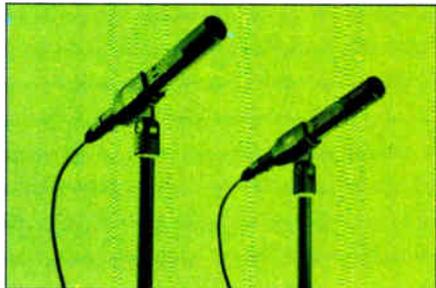
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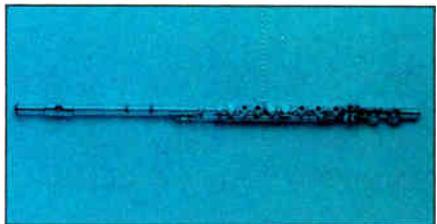
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SCOFIELD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

John is deep into a blues/funk bag with his new band. Working with Chambers and Grainger just naturally seems to bring it out of him. Hence the title, *Blue Matter*. "I guess the feeling of the album comes from the individual musicians, just like the last one I did (*Still Warm*). It just so happens that my group now is more in a funky direction, and if that brings out the B.B. King stuff, more power to it. 'Cause that's what I'm hearing.

"The blues stuff is real important, and I'm getting better at it. It's a craft. You learn it just like anything else. And really, there's nothin' like a good blues phrase. Nothin' in the world. Miles plays that kind of St. Louis-blues phrasing. Not like B. B. King. It's different, but still blues. I always hated to hear these guys get up and try to play 'The Blues,' you know? Like, I always hated to see John Davidson on tv get bluesy. But when somebody's doing it and meaning it, like B.B. or Miles, then it's beautiful to watch.

There's also a country & western feel that occasionally creeps into Scofield's playing, as it did on *Best Western* from *Electric Outlet*, or *Heaven Hill* from the new album.

"Heaven Hill is actually a brand of whiskey," he explains. "This song is a waltz coming from c&w-type sounds and gospel music. It's funny how these American music forms overlap, especially on the guitar. There's a vocal quality in bending notes that comes out of c&w singing and the blues or gospel. That sort of country phrasing has always fascinated me. My wife, Susan, is a big country music fan. She turned me on to the Whites and the Judds and all of them. I also love George Jones and Ricky Scaggs. And Hank Garland was really great at that country-jazz type thing—improvising on standard pop tunes from the '30s. Not as harmonically 'out' as bebop, but it definitely comes from a semi-swing feel. Hank made an album with Joe Morello and Gary Burton that's really great. He sounds sort of like Tal Farlow on the record."

Speaking of Tal, John recently joined with fellow guitarists John Abercrombie and Larry Coryell in paying tribute to the amazing Mr. Farlow at a special concert in Los Angeles, which was filmed as part of a documentary on the legendary guitarist. Says Scofield of Tal, "I remember hearing his Verve records when I was 15 years old, right around the time that I was getting seriously into jazz. When I first started playing I had a solid-body Hagstrom, and I'd sit around playing Beatles tunes. Then I got a Les Paul and started playing Otis Rush and Freddie King tunes. Then, around the time I heard Tal, I got a Guild arch top jazz guitar and tried playing like him. But he was so fast. Tal could play those really fast tempos with Red Norvo—really make those changes move. His work in the '50s is exemplary."

Other projects on the horizon include another album with Bennie Wallace, an album with Swiss trumpeter Franco Ambrosetti, and continued collaborations with Don Pullen/George Adams and bassist Marc Johnson in his group Base Desires. But for now, he's concentrating on developing his new musical rapport with Chambers, Grainger, and Aires, touring on the strength of *Blue Matter*.

On his being named number one guitarist by db critics, Sco has this to say: "It feels great that the people who are listening to music all the time would vote for me. But look at the numbers, man. It's pretty close there. I still don't know how much it really means, though. I mean, you can never rest up. I'm just starting to get gigs for myself in the States so I can go out and do club dates where I don't lose money. That's just starting to happen. So the last thing I'm gonna do is lay back because of some critics poll. That doesn't assure you of success. And also, what I really want to do is try to get better, somehow. You know—keep moving on."

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NEW ORLEANS NOW

by Ben Sandmel

There seems to be an over-enthusiastic perception among out-of-town music writers these days—namely that New Orleans has suddenly emerged as the nation's latest musical hotspot. A number of factors account for the current wave of media attention: the city's historic stature and romantic aura, the cajun food craze, the growing popularity of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, the rapid success of the Dirty Dozen Brass Band. But increased coverage has simply not caused a proportionate rise in opportunities for most of New Orleans' working musicians.

One fundamental reason for this is the city's current financial crisis. In addition, local musicians the world over are rarely appreciated at home. Another factor is the relative lack of recording activity. Rounder Records has signed a lot of local artists lately, as part of its Modern New Orleans Masters series; but many of the sessions were done in Slidell, 20 miles away. In town, New York expatriate Mark Bingham (best known for his work on Hal Willner's Thelonious Monk and Kurt Weill anthology tributes) and Jay Weigel have various projects in progress at their new Zero/One Studio. Jazz pianist David Torkanowski is associated with a new studio called Southlake, while Composer's Studio is heavily involved with local modern jazz.

Bob Vernon's Delta Studio, a multi-media facility, co-ordinated the rare co-billing of Ray Charles, Fats Domino, and Jerry Lee Lewis for a national video network. These and other studios have also produced some fine local rock records. But national name acts are not recording in New Orleans, as they did both in the early days of rock and the mid-'70s, when Allen Toussaint's Sea-Saint Studio was thriving.

Furthermore, while New Orleans music—r&b, classic jazz, parade bands, and the like—is adored by connoisseurs, it is not commercially viable. When a major label last tried to market the local sound—the Neville Brothers' *Fiyero On The Bayou*—the result was critical acclaim but disappointing sales. Finally, New Orleans is a relatively small market, with a limited number of gigs despite an extensive tourism industry.

One sad result is that New Orleans is losing some prominent musicians. Drummer "Zigaboo" Modeliste, formerly with the Meters, recently joined the group's ex-guitarist, Leo Nocentelli, in Los Angeles—where another expatriate, jazz pianist Henry Butler, has found increased opportunities and recognition. The Marsalis Brothers, Wynton and Branford, made their respec-



The Dirty Dozen's Jenell Marshall.

tive marks in New York; now their father Ellis, New Orleans' leading jazz pianist, is also leaving town for a professorial position in Virginia. As Marsalis recently told the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*: "I think that New Orleans is on a cycle right now where its priorities are different. I don't know what they are now, but they don't seem to have much to do with music—at least my kind of music."

Nevertheless, great new ideas are evolving in New Orleans, and the city's music enthusiasts have easy access to a rich array of styles. This unique assortment is enhanced by the increased popularity of cajun and zydeco music from nearby rural areas. Describing the entire scene could easily fill a book, and a mere list of names is pointless, so what follows is a selective discussion of a few significant artists, with an emphasis on recent releases. Rest assured that there are scores more, in various genres, who are equally worthy of mention.

The most striking development in New Orleans these days is the resurgence of the brass bands. The brass band tradition is a century or so old, an important component in the "birth" of jazz, and the source of such major talents as Louis Armstrong. Brass bands have remained popular in the city's black community, as well as finding an eager audience among tourists. But for decades now the style and repertoire have remained static and conservative, for the most part, until the recent emergence of groups like the Dirty Dozen Brass Band (see db, Aug. '85.) The tradition has now been revitalized—but not diluted or dominated—by modern influences, replacing a rigid concept with a vibrant movement led by young black players.

The Dirty Dozen's *Live: Mardi Gras In Montreux* (Rounder 2052) is a prime case in

point. While the group's debut set on Concord Jazz was marred by a poor recording—to the extent that the bass drum was barely audible—the Rounder LP captures the group's innovations in full frantic glory. In the wake of the Dozen's success, other young groups have appeared. The Rebirth Brass Band debuted (on Arhoolie 1092) a few years back, and recently finished a session at Zero/One Studio. Several other groups, including Tuba Fats and the Chosen Few, are gigging frequently around town, both in the black community and for tourists. In this era of bland mass culture such an unlikely trend is refreshing indeed.

The Dirty Dozen LP represents one-seventh of Rounder's Modern New Orleans Masters series. This ambitious and sorely needed project constitutes the only local activity by a national label. Artistically speaking, Rounder's Louisiana emphasis has seen both hits and misses; some of the records show a well-intentioned but odd perception of funky Southern music. The late, uncategorizable pianist James Booker's *Classified* (Rounder 2036), for instance, is a definite disappointment, although Johnny Adams' *From The Heart* (Rounder 2044) effectively captures the essence of a truly brilliant, world-class jazz, pop, and soul singer. Rounder producer Scott Billington has found a valuable asset in horn arranger Bill Samuels; in addition to Adams' two LPs, Samuels also arranged Irma Thomas' *The New Rules* (Rounder 2047, featuring a fine vocal performance by New Orleans' "soul queen"), *Wolf Tracks* (Rounder 2048) by guitarist Walter "Wolfman" Washington, and Marcia Ball's *Hot Tamale Baby* (Rounder 3095), all of which are Billington productions. Ball (not technically a New Orleans "master") is Austin-based, but Louisiana born and bred; New Orleans r&b is an important part of her repertoire, and has made her one of the city's leading club attractions.

The Modern Masters series goes on to include a solo set by Tuts Washington (Rounder 2041)—a now-deceased, seminal pianist, captured unfortunately far past his peak powers—and Alvin "Red" Tyler's *Heritage* (Rounder 2047). Tyler was a studio saxophone ace during the mid-'50s, New Orleans' "Golden Age" of rock and r&b recording, but jazz has always been his first love. *Heritage* features his straightforward tenor work with expert backing by trumpeter Clyde Kerr Jr., and three of the city's more gifted and sought-after players—David Torkanowski, bassist Jim Singleton, and drummer Johnny Vidacovich. There are also fine vocal performances by Johnny Adams and Germaine Bazzle. And Black Top Records, the Rounder-distributed label which brought us the Neville Brothers live set, *Nevillization*, has just released *Glazed*, featuring guitarist/songwriter Earl "Trick Bag" King, backed by Roomful of Blues.

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The Dallas Sessions, by tenor saxist James Rivers (Spindletop 101), features the same core of players in a Grover Washington/Southern-soul setting, with excellent guest vocals by the noted bassist George French. It's a warm, entertaining set that calls for repeated listening. In a more challenging vein, tenorman Eddie Harris is paired with Ellis Marsalis on *Homecoming*, also on Spindletop (105). And the New Orleans-based Great Southern label merits quick mention for two fine albums. Cousin Joe's *Relaxin' In New Orleans* (11012) features the wit, humor, and somewhat limited piano of a blues "elder statesman," while *The Pfister Sisters* (11011) are a talented young vocal trio who specialize in a variety of classic jazz genres, especially the work of the Boswell Sisters.

A very brief look at local rock includes self-produced singles by Dash Riprock, Reality Patio, and Multiple Places (all featured on MTV's *The Cutting Edge*), Upfront, and Uncle Stan and Auntie Vera. Rockabillys Johnny J. and the Hit Men's *Nuclear Hayride* LP appeared recently on the local Nightshade label; New Orleans' leading and longest-established rock band, the Radiators, were included on a recent Epic anthology LP called *Unsigned*, and may soon disprove that title by signing with Rounder. Despite New Orleans' prevailing reputation as an r&b and jazz town, the local original rock scene is equally diverse and worthwhile.

The brass band phenomenon of young people embracing and extending an essentially archaic tradition is paralleled in rural Louisiana by the recent resurgence of cajun music and its black counterpart, zydeco. Five or six years ago such raw ethnic music was considered hopelessly passé, but now it's come back with a prolifically recorded vengeance. Notable new cajun releases include three albums by Beausoleil, the genre's leading innovators (*Parlez-nous A Boire* and *Allons A Lafayette* on Arhoolie 5034 and 5036, respectively, and the upcoming *Bayou Boogie* on Rounder), and *The Best Of Nathan Abshire*—a late, traditional master—on Swallow 6061. Buckwheat Zydeco's *Waitin' For My YaYa* (Rounder 2051) presents the urban, soul-influenced side of this genre, while Lawrence "Black" Ardoin's LP (Arhoolie 1091) features a more rural approach that's also enjoying a comeback. As with the other styles discussed here, there are plenty more worthwhile records.

Much of the media-proclaimed local renaissance is actually a re-working of older musical forms. Such seemingly unlikely traditionalism is almost commonplace here, though its exotic appeal to non-residents is easily understandable. And in a sense those gushing writers are right—although working conditions may not always reflect it, a lot of today's most exciting new music is indeed evolving in and around New Orleans. db

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WOJTEK NIEDZIELA



Wojtek Niedziela, who turns 26 this month, was born in Rybnik, Poland. Niedziela began his music education on bassoon, but after entering the Academy of Music in Katowice he devoted himself to piano, graduating in 1986. He won first prize at the 1983 Contest of Jazz Improvisation in Katowice, Grand Prix at the 12th International Jazz Piano Festival in Kalisz in 1985, and with his group New Presentation was nominated the Young European Jazz Artist 1985, winning the contest organized by the International Jazz Federation during the Leverkusener Jazz Days in West Germany.

Niedziela has recorded several LPs, one slated for release in West Germany. Of his performance at Montmartre Jazz Club in Copenhagen, Boris Rabinowitsch wrote: "The playing of the trio was nothing less than outstanding, and it was unbelievably wide-ranged, from lyrical passages a la Bill Evans via Keith Jarrett, to strictly controlled free form style as we know it from [the] Ganelin Trio."

CHRISTOPHER WEISE



Christopher Weise, an 18-year-old senior from Eau Claire, WI, was a member of the first-place high school rhythm combo at the 1986 University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Jazz Festival (where Bill Berry and Dave Frishberg served as clinicians). This combo will perform next month for a regional convention of the Music

Educators National Conference in Minneapolis, having been chosen from among 150 combos submitting tapes. Weise's other honors include being chosen drummer for the 1986 Wisconsin State High School Honors Jazz Ensemble, and being in the first band at the Indianhead Jazz Camp in Shell Lake, WI, the past three summers.

Weise began drumming at age 13, studying privately with local teachers Bob Gibson and Ron Keezer. He has gigged steadily with various jazz, commercial, and rock groups, and recorded an album with The Exports. His influences include Steve Gadd, Neil Peart, Shelly Manne, Buddy Rich, and Omar Hakim.

KAROLYN KAER



Karolyn Kaer, 17, is a jazz- and classical-oriented saxophonist who also plays flute, clarinet, oboe, and piano. A high school senior from New Berlin, WI, Kaer is principal oboe player for her school's symphonic band and lead tenor in its jazz ensemble. She has earned many honors over the past few years, including being named principal oboe in the Greater Milwaukee Youth Wind Ensemble the past three years; tenor saxophonist in the Wisc. Honors Jazz Ensemble, '84 and '85; and alto saxophonist for the 1986 All-American McDonald's Band. She has won eight outstanding soloist awards from the National Association of Jazz Educators; four NAJE jazz camp scholarships and two NAJE national scholarships; a scholarship to study at the Conservatory of Music in Milwaukee; and an outstanding musician award at the World of Music Festival in Ft. Worth, Texas.

Kaer has studied with Joe Aaron, Lori Odermann, Greg Keel, Bill Sears, and Berkely Fudge, and is currently studying at Milwaukee's Conservatory of Music. Her influences include Charlie Parker, Phil Woods, Dexter Gordon, Stan Getz, and Michael Brecker.

AHMAD MANSOUR



Ahmad Mansour, 26, grew up in Geneva, Switzerland, and began studying the guitar at age 15. After graduating the International School of Geneva he started full-time music studies, including classical and jazz guitar, harmony theory, and solfège. He moved to Boston in 1981, enrolling at the Berklee College of Music and studying with guitarist Mick Goodrick.

Mansour has performed in several ensembles, among them Ashanti, which performed in the Boston area and did TV shows in 1983. That fall, Mansour founded a quartet with Hungarian pianist Laszlo Gardonyi, Norwegian bassist Terje Gewelt (both past Auditions honorees), and Canadian drummer Ian Forman. In 1984 he performed with Swiss tenor saxist Stephane Metraux, who later joined the quartet for their 1985 European summer tour. Mansour's first album was released in 1984, and his second, which includes Metraux, was recorded in November.

GARREE STEPHAN

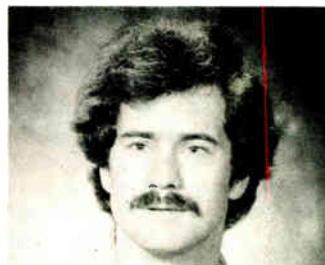


Garree Stephan, 25, is working on a master's degree in Jazz Trumpet Performance at the New England Conservatory of Music, where he recently completed a degree in Classical Trumpet Performance. Stephan was named best classical soloist in the 1986 db Student Music Awards; other honors include winning the 1986 New England Conservatory Baroque Concerto Competition, the 1984 Bach

Young Artist Competition, and the 1984 Kent Philharmonic Orchestra Concerto Competition, in which he performed the Henri Tomasi Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra.

Stephan is founder of the New England Brass. His teachers include John McNeil, Robert Nagel, and his hometown (Grand Rapids, MI) friend Gregg Good. Stephan served three years in the U.S. Marine Corps and was stationed in New Orleans, where he studied with the late George Jansen.

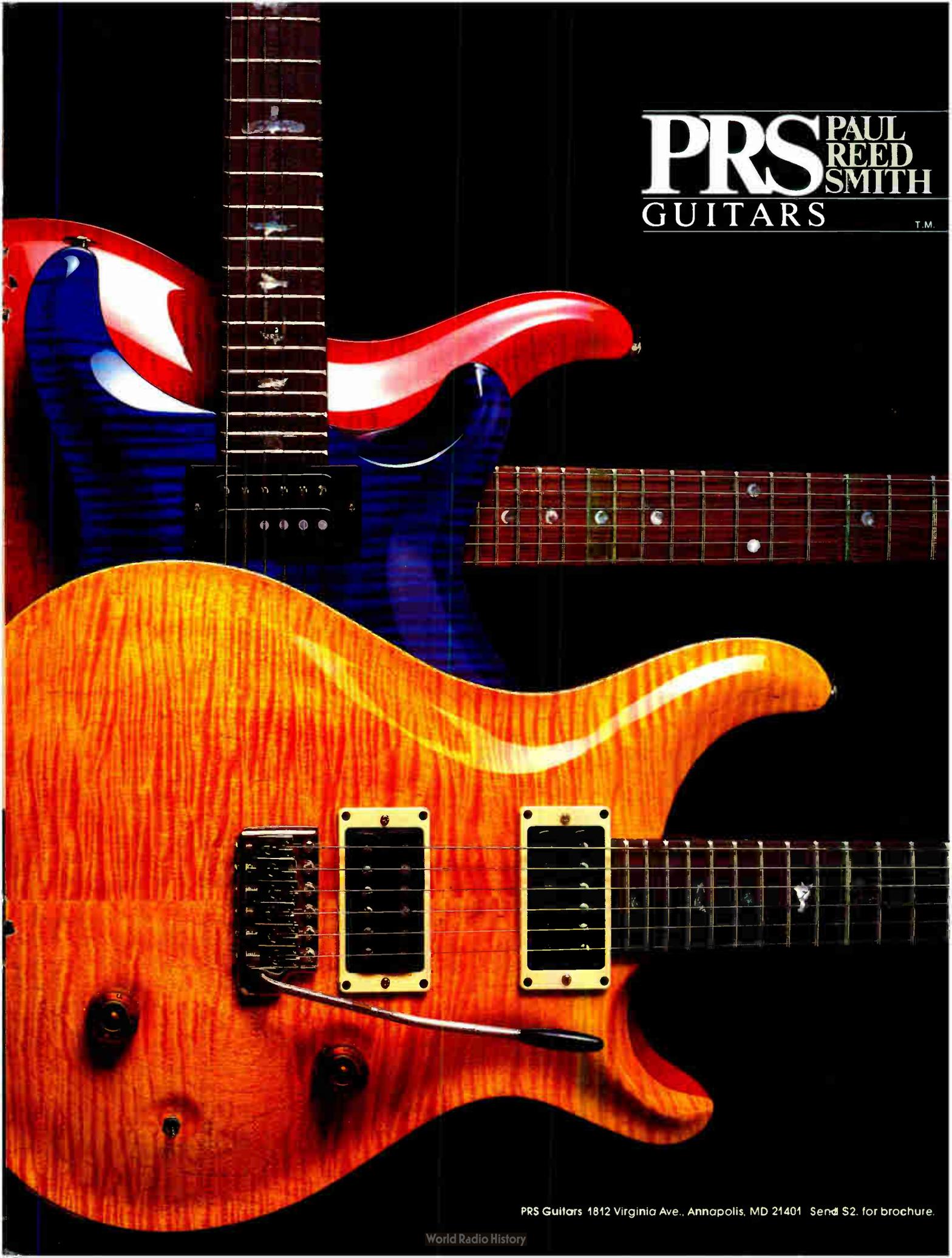
MARK MOORE



Mark Moore, 26-year-old winner of three db Student Musician awards, began his music career at the National Music Camp in Interlochen, MI, studying jazz piano with Jim Milne and classical piano with Peggy Erwin. That fall he enrolled at the Interlochen Arts Academy, where he played piano in the Studio Orchestra and won his first "deebie" as part of a student music group. Moore attended the U. of Miami in 1979, playing in a student jazz ensemble and putting together his own 15-piece big band, which won him another "deebie." He then spent some time working as a cocktail pianist on several Caribbean cruise ships, before returning to his home state and attending the U. of Iowa, where his ensemble earned him a third "deebie."

Moore moved on to the U. of Northern Iowa in 1981, where he played in the school's jazz ensemble and was runner-up in the NAJE composition contest for his *Variations On A Full Moon*. After graduating UNI, Moore moved to Boston, where he released his first album, *Hiway Hypnosis*, and his band, FM Express, plays regularly at the club Ryles. db

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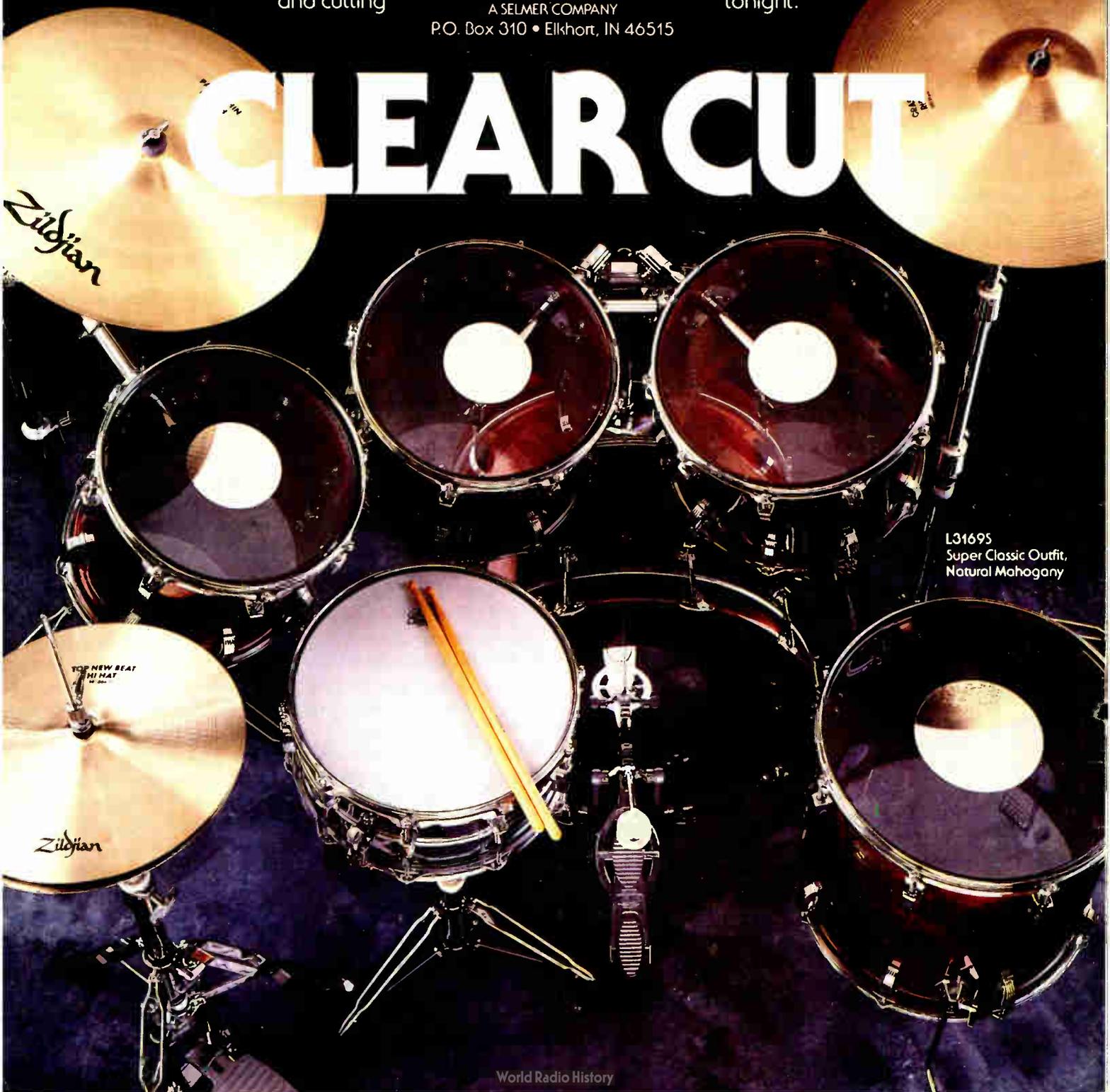
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