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For Contemporary Musicians

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OMAR HAKIM Stickin' It To Ya

GARY BURTON
Vibes Alive!

AL JARREAU
Trailblazing Troubadour

SERGEY KURYOKHIN
Music From Mars

AD LIB: Rouse, Monk
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Omar Hakim



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Gary Burton



ANDY FREEBERG

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Sergey Kuryokhin

Features

16 OMAR HAKIM: STICKIN' IT TO YA

He's played with all the big names (e.g., Gil Evans, Weather Report, Miles), but now he's moving to the forefront. With his first album as a leader due out this spring, drummer Omar Hakim is goin' places. **Jeff Levenson** provides the scoop.

20 GARY BURTON: VIBES ALIVE!

Poll-winning vibist Gary Burton is ready to do it again, returning to his storied vibes-and-guitar format along with "a new batch of killer unknowns." His story is far-reaching, including work with Chick Corea, Astor Piazzolla, and John Scofield, among others. Join **Bill Milkowski** for an in-depth conversation with the Berklee stellar alum/faculty member.

24 AL JARREAU: A TROUBADOUR'S NEW TONES

His range is exceptional—everything from jazz to techno-funk, with some blues and rock thrown in for good measure. Singer Al Jarreau has opened his heart to new horizons, as **Robin Tolleson** explains.

26 SERGEY KURYOKHIN: THE RUSSIAN MARTIAN ARRIVES

Pianist/ensemble leader Sergey Kuryokhin's been making the rounds worldwide. Fortunately, his music is relatively well-documented. His recent collaborations include everyone from Paul Wertico (of Pat Metheny fame) to Frank Zappa. **Howard Mandel** shares the amazing story of this improviser from outer space.

Cover photograph of Omar Hakim by Louis A. Myrie.

Departments

5 on the beat, by John Ephland.

6 chords & discords

10 news

14 riffs

30 record reviews: Steps Ahead; Miles Davis; Anthony Braxton; Paul Motian; Bass Hits: Charlie Haden, Slam Stewart, Avery Sharpe, Harvie Swartz, Edgar Meyer, Bruce Bromberg, Mark Egan; Chuck Berry; Ray Anderson.

37 cd reviews: Herb Robertson Brass Ensemble; How Big Is Big?: Teddy Charles, Gil Evans, Laurent Cugny, Orchestre National De Jazz, Maurice Magnoni, ICP Orchestra, Either/Orchestra, Mel Lewis, Louie Bellson, Bill Holman, Slide Hampton, Gerry Mulligan, John Coltrane, Julius Hemphill, Oliver Lake.

41 blindfold test: Eddie Daniels, by Michael Bourne.

42 profile: NRBQ, by Dan Ouellette; David Friesen, by William Minor.

46 caught: Thelonious Monk Institute Of Jazz Concert, by Owen Cordle; McCoy Tyner, by Stephanie Stein; Opus McShann, by Brooke Comer; Keith Richards, by Bill Milkowski.

51 book review: Satchmo, by Chip Deffaa.

54 pro session: "Music Writing Programs For The Macintosh—Part 1: The First Generation," by Joel Simpson; "Charlie Parker's Solo On Dewey Square—A Piano Arrangement," by Paul Smith.

58 pro shop

59 ad lib: "Rouse And Nica," by Peter Keepnews.

62 auditions: Young musicians deserving recognition.

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STICKIN'
IT TO YA

CLAUDIA THOMPSON

by Jeff Levenson



mar Hakim faces that classic dilemma confronting all multitalented artists. It is a nagging concern for those afflicted with terminal versatility, and best expressed by the modest, decidedly understated question, How does one do it all?

HAKIM

Hakim, arguably the drummer of the '80s, is on his way to find out. And in the process he may surprise quite a few of his drum-loving fans with a display of far-reaching musicianship that exceeds any of his contributions—kit-wise or conceptual—to projects led by Gil Evans, or Joe Zawinul, or Wayne Shorter, or Sting, or David Sanborn, or Brian Ferry, or David Bowie, or Miles Davis, or Anita Baker, or... enough with the resume! You get the picture.

Hakim has just finished *Rhythm Deep* for GRP, his initial record as a leader. It is a project that has been incubating for years, well before his star began to rise, before he first earned critical notice with Gil Evans' big band in 1981. During his three-year tenure with Weather Report one witnessed a creative flowering. He began writing more, and in his play he assumed an increasingly authoritative stance that emphasized feeling the groove, layin' down law in the service of the music rather than flaunting vacuous technique. Blame it on confidence.

His subsequent associations with the above-mentioned leaders reinforced his appreciation of the rhythmic distinctions among various musics. Along the way his notoriety fostered work opportunities that helped expand his repertoire of moves. For instance, studio play on Baker's *Giving You The Best I Got* required an appreciably different mindset and attack than traveling the world with Sting; just as backing guest artists with Sanborn's *Sunday Night* TV band necessitates having a full command of stylistic vocabularies.

That Hakim has got chops has never been questioned. The real issues, for now, are: Will he reveal himself on *Rhythm Deep*? Will he step forward and show us something about himself we haven't seen before? Will he ask his players to do for him what he has done for others?

Hakim's enthusiasm and spirit suggest there is but one resounding answer to such queries: Of course! (but check out the record for yourself).

Jeff Levenson: *Is this new GRP record a synthesis of the different musics you routinely play? Or have you focused your efforts into one particular concept?*

Omar Hakim: Yes to both. I am trying to use the record as a showcase for all the music skills I have tried to develop throughout my career. Maybe a few people don't know that I am a writer. Playing drums is actually just one part of what I do. I wrote for Weather Report when I was with them. On this record

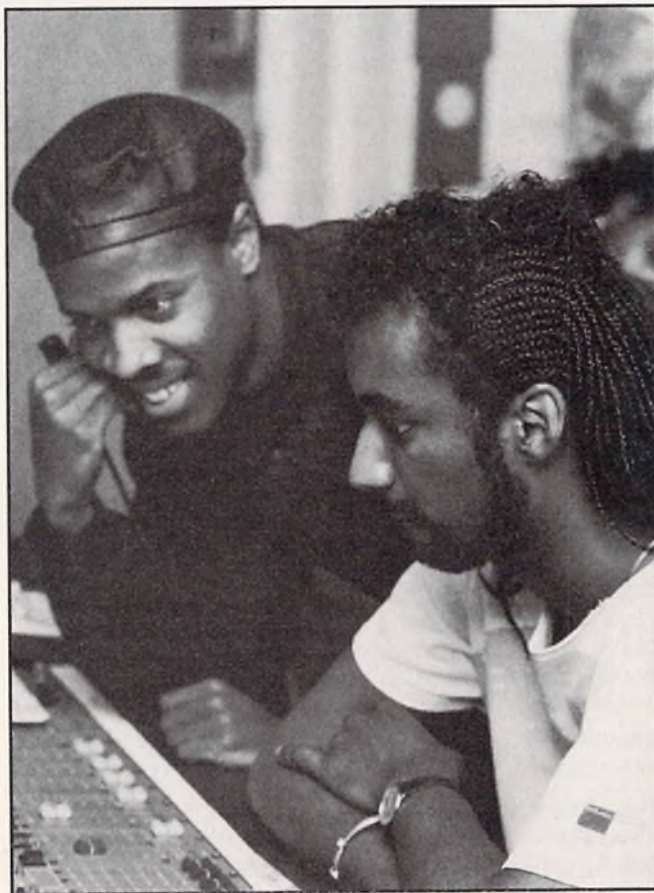
I am writing a lot of music that is vocally-oriented, which allowed me to do some singing. I have done a lot of singing behind the drums with some of the people I have toured with. I sang some pretty odd things on the Weather Report tour. I was a background singer when I was out with Carly Simon. And I sang with Sting and other rock and funk bands. Now I am going to try to move the singing to the forefront. There is stuff [on the record] you would call jazz, and stuff you would call crossover or r&b or dance or pop.

The '60s and '70s were a great time to grow up in America and hear all kinds of music—Motown, The Beatles, Atlantic Records, Earth, Wind & Fire—so many influences coming together. [That's why] it is impossible for me to narrow my music statement to just one thing, because I grew up hearing so much. It shaped my drumming. I am just as comfortable with Weather Report as I was playing on David Bowie's album. That is an artist profile that I want to develop and maintain in my recording career.

JL: *When you play in various group contexts, do you approach the particular style of drumming from an intellectual point of view or is it purely a matter of feel? For instance, does one make decisions about how to play with Bowie versus, say, David Sanborn?*

OH: It depends. I probably don't think too *drummerishly* about playing drums. I don't intellectualize the music. I just live it for the moment. [For instance,] the best way to learn how to play reggae is to go dancing in a reggae club. Live it! Make it a part of your body. Drumming is all body. I have often heard of drummers who are dancers. If you can get your body moving in a certain way, you can get the flow of the reggae or the funk or the rock & roll.

JL: *Fellow drummer Bob Moses has said that he approaches his instrument by imagining himself a giant bird in flight, an eagle perhaps. And that it is important for him to replicate the movement*



Hakim with keyboardist Michael Bearden.



LOUISA MYRIE

Hakim converses with David Sanborn on the set of *Sunday Night*.

of the bird through the air.

OH: That makes complete sense to me. You can't learn that at a drummers' school. It all ties in with how you walk and talk and see the world. I think about being on the road with Weather Report and Wayne calling me at seven in the morning, after getting off stage at 2:30, and asking me to take a walk with him in some beautiful village like Bologna—just to take a walk early in the morning and talk. If we do things like that, we know we're going to bring so much more to the stage the next night.

It's always you that you take to the stage—your life, the way you see and feel things. People don't respond to technique as much as to the soul, to what you give them from the heart. Hopefully it transcends judgment because it is so soulful. You just try to tap into that source.

JL: You are describing a process that is essentially humanistic, one that says great music is a function of the relationships forged between musicians.

OH: For me it is. Most definitely. That is where the energy comes from and it is so much bigger than me or you.

JL: When you think of the different groups that you've played with, can you see how each improved your musicianship?

OH: Sure. I played with Gil Evans right before I joined Weather Report and that was the best preparation I could have had for joining Joe and Wayne. Gil's was probably the first band I played with where the whole band could do an organized improvisation.

And it was different every night! The first time I played with them, I asked Hiram [Bullock] about it. He said, "Just play your thing, because if Gil didn't want you to play your thing, you wouldn't be here." That was a perfect thing for me to hear before Weather Report, because it required listening, paying attention to a groove that was never the same. In that band you forgot the arrangement, you looked at the chart and then ripped it up. It was very liberating.

Weather Report was probably a good combination of everything I was into. Joe and Wayne really do have a good sense of rhythm and it spans generations of grooves. It is not just bebop or swing or post-bop. It is all of it. Wayne wrote some really interesting rhythms that allowed me to stretch.

With Sting you had Kenny Kirkland playing some amazing stuff next to you. And then Darryl Jones pumping an amazing groove at you. And Sting singing those wonderful notes. And then Branford [Marsalis] doing his thing. How could you not rise to that? It was an amazing carpet ride.

JL: How important is it for you to have a good bass player? For instance, Darryl Jones or Marcus Miller?

OH: They are essential to free up my playing. If there is a bass player I don't know, we will [sometimes] have tempo or feel problems. But with [Darryl or Marcus] there is no question that now we can explore. Rapport with the bass player, for me as a drummer, is very important; once we have it, then we can embark on exploring our personalities. We can help each other

and express things together. There is a time for me to lay back and support, and a time for me to step out and accent—to do the grammar. Marcus and I used to lock ourselves in a room at the old Music and Art High school and just play. A lot of times when I rehearse my own band we just play grooves and play them until we have it down. I have a great new bass player from Washington, D.C. named Scott Ambush. He's on the record.

JL: Who else contributed to the project?

OH: I have Michael Bearden on keyboards and Chieli Minucci playing guitar, although I am doing most of the rhythm guitar on the funkier numbers. Victor Bailey is on a couple of cuts. Najee is on a couple of cuts. Also Kesia Bostick, who appeared on Onaje Allen Gumbs' album, and Candy Hinton. On a couple of songs I did all the backgrounds myself with overdubbing. And of course the drumming is mine. Electronic and acoustic.

JL: Do you have a good ear for jazz drummers? Can you identify them?

OH: Not like Kenny Washington [laughs]. He had the library in his house. He should have issued cards. He knew all the solos—a serious historian. Actually, I think about growing up and listening to Elvin Jones and Art Blakey and Buddy Rich. My dad was a musician and my first exposure in the house was to jazz. Rock & roll was out in the street. I remember going to Trane's house with [my dad] when I was a kid. Then in the '70s, I was listening to Billy Cobham and Lenny White and Mahavishnu, and Return To Forever.

JL: Now, you find yourself moving in a direction that includes electronics. Do you see yourself as a techno-freak as much as an acoustic drummer?

OH: Yes, although people don't think of me that way. I am mostly known for my love of the acoustic drums. I get called in to embellish a drum machine, to give it more of the human feel—high-hats and cymbals and tom fills on top of drum machines to make [the music] feel real. A lot of writers want the convenience of a drum machine because they use it at home. It's a wonderful tool. It has helped me compose. You can use it for recording late at night when you can't make noise.

A lot of times when people use drum machines it sounds square and rigid. On this project, I entered my drum performances on three or four of the tunes with sticks and pedals, so the computer became a fancy digital tape recorder for me. Every time I recorded on the computer, I didn't do it note-by-note. I did a performance—the whole song from top to bottom, so I could edit it.

Nothing interests me more than to fuse my knowledge and experience with what is going on now. I feel that gives me an edge. I can bring reference and understanding to what is going on now.

JL: Given your new creative objectives, was it hard for you to secure a record deal?

OH: It was hard because I was typecast as a drummer, and it didn't make sense for [a label] to see me as a front man. I like pop and dance music, but the record companies said, "Why don't you just be a drummer and make jazz records?" But I wanted to be a recording artist and make my own statement. It was discouraging, but I just kept working on it. I kept the ego in check and I learned. The process of looking for a record deal had its ups and downs—like going through the fire. But I realized that finding a relationship with a company was more important than finding a record contract.

JL: Just what you said about playing with musicians.

OH: A lot of it is the same. You've got to keep your vision. Don't let anyone tell you what your music should be. The stuff on this album was the same stuff rejected earlier. Now, it has taken on a new life. You've got to hold your position if that is what you believe in. That is what this record is—a presentation of who I am.

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LOUIS A. MYRLE

OMAR HAKIM'S EQUIPMENT

"My main drum set agrees with my posture," states Hakim. "I have a double pedal on a 22x18-inch bass drum with a Remo pin-stripe head; three rack toms—a 10x8-inch, a 12x10-inch, and a 13x11-inch; and three floor toms—a 14x14-inch, a 16x16-inch, and a 16x18-inch; all the tom heads are Remo Clear Emperor. My snare is a 3½x14-inch piccolo, the Remo white-coated Ambassador model, and a 6½x14-inch brass free-floating system snare. They are all Pearls. I try to have a set-up that allows even body motion. I had a teacher named Clyde Lucas who told me to line up the snare drum with the first tom and everything fans out from there. It feels good and you can move in a circular motion.

"[From left to right] my cymbals include a 16-inch china; a 13-inch thin-crash cymbal over my high-hat, which is a 14-inch Quick Beat or a 13-inch K-Z; a 19-inch medium-thin crash; a 20-inch lite-ride or Z ride—I use different kinds of ride cymbals depending on the gig; a 17-inch medium-thin crash, and a 22-inch china. The cymbals are all Zildjians. I use Vic Firth drum sticks. They are introducing the Omar Hakim model—a signature stick.

"On the [new] record, the electric drums I use are the Dynachord Add-One, the Akai M.P.C.-60—the newest version of the Roland Octapad; and the D.W. Trigger Pedal."

OMAR HAKIM SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

- | | |
|---|---|
| with Weather Report
PROCESSION—Columbia 38427
DOMINO THEORY—Columbia 39147
SPORTIN' LIFE—Columbia 39908 | with Dire Straits
BROTHERS IN ARMS—Warner Bros. 92526-1 |
| with David Bowie
LET'S DANCE—EMI America 17093
TONIGHT—EMI America 17138 | with Miles Davis
TUTU—Warner Bros. 925490-1 |
| with David Sanborn
AS WE SPEAK—Warner Bros. 923650-1 | with Brian Ferry
BOYS AND GIRLS—Warner Bros. 1-25082 |
| with John Scofield
STILL WARM—Gramavision 18-8508 | with Kazumi Watanabe
MOBO 2—Gramavision 8406
MOBO 1—Gramavision 8404 |
| with Sting
DREAM OF THE BLUE TURTLES—A&M 3750
BRING ON THE NIGHT—A&M Bring-1 | with Anita Baker
GIVING YOU THE BEST I GOT—Elektra/Asylum 60827-1 |

GARY BURTON

VIBES

alive!

By Bill Milkowski

A

perennial poll winner, improviser nonpareil, and recent inductee into the Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame, Gary Burton is fast approaching his 30th year as a professional musician. At age 17, he made his debut on record as a sideman to Nashville guitarist Hank Garland and by 1962 he initiated his recording career with RCA.

His musical coming of age occurred between 1963-'66 while working on the road with pianist George Shearing and later with the Stan Getz Quartet.

He garnered a **down beat** Talent Deserving Wider Recognition spot in 1965 and made the big breakthrough in 1967 with his first quartet, featuring the brilliant rhythm tandem of bassist Steve Swallow, drummer Roy Haynes, and guitarist Larry Coryell. **down beat** named him Jazzman of the Year in 1968 and he's been at the top of the Readers and Critics Polls ever since, alongside the likes of Milt Jackson and Bobby Hutcherson.

There have been many milestones along the way—his ongoing collaborations with Chick Corea, duet recordings with Swallow, guest appearances with The Tango Destroyer Astor Piazzolla, collaborations with Keith Jarrett, Ralph Towner, and Stephane Grappelli, and his commitment to education as a full-time staff member at the Berklee College of Music. He's even written a helpful instructional booklet entitled *The Musicians Guide To The Road*, published by *Billboard* magazine.

The 46-year-old vibes virtuoso is currently putting together a new band that will feature, for the first time in 12 years, guitar. After working with piano for so long, Burton is returning to the instrument that helped to establish his signature band sound with *Duster* back in 1967. Over the years, he's had some stellar six-stringers pass through his ranks, including Coryell, Jerry Hahn, Mick Goodrick, Pat Metheny, and John Scofield. As of press time, Burton had not yet indicated who his new touring guitarist would be, though he said he would spend a few months to conduct a thorough search of what new talent was out there. And being so closely tied to Berklee, he's likely to pluck some up-and-coming phenom from his own backyard.

Burton's latest record, his debut on the GRP label, *Times Like These*, has an all-star cast of guitarist John Scofield, saxophonist Michael Brecker, bassist Marc Johnson, and drummer Peter Erskine. Don't look for them to tour together anytime soon. Burton says it was hard enough to get these busy pros together for the recording session, let alone an exhaustive tour. But Burton will be out there with a new batch of killer unknowns, all potential stars of the future.

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BILL MILKOWSKI: *What made you stop using guitar 12 years ago?*

GARY BURTON: I had played with guitar a lot, even way back to the very first album that I ever made as a teenager. So I always had this combination of vibes and guitar as my basic format. And I just began to feel that I needed a change. I had been doing the same sound for so long I felt like I had pretty much exhausted the instrumentation possibilities of vibes and guitar. I just felt it was time to rejuvenate things, to get some kind of new sound both for the audience and for my own sake. There's some instinct that tells you at a certain point when you're carrying something on too long. For example, when you're talking to somebody and

you're gradually explaining something and you begin to sense that you've talked long enough about this subject, that the listener is beginning to get bored. I was beginning to get that sensation about this particular sound around '76-'77. So I decided it was time to do something drastically different to refresh my music, for me, and also get new attention from the public. So I had trumpet for three or four years, then saxophone another four years, then went to piano, which I've had now for five years. So making this GRP album with Scofield was great because not only is he currently one of my favorite guitarists but it was just nice hearing that vibes-guitar combination again after all these years. It does work well, instrumentation-wise.

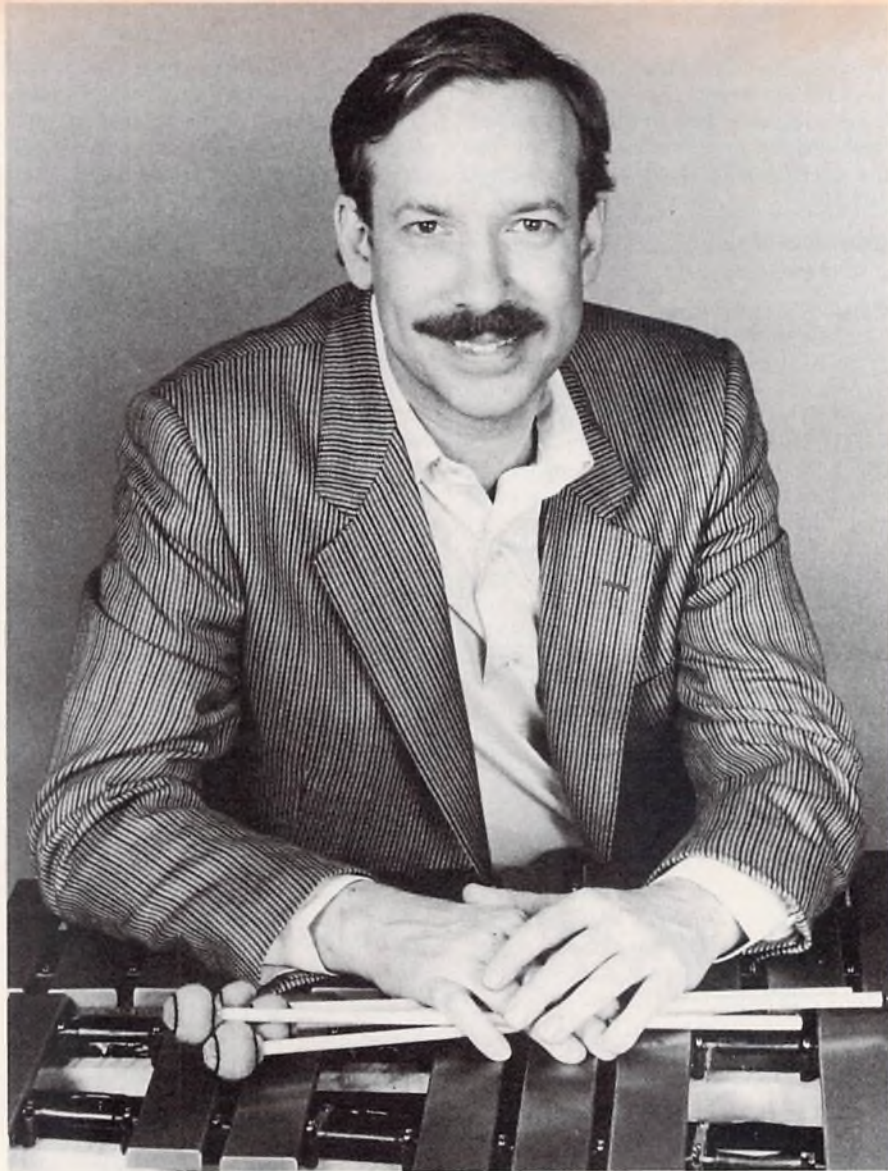
BM: *You last played with Scofield in 1977. Did you notice anything different about his playing?*

GB: Oh yeah. When he was in my band he was still, I would say, a developing player. I first played with him in the mid-'70s when he was a student at Berklee. Mick Goodrick was my regular guitarist at the time and about every 10th gig I did, Mick wouldn't be available. So I had sort of a second string of players . . . Scofield on guitar and Chip Jackson on bass, who would replace Swallow. I used them for a lot of local gigs around New England. I always liked John's playing, but he didn't have such a strong personality of his own then. He was not that long out of college and had just done some touring with Billy Cobham's band before he joined me full-time. When I hear him nowadays, I get a much stronger sense of his own identity as a player. His instincts as to what he wants to do at any given moment in the tune are much stronger, much clearer than they used to be. The last time I heard him before we did this record was with Bass Desires, and I was just knocked out by how strong his playing had become. And that was part of the reason why I was increasingly motivated to do some kind of record with him. And ironically, it turned out that we used Marc Johnson and Peter Erskine as well [Scofield's bandmates in Bass Desires].

BM: *What about Brecker? Had you worked with him before this album?*

GB: Yes, on a few odd-ball kinds of projects. I did an album 15 years ago, a big band project with Mike Gibbs. We had both Brecker brothers on that. Mike, in fact, at that point was still pretty young. He had only been living in New York for a year or two, I believe. He was probably 21 or 22 at the time. He was still pretty new and just sounded like a good, hot young player. Then maybe six or seven years later we played together in another all-star band that Chick Corea put together to do 10 days worth of dates in Israel. And I was really stunned at how strong his voice had become. I was struck by the fact that Brecker had really developed into not just a good player but a real strong individual voice. He had that kind of extra quality.

Not everybody manages to become a hot player, but among those that get their playing



CATHERINE GOLDWYN

together there's an even smaller selection of people who manage to develop a strong identity that sets them apart from just being a good player. It's just that quality that allows you to go on and become a major voice in the music and on your instrument. [Note: An interesting analogy here would be to compare Burton's playing in the early years to his more dramatic statements in later years. Suggested listening—*Gary Burton Artist's Choice* recently released by RCA on the Bluebird label for a sampling of his playing from 1963 to 1968, *Concert In Zurich* with Chick Corea on ECM, or *The New Tango* with Astor Piazzolla on Atlantic Jazz for examples of his more acrobatic feats with four mallets].

BM: Does the audience perception play any part in your decision to change your band at different points?

GB: Yes, to a degree. A lot of how I shape the group is based on my projecting what I think the audience or the listener can handle best. You know, trends keep changing over the years. When I first started playing jazz in the early '60s, the concept of what audiences were used to hearing was the more traditional jazz ensemble sound, which

was a single comping instrument, a single melody instrument, and just basically swing-time jazz structures. Over the years, audiences have gotten used to—because of records and changing trends—the sound of a larger rhythm section. They no longer hear a piano trio as being a big sound anymore. That would strike them as something very light and perhaps even kind of dated. People are now used to larger rhythm sections with guitar and piano or two guitars with overdubs and extra percussion and everything else. So to some extent I try to imagine what the average listener out there—who after all is my target—will feel most comfortable relating to.

BM: And yet, you've been pioneering new directions all along while you've been projecting at what listeners might relate to.

GB: Yeah, well, let me clarify that. There are two ways to sort of focus on what you think the audience wants to hear. One of them is to say, "Well, what the audience already likes hearing is 'You Light Up My Life,' so I'm gonna play that tune," which is, frankly, what some people do. They go for the lowest common denominator, whatever is the latest trend . . . if it's reggae, they

become a reggae band or whatever. The other thing is to realize that you have your own sense of what you want to do musically, so your question becomes one of how best to get them to pay attention to it. And so you go for elements rather than specifics.

When I formed my very first group, I had a nucleus of bass, drums, and myself. First I got Eddie Gomez and Joe Hunt, who were on an extended break from Bill Evans' band. Then I had to decide between tenor sax, piano, and guitar for the fourth person. And I picked Larry Coryell partly because of my recent friendship with Larry at the time and the fact that I was attracted to his playing, but also because I figured, "Well, the guitar is *the* instrument that is most likely to get people to pay attention." And it also lent itself well for this idea I had about incorporating rock music's stylistic traits and time feels into my own music. And so, I didn't choose a guitar player because I wanted him to play commercial, particularly. I just chose the instrument because I thought it would be the most attractive to listeners at the time. So I think musically your decisions are often a combination of what your instincts tell you you want to do and then just some common sense things about how you think it will best get across.

BM: You've had an ongoing musical relationship with Chick Corea beginning with your own group back in 1969 and continuing with your duet projects. You seem to have a very special affinity for each other.

GB: Yeah, well, Chick and I got off to a funny start. He was in my band for a couple of months. When Coryell first left my group to go off and start his own group, I was looking around to see who I could hire next. In fact, I was intending to hire Jerry Hahn, a guitarist from the West Coast who I had recently heard. And Larry, after much indecision and back-and-forth about when he was going to leave, suddenly decided, "Okay, I'm outta here," and was gone. But Hahn couldn't start just then because he had gigs for the next several months. So Swallow and I talked it over and thought Chick was a perfect choice. Swallow had played with him some and I knew him pretty well. We both thought he was the up-and-coming young pianist at the moment in New York. And Chick had also played with Roy Haynes so it seemed like a perfect combination.

So we hired Chick. He had been working as Sarah Vaughan's accompanist for the past six months and was kind of looking to get back into more of a playing situation, so we all had high hopes for this. So we got together and rehearsed, then started touring, and it didn't gel. It didn't quite work, for some reason. It was like Chick and I kept pulling back to stay out of each other's way. We just didn't seem to figure out how to play together. We did a whole tour around the States during that summer and at the end of it we were doing a week at The Village Gate in New York. Then we would have a break of about a month before the next tour was to start. So after that week at The

Gate, we said, "Well, it's obviously not working. Let's forget about it, this isn't a good combination." So I called Jerry Hahn and he joined the band for the next tour. And about a week after we had decided to part ways, Chick called to tell me that Miles had called and that he was going to join his band. He was so thrilled. So we went our separate ways.

A few years had passed, Chick had by then come out with a couple of solo records on ECM, and we found ourselves on the same bill for a festival in Munich called "The Art Of The Solo." They had hired five people—me, Chick, John McLaughlin, Albert Mangelsdorff, and Jean-Luc Ponty—to each play for a half-hour. And the promoters of the concert said, "Well, we need some kind of big finish, so can you all play together at the end?" And we said, "No, there's no rhythm section. You'd have five lead instruments and no band! It won't work!" But they were desperate to have some kind of finale, so finally Chick and I agreed to throw something together as a duet, because after all we had played together once before. So he taught me "La Fiesta" at the soundcheck and we kind of stumbled our way through that for the concert finale. And it was a big hit with the audience. As it turns out, Manfred Eicher from ECM was in the audience and that's when he started bothering us about doing a whole record of duo music. It wasn't our idea at all. We figured, "Who would want a record with no rhythm section on it?" But Manfred was persistent. Now this duo business is going on 18 years. We get together for a tour somewhere every year, ranging

from a week at the shortest to three or four weeks at the longest. And that's turned out to be a real nice thing for us. Keeps it real fresh and fun to do, and a short tour like that doesn't conflict that much with our own projects.

BM: *What did the project with Astor Piazzolla represent to you?*

GB: I think every musician has certain pet ideas that they'd like to do, and it has nothing to do with whether they think it will sell records or anything. It's just something that would be a thrill for them. And every now and then you get a chance to do one of these things, whether it's to play with a symphony or make a record with your idol or play some kind of music that you always felt a rapport with but never had the chance to try, which was my situation with tango music. I heard this music and for 20 years always imagined that I would know just what to do with it, that it would be really natural for me to play it. And sometimes you think that and you actually get there and it turns out it isn't. It doesn't work. And I got a little panicked, frankly, with Astor's stuff because he didn't send me the music until the last minute and it looked pretty hard. I began to get worried as we were all gathering in Italy a day before the first concert to begin the tour, 'cause I still hadn't heard any of this stuff. I had only seen the charts. But it came together real comfortably and I felt right at home playing it. I'm really looking forward to doing more playing with Astor in the future.

BM: *What is it about Piazzolla's compositional style that intrigues you?*

GM: Well, it's the mix of European classical music and the strong rhythm and emotionalism of the tango. Jazz is one of these other musics that has this very expressive kind of melodramatic type of melodic style, where the drama of the melodies are exaggerated. So when I hear that in tango, I think, "I know what that's all about. I'm used to playing like that. That's the way jazz is." And that to me has always been the attraction of jazz . . . that it's this improbable combination of the spontaneous and emotional with something that is also intellectually challenging and stimulating. For me, the best of jazz has both of those qualities in abundance, and I hear this also in tango music. The big challenge in tango music for a jazz player is that you don't take solos in the same sense that you do with a jazz tune, where you have a simple structure, maybe 32 bars long or whatever, and they point to you and say, "Okay, it's your turn," and you play as long as you want until you feel like you've gotten something accomplished, whether it's three, four, or five choruses. With tango music, there are no open solos. What you get is this written music and you're supposed to embellish on it, play around it, add things to it, and so on. So Astor would say to me, "Okay, this eight bars here . . . add something to it. This section over here . . . make it stronger. These eight bars . . . play over them." It was always little eight-bar clumps of soloing, not extensive choruses.

BM: *Piazzolla has mentioned that he couldn't improvise himself or sit in at a jam session.*

GB: Right, it's that whole tango aesthetic.



The Gary Burton Quintet: (from left) Gildas Bocle, Burton, Don Paul McCaslin, Martin Richards, and Makoto Ozone.

And I was prepared not to solo at all if that's what it came down to. He actually wanted me to solo but he didn't know how to write that way. So he wrote the music out and kept pointing out parts where he wanted me to embellish, and after a while I got real comfortable with this system. And, you know, it's not like that never happens in jazz. With big bands, it's quite common to be given eight bars or four bars. Duke Ellington's band was famous for those beautiful momentary appearances by a star sideman here or there with just the right lick, just the right little phrase that they would toss in. So playing with Astor reminded me of that kind of thing. But it was the first time I had ever been in that position of having to express myself through this written music as opposed to sort of saving it up for my big solo spot and having it all to myself.

BM: Over the years you've been a mentor figure for a lot of young players. Who were your mentors when you were coming up?

GB: Actually, my entry into the music business was because of a guy named Boots Randolph, the Yakety Sax guy. He was my very first mentor. He lived in Indiana where I grew up and he recommended me to Hank Garland and in fact drove me down to Nashville to meet him, just because he wanted us to get together. And then Hank sort of took it from there and invited me down to Nashville for the summer when I graduated from high school so we could play weekends at a club down there and make a record together. It always goes like that. The older musicians will cast about and find some younger musician to play with. There is something about a young musician who's talented, and I've had this same attraction myself. He's like a magnet. Older musicians are very drawn to a young talent. There's some excitement about a young player developing. You feel like it rubs off on you a little. You find it inspiring and rejuvenating. It keeps your own music from becoming routine and repetitive. So if you're a young musician with a growing talent, you'll find that people are stumbling all over themselves to try to help you.

It seems like wherever I went during those early years there was somebody there, anxious and eager to play with me, to give me advice, to give me opportunities, and so on. Later, when I moved to Boston to go to school at Berklee, Herb Pomeroy was a big influence on me. He was also Chick's hero at the time. Then when I came to New York, I worked for a year with George Shearing, who was an excellent leader and good musician. But the guys I learned the most from during those years were [Stan] Getz and the guys in his band. That band is where I formed my own sense of what I wanted to do. The three years I spent with them did a lot to pull me along and show me what kind of music I wanted to play on my own. So I think you have a choice as a leader whether you prefer playing with seasoned professionals who are already developed and you hire them essentially to



KEN FRANCKLING

do their thing. They come on and they do it for you. They play absolutely at the top level, wonderful ability, and so on. Or you might be attracted to the idea of having young players who are not as developed stylistically and identity-wise, who are more flexible, usually. And they're also more exciting, in terms of watching them grow and change and develop. You're attracted to one approach or the other, and I've always been attracted to the younger players.

BM: And you continue to work with Berklee students?

GB: Yeah, it's not as if I try to use Berklee people exclusively. It's just that I'm exposed to them all the time, so I tend to find them. My last band [Makoto Ozone on piano, Don Paul McCaslin on tenor sax, Martin Richards on drums, and Gildas Bocle on bass] was all Berklee grads. That's the first time that's ever happened. Usually it's been a one-here, one-there sort of thing. The last three or four times I've hired someone when I've looked around, the player who was most catching my attention happened to be somebody who had recently graduated from Berklee. And, of course, it's not unlikely, in that Berklee tends to attract 90 percent of the best players to go to school there. It's an obvious choice for some young players because not only is it the school with the best reputation for producing quality jazz players but it's also the place that's good for contacts and getting into the business. There may be other schools they could go to but Berklee looks like the best choice for many because of the chance of it leading into a good career opportunity. So I feel like I get to, in fact, sample a lot of the stars of tomorrow, as it were, just by being around the place. **db**

GARY BURTON'S EQUIPMENT

Burton plays a Musser M-48 vibraphone with bars, circa 1960. His Gary Burton Mallets are made by Good Vibes and are circa 1975.

GARY BURTON SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

TIMES LIKE THESE—GRP 9569
BERKLEE ALL-STARS—JVC 3301
REAL LIFE HITS—ECM 25024
PICTURE THIS—ECM 1-1226
EASY AS PIE—ECM 1-1184
TIMES SQUARE—ECM 1-1111
PASSENGERS—ECM 1092
DREAMS SO REAL—ECM 1072
IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST—Polydor 6503
THE NEW QUARTET—ECM 1030
ALONE AT LAST—Atlantic 1598
GOOD VIBES—Atlantic 1560
THROB—Atlantic 1531
COUNTRY ROADS—RCA 4908
GENUINE TONG FUNERAL—RCA 3988
IN CONCERT—RCA 3985
LOFTY FAKE ANAGRAM—RCA 3901
DUSTER—RCA 3858
TENNESSEE FIREBIRD—RCA 3719
TIME MACHINE—RCA 3642

with Stephane Grappelli

PARIS ENCOUNTER—Atlantic 1597

with Eberhard Weber

RING—ECM 1051

with Steve Swallow

HOTEL HELLO—ECM 1055

with Keith Jarrett

... AND KEITH JARRETT—Atlantic 1577

with Stan Getz

GETZ AU GO GO—Verve 2075

with Chick Corea

CRYSTAL SILENCE—ECM 1024
DUET—ECM 1-1140
CONCERT IN ZURICH—ECM 1-1184
LYRIC SUITE FOR SEXTET—ECM 1-1260

with Ralph Towner

SLIDE SHOW—ECM 25038
MATCHBOOK—ECM 1056

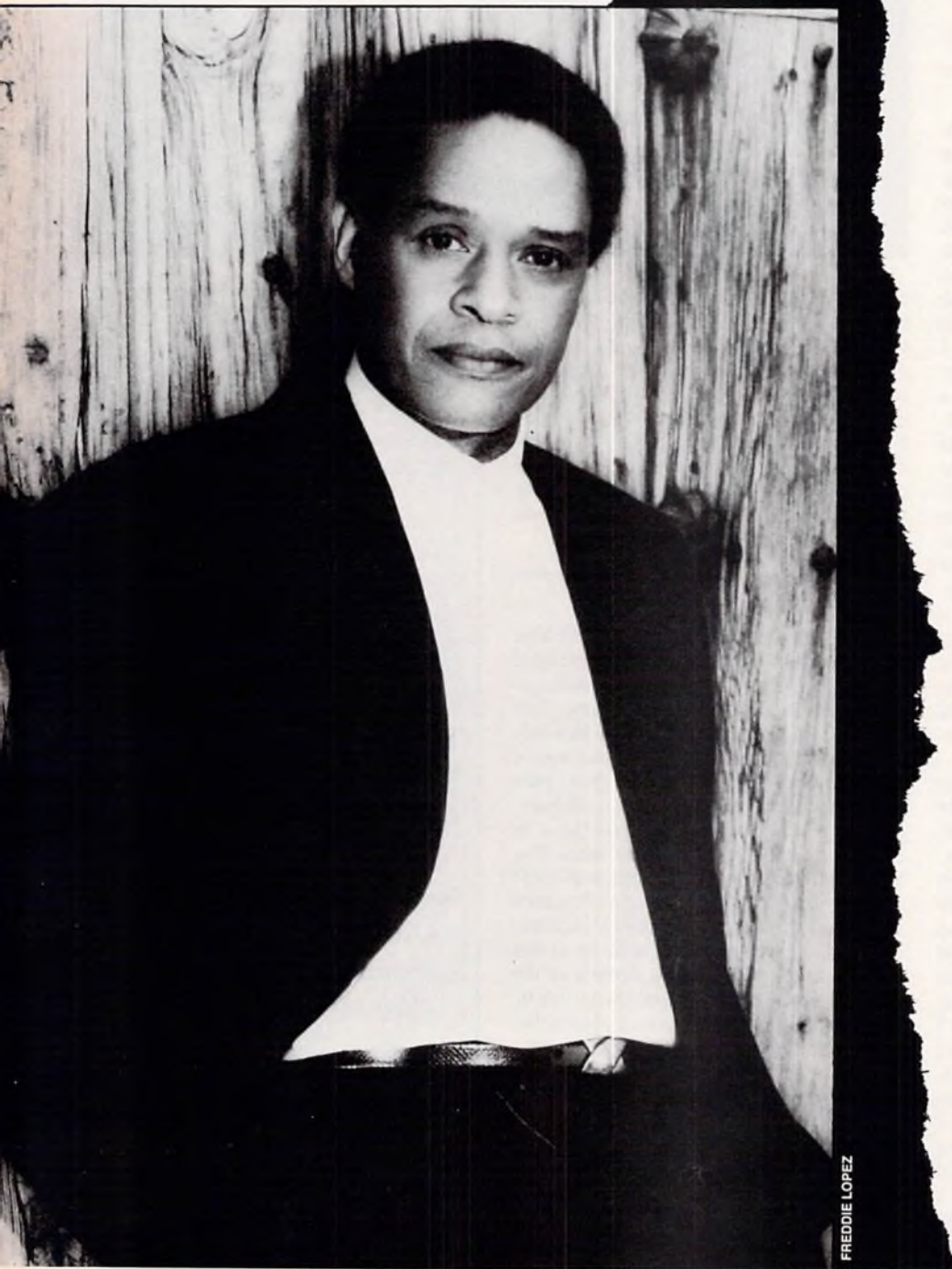
with Astor Piazzolla

THE NEW TANGO—Atlantic 81823

A TROUBADOUR'S NEW TONES

JAL Jarreau

By Robin Tolleson



FREDDIE LOPEZ

It's not the typical story of the jazz singer who goes Pop and loses his Soul. Even though the songs on Al Jarreau's *Heart's Horizon* are contained to a very un-jazz-like four minutes or so, they're still alive with emotion. What Jarreau has learned so well, at the age of 48, is the art of fashioning a song, of putting his own Glad Rap on it.

Very few singers could cover the vocal territory that Jarreau does on *Horizon*. There's techno-funk and blues ballads. Solo voices, and a Mediterranean love song featuring Earl Klugh. There's a flat-out rocker, and a lullaby to Ryan Jarreau that features strong acoustic bass work from Stanley Clarke. "Actually, I just used the lullaby and writing of a song to my son to be preachy," Jarreau laughs. "Couched in that form the things I'm saying are more tolerable. It's really a song for adults.

"We don't have a 'Spain' on this album. Some tastes will want that kind of song, but otherwise we've covered it nicely," the singer says. It's no accident that there are several chugging rhythm & blues numbers on the record. Jarreau sees signs that he's beginning to be discovered by the hardcore r&b audience. "I haven't been nearly as close to them as I think I should be, and as the music I've been doing historically deserves to be," he says. "But I think it's going to come."

The first single, a bluesy ballad called "So Good," should get through just about all barriers on its strong introduction alone. "It just sits people down. As soon as you hear that huge downbeat, with David [Sanborn] blowing that thing, man, you just say, 'Wait a minute, shit, hold the phone. I gotta sit down and find out who and what this is. Go ahead, I'm listening.'"

The enlistment of fellow Wonder Voice Bobby McFerrin for a lusty, a cappella tribute to a shapely pair of Levi's is a delightful touch. According to Jarreau, this won't be the last time they work together. "Bobby and I

have been talking about doing something for a long time. We're real late in coming to it and did much too little." Like maybe an entire album? "I think that thing that we do and happen to share together really deserves that kind of attention from me and Bobby," Jarreau says.

Another interesting, altogether different cut on *Heart's Horizon* is "10K Hi," produced by keyboardist Philippe Saisse, and featuring live and sampled Al Jarreau (Saisse sampled the singer on an Akai S900) playing nearly all the backing music and vocals. "It's 97 or 98 percent all Jarreau," says Al. "And what an interesting idea. The rhythm section stuff, even the drum sounds, it's all me. And the thing about it is that it doesn't come off like a super circus, like a carnival act. It's a genuine piece of material which is quite a nice song."

Going back to 1984's *High Crime* and the Nile Rodgers-produced *L Is For Lover* (with tunes written by Michael Gregory, the Scritti Politti boys, and Jonathan Butler), Jarreau's albums have been more song-oriented, still managing to find ways to get his most impressive vocal licks out there. "Nile taught me to listen for songs from the outside," says Jarreau. "I had been a little precocious about my own writing, neglecting really great material from the outside."

After talking at length with producer Jay Graydon several years ago, Jarreau made some decisions about the direction of his music, about staying truer to the form on the pop, rock, and r&b material. "I have a tendency to turn every song into a jazz piece, you know," he laughs. "And in doing that I miss that r&b listener whose eyes just roll back in his head when a good old r&b groove suddenly becomes a jazz song. What I needed to do was just discipline that thing a bit. Sing the pop song like a good pop singer, and the r&b song like a good r&b singer. So I think that is a recognizable difference in my work."

Jarreau often orchestrates nice openings for his voice to shine through, like the scat section on "L Is For Lover," or the vocal solo, doubled by keyboard, on "10K Hi." "I still indulge myself," he laughs. "Maybe overindulge."

A baseball and basketball star throughout his school days, Jarreau now wishes his mom, a piano teacher, had used more force on him. "My mother couldn't tie me to a piano," he says. "I was outside playing baseball. I wish she had handcuffed me." While the singer still lacks technical knowledge, he's found other ways to compose music. "I hear melody lines in my head, and have my Sony Walkman two feet away from me at all times. I just turn that boy on when I have an idea. I go back to it later and add to it. I take that and sit down with the other guys if I want to collaborate, or I might finish it myself."

Jarreau enjoys the studio process, and can't stand walking in to lay his part down after everything else is done. "I like being involved from the beginning," he says. "When basic tracks are being cut, I'm in there singing with the guys, scratch vocals. Just so they know where I'm at and how I'm feeling."

In 1965, with a masters degree in psychology from the University of Iowa, Jarreau moved to San Francisco and worked at The Presidio in an army rehabilitation center. Always with one eye on the music scene around him, he soon found a gig singing with George Duke's jazz trio. "That was a very important time for me," he recalls. "To have the opportunity to work with the finest trio that I'd ever worked with up to that point—it was really graduate school for me as a jazz singer. To really find my wings with that trio kind of taught me that I had something to say. San Francisco during that period was rock & roll heaven, and we were packing them in the middle of rock & roll heaven. All of that played a part in helping me decide that I should do music full-time."

Today, as co-producer of *Heart's Horizon*, George Duke should know well the singer's strengths and capabilities. Their three years of work together in the late '60s, gigs in San Francisco at The Half Note, Both/And, The Jazz Workshop, and elsewhere, cemented a friendship, mutual admiration society, and from the sounds they're making, a successful business partnership. "When I met George he was studying composition at San Francisco Conservatory," says Al. "At that point he was playing at a level that attracted Cannonball

Adderley. He's played this wide variety of different kinds of music as an accompanist—accompanying other players, singers, and himself as a soloist. There aren't any finer, you know."

Things did not come easy or fast for Jarreau once he made the commitment to music. He moved to Los Angeles in 1968 to pursue a record deal. After a couple years of gigging without luck he passed through Minneapolis on a visit, wound up staying there and starting a band. That group soon moved to the West Coast, but they couldn't find a record contract either, and gradually the band filtered back to the Midwest, except for the singer. It was 1975 when Jarreau signed a deal with Warner Bros. and released "I'll Get By." He's been with the label ever since. The singer sees the positive aspects of his dues-paying days. "I managed to work and pay the rent. It was great times for me," he says. "I was finally doing what I wanted to do full-time and getting by."

Jarreau has that same zest for the concert stage today. "The live performing is what I've done since I was a young kid, getting out there in front of people singing a song. Talking to people and them talking back to me. Enjoying that relationship. I'm a young recording artist, but I'm a pretty seasoned veteran as a guy who gets out there and troubadours a song."

The singer has noticed a deepening in his voice over time, due, he says, to "the work and the years. The thing to attempt to do is use those changes in ways that add to the music. And not regret that I don't sound like boy tenor or soprano. My voice is deepening, so I have to use that range as well and as effectively as I can. I'm having fun singing bass lines," he laughs.

Jarreau feels that an acting debut might not be too far away. He thinks some of what he does now onstage will transfer over, and he's eager to give it a try. Jarreau's manager, Patrick Rains, has plans to use him in a Broadway musical version of Nat King Cole's life called *Unforgettable*. "That's high and holy," says Jarreau. "I loved Nat. He was very important for me. One of the most important. Jon Hendricks and Johnny Mathis, but the first real important figure for me was Nat. During my early years that's who I really listened to. There was also Billy Eckstine, Sarah Vaughan, and Ella Fitzgerald. Hey, listening to Frankie Laine made me want to sing. Those guys were really pumping it out there in those days."

While attending the University of Iowa in June of 1965, Jarreau was performing with The Joe Abodeely Trio at The Tender Trap in Cedar Rapids. That part of Al's musical history is available, at least for now, on a bootleg-looking album on the Bainbridge label, called *1965*. Jarreau sings "My Favorite Things," "Sophisticated Lady," "Come Rain Or Come Shine," "One Note Samba," and others. "It's not really a bootleg as much as it is a theft," he laughs. The singer claims he went to court to block the record's release, because he had no input on the project or financial consideration. The judge ruled in favor of the record company ("I still don't believe it today," Al laughs), and Jarreau says he's never seen a cent from the recording. "But it's very legitimate music, and it's a real true statement about Al Jarreau at that period of time. I like it for that and am glad it's available in any case," the singer says.

"I think there'll come a time when I'll do some other things from that period. Just a straightahead jazz album for those fans that really like that part of what I do and have been looking for that kind of production for a long time. I owe it to them, and I owe it to me and my ability to do that kind of music. That's something I ought to get to." db

AL JARREAU SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

WE GOT BY—Warner Bros./Reprise 2224	JARREAU—Warner Bros. 23801-1
GLOW—Warner Bros. 2248	HIGH CRIME—Warner Bros. 9 25106-1
LOOK TO THE RAINBOW—Warner Bros. 2BZ 3052	AL JARREAU LIVE IN LONDON—Warner Bros. 25331-1
ALL FLY HOME—Warner Bros. 3229	L IS FOR LOVER—Warner Bros. 9 25477-1
THIS TIME—Warner Bros. 3434	HEART'S HORIZON—Warner Bros. 9 25778-1
BREAKIN' AWAY—Warner Bros. 3576	
1965—Bainbridge 6237	

SERGEY KURYOKHIN

THE RUSSIAN MARTIAN ARRIVES

By Howard Mandel

Most avant gardists despair to even dream of the opportunities—much less the acceptance—Soviet improvising pianist and ensemble leader Sergey Kuryokhin enjoyed during his first American tour last fall. Arriving in mid-October, the 35-year-old Leningrader with a shy but non-stop grin, dark doe-like eyes, and affable manner covering occasional moodiness, spent one of his first days in the U.S. hobnobbing in the studio with Frank Zappa.

From Los Angeles, Kuryokhin journeyed to Arizona, where he recorded *Morning Exercises In The Nuthouse* for Soundings of the Planet, a company of Tucson-based new age musicians. Booked by Salt Lake City's Space Agency, whose Steve Boulay has developed a special interest in contemporary music from the U.S.S.R., Sergey kept on, concertizing alone and with pickup bands of high level, outward-bound free thinkers.

In San Francisco he collaborated with techno-plectarist Henry Kaiser towards an eventual RykoDisc release, jammed with blue-eyed soulman Boz Scaggs, and socialized with members of the ROVA Saxophone Quartet. In New York he dueled with John Zorn at The Knitting Factory—provoking the interest of Elektra-Musician/Nonesuch new music producer Bob Hurwitz—and laid tracks with percussionist David Van Tiegham.

Drummer Paul Wertico (formerly with Pat Metheny), guitarist Pete Cosey (an AACM member best known for his wild late-'70s work with Miles Davis), saxist Mars Williams, and bassist Brian Sandstrom joined Kuryokhin at Chicago's Southend Musicworks. The pianist gigged at The Kumbwa Jazz Center in Santa Cruz, The Painted Bride in Philadelphia, and d.c. space in

JAMES F. QUINN

Washington, where he also took part in The Beethoven Society's second annual Thelonious Monk jazz competition. Sergey was afforded special dabbling privileges as a guest at M.I.T.'s state-of-the-art Wang Media Center, and was a late add-on to the New Music America/Miami fest, playing solo and, briefly, with vocalizing drummer David Moss.

Something of a media darling since his semi-clandestine *The Ways Of Freedom* was released by Soviet émigré-operated Leo Records in 1981, Kuryokhin has been the subject of a half-hour BBC documentary, "All That Jazz" aired in the U.S. on PBS, and articles in such trendy publications as *Interview* magazine. The hook is almost always, "This guy's a *Russian!*" and reminds one of the comment of ROVA Sax Quartet's Larry Ochs upon viewing the standing-room-only crowd that flocked to the San Francisco concert of the Soviet Ganelin Trio in '86: "They heard the Martians landed and came to hear them play."

Actually, audience curiosity was more complex than that, as evidenced by the less intense interest stirred by Soviet pianist Igor Brill's quartet, which toured the U.S. during the same months as Kuryokhin. Straightahead Brill, probably near 50, played jazz standards with determination but little else beyond personal gestures to distinguish his interpretations. Kuryokhin, like The Ganelin Trio before him, offered something unique but recognizable to the younger generation.

For all the presumed cultural isolation in which he developed his wide-ranging, often satirical style, Sergey's expanded consciousness—displayed through references to 19th century Romantic repertoire, 20th century dissonance, and '50s-to-the-'80s pop-rock, subversive shifts of feeling and tempi, furious physicality, and iconoclastic performance behavior—signals an irony-defended restlessness that typifies TV-and-nuclear bomb babies of every nationality.

For example: Kuryokhin's week in resi-



JAMES F. OJINNA



JAMES F. OJINNA

Kuryokhin mimics while (from left) Paul Wertico, Brian Sandstrom, and Mars Williams listen.

dence at Oberlin College resulted in a partially-composed conduction that approximated the hilarious chaos of his Leningrad-based ensemble, Pop Mechanics. Unshaven, in his usual long-sleeved red and black-striped t-shirt, listening intently and occasionally running a hand through his shock of brown hair, Sergey dominated the stage.

He took clownish pratfalls and lay on his back, kicking his legs to emphatically direct his mostly student aggregate: pipe organist, electric keyboard and guitar players, a folk trio, steel drummers, Professor Conrad Cummins on gamelan, a classical chamber ensemble, vocalists, brass and reed soloists and sections, a marching band, a small women's choir. Like any good post-modernist, Kuryokhin appropriated familiar motifs including Henry Mancini's "Theme From Peter Gunn," "The Song Of The Volga Boatmen," and "Alouette," which a gang of children sang in rounds. He mouthed random vowel sounds into a mic as Oberlin president S. Frederick Starr, an authority on Soviet jazz, played a credible New Orleans trad sax break. One climax had uniformed maintenance men hammering metal slabs, running drills, shaking thundersheets, and pounding bricks. Their diminuendo segued into an a capella "Amazing Grace."

This ambitious, lengthy endeavor seemed intended to demonstrate Kuryokhin's ease at moving back and forth amid all the received musics he's heard. Despite the limited access Soviet citizens have to Western goods, artists like Sergey network among themselves and with well-informed fans and critics (in Kuryokhin's case, the inestimable Alexander Kan, who accompanied him on some of his U.S. travels) to keep current on what's new in their fields. In '85, Kuryokhin told an American writer his favorite band was Britain's Cocteau Twins, and his knowledge of desirable but unavailable syn-

thesizers extended to their model numbers.

"Sergey's concept is of multi-media performance without definition of style or genre," Alex Kan explained. "Anything is possible, musically and visually, and the wilder the better. Sergey's appearance and behavior on stage affects the whole show, which he conducts, though he may not, and often doesn't, actually play piano."

However facile and funny, wild and free his conduction techniques are, by treating all the elements he weaves into a piece as equal, Kuryokhin suggests that obviously ridiculous and potentially sublime sounds are the same. Juxtapositions call the values of both poles into question—and the answer is: None of this means anything. Music is a parlor trick. One can switch between programs with the flick of a wrist, but nothing distracts us long from our inherent anxiety. If I reveal my heart, the next moment I'll deflate sentiment. If I tell you a joke, a brutal truth will stop your laugh.

The need to cloak meaning in metaphor and disguise intent has perhaps been necessary in the Soviet Union, where musicians, including Kuryokhin and his former partner, rock singer/songwriter/guitarist Boris Grebenshchikov (who's just issued his Columbia debut album), have been answerable to government agencies without empathy for eccentricity or individualism. Neither Kuryokhin, Grebenshchikov (until Gorbachev an underground youth culture hero, now the first Soviet to sign with a Western label) nor Kan had much hope of international travel until 10 months ago. Before then, permission for provocative artists to leave Russia was inconceivable. Since late July Sergey has appeared with Pop Mechanics in Finland, Stockholm, Berlin, and Liverpool, and been seen worldwide as part of video artist Nam June Paik's satellite telecast, "Wrap Around The World."

Kuryokhin is insecure about his command of English. When coaxed to speak on Ted Panken's live WKCR radio program in New York, he would only say in stilted self-parody, "Hello. My name is Sergey." With critic Kan translating, Kuryokhin remained elusive, denying commitment to any ideas, dismissing seriousness with the glee of a Marx—not Karl, but Chico.

"No, he doesn't try to make fun of everybody," Kan translated as Kuryokhin protested, tongue firmly in cheek, the program host's amiable charge. "Sergey says he's the most serious artist in the whole Soviet culture. Probably the most serious man in the whole world—after Lenin."

Asked Kuryokhin's reaction to the United



JAMES F. QUINN

SERGEY KURYOKHIN'S EQUIPMENT

While touring the U.S. this past year, Kuryokhin played Casio and Yamaha synthesizers and experimented with the Synclavier. He also performed on a variety of acoustic pianos.

SERGEY KURYOKHIN SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

solo

MORNING EXERCISES IN THE NUTHOUSE—Soundings Of The Planet 7138*
THE WAYS OF FREEDOM—Leo 107

with others

MUSIC MAKES THE SNOW MELT DOWN—Soundings Of The Planet 7136
SENTENCED TO SILENCE—Leo 110
EXERCISES—Leo 115
NOSTALGIA—Leo 119
INVOCATIONS—Leo 121
SUBWAY CULTURE—Leo 402/03
FORTUNE-TELLER—Leo 136
... AND BORIS GREBENSHCHIKOV—Leo 167

with Pop Mechanics

INTRO IN POP MECHANICS—Leo 146
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States, Kan replied, "He can't help laughing." However, that was Kuryokhin's response to almost any question. Inquiries about his aesthetic were met with disquisitions on the principles of "idiotism," or statements such as, "Humanity has chosen the wrong way to search, outwards, into space. I'm more interested in life in the center of the earth. So my whole orchestra is digging." Another: "I've found my place in Soviet culture. It's 15 meters to the left of the Kremlin, and a little above."

Considering the then-upcoming Monk competition, to be judged by Sir Roland Hanna, Barry Harris, Tommy Flanagan, Roger Kellaway, and Hank Jones, the question was asked, Does Kuryokhin know Monk?

Sergey laughed and uttered something Kan tried to translate as a cross-cultural pun. "He likes the saints."

Would Kuryokhin practice?

"Of course not. Well, maybe the week before."

Does he take the competition seriously? How does he think he'll do?

"Sergey takes the competition very seriously. He's going to win."

Well, he didn't (another young Soviet citizen, Azerbaijanian Aziza Mustafa-Zadeh, placed third). Kuryokhin's strength as a pianist is not in the African-American tradition—and today's jurists prefer rather single-minded devotion to its mainstream. Though steeped as a listener in jazz, and able to partake of its language and grammar, in his U.S. piano performances, Kuryokhin typically introduced themes from Chopin or Liszt etudes, then destroyed them with syncopated stride, two-fisted Jerry Lee Lewis patterns, furious swipes at the keyboard, and percussive clusters. He'd come out of a furious passage lightening his touch so much his hands would move inches above the ivories, playing silently. He sang along with himself in wordless falsetto or faux-European opera imitation. Quite capable of shocking normally blasé audiences, at The Knitting Factory Kuryokhin crawled under a grand piano, turned on his back, and lifted it with his legs. People gasped when he dropped the piano abruptly, and its open case-board slammed shut.

Defying expectations of an alternative audience in the U.S. is one thing; in the Soviet Union, Kuryokhin has gathered an audience by creative alternatives. Last June in Leningrad he removed the legs from a grand piano to play it flat on the floor. Also within his reach was an electronic synthesizer; he sometimes fingered both at once. Pop Mechanic's core instrumentalists put aside their horns and guitars in favor of folkish wood flutes, and a troupe of local Hari Krishnas chanted as a deadpan choir. Soon Kuryokhin abandoned his seat to write over the lip of the stage. A friend in a pink wig upturned a water-filled vase, to drench them both. Meanwhile, an oddly costumed trio struck poses from patriotic

Soviet sculpture. The Leningrad audience, similar in age if not experience to The Knitting Factory's, soberly considered Kuryokhin's skewering of concert hall conventions as social commentary.

Some background's required here: Kuryokhin's become an artistic hero of the U.S.S.R.'s youth culture after years of stubborn struggle. Born in Crimea, the son of a military officer, Kuryokhin studied classical piano throughout his childhood and developed an interest in Western pop in his teens. Attending music high school and the college-level Rimski-Korsakov Institute of Culture, he became prominent in the "unofficial" Leningrad rock scene in the early '70s. Kan has said, "Sergey was very young then, but the whole scene was young."

Kuryokhin was welcomed by the most advanced players of Russia's progressive jazz wing, who furthered his education in the music of black Americans including John Coltrane, Sun Ra, and Cecil Taylor. Working with members of The Ganelin Trio, tenor saxist Anatoly Vapirov, and gypsy vocalist Valentina Ponomareva—all of whom have issued records on Leo Records—and guitarist Grebenschikov, Kuryokhin gradually began initiating his own projects.

"Each time he presented a program he had a new name for his band," Kan remembered. "Crazy Music Orchestra was one. And he had long, elaborate, funny titles for his compositions." On his double-disc album, *Subway Culture: The Third Russian Opera*, Kuryokhin synopsised a whimsical libretto, full of pre-Soviet Russian references, that defies political analysis.

By 1982, Kuryokhin was scandalizing official artistic circles by presenting musicians who smashed their guitars, indulged in theatrics and orgiastic dancing—"Nothing very offensive by today's standards, even at home," according to Kan. His audiences in the LenSoviet Palace of Culture averaged 500. Today, he's much more widely accepted, having led Pop Mechanics on the popular television show Musical Ring, in Leningrad's prestigious 4,000-seat October concert hall, and 10,000-capacity athletic arenas.

Frank Zappa, in the late '60s, achieved even greater prominence in the U.S. than Kuryokhin claims in the U.S.S.R. Early on, Zappa was no less musically scabrous or confrontational (true, his performances included lengthy rave-ups on screaming blues guitar). Zappa diligently studied difficult masters, possibly leading a small percentage of his loyal following to Varèse and Webern. And he's matured into a serious defender of musicians and listener's rights, as in his opposition to rock & roll witchhunting by the PMRC.

Did that grand middle-aged man of rude pop music honestly advise his Soviet admirer on the course between pop martyrdom and selling out? Did he explain how to dazzle fans with both wit and musical wisdom? Or did Zappa and Kuryokhin talk recording technology and MIDI equipment? We'll find out. If the center holds, Sergey Kuryokhin will be back. **db**

record reviews

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



STEPS AHEAD

N.Y.C. — EMI/Intuition C1-91354: *WELL IN THAT CASE . . .*; *LUST FOR LIFE*; *SENEGAL CALLING*; *RED NEON*; *GO OR GIVE*; *CHARANGA*; *GET IT*; *N.Y.C.*; *STICK JAM*; *ABSOLUTELY MAYBE*; *FESTIVAL*; *PARADISO*.
Personnel: Mike Mainieri, *vibes and MIDI vibes*; Steve Smith, *drums*; Tony Levin, *bass and Stick*; Bendik, *tenor sax, soprano sax (cut 6)*; Steve Khan, *guitar (all cuts except 1 and 11)*; Ray Gomez, *guitar (1 and 11)*; Rique Pantoja, *acoustic piano (4)*; Mass Kool & The African Posse (*Massamba Fall*, Abdoulaye Diop, Magatte Fall), *percussion (3)*; Bruce Martin, *Synclavier and drum programming*; Stephen Barber, *string orchestration (5)*.

★ ★ ★ ★

Mike Mainieri may have lost the great Michael Brecker, but the Steps Ahead show rolls on, picking up where 1985's *Magnetic* left off. There has been a distinct shift toward the rock side of fusion since the early '80s (when the lineup included Mainieri, Brecker, Steve Gadd, Don Grolnick, and Eddie Gomez), and the addition here of former Journey drummer Steve Smith and former King Crimson bassist Tony Levin pushes it more in that direction. Yet in some respects this is one of the most versatile, dynamic editions in the group's 10-year history.

Though I miss Peter Erskine's syncopation (from the middle edition), Smith provides an undeniable groove on the funk tunes ("Get It," "Stick Jam") and flaunts his polyrhythmic prowess on the African-influenced numbers ("Well In That Case . . .," "Senegal Calling"). Levin, who understands that bass means base, rarely plays anything above the eighth fret and always locks in tightly with Smith on the funk offerings. It must be a thrill to play on top of such solid underpinnings.

The good news here is Bendik, a young Norwegian multi-instrumentalist whom Mainieri found via a demo tape submitted to him through a friend. Rather than try to ape Brecker's sound, Bendik has found a voice of his own, closer to the plaintive cry of Jan Garbarek. And he's an accomplished composer as well. In fact, the strongest pieces on the album belong to Bendik. His tunes tend to be more open-ended and more challenging to the listener than Mainieri's. But the savvy bandleader has been around and knows what plays on radio. Hence, the fairly slick, ultimately accessible "Stick Jam," "Get It," and "N.Y.C." The dense "Senegal Calling," featuring a battery of African percussionists, and the Brazilian-flavored "Charanga" are more ambitious. And Mainieri actually plays on "Festival," a nice ballad co-written with guitarist Ray Gomez,

who gets off some nasty rock licks here. Mainieri's sequence-driven title cut is the weakest of the lot, sounding like a reject from David Van Tiegham's last uninspired effort.

But the real winners in this set are Bendik's "Lust For Life," his gentle ballad "Red Neon, Go Or Give," which features some fine interplay between sax and Rique Pantoja's piano, "Absolutely Maybe," a subdued jazzy vehicle for Steve Khan, and his haunting "Paradiso," which features Levin's fluid fretless playing.

The last album featured a cast of thousands in the studio and a whole other lineup on tour. This time around, the studio group will be going out intact (with the exception of Khan). They're bound to be killin'. —bill milkowski



MILES DAVIS

THE COLUMBIA YEARS 1955-1985 — Columbia C5X 45000; *TUNES TAKEN FROM MORE THAN HALF OF THE NEARLY 50 EXTANT AND OUT-OF-PRINT COLUMBIA CATALOG LPs ALONG WITH FOUR ALTERNATE TAKES AND/OR PREVIOUSLY UNRELEASED VERSIONS.*

Personnel: Davis, *trumpet, electric trumpet, flugelhorn, keyboards (on "Star On Cicely")*; along with, among others, Gil Evans, John Coltrane, Philly Joe Jones, Herbie Hancock, John McLaughlin, Tony Williams, Bill Evans, and Kenny Clarke.

★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2 ★ ★

... at record sessions, there still is no question who is in charge and who has the final cut—the final editing." Nat Hentoff's notes about Miles Davis for this five-LP/four-CD box give us the picture of a man "who is in charge." Unfortunately, neither he nor longtime producer Teo Macero had anything to do with this project. A sad irony, because the lingering impression after all this music gets played is one in which Davis is strangely absent.

As with Davis' (sort of) *Greatest Hits* (Col. 9808), there is no center of gravity here, no sense that an artistic creation has emerged. Rather, a hodge-podge of seemingly random selections in an attempt to chronicle what Miles Davis recorded for one record company over a 30-year span.

Okay, every fan of his has their favorites. And so, it would be impossible for Columbia to put together the definitive collection—the assumption being that it's not feasible to release everything, i.e., *The Complete MD On Columbia*.

Given such a restriction, what we end up

receiving is some of his music broken up into five sections: "Blues," "Standards," "Originals," "Moods," and "Electric." (On the records, it corresponds evenly; I'm not sure how it's done on the four CDs.) The divisions seem interesting until you give a listen. Aside from the apparent arbitrariness of the selections, there is little or no coherence stylistically—*Kind Of Blue's* ('59) "All Blues" followed by *ESP's* ('65) "Eighty-One" and *Miles Ahead's* ('57) "Blues For Pablo," for example. What emerges is the consistency of the music in and of itself, particularly Davis' trumpet/flugelhorn from track to track; but the overall effect is sort of like being on a roller coaster—great if your goal is one of amusement, lousy if it has more to do with serious enjoyment of vital art.

There are welcome surprises: the out of print "Love For Sale," "Fran Dance," "Honky Tonk," and previously unreleased takes of "Pinocchio," "Flamenco Sketches," "Someday My Prince Will Come," and "I Thought About You." All of these versions provide delightful and interesting perspectives to the originals and/or the time in which they were recorded.

Who is the market for this unique sampler? Jon Pareles of the *New York Times* sees it as an attempt "to finesse the difference between a best-of set, an introductory sampler and a collector's item." Whoever it may appeal to, one thing seems certain: the music matters but making a buck matters more. What else could account for the manhandling of certain selections to fit the prescribed format? "It's About Time" and "Sivad" are excised from their original settings, thus allowing more time for other songs, but hardly giving these two numbers their rightful place in the listener's understanding of original artistic conceptions. What do the small letters next to the song titles on each disc mean? Typographical errors exist throughout—people are wrongly identified in photos as are the personnel on a number of songs.

And mention should be made of Columbia's generally poor record of digital remixing. Of all the artists to be botched in the transfer from analog to digital, this company's work on Miles Davis leaves little room for rejoicing. Listen (if you must), for instance, to the muddy sound of "Miles Runs The Voodoo Down" as compared with the original. An aside: How is it that Davis' concerts at Carnegie Hall in '61 and Antibes in '63 were so poorly recorded to begin with? The enclosed versions of "So What" and "I Thought About You" speak for each concert, respectively. Finally, besides gearing the music towards a more mellow Miles, I can't help wondering where all that great electric Miles from the '70s went, particularly the material CBS-Sony in Japan released. This period represents, in my opinion, some of the most experimental and intriguing sides to Davis. As Pareles states, this package "offered the perfect opportunity."

It may be that, short of a *Miles Davis Trunk*, any attempt to distill this man's music on Columbia into such a container as this is a thankless and impossible feat. For some, including those relatively unfamiliar with Davis' music, this set may prove educational and enjoyable. After all, except for *Jazz Track's* three selections, only one cut per LP represented exists here, thus offering lots of variety

(and no competition with records currently available). You can't miss with this man's music.

On the other hand, if a solution exists, an ongoing reissue campaign, similar to the one Mosaic has done with its Commodore series (e.g., see **db** record reviews, Dec. '88), might just be the only one suitable to honoring one of America's artistic treasures. In the meantime, this boxed-set—four-and-a-half stars for Davis, two for Columbia—is not definitive. Not by a long shot.

—*john ephland*



ANTHONY BRAXTON

SIX MONK'S COMPOSITIONS (1987)—Black Saint 120 116-1: *BRILLIANT CORNERS; REFLECTIONS; PLAYED TWICE; FOUR IN ONE; ASK ME NOW; SKIPPY.*

Personnel: Braxton, alto saxophone; Mal Waldron, piano; Buell Neidlinger, bass; Billy Osborne, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

PAUL MOTIAN

MONK IN MOTIAN—JMT 834 421-1: *CREPUSCULE WITH NELLIE; JUSTICE (EVIDENCE); RUBY MY DEAR; STRAIGHT, NO CHASER; BYE-YA; UGLY BEAUTY; TRINKLE TINKLE; EPISTROPHY; OFF MINOR; REFLECTIONS.*

Personnel: Motion, drums; Joe Lovano, Dewey Redman (cuts 4,8), tenor saxophone; Bill Frisell, electric guitar; Geri Allen (3,9), piano.

★ ★ ★ ★

Thelonious Monk was a stickler about the correct performance of his compositions; but, now that he belongs to the ages, so do his compositions; and his successors will, and should, have their way with them. *Six Monk's Compositions 1987* (sic) and *Monk In Motian* are engaging additions to a recent rash of recasted Monk, ranging from Buell Neidlinger's erstwhile hoedowns to the Instant Composers Pool Orchestra's dadaistic swing. While Paul Motian's program has a more overt revisionist sheen, Anthony Braxton's also tests the foundations of Monk's compositions.

The programs are also interesting statements of the respective artists' scholarship and connoisseurship. With, for the most part, a pianoless trio, Motian invigorates several of Monk's most frequently interpreted compositions—his "Epistrophy" is urgently cadenced; "Straight, No Chaser" has a searing pace; and "Ruby My Dear" is richly ornamented by Geri Allen. With the exception of two supple ballads, Braxton tackles Monk's more difficult, knotty

compositions, particularly the bracing "Brilliant Corners," which Monk, Roach, and Rollins couldn't ace in a single take. Still, their interpretative liberties are anything but heretical.

The vibrant colors of Motian's nuanced-filled drumming and Bill Frisell's electric guitar give imaginative highlights to a basically orthodox approach. The cornerstone of the trio is Joe Lovano, whose large, slightly dry sound, and well-honed lines, lend the performances a

leavening, Rouse-like earthiness. This is an exceptionally cohesive trio, adept at prompting and embellishing each other, and very capable of going the distance by themselves; Allen and Dewey Redman's guest artist roles are distinctively rendered, but their overall effect is that of cameo appearances.

Braxton unassumingly keys into Monk's ostinato quality; not ostinato in terms of literal

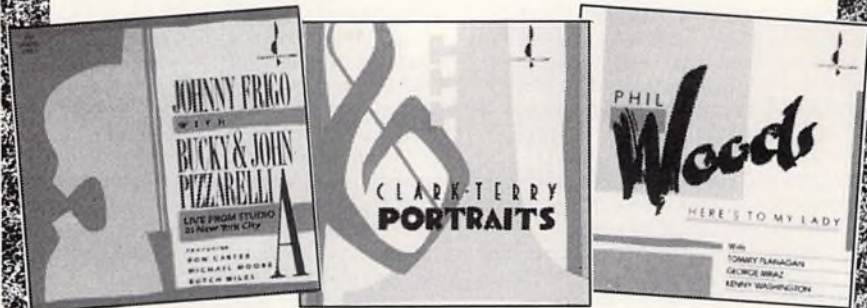
CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

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BASS HITS

by Jim Roberts

When bass players step forward as leaders, the albums they make tend to fall into two distinct categories. In the first type, the bass is clearly the center of attention. The arrangements feature the bass (or basses), mixed loud and up-front, taking over the role usually played by a horn or guitar or keyboard. The second type is more subtle. The bassist creates a role for himself that's at the center of the music, yet still within the instrument's traditional role of support.

Neither type of album is better. Whether the music succeeds depends on the bassist's overall skill as a composer, arranger, and instrumentalist—and on his ability to create a unique musical identity.

With the advancement of musical electronics, the first type of album—the "flashy" type—his become far more common. There have been some wonderful recordings of this type, made by bassists ranging from Oscar Pettiford to John Patitucci. There have also been some hideous ones, albums long on chops but woefully short on meaningful music.

The concept behind the second type of bassist-led album—the "quiet-but-forceful" type—can be traced back to the work of John Kirby, a swing era bassist who led a popular sextet in the late '30s and early '40s. Kirby was more of a conceptualist and arranger than a virtuoso player, and his recordings almost never featured his bass playing. Instead, his goal was to develop a seamless group sound, one where all the instruments, including the bass, would be equal.

The bassist who best combined both roles in his music was, of course, Charles Mingus. As a composer and arranger, Mingus sometimes featured himself—but more often than not, he chose not to. Instead, he searched for the proper bass function within each piece. Mingus could make his bass do whatever the music required, whether he needed a defiant lead voice or a deep, solid foundation.

Despite the general advance in musical technique over the past 30 years, few bassists have shown the ability to use their instruments as resourcefully as Mingus did. One who can is **Charlie Haden**. Since his emergence with Ornette Coleman in the late '50s, Haden has proven himself to be not only a superb sideman but also an innovative soloist, composer, and group leader.

Haden's recent album, *Quartet West In Angel City* (Verve 837 031-2), could be his finest. He casts himself in the supportive role most of the time, and his bass parts are the glue that holds the music together. His time is flawless, his intonation accurate, and his deep, woody tone has been captured especially well by producer Hans Wendl.

It would be hard to find a place anywhere on this disc where Haden plays a note that shouldn't be there. His bass lines carry the quartet—which includes Ernie Watts (tenor saxophone), Alan Broadbent (piano), and



Slam Stewart

Larance Marable (drums)—like a sturdy, ocean-going sailboat. His solos are concise and uncluttered, always saying something about the tune at hand. Most of them are brief, but when Haden does stretch out, on Ornette's "Lonely Woman" (included on the CD only), his long solo is constructed with painstaking care, each phrase carefully joined to the previous one.

If Charles Mingus was an antecedent for bassists such as Charlie Haden, another model was provided by **Slam Stewart**. Stewart remains a vastly underappreciated talent, written off by most critics and historians as an "entertainer" who recorded novelty songs. While it's true that Stewart made some lightweight music with guitarist Slim Gaillard, it's also true that he worked for years with Art Tatum. Hardly a show-biz gig, but one that Stewart could handle because of his perfect pitch and strong, assured rhythm.

Despite being largely ignored by the jazz establishment, Stewart remained vital right up until his death in 1987. His last session has recently been released on *The Cats Are Swingin'* (Sertoma BSC 650601). It's a wonderfully relaxed, easygoing album. Stewart sticks to the supportive role most of the time—laying down smooth, even lines with deceptive ease—but the album also includes several of the unique "humming bass" solos that Stewart pioneered in the late '30s.

While Stewart's solos are often cited as a "gimmick" that prove he was a showman at heart, careful listening to his work here (and on many previous recordings) shows that Stewart was a gifted melodist who put together thoughtful, ingenious solos. His sound is a little unusual, to be sure—but it's a lot more attractive than 98 percent of the synthesizer solos I've heard over the years, and it gives his bass an immediate identity.

If Slam Stewart's accomplishments have been overlooked by some, they have been carefully studied by at least one modern bassist: **Avory Sharpe**. Sharpe, who works regularly with pianist McCoy Tyner, recently released his first solo album, *Unspoken Words* (Sunnyside 1029). The album features several solos in the "humming

bass" style, and they sound great. It's too bad that Slam Stewart didn't get to hear this album before he died, because I'm sure he would have felt vindicated.

There's much more to Sharpe's album than the Slam-style solos, however; indeed, it's one of the most interesting bassist-led albums I've ever heard. The material ranges from straight-ahead swing to late-'80s funk . . . and beyond. At the center of it all is Sharpe's bass, always in control but never unbearing. There are some surprising effects (like an arco acoustic bass solo over an electric bass vamp) and more than enough fresh musical ideas to make repeated listening a pleasure. An auspicious debut.

While Sharpe's album leans towards the "flashy" type of bass album, with the bass consistently out front, it's his overall musicianship that makes it work. Even great bass playing, by itself, can't redeem pedestrian material—a point made clear by **Harvie Swartz's** latest recording with his group Urban Earth. Despite Swartz's considerable skill as a bassist, *It's About Time* (GIA 13-9011-1) is an unsatisfying album. Swartz's original tunes, and the one contributed by saxophonist Billy Drewes, recycle familiar funk and fashion clichés in predictable ways. Without the strong, supple bass lines that Swartz plays on his *Vertical Bass*, there would be little to catch your ear. Bassists will find Swartz's ideas intriguing, but most of them are wasted here.

Edgar Meyer's *Love Of A Lifetime* (MCA 6257) suffers from a similar problem. Meyer is a virtuoso bassist with a rich background that includes classical, bluegrass, jazz, and r&b playing. Unfortunately, as a composer, Meyer



Mark Egan

has taken all these ingredients, stirred them together, and made . . . a soufflé. This album was intended to appeal to new age audiences, I guess, so nothing too exciting was allowed. There are some fine examples of accomplished bass playing—Meyer's arco interpretation of "My Funny Valentine," for one—but his album is relentlessly fluffy.

If Edgar Meyer's album is less than substantial, it does have a certain quirky charm. Meyer, for all of his technical skill, doesn't seem to take himself too seriously. The same can't be said of **Bruce**

Bromberg, whose album *Basses Loaded* (Intima D1-73325) is slick and pretentious. Bromberg is a formidable technician, to be sure. He plays a roomful of electric and acoustic basses, along with things like a "piccolo bass guitar synthesizer with Photon MIDI converter." Why would someone want to play a bass that sounds like an overstimulated mandolin? I don't know; it could be to overcome boredom with lackluster material. That would explain this record, which is filled with routine L.A. studio funk and silly, overblown arrangements.

Bromberg (and many other "lots-of-chops" bassists) would do well to listen to *A Touch Of Light* (GRP 9572), the latest album by **Mark Egan**. Egan also plays some unusual bass guitar mutants—notably, a double-neck bass with a four-string fretless neck above an eight-

string fretted one—and his music is certainly "flashy," in the sense that it features his bass as the lead voice throughout. But Egan's music is also unfailingly melodic and texturally varied. He may sometimes stretch a single idea too far, but he never tries to disguise a flurry of unrelated sixteenth-note riffs as a solo or pass off a half-baked r&b vamp as a composition.

Most importantly, Mark Egan has found a strong, distinctive tone that's immediately recognizable. This isn't an easy trick with an electric instrument, but it's a lot more significant than all the double-time arpeggios and nifty triple-stops you can learn in a lifetime. Egan has established an identity as a bass player—as a *musician*—that reaches out beyond his technique and says something to us as listeners. **db**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

repetition, but ostinato as the propelling, obstinate compositional kernel. Though more obvious in the skeletal solos of Mal Waldron, the perfect pianist for this program, Braxton unlocks fresh scalar and textural implications from the compositions' component parts in an equally painstaking manner. Braxton is not merely superimposing his own vocabulary onto a Monkian backdrop; rather, he is vigorously probing Monk's "wrong is right" axiom, proving it to be as durable as the compositions.

Both albums argue well that Monk's compositions are as open to interpretation as they are demanding of precision. —*bill shoemaker*



CHUCK BERRY

CHUCK BERRY—Chess CH6-80,001: *MAYBELLE*; *WEE WEE HOURS*; *THIRTY DAYS*; *YOU CAN'T CATCH ME*; *NO MONEY DOWN*; *DOWNBOUND TRAIN*; *BROWN EYED HANDSOME MAN*; *DRIFTING HEART*; *ROLL OVER BEETHOVEN*; *TOO MUCH MONKEY BUSINESS*; *HAVANA MOON*; *SCHOOL DAY*; *ROCK AND ROLL MUSIC*; *OH BABY DOLL*; *I'VE CHANGED*; *REELIN' AND ROCKIN'*; *ROCKIN' AT THE PHILHARMONIC*; *SWEET LITTLE SIXTEEN*; *JOHNNY B. GOODE*; *TIME WAS*; *AROUND AND AROUND*; *BEAUTIFUL DELILAH*; *HOUSE OF BLUE LIGHTS*; *CAROL*; *MEMPHIS*; *ANTHONY BOY*; *JO JO GUNNE*; *SWEET LITTLE ROCK'N'ROLLER*; *MERRY CHRISTMAS BABY*; *RUN RUDOLPH RUN*; *LITTLE QUEENIE*; *ALMOST GROWN*; *BACK IN THE U.S.A.*; *BETTY JEAN*; *CHILDHOOD SWEETHEART*; *LET IT ROCK*; *TOO POOPED TO POP*; *BYE BYE JOHNNY*; *JAGUAR AND THUNDERBIRD*; *DOWN THE ROAD A PIECE*;

CONFESSIN' THE BLUES; *THIRTEEN QUESTION METHOD*; *CRYING STEEL*; *I'M JUST A LUCKY SO AND SO*; *I'M TALKING ABOUT YOU*; *COME ON*; *NADINE (IS IT YOU?)*; *CRAZY ARMS*; *YOU NEVER CAN TELL*; *THE THINGS I USED TO DO*; *PROMISED LAND*; *NO PARTICULAR PLACE TO GO*; *LIVERPOOL DRIVE*; *YOU TWO*; *CHUCK'S BEAT*; *LITTLE MARIE*; *DEAR DAD*; *SAD DAY*; *LONG NIGHT*; *IT'S MY OWN BUSINESS*; *IT WASN'T ME*; *RAMONA SAY YES*; *VIVA VIVA ROCK'N'ROLL*; *TULANE*; *HAVE MERCY JUDGE*; *MY DREAM*; *REELIN' AND ROCKIN' (LIVE)*; *MY DING-A-LING (LIVE SINGLE EDIT)*; *JOHNNY B. GOODE (LIVE)*; *A DEUCE*; *WOODPECKER*; *BIO*.

Personnel: Chuck Berry, guitar and vocals. Longtime collaborators: Bo Diddley, guitar; Johnnie Johnson, piano; Lafayette Leake, piano; Willie Dixon, bass; Fred Below, drums; Eddie Hardy, drums; Odie Payne, drums; L.C. Davis, tenor sax.

★★★★★

I was all ready for this one. Like a lot of other folks, I'm tired of the box fever that's gripped the major labels ever since they discovered their (previously offhandedly neglected) archives could be transformed from (what they perceived as) a bookkeeping problem to gold via the alchemy of CDs, digital remastering, and the onslaught of nostalgia among the yuppieified thirtysomething crowd. So even before I heard it, even during the phone call when John Ephland asked me to review it for **db**, I was all set to launch a vicious, uncompromising, highspirited, and (naturally) informed attack.

Aw, shit. Instead, I wound up getting yet another lesson in pragmatic critical humility. Because like the transfer of sound from the old analog masters to digital, the making of these boxes is still a case-by-case study. There's a simple way to bring that home to **db** readers. Think of everything wrong with the Miles Davis boxed set Columbia recently put out (see *accompanying review—ed.*)—the limited and bad selection of tracks, silly sequencing, flattened sound, booklet with errors, and so on. Then imagine that somehow all those f---ups got fixed, that what you got when you opened the box was a solid, representative portrait of an unparalleled musical life put together with

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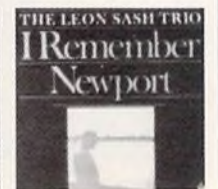


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Welcome to *Chuck Berry*: Six records, three CDs or cassettes, and 71 tracks spanning a remarkable and eye-opening (for those who think CB's chops were limited to "Maybellene" clones—as if that would be bad) array of musical styles. Many of the tunes are easily hummable from memory by anybody old enough to scan the titles. Some of them are previously unreleased. All of them are infused with the Maestro's prodigious verbal talents, the puns and humor and odd rhymes and shrewdly ironic observations that helped make him one of rock's Founding Fathers.

The whole thing is sequenced in chronological order from 1955 to 1973. In digital sound that enhances the originals without altering them into something they were never meant to be. There's a 32-page booklet sporting a fine historical overview by Billy Altman; an interview by resident MCA/Chess resuscitator Andy McKaie with the Brown-Eyed Handsome Man himself; pix of him in action in the early days, with other rock groundbreakers, in the studio; pix of memorabilia like all the Chess album covers, some of the great singles, sheet music, posters, his star on the Hollywood Walk Of Fame; a list of his *Billboard* Top-100 singles; a complete album discography, and detailed session info for all the tracks compiled.

I'm still tired of record companies' quick fixes, shortsightedness, and sheer greed vis-à-vis the miles of tapes moldering to dust in

their storage facilities while they continue to recycle only the obvious. But I'll just have to keep my bile in the freezer while I spin my happy way through *Chuck Berry*. It's hard to argue with success.

—gene santoro



RAY ANDERSON

BLUES BRED IN THE BONE—Gramavision 18-8813-1: *BLUES BRED IN THE BONE*; *53RD AND GREENWOOD*; *MONA LISA*; *DATUNE*; *A FLOWER IS A LOVESOME THING*; *HEMLINES*; *I DON'T WANT TO SET THE WORLD ON FIRE*.

Personnel: Anderson, trombone; John Scofield, guitar; Anthony Davis, piano; Mark Dresser, acoustic bass; Johnny Vidacovich, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Note the title of Ray Anderson's newest record, a clever rewording of an age-old adage. More than a stylistic reference, "blues" denotes the individuation and expressiveness brought forth in, er, his trombone. It can be stated without exaggerating that Anderson is among the brightest of current jazz luminaries and has delivered in spades on the promise of his selection as the premier trombonist deserving wider recognition in the 1981 **db** Critics Poll, attested to these past several years by stellar performances and an increasing wealth of recordings. Last year, in fact, the 36-year-old New Yorker edged out J. J. Johnson to take top honors as the established trombone spokesman in the aforementioned critical measure of talent.

Anderson's playing on the substantial programme of five originals and two familiar tunes continues a resolute and unswerving pursuit of his muse. Blessed with astounding technical skills, he works the slide and manages the embouchure with keenness and authority, giving sonic shape to music ideas that most often carry the element of eccentric surprise. He gallops through the swinging lines of "Datune," "Hemlines," and others, keeping sassy and provocative, his notes clearly articulate and of forthright eloquence. Anderson also excels on quieter songs. For the entirety of Billy Strayhorn's ballad "A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing," the trombonist maintains a graceful awareness that renders his interpretation remarkable. His lazy Crescent City jauntiness in a wittily transformed "Mona Lisa" does for the auditory canals what the gumbo at Eddie's does for the taste buds: tickles and soothes in indescribable fashion.

Trombonist Anderson is a wag, a kindred spirit of the great Vic Dickinson, and his work typically comes trussed up with humor of an ironic and nuanced sort, never the broad big-top hilarity (and garishness) a modern-day sackbut naturally leans towards. The moods evoked by his groans, slurs, and ringing proclamations are underpinned by a certain sly dog roguery. His impulses are complex: The moving story spoken by his 'bone in "I Don't Want To Set The World On Fire," for instance, has as much to do with gentle, aw-shucks gaiety as salty-teared melancholy. Applaud him for always steering the instrument away from the abyss of oppressive sadness it's inherently inclined to seek out. All through the album, Anderson digs deep, without self-consciousness or falsity, and the music produced, whether jazz bright or of blues hues, is superb.

Anderson's sessions compeers are required by the songs to not only follow and address the sterling expositions of the trombonist but to leave large impressions in the process. Sco's warm tones are just fine alongside Anderson's. The call-and-response and intertwining of guitar and brass in "53rd And Greenwood" couch the magnitude of the two players' techniques and cleverness. Davis, an ol' New Haven (Connecticut) buddy, lends his agreeably serious demeanor to the proceedings, and Dresser plays well, invaluable so when bowing on the Strayhorn piece. Vidacovich evidences ample Nawluns soulfulness, reveals maturity in his fabricating of colors and textures, and propels any quirky tempo shifts with nimble surety.

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bring to mind an apposite, timeless proverb by John Ruskin: "Fine art is that in which the hand, the head, and the heart of man go together."
—frank-john hadley

New Releases

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

DELMARK: Wynton Kelly, *Last Trio Sessions*. Leon Sash Trio, *I Remember Newport*. Ira Sullivan, *Blue Stroll*. Barney Bigard & Art Hodes, *Bucket's Got A Hole In It*. Chris Woods, *Somebody Done Stole My Blues*. George Lewis & Don Ewell, *Reunion*. Anthony Braxton, *Three Compositions Of New Jazz*. Muhal Richard Abrams, *Young At Heart/Wise In Time*. Joseph Jarman, *As If It Were The Seasons*. Various Artists, *Honkers & Bar Walkers; Big Band Jazz*.

JAZZLINE: Andy LaVerne, *Plays The*

Music Of Chick Corea. Horizont, *White Clouds*. Klaus Weiss Quintett with Clifford Jordan, *Live At Opus 1*. Matthias Frey, Y. Oscar Pettiford, *Sessions 1958-60*. Kenny Clarke, *The Concert*. Various Artists, *Hello Baden-Baden, Sessions 1955-60; Baden-Baden The Concert 6/23/58*.

POLYGRAM/EMARCY/FONTANA/OWL: Dave Liebman, *Trio + One*. Gil Evans & Laurent Cugny, *Rhythm-A-Ning*. James Williams, *Magical Trio 2*. Eric Gale with Ron Carter, *In A Jazz Tradition*. Ray Bryant, *Golden Earrings*. Miles Davis, *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud*. John Lewis, *The Garden Of Delight/Delaunay's Dilemma*. Ron Carter, *All Alone*.

LEO: Cecil Taylor Unit, *Live In Vienna*. Ganelin/Chekasin/Tarasov, *Threeminusoneequalsthree*. Anthony Braxton Quartet, "London" 1985. Ganelin Trio, *Poco-A-Poco*.

CONCORD JAZZ/CROSSOVER: Flora Purim & Airtro, *The Sun Is Out*. Rosemary Clooney, *Show Tunes*. Dave McKenna, *No More Ouzo For Puzo*. Various Artists, *The 20th Concord Festival All-Stars*.

JUSTIN TIME: Tim Brady/Kenny Wheeler, *Visions*. Denny Christianson Big Band, *More Pepper*. Sonny Greenwich, *Live*

At Sweet Basil.

CHESS: Etta James, *The Sweetest Peaches*. Chuck Berry, *Chuck Berry, The Chess Box*. Willie Dixon, *Willie Dixon, The Chess Box*.

BLACK LION: Slide Hampton, *World Of Trombones*. Lee Wiley & Ellis Larkins, *Duologue*. Art Tatum, *The V-Dscs*.

INDEPENDENTS: Turtle Island String Quartet, *Metropolis* (Windham Hill). Mark Isham, *Tibet* (Windham Hill). Nancy Marano & Eddie Monteiro, *The Real Thing* (Perfect Sound). Louie Bellson, *Hot* (MusicMasters). Lee Konitz, *Round & Round* (MusicMasters). Deborah Henson-Conant, *On The Rise* (GRP). Dave Grusin, *Collection* (GRP). Rob Schneiderman, *New Outlook* (Reservoir). Peter Leitch, *Red Zone* (Reservoir). Dominic Pifarély, *Insula Dulcamara* (Nocturne). Axiom, *Spirit Of Light* (Cexton). Nexus, *In Canada* (Four Leaf). James Van Buren, *I Ain't Doin' Too Bad* (Van Buren). Keith Jarrett, *Works By Lou Harrison* (New World). The Astronauts, *Surf Party* (RCA). Marcus Roberts, *The Truth Is Spoken Here* (RCA/Novus). Various Artists, *Brazilian Instrumental Music* (Som Da Gente). Bevan/Kingston/Lewis, *Original Gravity* (Incus). Jane Scheckter, *I've Got My Standards* (DRG).

Oliyer Lake, *Otherside* (Gramavision). Martin Taylor, *Sarabanda* (Gaia). Ahmed Abdallah Quartet, *Liquid Magic* (Silkheart). Jerry Tilitz, *Trombone Tangents* (Limetree). Manteca, *No Heroes* (Soundwings/Duke Street). Steve Bach, *More Than A Dream* (Soundwings). Tony Lada, *The Very Thought Of You* (Sterling Bell). Gonz, *Front End* (Not Fat). Con Brio, *The Ray* (Not Fat). Lonesome Strangers, *The Lonesome Strangers* (Hightone). Steps Ahead, *N.Y.C.* (Capitol). Ross Traut & Steve Rodby, *The Great Lawn* (Columbia). Pekka Toivanen, *Stick Around* (Kompas). Ink Spots, *I'll Still Be Loving You* (Bainbridge). Keiko Matsui, *Under Northern Lights* (MCA). Buddy Rich, *The Cinch* (Spotlite). Jim Richardson's Pogo, *Don't Get Emotional* (Spotlite). Grant Calvin Weston, *Dance Romance* (In + Out). Airtro Moreira & Flora Purim, *The Colors Of Life* (In + Out). Brave Combo, *Humansville* (Rounder). Quest, *Natural Selection* (Pathfinder). Enrico Fazio Quintet, *Mirabilia!* (CMC). Mario Rusca Trio, *Reaction* (Dyonia World). Giancarlo Barigozzi, *Recherche* (Dyonia World). Mooseheart Faith, *Mooseheart Faith* (De Milo). Bunny Wailer, *Liberation* (Shanachie). Various Artists, *Beleza Tropical* (Fly/Sire). Enya, *Watermark* (Geffen). O'Mara/Darling/Elgart, *O'Mara-Darling-Elgart* (Core). Jon Metzger, *Into The Light* (V.S.O.P.). Joshua Salesin, *Many Faces* (Memory-Tech). Allegro Jazz Ensemble, *Sphinx* (Mobile Fidelity). **db**



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HERB ROBERTSON BRASS ENSEMBLE

SHADES OF BUD POWELL—JMT 834 420-2:
*UN POCO LOCO; I'LL KEEP LOVING YOU; HALLUCI-
NATIONS; GLASS ENCLOSURE; THE FRUIT; SHADES OF
BUD.* (44:40 MINUTES)

Personnel: Robertson, trumpet, flugelhorn;
Brian Lynch, trumpet; Vincent Chancey, french
horn; Robin Eubanks, trombone; Bob Stewart,
tuba; Joey Baron, drums, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

At first, Bud Powell's music sounded like Bird's alto adapted to piano. Then its pianistic identity became clear—he had roots in Earl Hines as well as Parker. Now Herb Robertson focuses our attention on Powell as *composer*, divorced from the piano tradition and bop itself. He decontextualizes Powell. But in recasting Bud's music for brass-and-drum corps, Robertson avoids predictable moves. The band is no Brass Fantasy-like showcase for his own barnyard horn, nor does it get on a New Orleans bandwagon (Stewart's tuba syncopations on a mambo-ing "Hallucinations" and Afro-Cuban "Poco Loco" aside). Herb doesn't even exploit the sure-to-please Ellington effects which lie under his pen and his plunger—too obvious. A chamberish "I'll Keep Loving You" is never fussy, by nature of the players' idiosyncratic attack and timing—in short, they sound like jazz musicians.

Robertson yanks Powell's music out of context, yet keeps the spirit of his writing. Herb translates Bud's mock-Mussorgsky "Glass Enclosure" into a pumped-up circular march that keeps delaying its own resolution (in idiomatic ways that have even less to do with bop cadences than Bud's ending did).

Fine solos include the full-bodied horns of Chancey and Eubanks, giving the sextet a robust sound. But solo statements are subsumed into larger compositional plans—or into collective interplay, on a playfully programmatic "Hallucinations" and Robertson's "Shades Of Bud." Herb's token feature is "The Fruit," for trumpet, tuba, and master-of-attacks Joey Baron's brushes on phonebook; Powell's theme sounds more lyrical uncoiling on harmon-muted horn than it does rippling up the piano keys.

But Robertson shows off his pen more than his brass. (In a way this recital is the flipside of his ferocious '87 live album for JMT, "X"—*Cerpts*, which PolyGram mischievously declined to import.) His arranging reveals the same sensitivity to nuance and color his playing does. The music's dark but not bleak. Herb's own "Shades Of Bud" aside, he doesn't play up the

tragic-Powell clichés. "Shades" may acknowledge the pianist's demons, but the rest of the album emphasizes his writing's clarity, charm, and sense of fun.

Robertson has attained a too-rare equilib-

rium between tradition and innovation, composing and arranging, soloist and ensemble, finesse and raw muscle. And he's done it for the best of reasons: Why not?

—Kevin Whitehead

HOW BIG IS BIG?

by Art Lange

What makes a big band? Or, what makes a band big? How large is big, anyway? Questions which might confuse even the caterpillar in Wonderland, but nevertheless instigate this survey of 16 reissued or newly released "large ensemble" CDs.

There's no doubt that size does influence (musical) attitude—or should; as far back as Jelly Roll Morton arrangers have been wrestling with problems of articulation, design, clarity, and unity vs. independence while desiring the additional power, flexibility, and increased palette of colors more participants bring. (Was it Lao-tzu who said, "For everything you gain, you lose something too?") Let's, for

the sake of argument, say that 11 pieces constitute a big band—octets and nonets seldom allow for anything but minimal doubling of parts, and 10 pieces . . . well, it depends how you use 'em.

Which means that *The Teddy Charles Tentet* (Atlantic CD 7 90983-2, 68:06 minutes) slips in just under the wire. Reflecting the fervent, post-*Birth Of The Cool* experimentalism of the Cold War '50s, the charts—by shining lights like Gil Evans, George Russell, Jimmy Giuffrè, Bob Brookmeyer, Mal Waldron, and Charles himself—tend to speak lightly and politely without shouting, but also without sacrificing momentum or swing. Melodic lines are often charmingly angular, intervals open and wide, with healthy doses of dissonance and crisp rhythmic snap. None of the solos are outstanding, but they aren't meant to be, rather, they're shaped to sustain or enhance a thematic mood, and avoid the usual "solo-and-accompaniment" tug-of-war. Even the leader's vibes

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This special and most unusual album is McCoy Tyner's second solo piano album and his finest in 16 years. It was recorded digitally on a Steinway grand in a classical concert hall, landing superb clarity and acoustics to the already breathtaking music.

McCoy balances standards such as "Yesterdays" and jazz classics like Ellington's "In A Mellow Tone" and John Coltrane's "Lazybird" with originals such as "Contemplation," a magnificent reading of his ballad "You Taught My Heart To Sing," and a new composition, "View From The Hill."

Destined to be a jazz classic, *Revelations* (91651) should prove one of the great surprises and most outstanding releases of 1989. A great way to kick off Blue Note's 50th anniversary.

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are understated—forget Hamp's electricity and Bags' blues-soaked groove—with sparse, percussive phrasing that cuts to the sinewy muscle of a lyrical line and never overembellishes. No, it's the writing that's on display, and the best of it—such as the cubist construction and insistent kick of Russell's "Lydian M-1," Charles' juxtaposition of relaxed swing and orchestral ambition in the requiem-like "Word From Bird," and the moody intensity of Waldron's "Vibrations"—retains its message and appeal after three decades. (The clean CD sound is especially helpful in stating its case.)

Now, about **Gil Evans' *Into The Hot*** (MCA Impulse MCAD-39104, 41:34) be warned: except for the snazzy tie on the cover photo, Gil contributes nothing save moral support. These '61 sessions are split between Cecil Taylor and Johnny Carisi (three tunes apiece), and their contrasting sensibilities are musically obvious and philosophically deep—expressionism vs. impressionism and intuitional unity vs. thorough composition chief among them. Though Cecil's five- and seven-piece performances fall outside of the realm of this survey, they're important enough to mention a few brief points: the (surprising?) influence of Mingus in the interrelation of ensemble parts, Jimmy Lyons' pure boppish alto (later to evolve ever more elliptical) insinuating Bird quotes throughout, the Ellingtonian piano entrance against riffing horns in "Bulbs," the concision, wit, and energy which is everywhere apparent. As for Carisi, the organic, coloristic, non-sectionalized flow of "Moon Taj" is a landmark of jazz composition and infinitely influential . . . in Europe, if not

America. "Angkor Wat," too, anticipates advances in the art of the arranger, though to less-gracious ends; the deft 12-tone touches applied to its "I Mean You" near-paraphrase (with more extravagant orchestral writing, paradoxically, than classical composer Hall Overton supplied for Monk) are hindered by subsequent pseudo-gospelisms and stale riffs. Still, overall, this is a crucial disc—despite the hardly clinical sound quality.

Gil's presence is felt and heard on the Evans Orchestra's post-humously titled *Farewell* (ProJazz CDJ-680, 61:03), more performances from the same '86 Sweet Basil gig that filled the label's previous *Bud And Bird* CD. A wider disparity between the astutely measured, minutely determined (even the "solos" are written out in advance) Carisi charts, and the spontaneous flux and flow of Gil's daring intentions could hardly be conceived. The band's distinctiveness is due to its individual personalities, and the freedom (within subtle constraints) that Gil gives them. Thus the extended "Waltz" (with a few tongue-in-cheek quotes from *Bitches Brew*) soars as a result of altoist Chris Hunter's frolic and Johnny Coles' flugelhorn gingerly giving rise to daydreams of Miles soloing over the minimal chart. This version of "Little Wing"—Gil's fourth crack at it?—epitomizes the aforementioned tug-of-war between soloist and rhythm section/band accompaniment; how about that shift to a reggae backing while underrated trumpeter Lew Soloff wittily quotes "Friday The Thirteenth" and refuses to submit to the change? It must be said though that, while entertaining, this disc doesn't add

to our knowledge of Gil's great art.

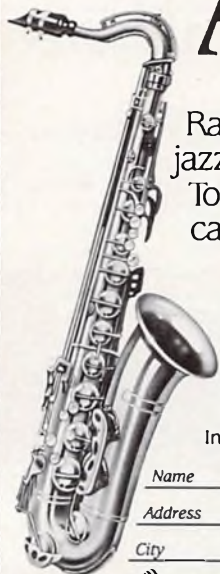
The collaboration of **Gil Evans and Laurent Cugny** on *Rhythm-A-Ning* (EmArcy 836 401-2, 54:38), however, does. Fronting the French Big Band Lumiere in what might be his final (Nov. '87) big band recording, Gil provides luminous direction and charts which bridge the considerable gap between his early, progressive successes and the later ad hoc creations. Compare the choppy, concise extroversion of the title track (and what we wouldn't give, now, for a complete "Evans Arranges Monk" session—if only he and not Oliver Nelson had been put in charge of the '68 Columbia big band date, alas) with the slow, glacial development of "London," where the ultimate evolution of sounds suspends time while simultaneously defining its inevitable pull. Such an intense view of music is so personal that our hearing it—and the band's playing it—almost seems an intrusion into his abstract feelings of what and how a piece of music should, ideally, mean. Similarly, "La Nevada" uses the original (transcribed from the recording) music as a jumping off point for an enticing blend of old and new attitudes. Kudos should go to the bandmembers and Cugny for their selfless effort to create such magic.

It may be merely coincidence that Evans' "Waltz" (this time a comparatively brief nine-minute treatment featuring a snaky John Scofield guitar solo) is the highlight of 86 (Label Bleu LBC-6503, 65:22) by the French government-sponsored **Orchestre National De Jazz**. With topnotch talent and classy arrangers (including the director, Francois Jeanneau, and Michael Gibbs), this isn't a bad band, just one in constant search for an identity. As a repertoire ensemble, dependent upon its suppliers for direction, they specialize in precision over spontaneity and feeling, and a generic flavor results. Too, a few of the trendy effects suggest an internal struggle between populism and aestheticism.

No such problems arise in the remarkable music **Maurice Magnoni** has produced for his 13-piece outfit. *L'Etat Des Sons* (Plainisphere CD-1267-36, 59:34) is a suite of bubbling improvised escapades and formal writing of substance and variety. Magnoni states his influences—Duke, Gil, Mingus—proudly and wears their music loudly in his composing. Echoes of Mingus' polyphony fight to erupt out of riffs and interpolated lush ballads; an Evansian parade of energetic soloists work within shifting, expansive thematic confines. There's nothing truly new here, but the half-familiar materials, colors, and textural events are so cogently, dramatically refreshed as to catch the ear and hold it persuasively. (Sound quality is intimate and effective, but the CD's lack of tracking bands hinders access to the music's individual sections.)

Another European ensemble, the Dutch **ICP Orchestra**, reduces the smaller-scale textures of, say, Teddy Charles' Tentet even further, to chamber music proportions, as they *Perform Nichols And Monk* (ICP 026, 72:23). Arranger Misha Mengelberg views these 13 pieces by Herbie Nichols and Monk as full-bodied compositions—not merely melodies with chord changes for soloing over, but atmospheric settings that can be stretched in various shapes by a shifting instrumentation without distorting the musical value or mood. This

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ultimately emphasizes the bittersweet harmonies, jangling rhythms, and touch of satire Nichols and Monk share, heightening and clarifying what Mengelberg sees/hears as the music's essence. Add in his own particular wit (audible in various interruptions, weird juxtapositions and exaggerations of timbres, and non sequiturs), and the equally curious stylings of his cohorts (especially valuable are Steve Lacy in the Nichols program, Maurice Horszthuis' viola, and reedmen Ab Baars and Michael Moore) and you end up with unpredictable, pungent, funny performances faithful to the spirit, if not the letter, of the music's origins. (Collectors should note that the Nichols portion of the program was once available on an ICP cassette, *Extension Red, White And Blue*, though the sound quality is somewhat improved on CD.)

Back to Boston, where resides the **Elther/Orchestra**, a pleasantly off-kilter 11-piece band of loose-limbed, casual quality. Humor is important to these guys, so on *Radium* (Accurate AC-3232, 69:12), there's a rambunctious a capella bari sax intro to Mingus' "Moanin'" (complete with moanin' vocalese) and a recasting of Monk's "Nutty" as a boogaloo (sorry, I wasn't amused) segueing into a "straight" version of "Ode To Billie Joe." They also like to establish a solid groove, then disrupt it upon the entrance of various soloists. Best tunes are the most aggressively contrapuntal and rhythmically risky—"Moanin'" and

Roscoe Mitchell's "Odwallah." The weakest moments are their most conservative ones, like "Insomnia," which begs for a larger band to handle its hefty section work, and the dirgey "Willow Weep For Me." But it's a band with plenty of promise.

The charts of Thad Jones propose plenty of promise as well, but it's sad to say that on *Naturally!* (Telarc D 83301, 46:29), the **Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra** clicks with machine-like precision—and that's the problem. Thad's writing, in the later Basie tradition, strives towards effects and high-voltage excitement, but the band's literalism results in an "orchestral swing"—polished, but artificial. The sound quality, too, strives for what used to be called a "sonic spectacular," with brass so sharp it hisses at climaxes, and a relatively reticent reed section by comparison.

There's even more immediate presence to be heard on **Louie Bellson And His Jazz Orchestra's** *Hot* (Musicmasters CIJD 60160X, 50:60)—if you're a drum fanatic you'll be pleased to hear that Bellson's drums are mixed so abnormally high that you can hear every tick, every stroke—and his hi-hat is often louder than the entire 17-piece band. Meanwhile, Don Menza is a reliable, excitable tenor sax soloist, Clark Terry sits in on a pair of tunes, and Bellson can still work up a head of steam with anybody. The writing, from Menza, Bob Florence, and others, reflects tried-and-true traditions out of late Basie and the showier

Buddy Rich band—the results are brash and, for me, mechanical. For hard-core big band fans only.

Even though the **Bill Holman Band** (JVC JD-3308, 59:02) follows a similar format to that of Lewis and Bellson, the leader's arrangements contain just enough curves and quirks to carry the music out of the muddle of the mainstream. Hear, for example, the brief 12-tone line periodically interrupting "Front Runner," the contrasting multi-voiced sections vying for attention in "St. Thomas," the three-soprano bite of "I Mean You." Stronger soloists—like tenor vet Bob Cooper and altoist Lanny Morgan—help too.

Slide Hampton's *World Of Trombones* (Black Lion BLCD-760113, 37:09) doesn't need unconventional writing, their lineup—nine trombones plus rhythm section—assures unfamiliar voicings and unique colors in the otherwise recognizable program of bop standards. Except for the sparkle of the late Albert Dailey's piano, the solos are incidental to the ensemble sound: rich and velvety en masse, enticing and offbeat in choir sans rhythm section in "Round Midnight," offsetting open and muted sections on "Donna Lee," a thicket of harmonized voices on "Impressions." There's no discernible difference in CD sound, though, from the '79 LP.

Gerry Mulligan has proven capable of rewarding, idiosyncratic writing for big bands in the past, but on *The Age Of Steam* (A&M

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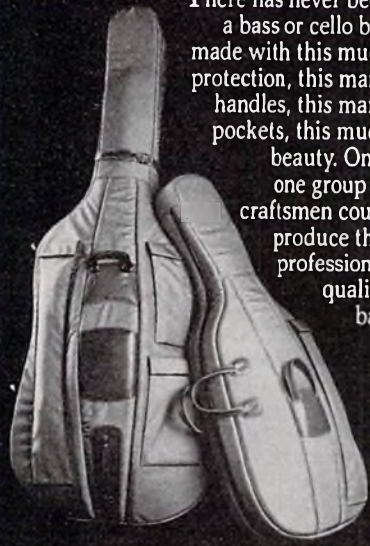
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CD-0804, 38:34), circa '71, he takes a simplified, seemingly commercialized, tact without really losing his individuality. It's hard to tell just how big the band is, since the listings are ambiguous and not everyone plays on every track. The use of electric instruments is discreet but telling. Tunes like "Country Beaver," and "A Weed In Disneyland" are uneventful washouts, but there are moments—on the soulful, laidback "One To Ten In Ohio," and the chugging "K-4 Pacific"—that invent a personal brand of excitement. The CD engineering adds an occasional echoey ambiance to the otherwise crisp, forward instruments, if that makes a difference to you.

Sound quality is not the reason to buy **John Coltrane's** *African Brass Volumes 1&2* (MCA/Impulse MCAD-42001, 67:32), either, though the combined sessions on a single CD is economical. Elvin Jones is often mixed louder than the massed brass, and the echo attached to his drum set makes his solo on "Africa" sound like an entire drum choir—a not untoward effect, considering the setting. More nit-picking: the conflicting personnel listings and recording dates, plus the ludicrous misspellings (McCoy Turner? three times?) are all intact, uncorrected from the original '61 LP release, as is the misleading "John Coltrane Quartet" titling. But the music, for the most part, is glorious. "Greensleeves" still sounds to me like an inferior remake of "My Favorite Things," but the remaining cuts shout and roar gloriously, amid the accompanying horns' dark vocalized chants of anguish and jubilation. There should never be any reservations over hearing a John Coltrane recording, and this one is unique in his output.

Julius Hemphill's *Big Band* (Elektra/Musician CD 9 60831-2, 60:39), likewise, though new, is a major release. From the welter of sound opening "At Harmony," it seems as if standard big band conventions are out the

window. The writing is hot and adventurous, with dark harmonies and welling sound masses dominated by provocative colors (variously four flutes, four soprano saxes, two french horns, Bill Frisell—an unconventional section of sounds all by himself) replacing traditional sectional settings. But the construction of the tunes are not all that far-out either, as the charts entertain brief, big band characteristic proportions and formulas, only to spin off on a tangent without a moment's notice. There's a serious chunk of the blues evident in Hemphill's featured soloing, especially on "For Billie" and the skewered r&b (sliding into swing tempo for the solos) of "C/Saw." Only "Drunk On God," a gutsy, ambitious, uncommercial, overlong combination of hip/metaphysical poetry and cinematic musical accompaniment, is a questionable inclusion. The remaining 40 minutes of music will make your head spin.

Ditto "Dedicated To Dolphy" and "Weave Song II," the big band side of **Oliver Lake's** *Otherside* (Gramavision CD 18-8901-2, 51:56). The other side is a tough and fine quintet not unlike previous Lake small groups. But the big news is the orchestral music—sharing with Sun Ra the ability to give itself over to riotous exchanges, thus making those episodes of straightforward melody all the more shocking. "Weave Song II" sets tension and release into large terms, and resolves with a joyous melody set down with sly insouciance. "Dedicated To Dolphy" sometimes staggers and sometimes soars, with Stanton Davis' trumpet courting Eldridge extravagance, Lake's virtuosic alto cadenza sojourning squirted notes to Benny Carter-ish buoyancy, and a closing orchestral theme that reminded me of, so help me, Johnny Carisi's "Israel." More, please. Lake and Hemphill and their ilk, along with some still-relevant directions from the experimental '50s, are among the few futures the big band has got.

db

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	8:00 Concert

1 BUDDY DEFRANCO and TERRY GIBBS.

"Seven Come Eleven" (from *HOLIDAY FOR SWING, Contemporary*) DeFranco, clarinet; Gibbs, vibes.

Buddy DeFranco and Terry Gibbs. Buddy was my inspiration after Benny and pointed to another way of playing the clarinet when I was a kid. He definitely added a lot to the style of clarinet playing. I owe him a lot. I tend to hear the clarinet in another direction now, but when I was younger I liked that kind of choppy energy. What I want to hear nowadays is longer lines, more liquid connectedness on the instrument. I'd give it five stars for enthusiasm—it's great energetic music—but I don't want to rate it. Why do I need to rate him? He's Buddy DeFranco. There's only one of him.

2 HENRY BUTLER.

"Reflections" (from *THE VILLAGE, Impulse*) Butler, piano, composer; Alvin Batiste, clarinet; Ron Carter, bass; Jack DeJohnette, drums.

It's definitely not Benny or Buddy. I'll give it an A for effort and concept as music for the clarinet, but for me the clarinet player is very limited. He has a nice jazz approach to the instrument, although it's kind of saxophone-y. I want to hear more control, more legato, more connection, and there's not enough disciplined clarinet playing. I don't know who he is. It's kind of squeaky, but it's nice. It's hard to judge someone. The tune is okay, McCoy Tyner-esque. I like the rhythm section. I like the feel of it, nice jazz energy. I'll give it four stars for the effort just generally.

3 FLIP PHILLIPS.

"I Got A Right To Sing The Blues" (from *A REAL SWINGER, Concord Jazz*) Phillips, bass clarinet, tenor sax; Howard Alden, guitar.

This is not the kind of music I'd listen to as a kid or even now, although it's musical. It comes from a whole other time. This is early clarinet playing, the tune, the harmony. It's singing. It's pretty. If the tenor player is the same person playing the bass clarinet, I like him better on the tenor. It's harder to express that same kind of lyrical emotion on such a low instrument. I like the guitar player, good solo. I can't really criticize it. It's just that my ears want to hear other things now. It's hard for me to give stars.

4 PEE WEE RUSSELL.

"Prelude To A Kiss" (from *ELINGTONIA, Impulse*) Russell, clarinet.

It could be Jimmy Hamilton or one of the earlier clarinet players. Whoever he is is

EDDIE DANIELS

by Michael Bourne

"I want the clarinet to sound as beautiful and as flexible as a violin can play, or a great pianist or a great tenor player," said Eddie Daniels, once a tenorist himself, now a great clarinetist. "I want to hear its inherent beauty, the sound of the wood, the control, the connecting of the notes, its potential on all levels. I've given up the tenor just to devote the time to play the clarinet."

After the heyday of Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw, and with the obvious exception of Buddy DeFranco, the clarinet almost disappeared in jazz. Eddie Daniels is now at the forefront of what seems a mini-renaissance of the clarinet, especially with the three quite different albums he's recorded for GRP: the orchestral jazz of *Breakthrough*, the bebop of *To Bird With Love*, and the chamber-like fusion of composer Roger Kellaway on *Memos From Paradise*.

Now he's recorded with Dave Grusin and synthesizers. "I'm finding that the clarinet works beautifully with electronic sounds. And also, I want to bring the clarinet into the contemporary universe. There's a depth of expression on the



clarinet that comes from the heart and the air in a way that synthesizers can't. I want our kids to know there's still a place for these acoustic instruments. I'm not doing a Sanborn record, but I want the people who listen to Sanborn to know that the clarinet is alive and kicking."

He was given no information about the music played.

more connected to the instrument and the style he's playing than Buddy was to what he was just playing. It comes from that style the clarinet comes from in jazz, more New Orleans, more Ellington, so it fits and it's pretty. I like it. It's a perfection of its own. I'll give it five stars because it's beautiful.

MB: It was Pee Wee Russell.

ED: I've always hated Pee Wee Russell. He always sounded too drunk to me, always discombobulated. I always felt his playing was so loose that it lacked the center of the sound and pitch-wise was all over the place, but this was pretty and with heart.

5 PHIL WOODS.

"Hal Mallet" (from *EVOLUTION, Concord Jazz*)

Woods, clarinet, alto sax, composer; Hal Galper, piano.

I love it. It's beautiful, the colors with the clarinet, the voicings. It's expressive and it's different. I like the clarinet player. He's got personality. He sounds like a clarinet player who comes from the saxophone, who didn't spend a lot of time on the clarinet.

I can hear limitations, technical things that

he's not getting, although he's staying within his limits and doing it beautifully. It could be Art Pepper, although I think the lead alto is giving me a clue. It could be Phil Woods. I love what the piano player is doing. I'll give it five stars.

6 JOE HENDERSON.

"Ask Me Now" (from *AN EVENING WITH JOE HENDERSON, Red*) Henderson, tenor sax.

Joe Henderson. To me he's the epitome of jazz tenor playing right now. I love his sound, his colors. He's got harmony by the you-know-whats. This is real expressive. He's got the history of jazz tenor from end to end. I give him a hundred stars. I know the tenor players better than I know the clarinet players.

My whole style comes from being a tenor player, more from the harmony and the heritage of tenor playing and alto playing rather than clarinet playing. That's why Alvin Batiste and Jimmy Hamilton aren't familiar to me. I grew up with Trane and Sonny Rollins and Charlie Parker. Those are the guys who influenced me the most. db

NRBQ

WITH A NEW ALBUM IN THE WORKS AND ALL KINDS OF PLAYING OPPORTUNITIES, THIS VETERAN R&B BAND IS COVERING LOTS OF MUSICAL TERRITORY.

by Dan Ouellette

"We always objected to being called The World's Greatest Bar Band, says NRBQ keyboardist/composer/maestro Terry Adams. "It insinuates that we're a group of guys who play old r&b tunes and drink a lot of beer. That's definitely not what we are. We call what we do 'omni-pop' because it's all-encompassing music." While bands offering an eclectic package of tunes from a variety of musical genres have become increasingly popular over the last few years, NRBQ has been the undisputed leader of the mix-and-match-styles school of music for over two decades.

The group holds the impressive distinction of being the only act to ever play the Berlin Jazz Festival, New York Folk Festival, and the Grand Ole Opry in the same year (1984), and its not-to-be-missed live sets (where the band is at its explosive, comic, and unpredictable best) include rock, jazz, r&b, country, schlock pop, polka, swing, bebop, and rockabilly numbers given the distinctive 'Q' treatment. "We don't deliberately try to jump from style to style," Adams insists. "It's just that this band is so talented, we have the ability to play any kind of music. We follow our musical impulses. We've never adhered to musical boundary lines or conformed to a rule book that said we couldn't play certain music in a rock context. People think I'm lying when I tell them we don't consciously plan to play across genres. Besides, those musical categories are there for deciding where to store albums in a record shop."

NRBQ (which stands for New Rhythm & Blues Quartet) was founded in the late '60s by Adams, his brother Donn (who is no longer an official 'Q' member, but occasionally still sits in as the trombonist for the Whole Wheat Horns section of the band) and bassist Joey Spampinato. By 1969, the group had a contract with Columbia which resulted in two LPs, including a rockabilly collaboration with Carl Perkins. Guitarist Al Anderson, whose group, The Wildweeds, scored a regional hit in the Northeast with the song "No Good To Cry" in the '60s, joined the band in 1971. Drummer Tom Ardolino enlisted in 1974, solidifying the Quartet's rhythm section (called The Ravioli Rhythm Section by Adams).



NRBQ: (from left) Tom Ardolino, Terry Adams, Joey Spaminato, and Al Anderson.

Fifteen years and hundreds of club dates and concerts later, NRBQ is without a doubt the tightest band you'll ever see live. Spontaneity is the key word, according to Adams, who notes that their potential playlist of songs is well over 600. "We go by vibrations and feelings," he says, in reference to how a set develops. "Sometimes we start off with a general idea of what we'll open with. But even that changes more often than not as soon as we walk on stage. From there, it's just a matter of getting a sense of what's happening with the audience. I never understood how groups pre-plan their sets. Doing that has never worked for us." This unpremeditated approach to performing means that no two NRBQ shows are ever remotely similar, even on nights when a date has the band doing two sets for different audiences. Live shows have also been characterized in the past by whacky, zany street theater such as silly poetry readings, pre-Cyndi Lauper bouts with Big-Time Wrestler Lou Albano, the request-a-song-any-song Magic Box, and the infamous exploding Cabbage Patch Doll skit that Adams submits was the precursor to Garbage Pail Kids collector cards. While acknowledging the comic relief in the band's goofy routines, he points out, "We're mostly about playing the music."

The 'Q' has recorded 12 albums altogether (on labels such as Kama Sutra, Mercury, and Bearsville), including two live LPs released last year, *God Bless Us All* and *Diggin' Uncle Q*, both on Rounder Records (which has remastered and reissued many of the early records). They amazingly capture the upbeat magic of the band in concert. "We didn't record a lot," Adams explains. "We taped three nights, one set per night. The first LP came from one set and the second collection was a combination of the two other gigs. These weren't outstanding nights, but I'm glad the records are out

there." The band has also released a career retrospective package on Rounder, *Uncommon Denominators*, a CD-only collection of 20 tunes from six 'Q' LPs issued between 1971 and 1981 (with a you-have-to-hear-it-to-believe-it previously unreleased cover of the Streisand hit, "People," included). "We picked out songs we wanted to hear cleaner copies of," Adams recalls. "We thought of a CD package as an excuse to get a sound closer to the master tapes."

Adams cites several musicians who have had an impact on him. At five, he was struck by The Coasters, then listened intently over the next few years to guitarist Link Wray, Duane Eddy, Elvis, The Beatles, and, as a teenager, Thelonious Monk—"When I first heard his pieces, I knew they were perfect music." He began his own musical career by taking trumpet lessons in the fifth grade, then switching to piano in sixth grade. "Music was always the most important thing for me," he says. "Everything influenced me. I liked every type of music I heard as long as it was good. But I can't really say that specific musicians influenced my style." Recently Adams has been listening to a variety of musical acts, noting Jonathan Richman and The Modern Lovers, Half Japanese, and old favorites Sun Ra and his Arkestra (NRBQ covered "Rocket Number Nine" when it was just getting off the ground).

As for equipment, Adams uses just "regular stuff" like Fender amps, a Yamaha grand piano, a toy piano ("My last one got busted on the road, the keys went flying everywhere"), and his trademark Hohner clavinet, which he assaults à la Jerry Lee Lewis. "I go through two or three clavinetts a year. I'm a virtuoso of the instrument because I was probably the first person to play one in a band and probably the only guy who's stuck with it this many years. Nowadays, it's

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considered old-fashioned because you have synthesizers. There's even a button to punch on synthesizers for the clavinet sound. But it just doesn't sound the same."

Adams calls NRBQ music organic because "it's made by people, not machines." He admits that the practice of synthesized music with programmed tempos and "guys behind the curtains playing all the instruments" scares him. "It's the paint-by-numbers concept of music that's being hailed as great art." While the band over the years has amassed a loyal (almost fanatical), but cult (read: relatively small compared to flash-in-the-pan pop acts) following, fellow musicians (including fans Elvis Costello, Bonnie Raitt, Pat Metheny, Todd Rundgren, and John Sebastian) are quick to sing the praises of 'Q members.

In addition, Adams worked with Carla Bley for a stretch as her keyboardist, joined in with trombonist Roswell Rudd, alto sax player Pat Patrick, bassist John Ore, and drummer Frankie Dunlop for a rendition of "In Walked Bud" for the Monk tribute double-LP, *That's The Way I Feel Now*, produced by Hal Willner in 1984 for A&M (the full 'Q crew served up one of its rousing concert favorites, "Little Rootie Tootie," for the LP), played piano for a Ringo Starr number on last year's Disney compilation, *Stay Awake* on A&M (NRBQ also contributed a wonderful off-key whistle rendition of "Whistle While You Work" for this Willner project), and is considering with the other Quartet members possible pieces for a third Willner tribute, this time for Charles Mingus. One of the highlights of Adams' career came when NRBQ joined with Grand Ole Opry country singer Skeeter Davis (who, incidentally, is married to Spampinato) to make the *She Sings, They Play* album on Rounder. "It was one of the finest records I've ever been involved in making," he says.

Al Anderson recently released a solo LP on Twin/Tone Records and has been much in demand as a songwriter—Fabulous Thunderbirds and Hank Williams, Jr. have both successfully covered his tunes—while Joey Spampinato played bass on Keith Richards' solo album and was handpicked by the Rolling Stone to play in Chuck Berry's band for the film, *Hail! Hail! Rock & Roll*. Richards was quoted as saying Spampinato is the only musician he's ever encountered who can play electric bass and make it sound like an upright.

Solo projects combined with the fact that the four live in separate states—Terry north of New York City, Tom in western Massachusetts, Al in Connecticut, and Joey in Tennessee—leads to speculation as to how the band is still going strong after 15 years of almost non-stop criss-crossing the country. How do they account for their longevity? Adams simply states, "I couldn't be happy with another rhythm section and guitarist. I feel they're the finest musicians I've ever

heard in a rock & roll band, and I'm fortunate to be in a band with them all. For example, people don't realize that Al Anderson's the best guitar player on earth. They haven't figured that out yet. But I have."

One of the best kept secrets of modern music may well be revealed later this year when NRBQ releases its first major label album in over a decade (and their first studio record in several years because of a contractual dispute with a former label) as a result of inking a pact with Virgin Records. The band begins recording in April. Adams downplays the long, storied history of NRBQ and critical acclaim for their indie LPs in favor of looking ahead to a promising future. "I'm not ashamed of any past accomplishments, but it's like talking about your third grade teacher every year. I see this contract with Virgin as part of the natural order of our developing a wider audience. Hopefully this record will give us the freedom to not have to rely on playing the club circuit all the time."

So, why did Virgin scoop up the 'Q'? Why do the guys sell out venue after venue across the U.S.? Why are there compilation records in England, Germany, and Sweden? Why do the critics rave? Adams simply responds, "We must be doing something right." db

DAVID FRIESEN

THIS BASSIST/COMPOSER/
BANDLEADER CONTINUES TO
WORK IN A VARIETY OF
SETTINGS WITH A
DOWN-TO-EARTH
MAGNETISM ALL HIS OWN.

by William Minor

Lots of people play jazz. Many do so quite well. Few probably play it with a deliberate extra-musical intention, one that infuses every note with significance and purpose. Enter bassist David Friesen, who sees the music, and humankind, not as ends in themselves, but as a means to celebrate the gift of life, mercy, and making music.

While Friesen concedes that "all of us have different reasons for playing music, different perspectives," and that "religiosity is not a word or concept I really like," he states, frankly, that he has "staked all of eternity on a living God," that loving music and being able to play it is "a gift: a gift that takes a lot of hard work; and to put in that hard work there's got to be some purpose."

Friesen once claimed the bass was the one instrument he did not wish to play ("So

large and awkward, and I could never hear the notes clearly"), yet he practiced 10 hours a day. For him the driving purpose was, and remains, to disclose a divine source—and that doesn't mean making "pretty music," but showing beauty that contains "awesome strength and intensity," the triumph of hope and faith in a world that tends to neglect itself through violence and the absence of love.



David Friesen

So what does any of this have to do with David Friesen, the actual recording artist, performer, composer, leader of small groups, and superb sideman? Everything. His integrity (faith and hope) seems to show in just about every note he plays—all of them clear, these days—and in every tune: whether they be, for example, one of his own compositions, such as "Early Morning Light," or Duke Ellington's classic "In A Sentimental Mood."

Friesen combines intimate tonalities, warmth, and cloudless phrasing with elusive, altered rhythms. The result can be solid, with a tasteful quietism suddenly turning into wild contrapuntal outings, with a vivid, passionate not-so-chance encounter with the universe. His solos are stunning: intense and intentional orchestrations—intelligence that swings, that doesn't hesitate.

The bassist has an attractive humility that allows for his ability to play in a variety of settings, or modes. He has lent his considerable talents to Ted Curson, Joe Henderson, John Handy, George Adams, Sam Rivers, Paul Horn, Dexter Gordon, and Stan Getz. He recently returned from a European tour with the extraordinary guitarist Uwe Kropinski. Friesen met the former East German artist while doing a solo tour of Europe in November, 1987, and paired up at the other's suggestion. "He enjoyed the way I played, I enjoyed the way he played." Friesen admits their styles are different.

"People who knew each of us couldn't understand why we were playing together," he says. But all doubts were dispelled by the results, the fine musical tension. "We contrast, highlight each other." They will be touring the States together this fall.

Friesen most enjoys small—solo/duo/trio—settings, and now works (nearly simultaneously, it would seem, he stays so busy) with pianists Mal Waldron (their album *Dedication* recently released on Soul Note) and Denny Zeitlin, guitarists Gene Bertoncini and John Stowell, and Paul Horn (a recording of their tour of India recently released). Another session, with Airtio and Flora Purim, is due out this spring. Commenting on the difference between working with Waldron and Zeitlin ("two very different piano players; each has his own style"), the bassist says, "I love Mal for tradition, depth, total uniqueness. He's a very stark player." Whereas Waldron is more aligned with the blues, Zeitlin leans toward the classical: "His harmonic style is very sophisticated, complicated." Both musicians, Friesen says, are "incredible listeners," and bring out different aspects of his own playing. In the case of Waldron, "a lot of history; a flavor of its own that's important"; on the other hand, he "intertwines" with Zeitlin, the music they make being more contrapuntal in nature.

His own trio includes the prodigious assistance of 23-year-old Phil Dwyer, on tenor sax and piano, and 25-year-old Alan Jones on drums. With this group, Friesen is about as self-effacing as a leader can be, yet always at the center of the music (under, around, behind, beyond it), reading the others well—creating, in a near-fatherly way, a family tapestry, an intricate and loving accord. Dwyer reminds one of Branford Marsalis or Courtney Pine: resourceful, proficient beyond his years, playing fast and all over, obviously digging his chops; yet Meister Friesen is always *there*, reminding one, through his own careful yet insistent choices, that one doesn't necessarily need all those notes.

Friesen himself is not distracted working "in a variety of different settings," but feels free to explore "the harmonic responsibility" of his role as a bass player: a role that "gives me more room." Asked about a statement he'd once made that Scott LaFaro had "opened up the bass like a guitar," he talks about "letting notes just follow themselves," about remaining flexible enough "to stay out of the way of others" while following your own ideas through, "unrestricted by bar lines and changes, yet remaining harmonically and rhythmically in focus."

Friesen conceived the Oregon bass, an instrument that combines the fine lines of the 16th century viola de gamba with the advantages of 20th century electrification: digital delay, sustain. Like many unique inventions, this one (the instrument comes apart) had its origin in practicality: "I could



HIFROSHI AWAYA

travel on airplanes without paying another full-fare ticket." Yet the Oregon bass is traditional, aside from metal strings, in its fretboard and fingering. Friesen says he is now playing acoustic bass about 80 percent of the time, saving the other instrument for strictly solo work. He's excited about new equipment provided him by Udo Klemptgiessing of Hanover ("an electronic genius"): "Incredible speakers" with a setup that allows him "certain sounds out of the instrument I never got before."

His fine compositions—and there are a host, with titles such as "Pathways," "Dolphin In The Sky"—tell a story which, he says, "seems to be there, that seems to just happen." "Early Morning Rises," recorded by Friesen and Jeff Johnson (on Roland Jupiter-6 Synthesizer), shows, through a series of double-note descents, the bassist's dramatic logic, parting Johnson's atmospheric hum and persistent pocking like some gentle milky morning alarm clock—the day truly stretching into consciousness. These stories are all told through sonic images: a melodic bass motif, plucked then arco, over synth spirals that suggest the continuum of "Forever Unending"; the chopstick underpinning, Chinese brightness with incisive dancing bass above in "My Toby/My Friend."

On an album called *Star Dance*, made with Paul McCandless, John Stowell, and Steve Gadd, Friesen celebrates his "Winter's Fall" with bowed harmonics, offers tasteful, nearly pretty, folk lines on "A Little Child's Poem," and the title piece, and creates appropriately shifting tones and evolving colors on "Clouds."

He seems to enjoy a healthy, alert, good life, and he does so not in a major jazz setting such as New York or Los Angeles, but in Portland, Oregon. For a man who also spends a lot of time on the road, his family life (he's been married for 25 years, and has four children) is extremely important, and

he sees its worth, along with that of his art, as stemming from a higher source: "the head of marriages and music." Again, he feels that family life, like music, "takes work, to cultivate the love." His son Tobin, 15, has printed a book of poetry: direct yet delicate, sensitive like David Friesen's bass artistry. Friesen's mother was born in the town of Smela, in the center of the Ukraine. When the bassist went on a four-week, 18-concert tour of the Soviet Union in '83 (with

Paul Horn), he was to have been filmed visiting his mother's birthplace, but unfortunately, the planned TV project fell through. A shame: it might have provided a strong documentary.

A healthy balance—of spontaneity and intentionality, of faith and down-to-earth usefulness, of uniqueness and group rapport—is characteristic of David Friesen; the direct result of hard work, musical ability, and a rare self, soul, person. **db**

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