

# DOWN BEAT

Jazz, Blues & Beyond

August 1990, \$1.95 U.K. £2.25

38th ANNUAL CRITICS POLL

Cool  
TODAY

HOT  
TOMORROW

ALSO

DIZZY GILLESPIE

ART BLAKEY, DR. JOHN,  
& "FATHEAD" NEWMAN

THE VILLAGE VANGUARD

BUCKWHEAT ZYDECO





MARC POKEMPIER

Dizzy Gillespie



ECM/ROBIN STOUTENBURG

Bill Frisell



ENID FARBER

Buckwheat Zydeco



MARC POKEMPIER

Linda Ronstadt & Aaron Neville

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# DOWN BEAT

Jazz, Blues & Beyond

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"Oh man, I'm exhausted."

**D**izzy Birks Gillespie slumps into his Washington, D.C. hotel room lounge chair, appearing overwhelmed by the commotion around him. Someone is on the phone, seeking advice about cheek infections. (Apparently Dizzy's bullfrog-playing jaws make him an expert.) A photographer wants him for a photo session. An artist wants to present him with a painting. A reporter wants to hear his life story. A magazine writer is following him around for the day. And in a few hours, a sold-out crowd will be waiting for him at Blues Alley.

"Oh man, I'm exhausted," the bebop pioneer groans, puffing his cigar, rubbing that expansive pouch, growing more and more irritable as the night gig approaches. Yet, he admits he would never quit. "I'd be bored to death," he rasps in a voice not unlike that other trumpet legend. "I would. I would die soon if I spent a year doing nothing."

And so, at age 72, Gillespie continues to pound the musical pavement—jazz fests, smokey jazz clubs, dates with symphonies, overseas concerts. Last year, he gave 300 performances in 27 countries, appeared in 100 U.S. cities in 31 states and D.C., headlined three TV specials, performed with two symphonies, starred in *A Night In Havana* (a docu/performance film about his synthesis of African-American and Afro-Cuban experiences released in theatres worldwide), and recorded four albums. His manager, Charlie Fischmann, estimates he worked 300 days out of the year. He just may surpass that this year.

On May 9, when he and his wife Lorraine were supposed to celebrate their 50th anniversary (one of the longest and most celebrated marriages in show business), Gillespie was performing his first concert in Moscow.

"He's a workaholic," says Fischmann. "He just has to play his music."

These days, that music comes in an array of shapes and sizes: In duets like his highly lauded pairing with Max Roach (*Paris 1989*, see "Reviews" May '90), in quintets, with symphonies (*Symphony Sessions*, with the Rochester Philharmonic, John Dankworth conducting; see "Reviews" Feb. '90), and with his celebrated United Nation Orchestra, which has been on a world tour this summer, traveling to 40 U.S. cities and 25 countries. Featuring old buddies like James Moody and Slide Hampton, the UNO wraps up in September. The album, *The Dizzy Gillespie United Nation Orchestra: Live From Royal Festival Hall In London*, comes out the same month, too.

Dizzy collects awards like tricker-treaters collect candy. Just in '89, he received the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, was crowned a traditional chief ("Baashere of Iperu" in Nigeria), was designated "Commandre d'Ordre des Artes et



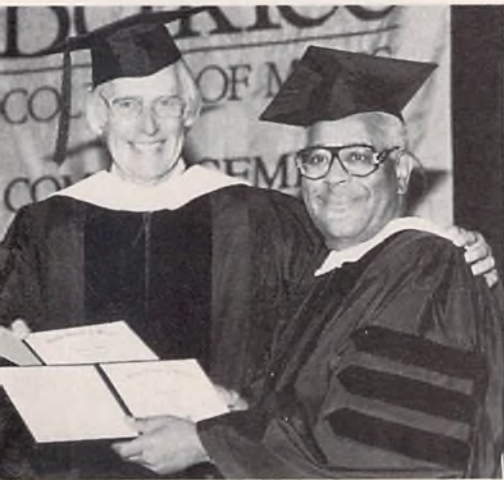
# DIZZY GILLESPIE

## THE WORKING MAN

By James Jones IV



Lettres"—the most prestigious cultural award in France, was honored with a scholarship fund endowed in his name at Stanford University, was named regent professor at the University of California, received his 14th honorary doctoral degree from the Berklee College of Music, and was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Bush. And on June 10, he was honored in the nation's capitol with the ASCAP Duke Award for his 50 years of achievements as a composer, performer, and bandleader. The Kennedy Center ceremonies celebrated the centennial of American jazz.



Dizzy collects awards like tricker-treaters collect candy.

### DIZZY'S EQUIPMENT

Dizzy Gillespie plays a custom-made upswept-bell Schilke trumpet given to him by trumpeter Jon Faddis.

### DIZZY GILLESPIE SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

#### as a leader

ENDLESSLY—MCA/Impulse! 42153  
DIZ & GETZ—Verve 833 559-2  
PORTRAIT OF DUKE ELLINGTON—Verve  
817 107-2  
SONNY SIDE UP—Verve 185 674-2  
DOUBLE SIX OF PARIS—Verve 830 224-2  
DUETS—Verve 835 256-2  
DIZZY ON THE FRENCH RIVIERA—Verve  
822 897-2  
NEW FACES—GRP 9512

#### with Max Roach

DIZZY AND MAX (PARIS 1989)—A&M 6404

with the Rochester Philharmonic  
THE SYMPHONY SESSIONS—ProJazz 698

#### with Charlie Parker

THE COMPLETE SAVOY SESSIONS—Savoy 1208

THE VERVE YEARS 1948-50—Verve 2501  
THE GREATEST JAZZ CONCERT EVER—  
Prestige 24024

It's been a half-century since he and Charlie Parker revolutionized jazz with bebop's quirky, blues-based harmonies, its frequent use of flatted fifths, its jagged melodies, and rapid-fire tempos that left swing musicians bewildered.

With the help of Lorraine, Dizzy escaped the drug plague that befell so many of his bebop contemporaries. These days, except for his diabetes, he's healthy and vibrant, with his chops basically intact. He says he still practices everyday. "Hell yeah, you better, man, or the shit catches up with your ass. On the trumpet you must. I practice all the time." Although, he adds, "I'd rather play on a job than practice."

On the job, he may not solo as long as his band members, but his solos always manage to make a statement. Playing his horn with the trademark tilted bell—"I can hear the sound quicker with it pointed up"—he ignores the melody, reaching deep inside the chords, dissecting it and coming up with the oddest notes. "I watch how he develops ideas, and how he allows the music to breathe because he lays spaces. That's what I marvel, what's happening harmonically," says saxophonist Ron Holloway, the newest band member.

And Diz hasn't lost any of his trademark humor, a natural comedian and free spirit whose reputation for zany antics got him kicked out of Cab Calloway's band in '41 (apparently, Cab thought Diz had thrown a spitball at him, which led to a backstage altercation) and earned him the name Dizzy. Dressed in African garb at Blues Alley, Gillespie mugged for the audience, sang and scatted, socialized with the fans.

Miles Davis' alter ego, perhaps?

"I don't understand about Miles because he's very nasty towards the crowd. People [approach] him and he says, 'Go f\*\*k yourself,' or something like that. They just love it; they just keep coming. If I did that, I would have nobody in my audience. That's why I'm there, to entertain people; I'm not trying to substantiate the acrimony."

He pauses: "Awwwwwwwww. Don't know that word, do you? Acrimony. A-C-R-I-M-O-N-Y. First time I ever used that," he says, laughing.

Is he still close to Miles? "Oh yeah, there's nothing between us. You read his book? [Miles—*The Autobiography*; see "Book Reviews" Dec. '89] People keep telling me about it, saying, 'Man, you're the only guy he said anything nice about. In my book [*To Be Or Not To Bop*], I'm kind to everybody. We need to point out the nicer things. There's enough shit out here."

Like Miles, though, Gillespie believes in using young musicians in his band, turning it into a training school. He's currently working with electric bassist John Lee,

guitarist Ed Cherry, drummer Ignacio Berroa, conga player Paul Hawkins, and saxophonist Holloway. Gillespie does most of the musical arrangements, filled with tempo changes and hairpin harmonic turns, and selects the songs, getting input from the guys "after a period of time." During performances, though, he gives them plenty of room to solo. "If you don't, they'll quit."

Good, young musicians are "coming out of the woodwork. They're going to school; they're learning how to write. When I was coming up, few guys even knew how to read. They're more educated than when we were at that age." Among the younger trumpeters he admires are Wallace Roney, Terence Blanchard, and Wynton Marsalis, who's "very good. He's created an environment for jazz."

Some question how jazzy Gillespie is, though. He still plays a dramatic, tempo-shifting version of "Round Midnight"—"I've been playing that arrangement for 40-something years"—but some of the other tunes have a strong contemporary feel, almost bordering on rock with very pronounced backbeats and blaring guitar and bass solos.

"If you see something you like, use it. Go ahead. The rock guys, they're closer to Latin music, anyway. The nature and signature of our music are backbeats."

He answers charges of commercialization by pointing to his collaboration with Max Roach, his most daring work in a decade. "We were talking about that for a long time. [Max and I] understand one another perfectly. I know what he's going to do before he does it. So there's no problem for us being together."

Always seeking challenges, he just finished filming *The Winter In Lisbon*, premiering in September. His first substantial acting role, Gillespie plays the very familiar story of a jazz musician who runs to Europe for acceptance. He and Slide Hampton composed the score and perform the soundtrack. "Acting is something else, man, but I'll do some more acting if somebody asks me. Doing what you set out to do, sometimes it doesn't come out, but [at least] you can do it again."

That ever-present smile disappears when he thinks about the deaths of comrades like Dexter Gordon and Sarah Vaughan. "Aw man, we've lost a lot of talent recently, and not just recently. My heart is torn from 35, 40 years ago, with the death of Clifford Brown, Charlie Parker. Now Sarah Vaughan." He shakes his head. "She was so sick."

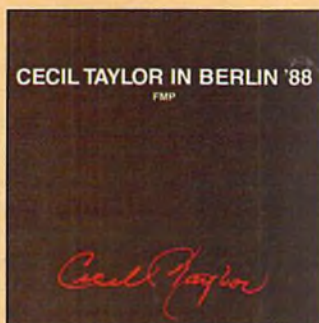
But Dizzy says he feels good, and rejuvenated by his Bahai religious faith. Has he ever thought about retiring? "Oh yea, every night. What can I do? I go home too long, my wife says, 'When are you leaving? What are you around here so long for?' Then she shakes her fist at me."

He laughs: "I've got to work."

DB

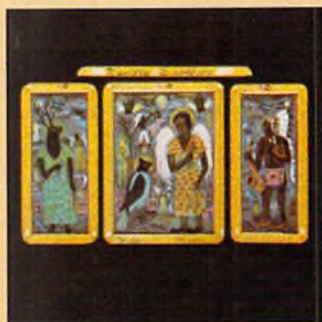
## JAZZ ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 31 Cecil Taylor, *In Berlin* [FMP]
- 25 Don Pullen, *New Beginnings* [Blue Note]
- 24 Miles Davis, *Aura* [Columbia]
- 20 Branford Marsalis, *Trio Jeepy* [Columbia]
- 20 Charles Mingus, *Epitaph* [Columbia]
- 16 Benny Carter, *Over The Rainbow* [MusicMasters]
- 15 Don Cherry, *Art Deco* [A&M]
- 15 Chick Corea, *Akoustic Band* [GRP]



## BLUES ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 35 John Lee Hooker, *The Healer* [Chameleon]
- 20 Johnny Adams, *Walking On A Tightrope* [Rounder]
- 16 Gatemouth Brown, *Standing My Ground* [Alligator]
- 13 Kinsey Report, *Midnight Drive* [Alligator]
- 11 Muddy Waters, *The Chess Box* [MCA/Chess]



## R&B/SOUL ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 23 Neville Brothers, *Yellow Moon* [A&M]
- 22 Quincy Jones, *Back On The Block* [Qwest]
- 20 Neneh Cherry, *Raw Like Sushi* [Virgin]
- 14 Soul II Soul, *Keep On Movin'* [Virgin]

## 38th ANNUAL CRITICS POLL

Cool  
TODAY  
HOT  
TOMORROW



## ROCK ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 15 Pixies, *Doolittle* [Elektra]
- 13 NRBQ, *Wild Weekend* [Virgin]
- 10 Bonnie Raitt, *Nick Of Time* [Capitol]

## WORLD BEAT ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 20 Peter Gabriel, *Passion* [Geffen]
- 13 Ivo Papasov & The Bulgarian Wedding Band, *Orpheus Ascending* [Hannibal]
- 12 Ofra Haza, *Desert Wind* [Sire]
- 7 Johnny Clegg, *Cruel, Crazy, Beautiful World* [Capitol/EMI]



## RAP ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 25 Public Enemy, *Fear Of A Black Planet* [Def Jam]
- 19 De La Soul, *3 Ft. High And Rising* [Tommy Boy]
- 13 Quincy Jones, *Back On The Block* [Qwest]
- 11 Queen Latifah, *All Hail The Queen* [Tommy Boy]
- 10 M.C. Hammer, *Please, Hammer, Don't Hurt 'Em* [Capitol]
- 10 N.W.A., *Straight Outta Compton* [Priority]



## REISSUE OF THE YEAR

- 45 Clifford Brown, *Brownie: The Complete Emarcy Recordings* [Emarcy]
- 29 Art Pepper, *The Complete Galaxy Recordings* [Galaxy]
- 26 Miles Davis, *Birth Of The Cool* [Capitol]
- 22 Muddy Waters, *The Chess Box* [MCA/Chess]
- 16 Thelonious Monk, *Genius of Modern Music, Vols. 1 & 2* [Blue Note]
- 13 The Commodore Jazz Collection, *Vol. II* [Mosaic]
- 13 Johnny Hodges, *The Complete Johnny Hodges Sessions 1951-1955* [Mosaic]
- 11 Ruth Brown, *Miss Rhythm* [Atlantic]

## RECORD LABEL OF THE YEAR

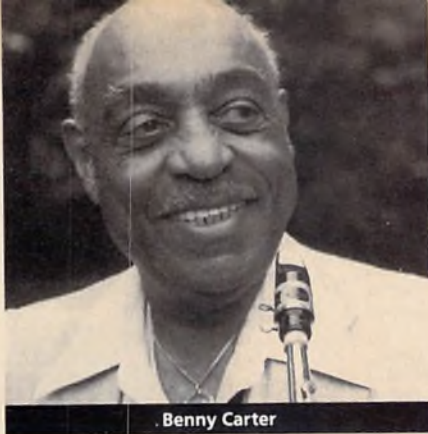
- 73 Blue Note
- 43 Mosaic
- 40 RCA/Bluebird/Novus
- 38 Fantasy
- 34 Black Saint/Soul Note
- 33 Concord



This year marks the 38th anniversary of **DOWN BEAT's** world-renowned Critics Poll. Regular annual observers may have noticed that this year's edition doesn't include the latest inductee into the Hall of Fame. We've opted to keep the entire music world in suspense and hold the Hall of Fame and Lifetime Achievement Award winners for the September issue. The rationale is that these inductees deserve more coverage than we can spare in conjunction with the Poll.

As for the results you have in hand, this year's winners (and runner-ups) in nearly all of the jazz player categories bear a striking resemblance to winners in years past, which raises a number of serious and intriguing questions. Is it going too far to wonder if consistency in our critics' choices is as much a fault as a virtue? Is there a strange quirk in jazz that feeds this seemingly hierarchical system? Or could it be that the Poll's setup is weighted in favor of the status quo? Consider, for example, the winners in the soprano, alto, and tenor saxophone categories: scanning the yearly results reads like, well, a broken record (somehow, some way, Hamiett Bluiett, beat out Gerry Mulligan this year for top honors in the baritone sax division). The saxophone is not alone. Perennial winners surface in, to name but a few categories, Drums (Max Roach), Violin (Stephane Grappelli), Bass (Charlie Haden), and, of course, Miscellaneous Instrument (none other than the legendary Toots Thielemans, on harmonica).

Anyone familiar with the overall thrust of this magazine realizes the context in which these questions are raised. The musicians mentioned above are well-respected, even revered here at **DOWN BEAT**. So, forget ideas that we're jumping ship on these



Benny Carter

## WHO'S ON FIRST

guys for hogging the spotlight. Rather, it's become a question of what this Poll is all about. Invariably, the TDWR (Talent Deserving Wider Recognition) categories provide the most interesting results as well as insights. Who's new to the Poll? Any surprises? Who are the hot younger players? It's the TDWR portion of the Poll that seems to provide us with a true barometer of where the music's going. After all, shouldn't polls provide new information on developments from year to year and names to watch for, courtesy of critical ears to the ground?

Speaking of where the music's going, we've added a few categories as an experiment. For example, in addition to jazz, we now have Album of the Year categories for rock, soul/r&b, rap, blues, and world music. Accordingly, there are Artist of the Year and Group of the Year winners in these categories as well. It should be mentioned that certain artists resist easy classification—for example, Bonnie Raitt and Stevie Ray Vaughan are considered both

blues and rock musicians—and that the World Music category is meant to serve as a unifier of various ethnic strains, including Latin, reggae, and Afro-pop.

Adding new categories provided some interesting and downright weird voting. Jon Faddis, for example, won the TDWR category for Rap due to some refreshing and comical rhymes he does live. But, Jon, please don't put the horn away. Which is our way of saying, don't give up the day job. Ladysmith Black Mambazo took the honors in the TDWR Vocal Jazz category, which can only be read as a critical slap at the state of vocal jazz. Perhaps, these results don't offer a definitive DB "perspective" to use when considering concerts to see, albums to buy, opinions to quote.

But variety and surprises are a step in the right direction. DB's editorial staff wishes every category would have held such diversity. The overall depth and breadth of the critics' tastes and interests requires a more balanced response in keeping with our credo of "Jazz, Blues & Beyond." Rest assured, the future holds great promise as we expand our horizons to include voices that may still vote Phil Woods in as Altman of the Year, but also recognize new talent that might be giving Phil a run for his money.

Trying to nail down the world of music in one poll is a far-reaching, cumbersome, and near-impossible goal. We hope you'll look through this year's results and find a number of exciting new faces, new players to check out as well as old favorites worthy of your continued respect and appreciation. Moreover, we hope you enjoy it.

—John Ephland

P.S. Happy Birthday (Aug. 8) to Jazz Artist of the Year Benny Carter.

### JAZZ ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 42 Benny Carter
- 36 Max Roach
- 31 Wynton Marsalis
- 30 Cecil Taylor
- 23 Miles Davis
- 18 Ornette Coleman

#### TDWR

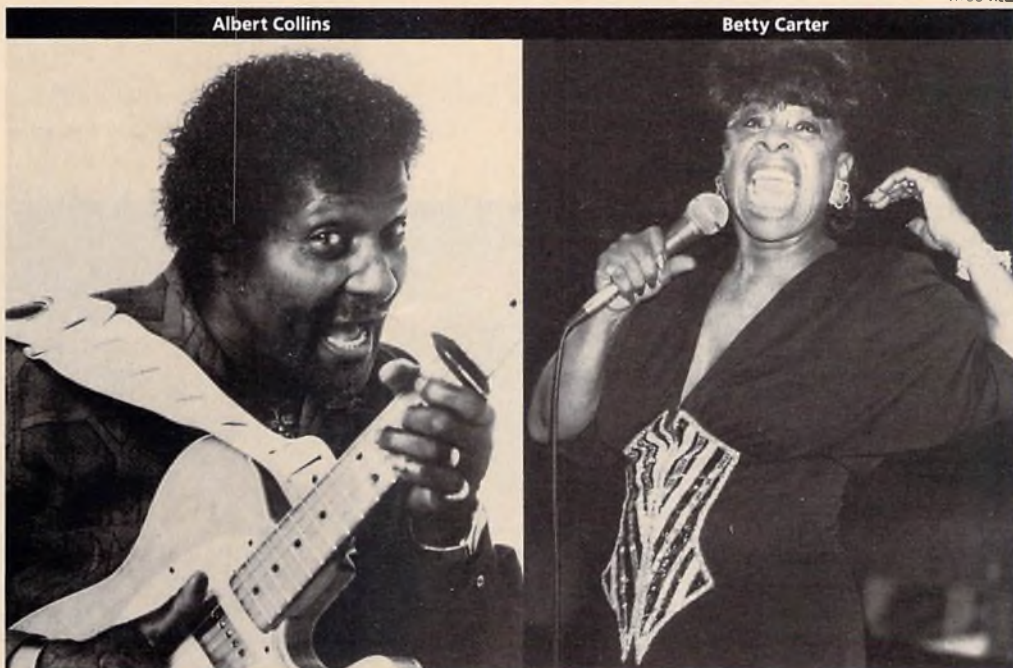
- 33 Bobby Watson
- 27 Marcus Roberts
- 26 Geri Allen
- 20 Henry Threadgill
- 19 Muhal Richard Abrams
- 19 Courtney Pine

### BLUES ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 50 John Lee Hooker
- 42 B.B. King
- 27 Robert Cray

#### TDWR

- 17 Albert Collins
- 14 Otis Rush
- 13 Snooks Eaglin



Albert Collins

Betty Carter

HYOU VIELZ

# 38th ANNUAL CRITICS POLL

## R&B/SOUL ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 40 Ray Charles
- 31 Neville Brothers
- 30 Prince

TDWR

- 24 Barrence Whitfield
- 21 Neneh Cherry
- 21 Irma Thomas

## ROCK ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 29 Elvis Costello
- 25 Neil Young
- 24 Peter Gabriel
- 20 Bonnie Raitt

TDWR

- 21 John Hiatt
- 17 Nick Lowe
- 13 NRBQ

## WORLD BEAT ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 29 Youssou N'Dour
- 26 Mahlaithini & the Mahotella Queens
- 25 Milton Nascimento
- 23 Eddie Palmieri

TDWR

- 11 Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan
- 10 Jerry Gonzalez & the Fort Apache Band
- 10 Papa Wemba

## RAP ARTIST/GROUP OF THE YEAR

- 59 Public Enemy
- 30 De La Soul
- 27 Kool Moe Dee

TDWR

- 21 Jon Faddis
- 17 Queen Latifah
- 17 N.W.A.

## COMPOSER

- 69 Henry Threadgill
- 42 Toshiko Akiyoshi
- 35 Carla Bley
- 33 Ornette Coleman
- 26 Benny Carter
- 24 Abdullah Ibrahim

TDWR

- 19 Bobby Previte
- 18 Willem Breuker
- 16 Tim Berne
- 15 Bobby Watson
- 15 Ed Wilkerson

## ARRANGER

- 52 Toshiko Akiyoshi
- 50 Henry Threadgill
- 40 Carla Bley
- 37 Benny Carter
- 35 Sun Ra
- 29 Frank Foster

TDWR

- 21 Don Sickler
- 18 Willem Breuker
- 18 Bill Kirchner
- 18 John Zorn

## PRODUCER

- 100 Michael Cuscuna
- 44 Giovanni Bonandrini
- 42 Orrin Keepnews
- 23 Hal Willner

TDWR

- 39 Delfeayo Marsalis
- 13 Jost Gebers
- 13 Bob Porter
- 13 Nils Winther
- 12 John Snyder

## BIG BAND

- 107 Sun Ra & His Arkestra
- 59 Mel Lewis
- 55 Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin
- 51 Count Basie
- 31 Illinois Jacquet
- 21 Gene Harris

TDWR

- 43 Willem Breuker Kollektief
- 36 George Gruntz Concert Band
- 33 Vienna Art Orchestra
- 22 Pierre Dorge & the New Jungle Orchestra
- 21 Illinois Jacquet
- 21 Ed Wilkerson's Shadow Vignettes



Harper Brothers

ANTHONY BARBOZA

## ACOUSTIC JAZZ GROUP

- 75 Phil Woods Quintet
- 50 Art Blakey & the Jazz Messengers
- 43 Henry Threadgill Sextet
- 38 World Saxophone Quartet
- 37 Wynton Marsalis
- 32 Art Ensemble of Chicago

TDWR

- 44 Harper Brothers
- 33 8 Bold Souls
- 19 Abdullah Ibrahim & Ekaya
- 19 Red Rodney

## ELECTRIC JAZZ GROUP

- 80 Ornette Coleman's Prime Time
- 52 Miles Davis
- 45 Chick Corea's Elektric Band
- 41 Pat Metheny Group
- 36 John Scofield
- 25 Bill Frisell

TDWR

- 25 John Zorn's Naked City
- 24 Curlew
- 23 Steve Coleman & Five Elements
- 19 John Scofield
- 17 Bill Frisell

## BLUES GROUP

- 31 Kinsey Report
  - 30 B.B. King Orchestra
  - 20 John Lee Hooker
- TDWR
- 28 Saffire
  - 22 Lil' Ed & the Blues Imperials
  - 10 Luther Allison
  - 10 Johnny Copeland

## ROCK GROUP

- 23 Rolling Stones
- 18 Miles Davis
- 18 Living Colour

TDWR

- 16 Living Colour
- 13 Big Shoulders
- 10 Cocteau Twins
- 10 Ambitious Lovers

## R&B/SOUL GROUP

- 88 Neville Brothers
- 36 Ray Charles Orchestra
- 19 B.B. King Orchestra

TDWR

- 34 Barrence Whitfield & the Savages
- 15 Dirty Dozen Brass Band
- 12 Etta James

## TRUMPET

- 84 Lester Bowie
- 77 Wynton Marsalis
- 58 Tom Harrell
- 42 Miles Davis
- 42 Dizzy Gillespie
- 41 Don Cherry
- 38 Clark Terry

TDWR

- 46 Wallace Roney
- 32 Claudio Roditi
- 30 Paul Smoker
- 26 Tom Harrell
- 22 Terence Blanchard
- 21 Philip Harper

TERI BLOOM

HYOU VIELZ

BRIAN McMILLEN

ALDO MAURO

Michael Cuscuna



Wallace Roney



Jane Ira Bloom



Bill Frisell



## SOPRANO SAXOPHONE

- 190 Steve Lacy  
63 Wayne Shorter  
60 Dave Liebman  
36 Jane Ira Bloom  
36 Branford Marsalis  
33 Bob Wilber
- TDWR**
- 51 Jane Ira Bloom  
38 Courtney Pine  
34 Jane Bunnett  
25 Greg Osby  
22 Bob Wilber

## ALTO SAXOPHONE

- 112 Phil Woods  
102 Ornette Coleman  
82 Frank Morgan  
59 Benny Carter  
36 Jackie McLean  
33 Lee Konitz
- TDWR**
- 92 Bobby Watson  
44 Steve Coleman  
42 Kenny Garrett  
39 Greg Osby  
30 Christopher Hollyday  
25 Tim Berne

## TENOR SAXOPHONE

- 119 Sonny Rollins  
79 Joe Henderson  
61 Stan Getz  
57 David Murray  
35 George Adams  
21 Clifford Jordan
- TDWR**
- 47 Ralph Moore  
38 Joe Lovano  
35 Courtney Pine  
28 Gary Thomas  
26 Branford Marsalis

## BARITONE SAXOPHONE

- 124 Hamiett Bluiett  
124 Gerry Mulligan  
80 Nick Brignola  
39 John Surman  
31 Howard Johnson  
23 Ronnie Cuber
- TDWR**
- 42 John Surman  
39 Glenn Wilson  
37 Gary Smulyan  
31 Nick Brignola  
25 Ronnie Cuber  
25 Howard Johnson



Ray Anderson

## TROMBONE

- 104 Ray Anderson  
82 Steve Turre  
70 J.J. Johnson  
55 Craig Harris  
42 Jimmy Knepper  
29 Curtis Fuller
- TDWR**
- 59 Robin Eubanks  
41 Ray Anderson  
33 Steve Turre  
29 Dan Barrett  
25 Frank Lacy  
24 Craig Harris

## CLARINET

- 125 John Carter  
62 Eddie Daniels  
59 Buddy De Franco  
58 Alvin Batiste  
48 Kenny Davern  
22 Phil Woods
- TDWR**
- 49 Don Byron  
29 Bill Smith  
27 Tony Coe  
27 Ken Peplowski  
20 Perry Robinson

## FLUTE

- 175 James Newton  
67 James Moody  
64 Lew Tabackin  
40 Frank Wess  
34 Henry Threadgill
- TDWR**
- 35 Frank Wess  
34 Sam Rivers  
26 Kent Jordan  
17 Gary Thomas  
15 Dave Valentin

## VIBES

- 140 Milt Jackson  
135 Bobby Hutcherson  
90 Gary Burton  
33 Lionel Hampton  
19 Terry Gibbs
- TDWR**
- 62 Jay Hoggard  
44 Khan Jamal  
42 Steve Nelson  
36 Karl Berger

## ACOUSTIC PIANO

- 105 Cecil Taylor  
66 Tommy Flanagan  
48 Don Pullen  
31 Oscar Peterson  
28 Kenny Baron  
22 Marcus Roberts
- TDWR**
- 62 Geri Allen  
41 Marcus Roberts  
26 Renee Rosnes  
25 Mulgrew Miller  
24 James Williams  
21 Marilyn Crispell

## ORGAN

- 108 Jimmy Smith  
80 Jimmy McGriff  
40 Charles Earland  
39 Jack McDuff  
35 Carla Bley  
29 Sun Ra
- TDWR**
- 59 Barbara Dennerlein  
51 Joey De Francesco  
23 Amina Claudine Myers  
22 John Patton  
21 Don Pullen

## SYNTHESIZER

- 78 Sun Ra  
71 Joe Zawinul  
41 Lyle Mays  
34 Herbie Hancock  
29 Don Preston  
28 Chick Corea
- TDWR**
- 44 John Surman  
28 Wayne Horvitz  
20 Don Preston  
19 Lyle Mays  
16 Richard Teitelbaum  
14 Henry Kaiser

## ACOUSTIC GUITAR

- 44 Jim Hall  
41 John McLaughlin  
37 Joe Pass  
35 Kenny Burrell  
26 Tal Farlow  
18 Ralph Towner
- TDWR**
- 22 Emily Remler  
17 Egberto Gismonti  
16 Howard Alden  
16 Bereli Lagrene  
16 Steve Tibbetts

## ELECTRIC GUITAR

- 116 Bill Frisell  
109 John Scofield  
64 Pat Metheny  
38 Jim Hall  
27 John Abercrombie  
21 Kenny Burrell
- TDWR**
- 35 Sonny Sharrock  
27 Mike Stern  
22 Bill Frisell  
21 John Abercrombie  
20 Howard Alden  
19 Emily Remler  
19 Steve Tibbetts

## ACOUSTIC BASS

- 127 Charlie Haden  
79 Dave Holland  
43 Ray Brown  
33 Milt Hinton  
23 Rufus Reid  
23 Buster Williams
- TDWR**
- 33 Fred Hopkins  
30 Ray Drummond  
24 Charnett Moffett  
20 Mark Helias  
20 William Parker  
17 Anthony Cox

## ELECTRIC BASS

- 146 Steve Swallow  
67 Jamaaladeen Tacuma  
36 Bob Cranshaw  
31 Marcus Miller  
31 John Patitucci  
27 Jack Bruce
- TDWR**
- 36 Bill Laswell  
14 Miroslav Vitous  
12 John Patitucci  
10 Gerald Veasley

BRIAN MILLER

HYOU VIELZ

Geri Allen

John Carter

Ladysmith Black Mambazo







Max Roach

## DRUMS

- 135 **Max Roach**  
88 Jack DeJohnette  
48 Art Blakey  
48 Billy Higgins  
45 Tony Williams  
25 Ed Blackwell
- TDWR**
- 60 **Marvin "Smitty" Smith**  
45 Ralph Peterson  
33 Joey Baron  
27 Victor Lewis  
25 Kenny Washington  
23 Terri Lyne Carrington

## VIOLIN

- 139 **Stephane Grappelli**  
73 Billy Bang  
54 John Blake  
47 Leroy Jenkins  
28 Michal Urbaniak  
27 Jean-Luc Ponty
- TDWR**
- 33 **Terry Jenoure**  
27 Johnny Frigo  
24 Billy Bang  
24 Didier Lockwood  
18 Svend Asmussen  
15 Claude Williams

## PERCUSSION

- 94 **Nana Vasconcelos**  
50 Airto Moriera  
49 Famoudou Dori Moyo  
40 Trilok Gurtu  
40 Tito Puente  
30 Han Bennink
- TDWR**
- 34 **Marilyn Mazur**  
33 Trilok Gurtu  
29 Glen Velez  
27 Han Bennink  
22 Mino Cinelu  
22 Poncho Sanchez

## MISCELLANEOUS INSTRUMENT

- 71 **Toots Thielemans [harmonica]**  
52 Astor Piazzolla [bandoneon]  
48 Bob Stewart [tuba]  
32 David Murray [bass clarinet]  
30 Howard Johnson [tuba]  
23 Abdul Wadud [cello]
- TDWR**
- 25 **Hank Roberts [cello]**  
24 Andy Narell [steel drums]  
22 Diedre Murray [cello]  
17 Steve Turre [conch shells]  
16 Bob Stewart [tuba]

## MALE JAZZ SINGER

- 117 **Joe Williams**  
69 Mel Torme  
67 Bobby McFerrin  
39 Jon Hendricks  
34 Mark Murphy  
31 Ray Charles
- TDWR**
- 38 **Mark Murphy**  
35 Harry Connick, Jr.  
28 David Frishberg  
15 Jon Hendricks  
12 Ernie Andrews  
11 Bub Dorrough

## FEMALE JAZZ SINGER

- 124 **Betty Carter**  
79 Carmen McRae  
73 Sheila Jordan  
51 Ella Fitzgerald  
48 Sarah Vaughan  
33 Helen Merrill
- TDWR**
- 67 **Cassandra Wilson**  
25 Meredith D'Ambrosio  
22 Shirley Horn  
19 Sheila Jordan  
19 Carol Sloane  
18 Lauren Newton

## FEMALE NON-JAZZ SINGER

- 28 **Bonnie Raitt**  
27 Marianne Faithfull  
23 Ruth Brown  
22 Rickie Lee Jones  
20 Linda Ronstadt  
17 Aretha Franklin
- TDWR**
- 17 **Sin ad O'Connor**  
13 Tracy Chapman  
10 Anita Baker



Aaron Neville

## MALE NON-JAZZ SINGER

- 45 **Aaron Neville**  
32 Frank Sinatra  
26 Milton Nascimento  
22 Ray Charles  
17 Elvis Costello  
13 Johnny Adams
- TDWR**
- 14 **Harry Connick, Jr.**  
12 Peter Gabriel  
10 Jack Bruce

## VOCAL JAZZ GROUP

- 127 **Take 6**  
77 Manhattan Transfer  
62 Hendricks Family  
35 Jackie & Roy
- TDWR**
- 26 **Ladysmith Black Mambazo**  
25 The Bobs  
24 New York Voices  
17 Hendricks Family  
17 Take 6

## THE CRITICS

Following is a list of critics who voted in *JBB's* 38th annual International Critics Poll. Sixty-four critics voted this year, distributing 10 points among up to three choices [no more than five votes per choice] in each of two categories: Established Talent and Talent Deserving Wider Recognition. The participants were:

**Frank Alkyer**: editorial director, *JBB*  
**Jon Andrews**: *DB*  
**Chuck Berg**: *DB*; *Jazz Educators Journal*; Lawrence [Ks.] *Journal-World*  
**Fred Bouchard**: *DB* correspondent [Boston]; *Jazz Times*; *Quincy Point Journal*; *WMBR-FM*  
**Michael Bourne**: *DB*; *Jazz Journal*; *WBGO-FM* [Newark]  
**Pawel Browdowski**: editor, *Jazz Forum* [Poland]  
**Chris Colombi**: *DB* correspondent [Cleveland]; *Cleveland Alternative/Jazz Report*  
**John Corbett**: *DB*  
**Owen Cordle**: *DB*; *Jazz Times*; *Raleigh News & Observer*  
**Paul de Barros**: *DB*; *Earshot Jazz*; *Seattle Times*  
**Lauren Deutsch**: *DB*; photographer  
**John Diliberto**: *DB*; host/producer, *Echoes* [NPR]  
**Len Dobbin**: *CJFM* [Montreal]; *Jazz Report* [Toronto]; photographer  
**Jos  Duarte**: Portuguese radio, press, television  
**Lofton Emery III**: *Chicago Citizen*; *WHPK-FM*  
**Gudrun Endress**: editor, *Jazz Podium* [Germany]; *Radio SDR* [Stuttgart]  
**John Ephland**: managing editor, *DB*  
**Enid Farber**: *DB*; photographer  
**Mitchell Feldman**: *DB*; *Ear*; *Musician*

**J.B. Figi**: program committee, Chicago Jazz Festival  
**Maurizio Franco**: *Musica Jazz* [Italy]  
**Gerard Futrick**: *Coda*  
**Frank-John Hadley**: *DB*; *Jazziz*; Boston Blues Society  
**Michael Handler**: *DB*; jazz video producer  
**Dave Helland**: teen editor, *DB*  
**Brenda Herrmann**: *DB*; assoc. editor, *Music Inc*  
**Randi Hultin**: *DB* correspondent [Norway]; *Jazz Forum*; *Jazz Journal*  
**Niranjan Jhaveri**: producer, Jazz Yatra festival; secretary-general, *Jazz-India*  
**Gene Kalbacher**: publisher, *Hot House*; columnist, *New Music Report*  
**Leigh Kamman**: *The Jazz Image*, Minnesota Public Radio  
**Peter Kostakis**: *DB*  
**Art Lange**: *DB*  
**John Litweiler**: *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *Chicago Tribune*; author, *The Freedom Principle*  
**Jaap L deke**: *AVRO Radio* [Netherlands]  
**Kevin Lynch**: *DB*; *Capital City Times* [Madison, WI]  
**John McDonough**: *DB*; *Wall St. Journal*  
**Bill Milkowski**: *DB*; *Pulse*  
**Mark Miller**: *DB* correspondent [Toronto]; *Toronto Globe & Mail*  
**Tom Moon**: *Philadelphia Inquirer*  
**Dan Morgenstern**: director, Institute of Jazz Studies [Rutgers U.]  
**Michael G. Nastos**: *DB* correspondent [Detroit]; *Ann Arbor News*; *Cadence*; *Jazz News International*; *WEMU-FM* [Ypsilanti, MI]  
**Herb Nolan**: editor, *Musica Inc*

**Dan Ouellette**: *DB*; *Oakland Tribune*; *Sojourners*  
**Michael Point**: *DB*; *Pulse*; *Austin American-Statesman*  
**Doug Ramsey**: *Jazz Times*; *Texas Monthly*; author, *Jazz Matters*  
**Jim Roberts**: editor, *Bass Player*  
**Robert D. Rusch**: editor, *Cadence*  
**Mitchell Seidel**: *DB*; *Jazz Times*; *Hot House*; *Jazz Forum*  
**Chris Sheridan**: *DB* author, *Count Basie - A Bio-Discography*  
**Jack Sohmer**: jazz writer/musician, *DB*; *Jazz Times*; *The Mississippi Rag*  
**Stephanie Stein**: *DB*  
**David Steinberg**: *Albuquerque Journal*  
**Ron Sweetman**: *CKCU-FM* [Ottawa]  
**Robin Tolleson**: *DB*; drummer, hoopster  
**Luis Vilas-Boas**: producer, Cascais Festival [Portugal]  
**Norm Weinstein**: *East West Journal*; author, *A Night In Tunisia*; *Imagination Of Africa In Jazz*  
**Brooke Wentz**: *DB*; associate editor, *Ear*; *Option*  
**Kevin Whitehead**: *DB*; *Coda*; *Cadence*; *Fresh Air* [NPR]  
**Russell Woessner**: *DB* correspondent [Philadelphia]; *Philadelphia City Paper*  
**Josef Woodard**: *DB*; contributing editor, *Musician*  
**Scott Yanow**: *DB*; *Jazz Times*; *Jazziz*; *Cadence*  
**Shoichi Yui**: jazz critic  
**Rafi Zabor**: Top Zogga Zogga of Wogga Wogga  
**Mike Zwerin**: European editor, *Spin*; music critic, *International Herald Tribune* [Paris]

# BLUES FOR THE HOMELESS

By Larry Birnbaum

**“W**hen I go to Europe,” says Art Blakey, “I don’t see homeless people there; I don’t see hungry children; I don’t see kids walking around with holes in their shoes. We’re the richest country in the world, and something is wrong. What goes around comes around, and I’m not going to live long enough to see the retribution. But it hurts.”

Putting his money where his mouth is, Blakey, together with Mac “Dr. John” Rebennack and David “Fathead” Newman, has just cut a new album, *Bluesiana Triangle*, released this month by Windham Hill, with proceeds earmarked for the National Coalition for the Homeless. “It’s one benefit you can see results from,” says Rebennack. “It’s not like

**DR. JOHN, DAVID “FATHEAD” NEWMAN, & ART BLAKEY**





ENID FARBER

**"Up to the point that we went into the studio, I was under the impression it was Art's date . . . I just couldn't conceive of this being a three-way thing, but somewhere during the date I was told it was."**

**—Mac "Dr. John" Rebennack**



ENID FARBER

the money is going into some politician's pocket. I'm real involved with the National Coalition anyway. They started off in New Orleans, and they've gone to a lot of cities since then. I'm real tight with Sister Ann, the nun that runs the thing in New Orleans, and that old lady dragged us around and let us see the results of what they're doing, so we know it ain't just a hustle. That money is going for some people to have a place to stay, and I think if we're doing a record for some square-goods people, that's all right."

More than just a benefit for a worthy cause, *Bluesiana Triangle* is an extraordinary meeting of musical minds—a loose, spontaneous interaction among three mature masters (plus current Messengers bassist Essiet Okon Essiet and former Chuck Mangione percussionist Joe Bonadio) that showcases each of their strengths in an unaccustomed context. "There was nothing planned beforehand," says Newman. "Everything was done from the moment we hit the studio. We chose the tunes we were going to do, ran through them, set up the solos and endings and so forth, and then we started to record. It was different from the average record date, because we didn't rehearse before we came to the studio—we had no idea what kind of material we were going to do—and we didn't have a producer standing over our heads telling us what to do. We could do exactly what we wanted, because we weren't struggling for a hit. Of course, we would like the album to do well, and we hope it does something for the homeless people."

It was actually producer Joe Ferry who initiated the *Bluesiana* project. He'd recently lost two close friends—one to cancer, one in the Lockerbie airliner bombing—and decided to take a break from commercial recording (the Roches, SOS All-Stars, Nicolette Larson) to make a Christmas album for charity. He enlisted Rebennack to perform "Silent Night" and "Toyland" for last year's *Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas*, on Rhino, and later approached Mac's road manager, B.B., with an idea for another benefit. "B.B. came up with the idea of having Art and David and Mac do a record together," says Ferry. "She said, 'Let me run this idea past Mac,' and then she called me back and said, 'Yeah, he wants to do it.' So I called up my friend Sam Sutherland at Windham Hill, because I knew he was a Dr. John fan, and he just said, 'That sounds like a real good idea.' And he was hands-on all the way down the line."

B.B. and Blakey were already friends. "I'd be just randomly talking to B.B. sometimes," says Art, "and I'd say, 'I've got to get together with Dr. John and make a record—if nothing else, just for posterity.' And then he came down to Sweet Basil, the club where I was working, and played his ass off. I told the rest of the band to get off the stand—it was just me and Essiet, the bass player, because the rest of 'em didn't know what was happening—and we played the blues that night. Ain't no substitute for experience; that's what it's all about."

"But I've always wanted to play with Dr. John. A lot of cats would put his kind of music down, but I figure if you put one kind of music down, you're putting yourself down. Because the man swings, and most of them out there talking about him can't swing by nothing but a rope. The only church I ever went to in my life was the sanctified church, and he's the closest thing to it. His playing makes me think about the Creator, and where it's coming

from. That's my background and that's his background. People don't want to talk about death, politics, or religion, but you've got to deal with it. You've got to believe that the day you come into this earth, your destination is death. It's what you do with the time in between that counts."

Rebennack reciprocates: "I always wanted to play with Art," he says. "I didn't care if we recorded, I just wanted to play with him. I first heard Art on some of the old Blue Note recordings from the '40s, and I was fascinated by this cat. When I first heard his records, I swore he was from New Orleans. He was always pushing the soloists and keeping the heads together. It's like a real beautiful, traditional thing, but he doesn't necessarily do it in what people call a traditional way. You can't pin the man down, because he has too many things to draw on. And I thought anything we did would be together. You get a class act like him, with all that understanding and experience—I can't imagine something we'd do not working. To be honest, up to the point that we went into the studio, I was under the impression it was Art's date, and that me and David were just playing on it, because that's the way I respect him. I just couldn't conceive of this being a three-way thing, but somewhere during the date I was told it was."

**W**hile neither Rebennack nor "Fathead" Newman had recorded with Blakey before, the two had worked together on many albums by Hank Crawford, Newman's old mate from the classic Ray Charles band of the late '50s and early '60s. Newman, Crawford, and Rebennack had recorded and toured as Swamp Jam in the early '80s, and Newman backed Dr. John last year on his best-selling album *In A Sentimental Mood* (see "Reviews" Oct. '89). So when Rebennack felt the need for a horn player to round out the *Bluesiana* session, he naturally turned to Newman. "I thought it would be a good idea," he says, "because David always contributes. I was going to invite more people, but Art didn't want to deal with too much stuff, and I was going to go along with whatever he wanted. But I figured whatever David plays is cool, whether it's the flute, alto, tenor, or soprano. He's a real special cat."

Newman played all four instruments on the date, infusing each with his characteristically smooth, incisive tone and bluesy Texas lilt. "We all contributed tunes," he says. "I contributed one of my originals [the title track from his '87 Atlantic release, *Heads Up* (81725)], and we all chipped in together on 'Need To Be Loved'—that was a joint effort between the three of us." As producer Ferry recounts, "Art was sitting there playing the drums, basically just noodling around while they were setting up the mikes, and Mac said, 'That's a killer groove.' They started to embellish it, and then David came up with a melody line, and Mac came up with some chords behind it, and Art would say do this or do that. Next thing you know, 'Need To Be Loved' was cut and on tape—literally written and recorded in an hour, from soup to nuts."

"The other tunes were introduced by Mac," says Newman, "but we worked together on all of them. We all put in different ideas." "We'd goof around," says Rebennack, "and Art would say, 'We'll do one of them,' and that's what we'd do. Or he'd just say,



**"We could do exactly what we wanted, because we weren't struggling for a hit. Of course, we would like the album to do well, and we hope it does something for the homeless."**

—David "Fathead" Newman



ENID FARBER

'Play the blues.' So we came up with 'One Way Ticket,' which is by Cousin Joe from New Orleans. There was one Junior Parker tune he'd suggested before the date, but we never could find it, so we did another Junior Parker tune, 'Next Time You See Me.' And he wanted to do a penitentiary song, so we did 'Shoo Fly.'" There's also a spine-chilling version of the hoary standard "When The Saints Go Marchin' In," performed as a minor blues in the style of New Orleans' Spiritual Church, which Rebennack attends. "They don't have many Spiritual churches left," he says, "but that's the way they do it, when the little kids carry the flowers and candles up to the altar, and they call the angels and saints."

The finale is the vintage ballad "For All We Know," which features Rebennack on guitar and Bonadio on drums, with Blakey playing piano and singing in a hoarse voice reminiscent of Louis Armstrong. "I never intended to sound like Louis Armstrong," he objects. "I try to do it my way, from the heart. Not because my voice is like that—my voice used to be clear, but playing drums, you hum, and that strains the vocal chords." Rebennack, whose gritty vocals grace four of the seven tracks, is similarly modest. "I don't even know how to sing," he maintains. "I try to at least sing in tune—I don't necessarily do it, but I try."

As its title suggests, the album is permeated with deep blues feeling, but though Newman and Rebennack are more commonly associated with the idiom, Blakey is no stranger to the blues. "There was a time when I couldn't find a black trumpet player anywhere who wanted to play with me," he says, "because I played the blues. I told them, 'Hey man, you can't play the blues anyway. You can't play your way out of a paper bag.' That was the

last thing Bird [Charlie Parker] talked about. We spent all Christmas night talking, and he was telling us—Benny Golson, Hank Mobley, Lou Donaldson, and myself—'You ought to teach these cats how to play the blues. They don't know how to.'"

**B**lakey's affinity for the blues, and his concern for the homeless, are deeply rooted in his Pittsburgh childhood. "I was an orphan," he explains. "I never saw my mother or even a picture of her. My father was mulatto, and he wasn't allowed to speak to me. But I have so much pride for the woman who raised me till I was 11 years old. That little woman had two children of her own, and she brought me home. Her husband didn't want me in the house. He said, 'If you bring that piece of anthracite in here, I'm leaving.' So she picked up all his clothes, dumped them on the front porch, and said, 'Buddy, don't let the doorknob hit you in the back.' Never seen him again. That woman gave me so much courage. The Salvation Army would come around at Thanksgiving, marching and singing and leaving baskets on the people's porches. And that woman came out and stopped them. She said, 'Sisters, take this basket for somebody who really needs it.' And we had butterbeans, fatback, cornbread, and buttermilk for Thanksgiving, and I was as full as a dog.

"I had pride. I wouldn't steal—I wanted to work for mine. So a woman saw me in the street and took me in, and she turned out to be the madam of a whorehouse. They gave me a great big room with a bathtub—I'd never seen a porcelain tub or bowl in my life—and that's where I grew up. They had an old piano, and I banged on that piano until I learned a few things, and then I organized a band. I had a 14-piece band during the Depression. I was singing with a spinet piano—I only played in one key—and I'd make up the lyrics, like '20 years a chambermaid and never dropped a pot.' It was a way of surviving.

"But I know who I am, and I'm proud of what I am. You can always complain about your shoes, but one time I saw a man who had no feet. I'm just happy to be able to go on playing music. The only way they can kill me is to say I can't play anymore—I guarantee that in six months I'd be dead. But people look at jazz musicians like they're from another planet. The music is not treated right. They want to keep jazz musicians down. All they've got are musicians playing mickey-mouse music to get some money. Jazz is an art form. You take a great symphonic musician and put him on stage with a jazz band—he's in trouble. That's the beauty of jazz—from the Creator to the artist, direct to you. You don't know what's going to happen. I think it's fun. Make a mistake, go back and make it again. That's how jazz was born—somebody goofed. Let's face it."

That free-spirited attitude comes through loud and clear on *Bluesiana Triangle*. "It was really cool and we had a lot of fun," says Joe Ferry. "The way these cats cut this record is the way I like to make records. You just come in and do it. That's where the spirituality lies. I just don't think there's any spirituality to stuff that's done with computer chips." Adds Blakey: "This was just the first record. I'm hopeful we'll make some more. We were just getting together—if we do another album, there'll really be a cohesion. That can't come from any group of musicians. It's got to come from musicians who love each other." **DB**

EBET ROBERTS

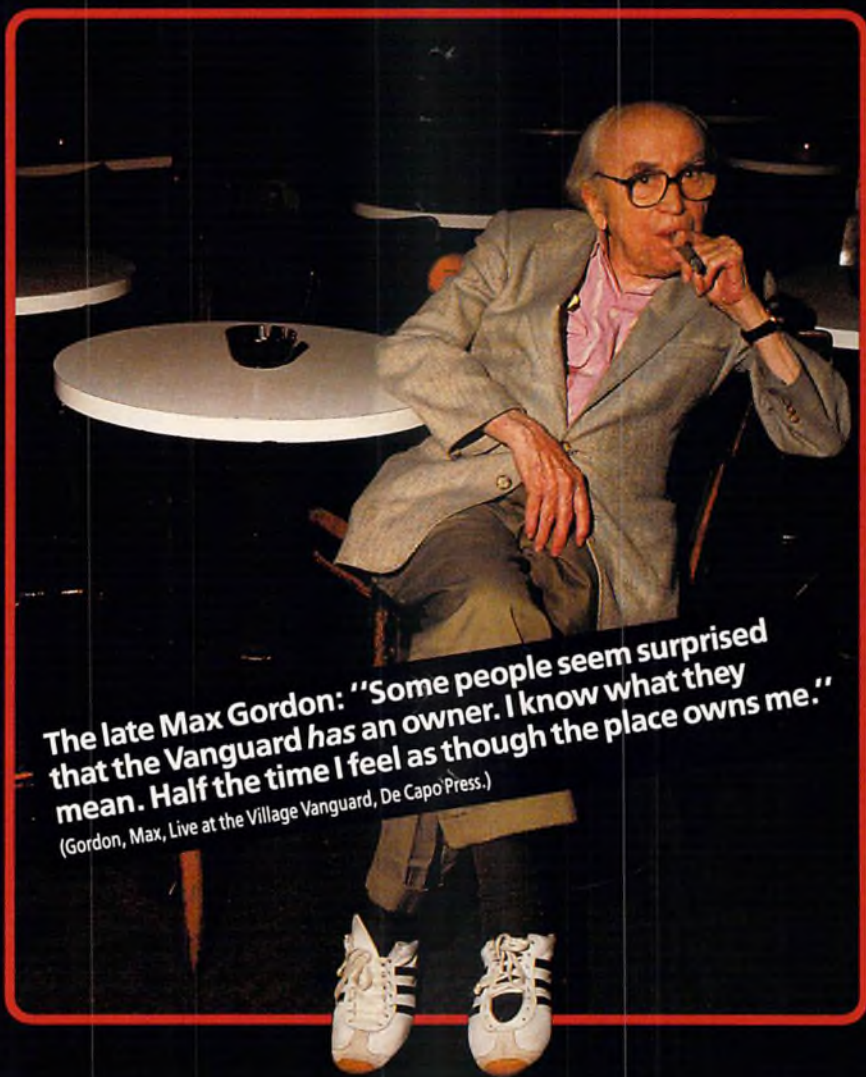


**BLUESIANA TRIANGLE EQUIPMENT**

Art Blakey plays Pearl drums—a 20-inch bass drum, 14 x 7-inch snare, and five tom-toms—and Zildjian cymbals. David Newman plays a Selmer Mark VI tenor sax, a Selmer alto, a Vito soprano, and a Gemeinhardt flute. He uses Otto Link hard-rubber mouthpieces, and Rico Royal reeds. Dr. John prefers Steinway baby-grand pianos. "I like studio Steinways," he says. "The ones they made before the '50s—they were made for studios." He also plays a Gibson Birdland guitar.



AT THE  
**Vanguard**



**The late Max Gordon: "Some people seem surprised that the Vanguard has an owner. I know what they mean. Half the time I feel as though the place owns me."**  
(Gordon, Max, Live at the Village Vanguard, De Capo Press.)

By Stephanie Stein  
Photos by Mitchell Seidel

**Branford Marsalis:** "It's like a Mom & Pop store."

**Bill Frisell:** "It's like playing at Carnegie Hall here."

**Jim Hall:** "The Vanguard feels like it belongs to the musicians, although the help is very proprietary about the place."

In 1935, Max Gordon, who died last year at the age of 86, transformed an ex-speakeasy in the heart of Greenwich Village into the Village Vanguard, one of the most influential clubs in jazz history (see "Ad Lib" Sept. '87). He opened the club on borrowed money, favors from laborers willing to defer their pay, and illegal utility hookups. When cited for operating without a cabaret license, a sympathetic judge concluded that poetry readings, the club's first cultural offering, could hardly be considered "entertainment" and let him go. In the years that followed, Max went from poetry and cabaret to comedians, folk singers, and jazz before settling into the more exclusive jazz policy that the club has maintained since the mid-'50s. By virtue of its location in a landmark-designated area—which guarantees the architectural integrity of the buildings on the block—the Vanguard may be the only basement anywhere to acquire official landmark status. But its more momentous status is reflected by the photographs lining the walls. The gallery of jazz legends that played here—Monk, Mingus, Coltrane, Miles, Bill Evans, Ornette Coleman, Dexter Gordon—continues to conjure up great dimensions for this small, dark, no-frills room.

The club owes its successful longevity to Max Gordon, whose widow, Lorraine, now runs it. Gordon's keen instinct for talent boosted the careers of a wide range of artists: folk singers Leadbelly and Josh White; comedians Dick Gregory, Woody Allen, Irwin Corey, Lenny Bruce; singers Pearl Bailey, Barbra Streisand, Dinah Washington. From early on, Gordon hired both black and white performers, playing a large role in opening up the city's somewhat segregated club scene. A mere glance through the club's roster reveals jazz history in the making: Zutty Singleton, Max Kaminsky, Mary Lou Williams, on up through Monk and every other modern jazz giant. Over 70 recordings—particularly those of Coltrane and Bill Evans from the early '60s—document the magic that went on here.

For the current crop of young musicians who are given a chance to play at the Vanguard, it is a very significant experience, inspiring them to play their best. "The first time I played there I was sitting in with Elvin Jones," said Brandford Marsalis, who has since led his own group at the club several times. "So not only was I amazed because it was Elvin Jones, but you just look up on the wall—everybody's on that wall. You can really feel the ghosts here. In some ways, it's the worst club in New York. It's small, it's dark, it's dingy, there's no food. But this is the club that everybody played in that I grew up listening to. So as far as I'm concerned, there's no place in the world I'd rather play."

Lorraine's involvement in the club, though more peripheral until now, began with her marriage to Max in 1948. "There's no one playing anywhere today that hasn't cut his teeth here," she remarked in a recent interview. "Somehow Max kept the ball rolling all these years. The Vanguard was just part of our life. I was fated from youth to love jazz and look where it led me—through this marvelous passage of time, knowing all these great musicians and having access to the music. The art form is alive and well here. The young musicians all come down to listen and the older musicians come down to hang out. Max did all this—it exists, it's real—and I can at least carry it on, I hope."

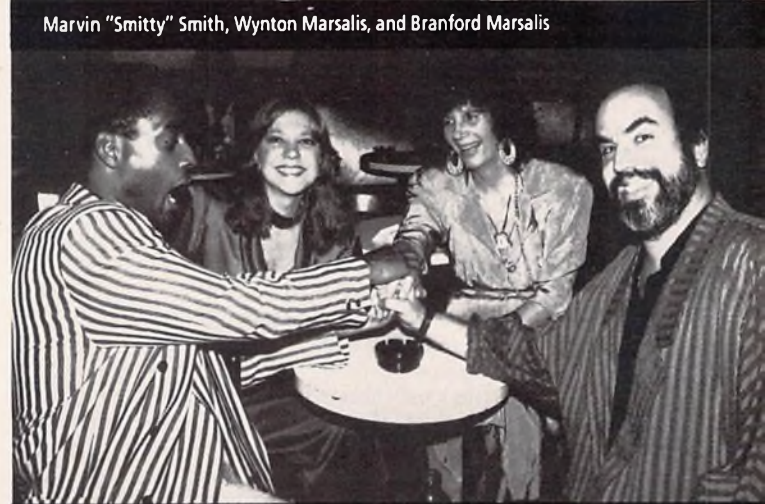
Opposite page above: Roy Hargrove



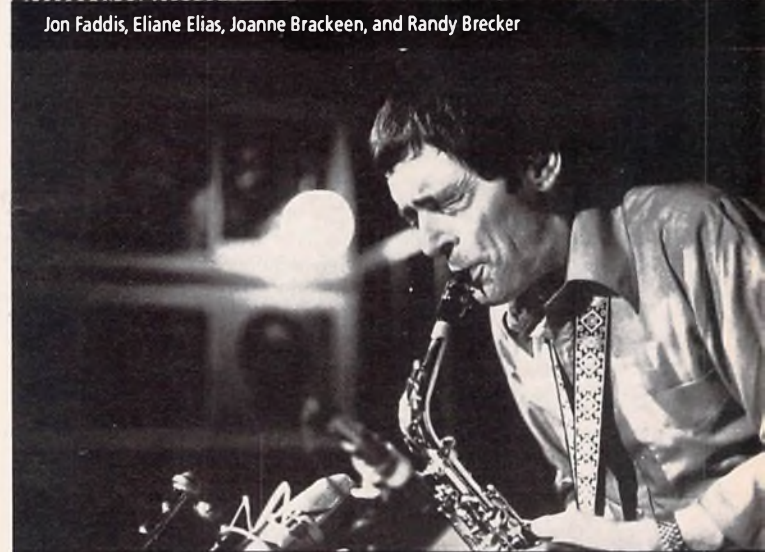
Lorraine Gordon: "Max always said he ran a loose ship—well, sometimes it sprang a few leaks."



Marvin "Smitty" Smith, Wynton Marsalis, and Branford Marsalis



Jon Faddis, Eliane Elias, Joanne Brackeen, and Randy Brecker



Art Pepper

**"Now that so many young people are returning to acoustic music, the Vanguard is the place of incubation for all of them, but also for people like me." — Jackie McLean**

**T**he Vanguard legacy continues, guided, perhaps, by some benign spirits. Although Mel Lewis died recently, Monday nights are still reserved for his Orchestra, a Vanguard mainstay since 1966 when Max first took a chance on them (see "Caught" May '90). Artists such as Tony Williams, Jim Hall, Charlie Haden, Hank Jones, Tommy Flanagan, Don Cherry, Joe Henderson, and Dorothy Donegan are among the regulars. These days, Lorraine has been bringing in some newcomers—Geri Allen, Bill Frisell, Butch Morris with a 12-piece ensemble, Roy Hargrove—who reflect the broad spectrum in jazz the Vanguard has always accommodated, despite its reputation for being mainstream.

The club's history, superb acoustics, and intimate, respectful atmosphere make it the place of choice for many musicians. But mostly it was Max, whose perennial presence was as much a part of the room as the music. "I was so fond of Max for all the help and encouragement he gave me," commented Kenny Burrell, who has played the Vanguard for over 30 years. "In '59, I had the idea, unusual for its time, to have a guitar trio with just bass and drums. Max didn't even know if it would work—but he didn't say no, he gave me a Monday night to try it out. He was always willing to take chances. And he was always there, it was rare when he *wasn't* there. But what was really significant was that he always gave young musicians an opportunity—employment. Good music was his only qualification. He was the best kind of entrepreneur."

Jackie McLean, who returned here last spring to wild acclaim after an absence of 20 years, echoed Burrell's sentiments. "Max helped me so much as a young musician—the first gig I had there was a real high point for me. I had lost interest in the club scene for many years. But Max called me about a week before he died, just when I was rehearsing with a new group. When Lorraine followed through later on, we were ready to explode in New York. I don't think we could have played with that much vigor anywhere else. Max and Lorraine have held on to the traditions they started. When electric music came in, they hung in there and stayed on the straight path. Now that so many young people are returning to acoustic music, the Vanguard is the place of incubation for all of them, but also for people like me."

Lorraine's been fixing some of the leaks she used to get on Max's case about. She's put rubber treads on the club's steep stairs, replaced the bar's counter top and stools, and is getting the air conditioning tuned up. And subtly, she's putting her imprint on the roster. "This room has a mind of its own," she said. "But I've been here long enough to visualize what will or won't work. Bill Frisell—now there's a man that generally would not be playing in a club like the Vanguard. But when I first heard him, his music appealed to me. You have to trust your own instincts, but also keep in mind what will work here. What Bill is doing may not be new to other people, but it's new to me, so I'm proud of myself and enjoying it. I like to run the gamut here of what I like—it used to be what Max liked, or what Max and I liked, but more of what he liked. Now it's really everything that I like. I can't always be adventurous, but I think, by and large, I've gone out and stretched the boundaries of the club and done fine.

"Can you imagine what went on in this room? We've had Ornette, Dolphy, Coltrane. How modern can you get? Max may not have always liked what everyone was doing, but my point is that they were all here. The satisfaction is that we're still here and that, generally, the music is good."

DB



Cecil Taylor and Mel Lewis



Orrin Keepnews and Bobby Hutcherson

Bill Evans



Ron Carter, Herbie Hancock, Max Gordon, and Tony Williams

# BUCKWHEAT ZYDECO

## RECLAIMING HIS ROOTS

By Brooke Wentz

**"A**llons Zydeco! Help me Zydeco!" These phrases roll out as the beat gets pumping, the accordion breathes heavily and zydeco master Buckwheat Zydeco arouses an exuberant crowd with his *Ils Sont Partis* Band. No matter if the crowd is young or old, black or white, zydeco music gets people on their feet.

Taken from the French Creole word "haricot," loosely pronounced "air-ee-co," meaning "snap bean," the music pops: zydeco is foot-stomping dance music sung in English and Creole French. The traditional songs are accompanied by accordion and frottoir (rubboard) and grew out of the backwaters of Southern Louisiana.

Zydeco was made popular by the undisputed King of Zydeco, accordionist Clifton Chenier, who sported a crown of jewels and sang in French patois. His mark in musical history has been adopted and carried on in the work of 42-year-old Stanley "Buckwheat" Dural, known as Buckwheat Zydeco.

"There is no doubt that what Clifton Chenier did has helped me," affirms Dural. "If it hadn't been for him, I wouldn't be doing what I am doing. That is why he is the King: the King then, the King now, and he's the King tomorrow."

But Dural's music takes a slightly different turn; using horns, bass, guitar, and rubboard, Dural's repertoire integrates cover tunes such as the Blasters' "Marie Marie," Bob Dylan's "On A Night Like This," the Rolling Stones' "Beast Of Burden," and Hank Williams' "Hey Good Lookin'," endowing each classic melody with a taste of swamp swing. With a childhood steeped in r&b, funk, and jazz, Dural's zydeco style holds firm its folk roots, flavoring each piece with a modern sensibility. "I play music for a different generation, bringing together the younger generation with the older generation. Now you, mom, and dad, can go to hear Buckwheat Zydeco and all have fun at the same time," he exclaims.

Growing up on the music of James Brown, Aretha Franklin, and Blood, Sweat and Tears, Dural also heard the accordion day in and day out: his father was an amateur zydeco player. As a youngster he refuted accordion music. "It was my father's and great grandfather's instrument," he explains. "The music my father played wasn't hip enough for me to play. I used to play Fats Domino and Little Richard on the piano but he felt I should be playing my roots."

Instead, Dural took up the piano at age four and the organ at nine. Born in Lafayette, Louisiana, into a family of 12 children—five boys and seven girls—Dural (number four) took his stage name "Buckwheat" from the Little Rascals character; they shared the common Deep South hairdo: plats. After playing r&b keyboards in different bands around the area as a teenager, Dural began performing at local clubs with Gulf Coast musicians



ENID FARBBER

Joe Tex and Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown. They would open for such greats as Little Richard, Ray Charles, Muddy Waters, Big Mama Thornton, and Fats Domino.

By 1971 Dural had started a 15-member big band called Buckwheat and the Hitchhikers, which played mainly funk and r&b. Four years later he found himself taking a break because of conflicting personalities and musical directions. Chenier, one of his father's best friends, invited him to join his band. "He said, 'Come give it a shot and see what you think,'" recalls Dural. "'If you like it I'd like you to stay, but if you don't I'll understand.'" Dural, who by then had picked up the accordion from his father, joined Chenier playing the Hammond B3 organ and stayed with him for two years.

Much inspired by Chenier, he moved on to start his own zydeco band. "Musicians didn't care too much for me," says Dural about starting a new band. "They said, 'Buckwheat is going crazy.' Even singers in Louisiana wouldn't touch me with a 10-foot pole. They'd say, 'No, not that man, not zydeco music.' So I got pushed into singing myself because no singer would sing with me.

"Once in '79 I played to 25 people. They didn't want to drop in and listen to no accordion. They wanted guitar and drums, but I was determined to give it two and a half years, no matter what the situation." It only took one year before Dural was touring Europe and went on to record the notable albums *100 Percent Fortified Zydeco* (Black Top 1024), *Turning Point* (Rounder 2045), and *Waitin' For My Ya Ya* (Rounder 2051) between the years 1982 and '86.

Dural became friends with journalist/zydeco enthusiast Ted Fox, who passed the good word onto Chris Blackwell of Island Records. Blackwell, keen on fresh musical

styles, signed the artist in '86 and Dural recorded *On A Night Like This* (90622), produced by Fox in 1987, followed by *Taking It Home* (90968) selling almost 100,000 copies nationally, unthinkable for regional folk music. *Taking It Home* garnered Dural a Grammy nomination in the Best Contemporary Blues Record category and includes a stellar guitar performance by Eric Clapton accompanying Dural on "Why Does Love Have To Be So Sad." He was nominated three times previously in the Grammy Category of Best Ethnic or Traditional Folk Recording. This summer Island released *Where There's Smoke There's Fire*, produced by Los Lobos accordionist/singer David Hidalgo, who Dural met touring (see "Reviews" July '90). Today Dural spends much of his time on the road and in the studio, often working with other musicians (guesting on Keith Richards' *Talk Is Cheap*), and making commercials. "I've done Budweiser, Coke, Lee Jeans, Mercury, and recently Cheerios," boasts Dural proudly. "This exposure is good for me and all of zydeco.

"Radio stations play the music today but we still need zydeco bands throughout the country," emphasizes Dural. "If they can pick up on jazz and the blues, let's pick up on this. There is more attention and thought given to zydeco now than there was when Chenier was around. It should have been done when he was alive. Look at Elvis Presley, the King of rock & roll. He did what he did while he lived and look where it went. I look at it this way: Give me my flowers while I live. Don't give them to me when I'm dead, 'cause I can't smell them. Right?"

DB



# record reviews

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



## ALLEN/HADEN/MOTIAN

**SEGMENTS**—DIW CD 833: *LAW YEARS; YOU'LL NEVER KNOW; MARMADUKE; CABALA/DRUM MUSIC; HOME; I'M ALL SMILES; SEGMENT; LA PASIONARIA; RAIN.* (48:18 minutes)

**Personnel:** Geri Allen, piano; Charlie Haden, acoustic bass; Paul Motian, drums.

★★★★

**IN THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON**—JMT CD 834 428-2: *OBIVION; FOR JOHN MALACHI, ROLLANO; SEE YOU AT PER TUTTI'S; LAST CALL, NO MORE MR. NICE GUY; INVISIBLE; FIRST SONG; IN THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON.* (47:42)

**Personnel:** Allen, piano; Haden, acoustic bass; Motian, drums.

★★★★

This may well be the best, most equally balanced, and lyrically satisfying trio currently before the public. Their intimacy—and intricacy—is such that a horn player would intrude on the deftly modulated conversations. Though they typically eschew fireworks for their own sake (in favor of warm melodic familiarity and graceful passion), they're certainly capable of surprise and much muscle. And they've got great taste in repertoire—each of their recordings inevitably includes an obscure Ornette tune and a neglected bop line, in addition to appealing originals.

The trio's elasticity of time is everywhere apparent, no more so than on *Segments'* opening "Law Years:" not merely phrase-stretching, but a real, interactive telepathic sense of the music's dramatic progress through space. They slip in and out of tempo with ease, almost unnoticed, and their ensemble is as tight as a sailor's knot. This is possible because, as a trio, they equal more than the sum of their individual parts. Motian's timekeeping (what a misnomer) can be crisp or liquid, and his obstinately oblique solos and fills are a tonic. Haden is, of course, the unflappable foundation—with the most moving bass *tone* in jazz—but his melodic leads and slow-motion solos evoke real sentiments without sounding sentimental (hear his sweetly phrased "You'll Never Know" and his sensitive intro to "No More Mr. Nice Guy"—Allen's tongue was in her cheek if this title was meant to refer to the bassist who's featured). As for Allen, she's primarily forthright, focused, and concise; whether probing a *norish* state of mind (Motian's "In The Year Of The Dragon") or scattering splinters of phrase-like pick-up sticks with Monkish abandon ("Marmaduke" and "Last Call"), she's able to create a cogent statement with seemingly elusive materials.

It's tough to choose between these two new discs, recorded within a month of each other (March and April '89). *Segments'* programming offers a bit more variety (and their version of Charlie Parker's title tune is a gem); *In The Year Of The Dragon* explores more uniformly nocturnal, introspective moods (though don't rule out their romp through Bud Powell's "Oblivion"). Hear them both, for two takes on pleasantly provocative state-of-the-art trio maneuvers. (reviewed on CD) —Art Lange

version so that the melody glints to the surface sporadically, in fragmentary fits and starts, like a fish being reeled in. The results are hilarious and re-establish the tune's attraction.

More than just a bunch of great stuff, *Is That You?* is a kind of musical autobiography. As you navigate its expanses, you discover more and more of the resonances behind Frisell's mosaics. By the time you're done, you'll never hear quite the same way again. (reviewed on CD) —Gene Santoro



## BILL FRISELL

**IS THAT YOU?**—Elektra Musician 60956-2: *NO MAN'S LAND; SOMEONE IN MY BACKYARD; RAG; IS THAT YOU?; THE WAY HOME; TWENTY YEARS; CHAIN OF FOOLS; HELLO NELLIE; THE DAYS OF WINE AND ROSES; YUBA CITY; HALF A MILLION; HOPE AND FEAR.* (51:53 minutes)

**Personnel:** Frisell, guitars, bass, banjo, ukelele, clarinet; Wayne Horvitz, keyboards, drum programming; Joey Baron, drums; Dave Hofstra, bass (cut 7), tuba (4, 8).

★★★★★

By now, everyone knows Bill Frisell is a guitar genius with a one-of-a-kind style, a soft-spoken guy whose wickedly sarcastic sense of humor finds its warped outlet in skidding, off-kilter solos that lurch from hovering pedal-steel impersonations to metalloïd strafing. But besides his virtuosity and development of an instantly recognizable voice, over the last few years he's grown steadily as a composer and arranger.

Frisell writes real tunes with richly contrasting sections. Like Bobby Previte and Wayne Horvitz, he seems to transpose the aesthetics of mosaics into musical form. So "No Man's Land," for instance, starts with ominous synth effects licking at the edges of a steely-deep acoustic guitar, cuts to writhing, searing electric-guitar screeches, doubles back to overlay the two concepts, then shifts emotional settings, à la Jimi Hendrix's fabulous "1983... (A Merman I Should Turn To Be)," to a country-tinged, guitar-stuffed rideout. By its finish, you've been swept across an emotional landscape of undeniable depth and power.

Frisell is no less inventive and unpredictable on other folks' material. Henry Mancini's seemingly sappy film track probably attracted the acerbic guitarist partly because of tastes he shares with pals like John Zorn—film and incidental-music composers rate high on their lists of neglected heroes—and partly because of its twisty, chord-cycle and melody. Naturally enough, Frisell the musical cubist arranges his



## MARIANNE FAITHFULL

**BLAZING AWAY**—Island 422-842-794: *LES PRISONS DU ROY; STRANGE WEATHER; GUILT; WORKING CLASS HERO; SISTER MORPHINE; AS TEARS GO BY; WHY'D YA DO IT?; WHEN I FIND MY LIFE; BALLAD OF LUCY JORDAN; TIMES SQUARE; BLAZING AWAY; SHE MOVED THROUGH THE FAIR; BROKEN ENGLISH.* (72:42 minutes)

**Personnel:** Faithfull, vocals; Dougie Bowne, drums; Garth Hudson, accordion, keyboards; Mac Rebennack (Dr. John), piano, rhythm guitar (cut 10); Barry Reynolds, guitar, background vocals; Marc Ribot, guitar; Fernando Saunders, bass, rhythm guitar, background vocals (11); Don Alias, percussion (11); Charlie Drayton, drums (11); Kevin Savory, keyboards (11); Gib Wharton, pedal steel guitar (11).

★★★★★

This album is one courageous autobiography. Faithfull unflinchingly searches her soul, opens her heart, and expresses raw emotion in this 13-song retrospective recorded live (with the exception of the title cut) in St. Anne's Cathedral in Brooklyn last fall. This is not casual listening, not even on the Richards-Jagger tune "As Tears Go By" that the sweet-voiced, 17-year-old Faithfull winsomely sang on her way to stardom in 1965. This time through it's a slow and anguished journey. It's an understatement to say things have changed since those innocent schoolgirl days. Faithfull's voice has become gravely over the years, full of the grit, anger, and urgency of the impassioned survivor of drugs and alcohol abuse that she is. Her songs chart the depths of despair and isolation.

You'll never hear a couple of these songs on the radio because of their X-rated language. But the warning label on the album cover is hardly the kind of bracing you need to really—and I stress the word "really"—listen to Faithfull's songs, especially the embittered "Why'd Ya Do It?" (you'd be hard put to find a more acrid, more realistic song portraying sexual jealousy) and the haunting "Times Square."

She suffers through "Sister Morphine" (Jagger wrote the music, she composed the lyrics) and breaks into a zone of depression beyond blue in her brilliant interpretation of the Tom Waits-Kathleen Brennan song, "Strange Weather." Speaking of covers, Faithfull rivals John Lennon's incisiveness with her exquisite rendition of his "Working Class Hero."

Producer Hal Willner has assembled a top-notch outfit of musicians, including guitar ace Marc Ribot and piano whiz Dr. John, to back Faithfull up. But the band's biggest achievement is in letting Faithfull dominate the spotlight. There's good reason why she's being compared to Marlene Dietrich. As she demonstrates on this album, Faithfull is a rare singer who deserves the title *chanteuse extraordinaire*. (reviewed on CD) —Dan Ouellette



## WYNTON MARSALIS

**STANDARD TIME, VOL. 3-THE RESOLUTION OF ROMANCE**—Columbia CT 46143; *IN THE COURT OF KING OLIVER; NEVER LET ME GO; STREET OF DREAMS; WHERE OR WHEN; BONA AND PAUL; THE SEDUCTRESS; A SLEEPIN' BEE; BIG BUTTER AND EGG MAN; THE VERY THOUGHT OF YOU; I COVER THE WATERFRONT; HOW ARE THINGS IN GLOCCA MORRA?; MY ROMANCE; EVERYTHING HAPPENS TO ME; FLAMINGO; YOU'RE MY EVERYTHING; SKYLARK; IT'S EASY TO REMEMBER; TAKING A CHANCE ON LOVE; I GOTTA RIGHT TO SING THE BLUES; IN THE WEE SMALL HOURS; IT'S TOO LATE NOW.*

**Personnel:** Marsalis, trumpet; Ellis Marsalis, piano; Reginald Veal, bass; Herlin Riley, drums.

★★★★★

## MARLON JORDAN

**FOR YOU ONLY**—Columbia CK 45200; *JEPETTO'S DESPAIR; CHEROKEE; FOR YOU ONLY; MONK'S POINT; STARDUST; FALL; ARAD'S DREAM; SKIPPIN'.* (55:26 minutes)

**Personnel:** Jordan, trumpet; Branford Marsalis, tenor saxophone (cuts 2, 4-6); Kent Jordan, flute (1); Daryl Grant (2, 4-6), Darrell Lavigne (1, 7), piano; Elton Heron, piano (3), bass (1, 7, 8); Ira Coleman, bass (2, 4-6); Jeff Watts (2, 4-6), Troy Davis (1, 7), drums.

★★★★★

Maybe it's something in the hometown bouillabaisse. Grand vizier Wynton Marsalis and prodigy Marlon Jordan play music with a thoughtful sort of joy and firm determination that bear witness to New Orleans' old-as-jazz trumpet sovereignty. On respective new albums, Marsalis' 11th and Jordan's debut, each

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Sir Wynton no longer concerns himself with projecting his prodigious musical personality. With last year's *The Majesty Of The Blues* (see "Reviews" Oct. '89) and continuing on *Standard Time, Vol. 3*, he's been asserting his discovery of character—the aesthetic latchkey that frees wondrously heartfelt music. Disclosure came by heading home in spirit, embracing the blues regardfully, and *feeling* the life force tendered as jazz by trumpet masters such as King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Teddy Riley, and Nashville-born Doc Cheatham.

Jets cooled, romantic, probing, and personally purgative, Marsalis bestows all the wisdom at his command—heaps and heaps—to three originals and 17 selections culled from the catalogs of various giants of American popular

song. The *vox-humana* property of his muted or open horn is stunning, and his expressive range in enchantingly wide (often more so than the lyricists'), Marsalis' soft and elegant speech tones, so musically right, accompany his emotional immersion. Ellis Marsalis, whose sincerity and jazz acumen are unassailable, lends quiet Steinway eloquence to his son's session, while the Big Easy support tandem of Reginald Veal and Herlin Riley are splendid in a comparatively mundane way. Note: Savoring the entire album in a single sitting isn't recommended (when alone in daylight, anyway) as its intimate mood and slow and easy tempos grow wearisome. (reviewed on cassette)

About eight years ago this writer, with no revelatory insight, forecast in these pages great things for the fledgling Wynton Marsalis. Well,

19-year-old Marlon Jordan is a special someone capable of soaring just as high. In duo, quartet, and quintet formats, the trumpeter offers arresting improvisations, choosing notes with confidence and lucidness while favoring the middle and lower registers of his instrument. He's not averse to storming the ramparts, say, firing bop salvos alongside guest warrior Branford Marsalis on "Cherokee," but he seems more in his element handling blues and ballads. (Not true of early Wynton or young turks in general.) Jordan's affecting reading of "Stardust"—his limpid, nuanced tones breathe knowledge beyond his years—is a highlight. The serene blues cast to his easefully and swingingly delivered inventions on the self-penned "Skippin'" further underscores his precocity. (reviewed on CD) —*Frank-John Hadley*

## SOPRANO SCIENCE

by Kevin Whitehead

**S**teve Lacy is like a sun among planets. His soft voicelike sound rarely varies, as other players revolve around him in shifting orbits. In this batch of Lacy CDs, settings range from duo to nonet.

On *Images* (Ah-Um 001; 52:24 minutes: ★★★), taped in Liverpool during a 1987 tour, the sopranoist goes one-on-one with drummer Steve Arguelles, playing six Lacy staples and a Monk. Like most Lacy music it's deliberately paced, Arguelles shadowing and shading rather than shoving. His style's spare and quiet, like Lacy's; the drummer matches him beat for beat on "Evidence" and "Blinks." Using brushes, he turns "Image" into a funereal slow drag. On "Art"—the (unheard) words are Melville's, but the music is almost shakuhachi-Eastern—he barely ripples the background. For "Twilight" and "Cliches," Arguelles leans on his near-tympanseseque toms, and Lacy responds with energized split-tones; they're the lone pieces where they audibly egg each other on.

Lacy says this duo project is the last of its kind; he's renouncing such one-shot tours to devote all his time to his own projects, never in short supply. The 1989 recording *Rushes: 10 Songs From Russia* (New Sound Planet 809; 54:38: ★★★½), for the trio of Lacy, singer Irene Aebi, and pianist Frederic Rzewski, is Lacy's stark settings of poems by Osip Mandelstam, Anna Akhmatova, and Marina Tsvetayeva, translated into English or French. Its pre-glasnost gloominess is oppressive, but the compact instrumentation gives it an ascetic cleanliness, and short improvised episodes within the pieces open them out. What one remembers best are clever details, like the way Lacy sets the last word of the line "I live like a cuckoo" to an onomatopoeic interval: the first syllable a spiked high note, the second a flatted fifth below. Or the tramp-tramp-tramping piano chords, evoking



COLLIS H. DAVIS, JR.

inmates in chains, on "Prison Song"—wittily literal touches that lighten the load. Steve's soprano doubles Aebi's voice as usual, dogging her like a KGB tail.

More thickly textured but lighter in every way is the admirably varied *Anthem* (RCA/Novus 3079; 57:47: ★★★½). Another Mandelstam poem (in French translation) is at the core of the 16-minute "Prelude And Anthem," commissioned by the French government in honor of the bicentennial of the revolution; the mood is suitably triumphant, celebratory, and free-jazz disruptive. The band is Lacy's working sextet—Aebi on violin, Steve Potts on soprano and alto, pianist Bobby Few, bassist J. J. Avenel, and drummer John Betsch, who's replaced Oliver Johnson—fortified by trombonist Glenn Ferris, hand drummer Fred Kelly, and pop-gospel singer La Velle. (She reinforces Irene's voice on two of three vocal features.) "Number One" (for James Brown) and the cha-cha "The Rent" (where Few slips in and out of a *montuno* groove—Lacy goes Latin) are joyfully manic. Lacy's known for his conversational rhythms, but on much of *Anthem* the band's one big groove machine. "J. J.'s Jam"—

spotlighting Avenel's thumb-picked West African kora, a cascade of golden nails—is like nothing Lacy's done before, ever. As on other Lacy dates, the unsung hero is Potts, whose driving, rhythmic, percussive sound is like drums played on saxes.

Hat ART has reissued three fine Lacys on disc. The 1981 sextet offering, *Songs* (hat ART 6045; 63:38: ★★★★★), is co-credited to Lacy and the lyricist and sometime-guest vocalist, the late Brion Gysin. Gysin's best wordplays ("I Don't Work You Dig/Don't Work You Dig I/Work You Dig I Don't") are perfect for Lacy's singsong melodies and chewy improvising. Brion's inspired machine-gun duet with drummer Johnson, "Luvzya" ("Rainna shine/Onna dime/Alla time alla time/Mine mine mine") is rap for auctioneers. A few of the pieces are a little too giddy—or, worse, not enough so—and Aebi doesn't finesse the words as deftly as Gysin, but the highs are high. Lacy's one of the very few beats, or post-beats, who successfully weds poetry and jazz.

There's more proof of that on the two volumes of *Futurities* (Part I: hat ART 6031; 45:30: ★★★★★; Part II: hat ART 6032; 49:32: ★★★½) by the Steve Lacy Nine: the sextet augmented by Gyde Knebusch's dappled-light harp, George Lewis' simpatico shadow-dark trombone, and Barry Wedgley's subliminal guitar. Like *Anthem*, it's one of Lacy's most colorful projects. He's expertly married Robert Creeley's playful texts to his own jaunty speech-oriented rhythms; the team of Avenel, pianist Jef Gardner, and Johnson (on tuned percussion as well as drums) is a juggernaut. The first volume has a slight edge, blessed with the cheerfully practical "Sad Advice" (If it isn't fun don't do it/You'll have to do enough that isn't!), "The Warning," with its Rube Goldberg rattletrap gait, and "Jack's Blues," where Lewis steps in the cracks left open by Lacy's and Potts' riffing. *Futurities* also includes some of Irene Aebi's best singing on disc—you feel her empathy with the poet's wit. The excellent new liner notes are by editor/poet and jazz critic Peter Kostakis, that rare soul who can talk about the project's literary and musical ramifications without gasbagging. **DB**

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## LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO

**TWO WORLDS ONE HEART**—Warner Bros. 9 26125-2: TOWNSHIP JIVE; OFANA NAYE; BALA UBHALE; LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR; LEANING ON AN EVERLASTING ARM; REJOICE; HAYI NGALESISKATHI; EMHLABENI; ISIKHATHI SIYIMALI; NAMI NGAZE NGAMTHOLA; NGOMNAYANGO; SCATTER THE FIRE; COIHOZA MFANA. (48:32 minutes)

**Personnel:** Ladysmith Black Mambazo, vocals; Ray Phiri, guitar (cut 1); Anton Fig, drums (1); Sammy Figueroa, congas (1); Mark Ledford, trumpet (1); Tony Cedras, Hammond B-3, accordion, synth bass (1); Marvin Winans, lead vocals, keyboards (5); David McMurray, keyboards (5); the Winans, backing vocals (5); Armond Sabal, bass (6); Chacal, moringa (6); Cindinho, abacus, shaker (6); Mingo Araujo, bambu (6); Amp Fiddler, keyboards (12); Blackbird McKnight, guitar (12); Michael Payne, drum programming (12).

★ ★ ★ ★

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

**URBAN AFRICA: JIVE HITS OF THE TOWNSHIPS**—Polydor 841 470-2: A LUTA CONTINUA; UMQOMBOHI; TOGETHER AS ONE; KAZET; SHARP AS A RAZOR; WE MISS YOU MANDELA; MELODI YA LLA; WHISPERS IN THE DEEP; SLAVE; WAYA WAYA ALL THE WAY DOWN; AFRICAN SALAD; WELELA. (63:54)  
**Personnel:** includes Miriam Makeba, Mahlahini and the Mahotella Queens, Stimela, Lucky Dube.

★ ★ ★ ★

Slowly but surely, the signs of the American market accepting international sounds are becoming clearer. Sales for so-called World Music—a shapeless, generic tag that basically means non-white, non-American music—are outpacing jazz, grabbing six percent of the U.S. market, as compared to jazz's three to four percent. *Billboard* has, to much fanfare, created a new chart to track the stuff. And, of course, major labels are now releasing it on a regular basis: hence the recordings above.

Fans of Ladysmith Black Mambazo's *isicathimaya*—the church-derived, gospel-goes-to-Africa a cappella vocals that electrified audiences throughout Paul Simon's *Graceland* tour—won't be disappointed by their latest venture. The same arcing swoops and startling chirps and whoops flash in and out, over and across the same densely shimmering curtain of harmonies with enviable ease. A couple of new wrinkles have been added, though, with varying success. The kickoff track puts Ladysmith in front of Ray Phiri's township jive groove—a match made more in a marketing

meeting than in heaven, since *mbaqanga's* loping, propulsive beat doesn't exactly open up the kind of space Ladysmith's rich vocalizing thrives on. Matching churchy wits with the Winans is a more congenial, natural idea, although overcooked with synthesized drums and bass and horns in practice. But the notion of pumping up the funk with maggotbrain-in-chief George Clinton is inspired: who but Ladysmith could transform a human choir into a wirehead polyphonic synth without losing the heartbeat and bloodpump beneath?

*Isicathimaya* is the music of rural men isolated from their families, forced to live in single-sex barracks far from home. In the streets of South African cities, electrified sounds influenced by everything from Portuguese sea chanties to Duke Ellington to Little Richard to the Beatles to Bob Marley have been evolving their own ways for a generation. *Urban Africa* takes a look at some salient practitioners.

Samplers can be a cause for quarreling; everybody has their own choices. As it happens, the range of selections on *Urban Africa* is broad enough to do what samplers are supposed to do: tempt tentative new listeners into the fold of true believers without hoodwinking innocents into thinking they've done more than dipped their toes in the vast and wildly divergent waters of African pop. Front-loaded with two fine tracks from Miriam Makeba's *Welela*, *Urban Africa* introduces the uninitiated to the glorious frogman croak of Mahlathini playing call-and-response with the full-throated female trio Mahotella Queens, the township jive of Stimela (whose guitarist, Ray Phiri, was a prime catalyst on *Graceland*), and the politicized reggae of Lucky Dube, whose roughhewn vocals and approach deliberately recall those of his hero, Peter Tosh. Taken with the selections from Yvonne Chaka Chaka, Chicco, Teaspoon, and Peto, this album offers you an entree; since all of its performers have albums available in the U.S. now, when you discover what you like, don't stop here—follow them up. (reviewed on CD) —Gene Santoro



## ERIC MARIENTHAL

**CROSSROADS** — GRP GRD-9610: *THE SUN WAS IN MY EYES; SPOONS; YELLOW ROSES; UPSIDE DOWN; SCHMOOZE; CROSS COUNTRY; HIDE AND SEEK; TWO BITS; EVE OF TOMORROW; RAIN ON THE ROOF.* (58:37)

**Personnel:** Marienthal, saxophone, John Patitucci, bass, Chick Corea, Russell Ferrante, keyboards, Alex Acuna, Vinnie Colaiuta, Dave Weckl, Terri Lyne Carrington, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

Much as saxist Eric Marienthal has asserted his muscle and wide-ranging bandwidth of jazz chops, he has been regarded in the jazz scene at large primarily as the reed voice in Chick Corea's Elektric Band. Marienthal's two previous solo albums have failed to make much of an impression beyond their being highly competent variations on the pet pop sounds of today's highest-earning saxists.

But something is refreshingly different about *Crossroads*, which finds Marienthal operating in more musically engaging and personally expressive waters—no Kenny G factor in sight. Part of the change of heart (or the addition of heart) seems to follow suit with the last Yellowjackets album, *The Spin*, which reconciled pop instincts with a new-found expansiveness of sonic space, an improvisatory approach, and a conscientious electro-acoustic balance. Jacket keyman Russell Ferrante plays a strong role in this project, both as tunesmith and pianist of simple, singular taste.

Elektric Bandmates figure in heavily Marienthal's central creative liaison is Patitucci, as producer, composer, and bassist with few equals. His "Rain On The Roof" is a memorable tribute to the mid-section of Steely Dan's "Aja." Corea wrote and played on "Eve Of Tomorrow," while Weckl is on board and guitarist Frank Gambale wrote the crafty groove-lined "Schmooze." As a player, Marienthal doesn't veer towards any cutting edge with his playing, but rather burrows into both the romantic and sax traditions for all he's worth. This album gives new consideration to that worth. (reviewed on CD)

—Josef Woodard



## JIM WALKER

**PRIVATE FLIGHT** — Tall Tree 6011: *SANTIAGO; NEW ENGLAND; SERENDIPITY; VICTIMS; KENTUCKY HILLSIDE; PAVAN; THE OLD FOOL; EXTREMITIES; PASSION PLAY.* (36:04 minutes)

**Personnel:** Walker, flutes; Stanley Clarke (cuts 1, 3, 5, 6, 9), bass; Branford Marsalis (9), soprano sax; Mike Garson (3, 9), piano; George Duke (7), synthesizer; Paul Jackson, Jr. (3), guitar; Ralph Humphrey (1, 3, 6, 7, 9), Vinnie Colaiuta (4), drums; Alex Acuna (1), percussion; Stuart Canin (2, 3-4, 7-9), concertmaster of string section; Non Schwartz (9), Roger Bellon (2, 3, 7), arranger/conductor of strings; Gayle Levant (2), harp; Roger Bellon (4, 8), strings.

★ ★ ★ ★

On *Private Flight*, virtuoso flutist Jim Walker makes his debut as a solo artist. In the liners, Walker takes time to point out that "my direction has been heading more and more into a pop-

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jazz format." Given Walker's self-imposed parameters, and his desire to highlight the flute's sensuous tonal qualities, the project succeeds quite handsomely. Walker does, indeed, possess a wondrously lyric "voice." And, for fans of Free Flight (see "Riffs" p. 14), there are plenty of those amazingly virtuosic flurries that flutter and soar with the greatest of ease. The emphasis, though, is on Walker's talents as a romantic interpreter of poignantly lush melodies.

Producer Stanley Clarke deserves credit for maintaining the project's focus. The varied backdrops range from bucolic soundscapes like Clarke's warmly redolent "Kentucky Hills" with its *Twin Peaks*-like eeriness, and melancholy classicisms such as Roger Bellon's "Extremities" or Nan Schwartz's "Passion Play," to happy-go-lucky fusionistic romps best epitomized by Mike Garson's radiantly playful "Serendipity."

*Private Flight* is an auspicious coming-out for Jim Walker as a solo, crossover artist. And though not designed for the hard-core jazz purist, *Private Flight* has plenty of solid music which should expand Walker's already large and devoted audience. (reviewed on CD)

—Chuck Berg



## JOHN DOE

**MEET JOHN DOE**—DGC/Geffen 24291: Let's Be Bad; Matter of Degree; Dyin' To Get Home; It's Only Love; The Real One; Take #52; Worldwide Brotherhood; With Someone Like You; By the Light; Knockin' Around; Touch Me, Baby; My Offering.

**Personnel:** Doe, guitar and vocals; Jon Dee Graham, Richard Lloyd, guitar; Jeff Donovan, drums; Tony Marsico, bass.

★★★★

Los Angeles' seminal punk band X always had more than just angst in its veins. Americana was always bubbling near the surface of the band's buzz-saw rave-ups. X co-architect John Doe's first solo album layers the roots factor much closer to the skin and the vest, just as his former (and future?) partner Exene Cervenka's did on her compelling song set of last year, *Old Wives Tales*.

Illinois native Doe, now evidently older and wiser, sings without spitting, in a laconic voice half-learned from country crooners. His relaxed delivery makes special poetic sense with the lonely-heart wisdom of Hank Cochran's "It's Only Love." John Hiatt, that undaunted song factory, contributes the ramunctious "The Real One." Doe's own songs run the gamut of

pop topics, including an unabashed love ode, "With Someone Like You," in which he sings of "bulletproof love."

Musically, too, the album is propped up on doses of c&w, folk, blues, and rock from the proverbial saloon esthetic. Doe's dual guitars fill up the face of the band sound. On "Worldwide Brotherhood," an ironic take on the artist's presumed humanitarian hot line, we hear a twisted quotation from Black Sabbath's "Iron Man."

Right down to his *nom de plume*, Doe has always championed everyman nobility, an idea carried over from Punk's spitwad-in-the-face-of-pop megastars who had gotten out of touch with the pop-ulace. Doe is still in touch, and doesn't mind getting his fingernails dirty or singin' about love, pure and simple. (reviewed on cassette)

—Josef Woodard



## CARMEN McRAE

**CARMEN SINGS MONK**—RCA Novus 3086-2-N: Get It Straight (Straight No Chaser) [Live]; Dear Ruby (Ruby, My Dear); It's Over Now (Well, You Needn't); Monkery's The Blues (Blue Monk); You Know Who (I Mean You); Little Butterfly (Pannonica); Listen To Monk (Rhythm-A-Ning); How I Wish . . . (Ask Me Now); Man, That Was A Dream (Monk's Dream); 'Round Midnight; Still We Dream (Ugly Beauty); Suddenly (In Walked Bud); Looking Back (Reflections); Suddenly [Live]; Get It Straight. (66:01)

**Personnel:** McRae, vocals; Al Foster, drums; George Mraz, bass; Clifford Jordan, Charlie Rouse [live only], soprano and tenor saxophones; Eric Gunnison, Larry Willis [live only], piano.

★★★★

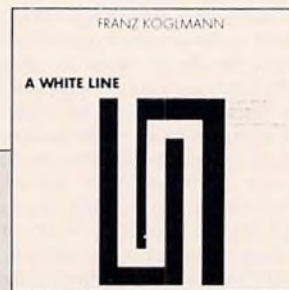
Carmen sings Monk: what a perfectly imperfect pair! Extreme individualists; often misunderstood; angular melodists; gritty griots; owners of liny moments; closet romantics. Carmen meets Monk—again. She played intermission piano and sang at Minton's Playhouse in the late 1940s, where Monk and her husband Kenny Clarke helped launch bebop. Her painstaking labor of monkey—a slow, slow train—has at last screeched into Penn Station waving banners.

At first I thought her readings—succinct, no scat but for "Needn't"—bookish and dry, but later reconsidered that McRae was being literal and respectful introducing new, albeit witty and warm, lyrics to classic melodies long heard as instrumentals. (Since all but two are premiere recordings, why not include the lyrics?) All the cats play with alert intensity, but

kudos to George Mraz (his wry bass never goes awry) and Clifford Jordan, whose reflective tenor modestly complements McRae. Hats off too, to lyricists Sally Swisher ("Dear Ruby"), Mike Ferro (the tough "Well, You Needn't"), Abbey Lincoln (her version of "Blue Monk" was unrivaled until Carmen's), and that redoubtable bopsmith, Jon Hendricks, whose poignant "Looking Back" reflects and ennobles his own life's search for truth, in word and deed.

Carmen, who has always sung with the passion of absolute certainty, has put Monk on a new map: now even singers worldwide will beat a path to him. (reviewed on CD)

—Fred Bouchard



## TEO MACERO

**THE BEST OF TEO MACERO**—Stash 527: Neally; Adventure; Heart On My Sleeve; 24+18+; T.C.'s Groove; Sounds Of May; Seven; Equals; Time; Plus; Pressure.; Teo; I'll Remember April; How Low The Earth; Mitzi; Explorations; Thou Swell; Un Poco Diabolo; Am I/Are You; Blues For Amy; Bedroom; Out Of Loneliness. (76:55 minutes)

**Personnel:** Macero, tenor sax; Art Farmer, Clark Terry, trumpet; Eddie Bert, Frank Rehak, trombone; John LaPorta, clarinet, alto sax; Lee Konitz, Phil Woods, alto sax; George Barrow, Pepper Adams, baritone sax; Mal Waldron, Bill Evans, piano; Orlando DiGirolamo (aka Lanny DiJay), accordion; Eddie Costa, vibraphone; Wendell Marshall, Charles Mingus, Lou LaBella, Addison Farmer, Jorge Romero, bass; Ed Shaughnessy, Frank Hernandez, drums; Baddal Roy, tabla; Ernest Anderson, vocal; Orchestra U.S.A., conducted by Harold Faberman; chamber orchestra; string section.

★★★★

## FRANZ KOGLMANN

**A WHITE LINE**—hot ART 6048: A White Line; April In Vienna; Eccentric Shorty; Quapp; Festive Minor; The Fabel Of Mabel; Bley Play; Jambangle; Oof; Aristony; For Max; Out Of Nowhere; Free (Three) Again I-III; Je?; At The Jazz Band Ball. (71:07)

**Personnel:** Koglmann, trumpet, flugelhorn; Mario Arcari, oboe; Tony Coe, clarinet, tenor sax; Jean-Christophe Mastnak, french horn; Raoul Herget, tuba; Paul Bley, piano; Helmut Federle, accordion; Burkhard Stangl, electric guitar; Klaus Koch, bass; Gerry Hemingway, drums; Gustav Bauer, conductor (cuts 1, 4, 6).

★★★

The young Teo Macero dug jazz but went to

Juilliard. When he got out of school in the early '50s, he naturally mixed elements from both worlds—his music was third stream before Gunther Schuller coined the term. Teo used tools like counterpoint, tone rows, polymeters, and crosstempes, and then let groups of five-to-nine improvisers have their way with them. Heard again now, his '50s compositions (which make up more than half this sampler) have a certain quirky charm: sort of atonal cool jazz. With accordion. Lanny DiJay swung the squeezebox as hard as anyone this side of the superhuman Leon Sash. Odder yet, on "Sounds Of May," Macero incorporated mock-Renaissance vocal lines, played back at various speeds (foreshadowing the aggressively-edited Miles Davis albums he produced circa 1970). You have to hear this stuff to believe it. No, it wasn't the wave of the future, and yes, some of the '60s pieces (the "Times Plus Seven" suite; "Pressure") get kinda bombastic. But Macero's best music shows his kinship with great American crackpots like Cowell and Partch.

Austria's Franz Koglmann is always cool and cerebral, and often inspired. However, *A White Line*—his tribute to the Great White Music of Tristan, Kenton, Mulligan et al.—is a misstep, starting with his foolish booklet essay. He sets up an opposition between the "soul" and "emotional immediacy" of black jazz and the "rational/geometric lucidity" of white jazz. Of course, jazz thrives on tension between head

and heart, but to attribute the brains to whites and brawn to blacks—or to believe that these strains are neatly segregated along racial lines—ignores the facts, to put it politely. Into which "line" would Koglmann place rational/geometric black composers Anthony Davis, George Russell, and Anthony Braxton? Or rawly expressive white trombonists Roswell Rudd and Ray Anderson? You can make up your own long list of players who challenge the dumb stereotypes.

Worse, the album is the least striking and limpest of recent Koglmans, despite the (too) occasional presence of driving drummer Hemingway. The Shorty Rogers tribute/medley doesn't measure up to Shorty's own '50s classics. But there are traces of the economical voicings and vivid color-sense that make Koglmann worth tracking—like "Out Of Nowhere," scored for a deceptively big-sounding flugel/tenor/tuba trio, a bantering trumpet/oboe/guitar "Jazz Band Ball"—does the Original Dixieland Jazz Band represent lucid cool?—and Gil Evans' "Jambangle," sketched by trumpet, tenor, and tuba. Best is Dick Twardzik's "Mabel," the latter the best vehicle for guests Bley (key career influence: Ornette Coleman) and Hemingway (major inspiration: Baby Dodds), and for Coe's vocalized clarinet and Pink Panther tenor. The last two tunes draw deeply on the blues, by the way, and thus are firmly rooted in black music. (reviewed on CD)

—Kevin Whitehead



## ALI FARKA TOURE

**AFRICAN BLUES**—Shanachie 65002: *Sidy Gouro; N'timbara; Deleve Wague; Okatagouna; Zona; Mbaudy; Petenere; L'exode.*

**Personnel:** Toure, guitar, vocals; unnamed percussionist and background vocalist.

★ ★ ★ ★

The first time Ali Farka Toure heard a John Lee Hooker album in the early '60s, he immediately recognized the kinship between African-American blues and his self-taught technique of acoustic guitar playing based on the traditional music of Mali. The 51-year-old Toure learned how to play music in his homeland on the monacorde, a one-stringed sacred instrument. He transferred his skill onto the six-string acoustic guitar in the late '50s and developed

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a spare styling that sounds like he practiced his licks on a Mississippi Delta country porch. While his albums have been available in Britain and France over the years, only a couple—including a self-titled collection that came out on Mango Records a few years ago—have been released in the U.S.

Toure's latest—recorded at approximately the same time as the Mango album—is an eight-song feast of entrancing acoustic blues. Even though he doesn't use a slide, Toure nonetheless bends and picks his strings to create a tinny, twangy sound. He lets the strings resonate and, banking on his experience with playing the moncorde, often uses the bass strings as a drone. Occasionally, his guitar riffs get flashy, but for the most part Toure attends to syncopated rhythms that follow the melody lines of his soulful vocals. He sings in the several different languages of Mali, engaging in exquisite call-and-response exchanges with the background vocalist (who also offers clapping percussion throughout the album) sounding like a chanting Muslim muezzin at times.

Despite the fact that the liner notes don't provide translations for the songs, you can sense a plaintive as well as celebratory quality in Toure's voice. Like the great blues singers and musicians in the U.S., Toure delves deeply into the emotion of his songs and rises above them ecstatically. *African Blues* is a rich testament to the close links between African and American music. (reviewed on LP)

—Dan Ouellette



## BUNKY GREEN

**HEALING THE PAIN**—Delos DE 4020: *THE THRILL IS GONE; WALTER'S THEME; WHO CAN I TURN TO; I CONCENTRATE ON YOU; LOVE THEME; YOU'VE CHANGED; WILD LIFE; RADIO THEME; EVERYTHING I HAVE IS YOURS; SEASHELLS; GOODBYE; LOVE THEME-REPRISE.* (65:52 minutes)

**Personnel:** Green, alto, soprano saxophone; Billy Childs, piano; Art Davis, bass; Ralph Penland, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Bunky Green plunges the second note of "The Thrill Is Gone" down into some sad-soul abyss and back up. The thrill is on and it never lets up throughout this album. The Univ. of N. Florida professor proves himself a master of melodic extrapolation. He makes the theme statements personal essays of feeling, then by degrees he roams far afield—inside/outside,

as the liner notes discuss. The album, then, represents a lot of fecundity and freedom. Green makes sense by his own logic and he has an empathetic rhythm section.

The album is dedicated to his recently deceased parents. They liked ballads; hence, there are lots of slow tempos here. A melancholy mood prevails, Green lingering over each note. The music just happens, nothing forced.

Green's "Wild Life" and "Seashells," uptempo performances along with "I Concentrate On You" have octave-leaping intervals, hit-and-run accents, and angular turns that show somewhat where Steve Coleman and Greg Osby come from. "Concentrate," done here as a fast Latin piece, comes at you in jagged fragments. Not everything proceeds to angularity, though. Green's playing can be smoother, as on "Good-bye," and sexy, as on "Everything," and purely lyrical, as on the soprano performances "Love Theme" and "Radio Theme." This is a multi-dimensional saxophonist and improviser.

In this recital, the rhythm section only occasionally gets the spotlight. Childs' Red Garland-ish intro to "Who" and zingy, Herbie Hancock-like solos on "Thrill" and "Seashells" are in the right mood. (He plays an electric piano in the background behind Green on several of the ballads.) Altogether the sensitive support of Childs, Davis, and Penland is . . . thrilling, too. (reviewed on CD) —Owen Cordle

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## STANLEY JORDAN

**CORNUCOPIA**—Blue Note P7 92356 2: *IMPRESSIONS; WILLOW WEEP FOR ME; AUTUMN LEAVES; STILL GOT THE BLUES; FUNDANCE; WHAT'S GOING ON; ALWAYS KNOW; ASTEROIDS; CORNUCOPIA.* (70:28 minutes)


**Personnel:** Jordan, guitar, guitar synthesizer; Kenny Kirkland, piano; Bernard Wright, keyboards; Charnett Moffett, bass; Yossi Fine, electric bass; Jeff Watts, J. T. Lewis, Kenwood Dennard, Flare Funston, Michael Flythe, drums; Robert Zantoy, synthesizer programming.

★ ★ ★

When Stanley Jordan burst on the scene in the mid-'80s, he caught attention on at least two separate platforms: he brought a new strategy to the guitar by tapping with two hands and dogmatically blended traditional "standards" with pop "standards" from his own generation. He's still searching for common musical threads on the euphemistically entitled *Cornucopia*. If the hunt comes up short, the intermittent rewards make it worthwhile.

With the unshakeable post-Wynton Marsalis rhythm section of Watts, Moffett, and Kirkland, Jordan navigates standards turf with facility, if






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not great profundity. The sleek r&b-jazz hybrids go down easily but lack much spark of spontaneity, while Jordan's solo flights (including the 20-minute title track) ramble amiably.

Jordan is a conspicuously gifted, if fundamentally conservative, guitarist. Still, there remains the question if Jordan's basic technique broadens the guitar's appeal or detours around the very thing of which guitaristic beauty is (or has been) made of: a plectrum (or fingers) agitating strings of steel. Jordan's two-fisted articulations have the obvious advantage of twining separate voices on a normally single-minded instrument. But thinning the tone on an instrument already dynamically soft by nature may have diminishing aesthetic returns. (reviewed on CD) —Josef Woodard



## GINGER BAKER

**MIDDLE PASSAGE**—Axiom/Island 539 864: *MERTOUB; UNDER BLACK SKIES; TIME BE TIME; ALAMOUT; BASIL; SOUTH TO THE DUST.* (34:13)

**Personnel:** Baker, drums; Bill Laswell, bass, fretless bass, six-string bass; Nicky Skopelitis, six- and 12-string guitars, baglama, coral sitar, electric bonjo, Fairlight; Jah Wobble, bass; Janos Hellborg, Wal MIDI bass, fretless bass, acoustic bass guitar; Faruk Tekebilek, ney, zurna; Bernie Worrell, organ; Aiyb Dieng, doff, dumbek, talking drum, metals; Mar Gueye, sobar (hand drum); Magette Fall, tama (talking drum).

★ ★ ★ ★

## MATERIAL

**SEVEN SOULS**—Virgin 2-91360: *INEFFECT; SEVEN SOULS; SOUL KILLER; THE WESTERN LANDS; DELIVER; EQUATION; THE END OF WORDS.* (40:42)

**Personnel:** Bill Laswell, bass, percussion, guitar; Nicky Skopelitis, guitars; Sly Dunbar, drums; L. Shankar, violin; Simon Shaheen, violin; Aiyb Dieng, percussion; Foday Musa Suso, vocals; Fahiem Dandan, vocals; Rammellzee, vocals; William S. Burroughs, spoken-word vocals.

★ ★ ★

New York-based bass player, composer, and producer Bill Laswell has been at the helm of some impressive projects, ranging from work with harmonized guitar ace James Blood Ulmer to his own super groups the Golden Palominos and Material. His latest two endeavors are equally adventurous.

*Seven Souls* isn't so much a new album by Material as it is a soundtrack in support of snippets from William S. Burroughs' recent novel, *The Western Lands*. Remember back in 1984 when Burroughs showed up on Laurie

CONTINUED ON PAGE 42

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## MURRAY'S STEPS

by Art Lange

**R**eedman **David Murray** hit the early '80s running, with a stunning series of stylistic leaps and musical zig-zags that kept critics and fans guessing. No one knew what format he'd turn up in next—blistering free trios or rough-and-tumble big bands, conceptual all-star groups Clarinet Summit or the World Saxophone Quartet, or his highly acclaimed, hi-octane octet. But, whether due to record company reticence or personal choice, Murray seems to be entering the '90s at a slower, more conservative pace. His octet has not recorded since '85, and five of these eight recent releases or reissues are quartet dates; if anything, they suggest his tread has grown more cautious and favors familiar turf.

The newest, *Daybreak* (Gazell CD 4002; 44:35 minutes ★★★½), pairs Murray with pianist Dave Burrell, and its four tunes run the gamut from romantic to raucous. Though attuned to each other's every nuance, their shadowboxing relies on intuitive powers that at times pall. Murray's dark, labyrinthine "Sketch #1" and the (tongue-in-cheek?) exoticisms of "Qasbah Rendezvous"—not coincidentally the two shortest tracks—are the most focused and work best; the alternately harsh and lyrical "Blue Hour" and the title tune stretch themselves thin, especially when Murray's tenor uncomfortably strains for catharsis.

*Golden Sea* (Sound Aspects LP 027: ★★★½), is a duo with Chicago percussionist (and Ethnic Heritage Ensemble co-founder) Kahil El'Zabar. Here, the minimal setting, without harmonic accompaniment, serves to restrain Murray's more extravagant gestures; on atmospheric outings like the title tune or "Dreams," his tenor and bass clarinet blends obligingly with Kahil's mbira and congas. "Sweet Meat"'s bluesy swing and the occasional maelstrom he whips up on "Song For A New South Africa" supply more heat than light. An attractive session, thanks in no small part to El'Zabar's selfless, strong foundation.

Dave Burrell returns, and is the best thing about *Lucky Four* (Tutu LP 888 088: ★★★½); he penned the dark, moody tango ("Valley Talk"), and his solos are pianistic pearls. But the bulk of the material fails to inspire Murray, et al. "Chazz," for example, reflects Mingus' sentimental side without taking into account his more volatile nature, and the foursome (including bassist Wilber Morris and drummer Victor Lewis) similarly equates emotions-under-wraps with accessibility elsewhere.

In contrast stands *Ming's Samba* (CBS/Portrait LP 44432: ★★★), the best all-stops-out showcase for Murray's exuberant blowing in recent memory. Much of the credit should go to the rhythm section: pianist John Hicks, bassist Ray Drummond, and especially Ed Blackwell on drums, push and prod Murray into enthusiastic, ear-stretching yet still-accessible forays. Murray's instrumental control is at a peak—

his distinctive upper-register tenor work is convincing and his bass clarinet achieves a warmth on "Walter's Waltz" few could match.

Over the past few years Murray's recorded a fistful of fine discs in Japan, and the latest, *Deep River* (DIW LP 8030:

★★★★), again reunites him with Burrell (this time assisted by bassist Fred Hopkins and drummer Ralph Peterson Jr.). As usual, Burrell opts for introspection over power, and on their "Home" duo this allows Murray to wax rhapsodic, at first displaying a kinder, gentler attitude prior to some expressive testifying, à la George Adams, over Burrell's churchy chords. Nothing else here reaches these exalted heights, though "Mbizo" finds Murray's bass clarinet at its most Dolphyesque, and Coltrane's "Mr. P.C." gives him the perfect context for his elusive, Gonsalvesean gyrations.

All three of the following quartets date from '88, and share a level of homogenous consistency with *I Want To Talk About You* (Black Saint LP 120 105: ★★★½). This, a live '86 club gig with Hicks, Drummond, and Peterson, finds Coltrane ever more on his mind. The echoes are everywhere. Beyond the title tune's inescapable connection (though Murray's version is more intimate), Drummond's "Quads" may remind you of "Spiritual," and note the neat paraphrase from "Mr. P.C." on the release of Murray's "Morning Song." The quartet's playing is passionate and basically satisfying—though Murray's r&b exaggerations seem over the edge even on an out-and-out stomp like "Red Car."

Now for something completely different—the CD reissue of Murray's *3D Family* (hat ART CD 6020: 70:00: ★★★★★). This '78 trio (with drummer Andrew Cyrille and bassist Johnny Mbizo Dyani) is one of his freest recordings, from his most expressionistic period. Murray explores some ferocious, creative distortions of phrase and tone—pops, smears, growls, squeals—held together by a Rollinsish intricacy of detail, and the acute dynamics and dramatics of Cyrille and Dyani. On "In Memory Of Jomo Kenyatta," "Shout Song," and the title tune Murray is at his most unconventionally Aylerish—frequently with a gasp in his grasp, only to resolve it in blasts of youthful exuberance—impossible to sustain without Cyrille's perfection of tension and release.

Equally exciting is the reissue of *Live At The Lower Manhattan Ocean Club Vols. 1 & 2* (India Navigation CD 1032; 75:05: ★★★★★), caught on the last day of '77. This one-time-only quartet is, above all, marvelously *balanced*, with an open-minded, intuitive rhythm team of Fred Hopkins and drummer Phillip Wilson, and the inspired pairing of Murray with Lester Bowie. Bowie's tart trumpet is a tonic. It's a treat to trace the logic of his solos on flowing, open tunes like "Obe" and "For Walter Norris," which contain some of the textural flavor and interaction of the late, lamented NY Contemporary 5. Murray, too, was on this night, and a highlight was the satiric but loving "Bechet's Bounce." Given his present predilections, one wonders if he'll ever visit such uncharted territory again. **DB**

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### A NOTE ON FRANZ KOGLMANN

Every act of art—an attempt to intensify our perception of life, and, thus, life itself—is a distortion of things, as they are. Such creative distortion can be mild or willful, healing or harmful, surprising or simply reassuring. Great art can be all of these at once.

Though music is the most abstract of art forms, Franz Koglmann's music is unique because it is uncommonly literal... which is not to say programmatic or pictorial. It is somehow misleading, as it is satisfying, to put him in a lineage of such as Jelly Roll Morton, Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus, Gil Evans, George Russell, because he is as different from them as they are from each other. But like them, his compositions are rich in beautifully ambiguous images, which originate in a place so personal that they allow us to respond to them personally. They exist as substance and suggestion, in his magical ability to blur the distinctions between form (intellect) and feeling (emotion).

Each of his recordings on hat ART is a special, distinct experience, with its own particular moments of drama, seduction, mystery. They inhabit so many varying moods and modes precisely because of his willingness to acknowledge seemingly contradictory impulses—to trust the "reality of the imagination"—and to share his creative instincts with strong musicians, who become not interpreters but collaborators.

For all of its poetic ambience—sounds which understand shadows but brave the clear light of day—his is a deeply human music, a triumph of character.

— Art Lange  
January 1990

FRANZ KOGLMANN

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# record & cd reviews

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40

Anderson's *Mister Heartbreak* album? His brittle voice served both to haunt and humor on the tune "Sharkey's Night," which was co-produced by Laswell. Six years later, Laswell teams up with the literary legend once again and makes him the centerpiece of the album. Burroughs appears on five of the seven pieces, expounding on esoteric theories of the seven souls postulated by ancient Egyptians and the soul-killing potential of the atomic bomb.

As on past albums, Laswell enlists the support of an eclectic crew of singers (who, on this album, contribute Middle Eastern vocal chants) and musicians who add in guitar slashes and stings, bouyant percussive runs,

and violin drones. Some tunes go the funk-dance route (complete with samplings and a bit of rap) while others drift into a mesmerizing dreamscape of adventurous instrumental explorations. A Middle Eastern music flavor is present on some numbers, including "Ineffect," which is a wonderfully exotic meld of styles from high-tech synth lines to a few bars pilfered from early Santana. The best cut is the joyful "Deliver," the closest you get to a melodic, vocal-based pop song on the album.

Laswell's collaboration with ex-Cream drummer Ginger Baker is much more successful. Laswell, who helped to coax Baker out of retirement from his olive farm in Italy a few

years ago, puts the spotlight on Baker's bold, emotive, and even talking drumming. In keeping with African sensibilities, Baker's drums are the lead instrument, never relegated to simply being the rhythmic undergirding for the six instrumental numbers. Since the tunes, for the most part, are built around simple melodic guitar and bass riffs, Baker is free to let his drum chops soar. This is especially apparent on "Basil," an exhilarating drum solo filled with intriguing twists and turns and accelerating rhythms. It is also evident on "Mektoub," a piece that is a meld of rock, jazz, blues, and world beat influences, where Baker's thundering drumming dominates. While some of the musical textures border on the ethereal, Baker stridently punctuates those soft dreamscapes with his stout drumming, rooting the pieces on *Middle Passage* to terra firma. (reviewed on cassette)

—Dan Ouellette

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Personnel: McLaughlin, acoustic guitar; London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas (cut 1); Katia Labeque, piano, synthesizer (2-6).

★ ★ ★ 1/2

LIVE AT THE ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL—JMT 834 436-2: BLUE IN GREEN; JUST IDEAS—JOZY; FLORIANAPOLIS; PASHA'S LOVE; MOIHER TONGUES; BLUES FOR L.W. (64:15)

Personnel: McLaughlin, acoustic guitar, Photon guitar synthesizer, voice; Kai Eckardt, electric bass; Trilok Gurtu, percussion, voice.

★ ★ ★

Expectations run high for John McLaughlin, especially after an absence of several years from recording. These albums present entirely different vehicles for his acoustic guitar. The results are mixed but generally good.

McLaughlin's concerto for guitar and orchestra is an unabashed collage of romantic classical music, and possibly an homage to Miles Davis' *Sketches of Spain*. Listening to "The Mediterranean," I thought of Rodrigo's *Concerto de Aranjuez*, of DeFalla, Bizet, Ravel, and maybe John Williams. I never once thought of the Mahavishnu Orchestra, not even the truly orchestral *Apocalypse* album conducted by Tilson Thomas. This concerto is a sunnier, less troubled (and less memorable) companion to

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## TRIOS X 4

We can thank Sonny Rollins for the historical imperative of the pianoless (ie: sax/bass/drums) trio; he may not have invented the format, but he found advantages to its nooks and crannies, defined it, refined it, and came perilously close to perfecting it.

Those who chose to follow in Rollins' footsteps – especially including these four devoutly particular examples – have nevertheless discovered alternate paths. These often stress the trio's inherent deceptive nature – suggesting simplicity, while in actuality embracing further modes of complexity ... or at least the potential for greater (elastic) interaction and frank harmonic freedoms. (Think of the vastly different attributes of pianoless Mulligan, Mingus, and acoustic Ornette groups, earlier and later, among others.)

Primarily, the *process* is emphasized, arrangements are intuited and literally caught-in-the-act, requiring a special structural shrewdness, a surefooted confidence, all-but-endless invention. Braxton's spontaneous determinism on *hat ART CD 6025*, Coe's oblique romanticism on *hat ART CD 6046*, Portal's dramatic narratives on *hat ART CD 6022*, Murray's expressionistic epics on *hat ART CD 6020*, are indivisible from the subplots ordained by the character of the trio itself, and, thus, their collaborators – which allows us the lovely experience of acknowledging the nuances of Oxley's fluidity with Coe compared to Braxton, Favre's color and sustenance, and Cyrille's mastery of tension and release, not to mention a reexamination of the bassist's role between Roidinger, Laurence, Francioli, and Dyani ...

What's new? As in any art that is meaningful, referential, and visionary, none of it, and all of it.

– Art Lange  
February 1990

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Miles' and Gil Evans' version of "Aranjuez." McLaughlin's flamenco-flavored playing is wonderful throughout, maneuvering through Michael Gibbs' picaresque arrangements.

The "Duos" with Katia Labeque are the highlight of the album. McLaughlin calls them songs, and they have the simple, catchy melodies of folk songs, reminiscent of the solo acoustic sides on McLaughlin's *My Goals Beyond*. Best known as a classical pianist, Labeque supported McLaughlin in the under-

rated *Belo Horizonte* band, and provides very sympathetic accompaniment here. I suspect that I'll return to the "Duos" much more often than the "Concerto."

The trio album, recorded after a year of touring as a unit, places McLaughlin in a jazz/ethnic/fusion environment. Along with the acoustic guitar, McLaughlin plays a Photon guitar synthesizer which allows him to play over pre-programmed rhythms, and to switch

CONTINUED ON PAGE 46

## EURO-CHET

by Kevin Whitehead

In jazz as in other pursuits, death is a great career move – witness the continuing flood of European sessions by the late **Chet Baker** (see

"Reviews" Jan '90). Some fine Chet is on *The Italian Sessions* (RCA/Bluebird 2001-2-RB; 55:16 minutes: ★★★★★), recorded in 1962 but reportedly unissued in the U.S. till now. Fronting a well-meshed pan-European band – Belgian guitarist Rene Thomas and tenorist/flutist Bobby Jaspar, French drummer Daniel Humair, Italian pianist Amadeo Tommasi, and bassist Benoit Quersin – Baker demonstrates he could do more than croon at a whisper or play five or six soft notes in the trumpet's middle register. He delivers the ballads "Over The Rainbow" and "These Foolish Things" with a singing tone, full and declamatory enough to please opera buffs. Most of the program is more up – including Bird's calypso "Barbados" and Monk's "Well, You Needn't" – and Baker rarely sounded more playful or in better lip. The hearty band, blue Tommasi especially, provide firm incentive and support.

Baker and bassist Charlie Haden may seem an unlikely pair. But both sprung from the earthy heartland (Oklahoma and Missouri, respectively) to flower on the sunny West Coast; both are instinctively lyrical and trust in simplicity. Their hookup sounds instantly right on Haden's *Silence* (Soul Note 121 172; 43:57: ★★★★★½), made in Rome in '87. So much is made of the bassist's melancholy side – showcased on his "Silence," a nice vehicle for Chet – you may forget how ably he can buoy up a band with plump walking, as on Bird's "Visa" and Shearing's "Conception" (which also display Haden's excellence at medium tempos). Pianist Enrico Pieranunzi sounds great, playing snaky single-note lines or porcelain chords; ever-reliable Billy Higgins is on drums. The rhythm team makes even "My Funny Valentine" sound chipper. (It's the only vocal.) Baker doesn't crack too many notes, and plays a fresh version of the overworked "Round Midnight." The whole date has a wonderfully warm – not cool – atmosphere.

There's a nice, long version of the same Monk ballad on 1986's *Cool Cat* (Timeless 262; 43:04: ★★★★★). Overall, though, Chet's chops are a little less sure, and the worthy backing crew – Harold Danko on piano,

John Burr on bass, distinguished sparkplug Ben Riley at the traps – form not quite as magical a unit. But they too choose tempos that let Chet ruminate comfortably without bogging down. He sings half the program ("For All We Know," "Blue Moon," "My Foolish Heart") in the somnolent, warbly manner familiar from the *Let's Get Lost* soundtrack – even partisans of his song stylings would have to concede they're sub-par. The way he whistles the occasional sibilant suggests denture woes.

Somebody must have thought teaming up Baker and tenorist Archie Shepp was just crazy enough to work. Alas, it wasn't. On their March '88 Frankfurt and Paris dates, heard on *In Memory Of* (Optimism 5006; 69:46: ★★★★★½), they share little more than embouchure problems, which make each sound even further out of tune than he already is. Wobbly intonation aside, on most of the program Chet's solos are pleasing, even deft – notably on "How Deep Is The Ocean?" and "Old Devil Moon" – but when the horn players try to blend, the clash is painful. As usual in the '80s, Shepp's grotesquely flatulent tone obscures even the occasional graceful idea. The best thing this mismatch affords is a study in contrasting vocal styles: Shepp's hoarsely shouted "Dedication To Bessie Smith's Blues" versus Baker's low-energy ballads, "My Foolish Heart" and "My Ideal." The rhythm section, Shepp's, is Horace Parlan, Herman Wright, and Clifford Jarvis.

Last year's *My Favorite Songs* from "The Last Great Concert," highly praised by some, sounded tentative to these ears; significantly, Chet was then planning a trip to the dentist. (He died two weeks after this 4/28/88 date.) He sounds steadier on much of the mostly-second-set sequel. *Straight From The Heart* (Enja R2 79624; 45:16: ★★★★★½) again finds him with small group, big band, and strings-and-woodwinds orchestra. Best up are his bright exploration of Jerome Kern's "Look For The Silver Lining," and an up-tempo, if not exactly burning "Conception." He sounds okay singing "I Get Along Without You Very Well," designed by (and for) a vocalist of modest talents, the great Hoagy Carmichael. Baker's lip begins to falter on "There's A Small Hotel," giving out on the night's second "Valentine." (Maybe it's me, but he sounds a mite tired of the tune.)

In that January roundup, Fred Bouchard speculated on how many post-"last concert" Baker dates will now surface. Any takers? (reviewed on CD)

DB

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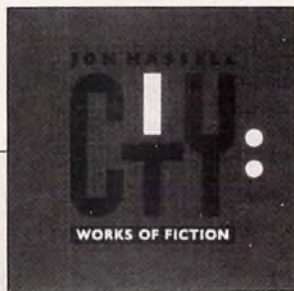
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43

instantly from acoustic to synth.

The trio opens with a bimbo arrangement of Miles' "Blue In Green"—there's a pretty head, but no depth—and an uneventful Photon tribute to Joe Zawinul, before catching fire on "Florianapolis" and "Pasha's Love." McLaughlin is in peak form, playing impossibly fast phrases over Eckardt's fretless bass lines and Gurtu's straightahead drumming.

The quality of the energetic ensemble playing is not always matched by the compositions. The leader may prove generous to a fault by indulging Gurtu with an extended percussion suite and an Indian-styled scat vocal mimicking tabla rhythms I would have preferred more McLaughlin and less Gurtu.

McLaughlin's search for new contexts for his acoustic music continues. With his ambivalence towards the electric guitar apparently resolved, McLaughlin's earliest loves—flamenco, blues, Tal Farlow, and classical music—are more likely to shape his future work than is the legacy of the Mahavishnu Orchestra. (reviewed on CD) —*Jon Andrews*



### JON HASSELL'S CITY

**WORKS OF FICTION**—Opal/Warner Bros. 9 26153-2: VOICEPRINT (BLIND FROM THE FACTS); PAGAN; MOMBASA; TIKAL; IN THE CITY OF RED DUST; RAIN; BA-YA; WARRIORS; OUT OF ADEDARA. (56:11 minutes)

**Personnel:** Hassell, trumpet, keyboards; Gregg Arreguin, guitar; Jeff Rona, keyboards, sampled percussion; Adam Rudolph, acoustic and sampled percussion; Daniel Schwartz, bass.

★ ★ ★ ★

Jon Hassell's trumpet inhabits and unifies the seemingly paradoxical worlds of electronics and quasi-tribal/modalities. His efforts have not always proven successful. As Jon Andrews suggests in his review of Hassell's previous release, *Flash Of The Spirit* (see "Reviews" Feb. '90), the "primitive postmodern" trumpeter's music runs the risk of stalling when the production mix and melodic variation are limited. Hassell's most satisfying music integrates storyline/development with the kind of creative use of linear progression found, for example, on Hassell's '88 offering (are you ready for this?). *The Surgeon Of The Night Sky Restores Dead Things By The Power Of Sound* (on Capitol/Intuition).

*Works Of Fiction* succeeds in this regard, as Hassell maintains his fascination with Middle- and Far Eastern tonalities. The overall impression from track to track is one of time-travel mixed with a pleasant disorientation. This mu-

sic isn't about "chops"—rather, it communicates best when the ensemble arrangements, for example, combine catchy rhythmic tracks with processed voice and Daniel Schwartz's delicious bass lines ("Voiceprint"). Contrary to that other major electronic trumpeter/keyboard dabbler, Miles Davis, Hassell's horn & synth are "merely" part of the tapestry, not its centerpiece. Granted, his sound is ever-present, leading his cohorts across various lunar dreamscapes, but Hassell's sparse, oblique, and slippery theme statements seem to require group participation to embody his gravity-defying constructs: the simple use of a triangle (or triangle-sounding device) on "Mombasa" provides an effective and steady counter to an otherwise free-floating piece of serenity.

Rhythm, steady rhythm, serves as the backbone to everything on *Works Of Fiction*; generally bright tempos nudge the music along—check out the funk/pop/almost-Tutuish beats on "Voiceprint" and "In The City Of Red Dust." In fact, Adam Rudolph's (and Jeff Rona's?) clever uses of rhythm help to break things up (that tinge of "sameness" referred to above hovers over *Fiction* like an extraterrestrial vulture). Sound effects replace sustained synths, creating and releasing tension, giving the impression of people playing machines instead of the reverse. And, unlike Miles, Hassell's rhythms tend to serve the imagination instead of the groin. Net effect: *Fiction's* sonic dashes, rhythmic or otherwise, complement, rather than obscure, Hassell's lustrous tones.

Peter Gabriel's *Passion* comes to mind. In this case, however, the emotional yearning of *Passion* gives way to that combined sense of foreboding and wonder that comes from a cool music tending towards warm. And yet, *Works Of Fiction's* story is unique. (reviewed on CD)

—*John Ephland*



### GREG OSBY

**SEASON OF RENEWAL**—JMT 834 435-2: SAPPHIRE; ENCHANTMENT; FOR THE CAUSE; LIFE'S TRUTH; DIALOGUE X; SEASON OF RENEWAL; MISCHIEF MAKERS; WORD; CONSTANT STRUCTURE; EYE WITNESS; SPIRIT HOUR. (53:29 minutes)

**Personnel:** Osby, alto and soprano saxes; Kevin Eubanks, Kevin McNeal, guitar synths; Edward Simon, keyboards; Lonnie Plaxico, bass; Paul Samuels, drums; Cassandra Wilson, vocals (cuts 6, 8, 11); Amina Claudine Meyers, vocals (2, 4); Renee Rosnes, keyboards; Steve Thornton, percussion.

★ ★

Ambitious is probably the word Greg Osby would use to describe his overarching plan for

this album; unfortunately, boring is the word that describes too many of the results. Like some of Osby's earlier projects, it must've looked good on paper—shuffle these diverse concepts, gather these talented people, put 'em together—but somewhere between paper and tape the excitement that he wants to generate gets lost.

Maybe it's because he himself needs shaking up. It seems like he's gotten stuck in his own grooves before he's let those grooves spool out into the bigger and better things he's clearly capable of. As an instrumentalist, while he offers a gorgeously glowing, burnished tone that cuts neatly on both alto and soprano, his phrasing, which can be angular and surprising, has become more and more pat and repetitive. As a composer, he's been working the same basic ideas for a while now—odd-meter funk, static ballads—without really developing them into anything new. And his increasing tendency toward overproduction has become truly intrusive and cloying on this album; everything feels claustrophobic.

There are rewarding moments here and there on *Seasons Of Renewal*, but almost all of it sinks repeatedly beneath its own self-conscious weight. It's about as renewing as sitting in a dark room by yourself with the windows closed and the curtains drawn. (reviewed on CD) —Gene Santoro

Chick Corea (3), keyboards; Steve Kershisnik (1, 2, 4, 9-11), Tim Landers (3, 6, 8), Abe Laboriel (5, 7), bass; Gregg Bissonette (1, 2), Joe Heredia (3, 8, 9, 11), Tom Brechtlein (4, 10), Vinnie Colaiuta (5, 6), drums; Steve Tavaglione, saxes and E.W.I.; Gary Grant, flugelhorn (4, 11); Luis Conte, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★

## SCOTT HENDERSON & TRIBAL TECH

**NOMAD**—Relativity 88561-1028-2: *RENEGADE; NOMAD; ROBOT IMMIGRANTS; TUNNEL VISION; ELEGY FOR SHOE; BOFAT; NO NO NO; SELF DEFENSE; RITUALS.* (52:21)

**Personnel:** Henderson, guitar; Gary Willis, bass; Brad Dutz, mallets and percussion; David Goldblatt, keyboards; Steve Houghton, drums.

★ ★ ★ ½

Frank Gambale's dozen does a number on all kinds of grooves, wearing out sambas, mambos, funks, rock ballads, and medium-tempo Steely Dan-type things. The much-acclaimed guitarist has his regular employer of the last few years along for a tune, but it's really Frank's vocals, but don't be dismayed by that right away. Some albums by acknowledged instrumentalists may suffer from the vocals, espe-

cially the sappy love-song type, but Gambale's have guts.

The instrumentals range from the tight, crisp Brecker Brothers-ish funk of "Humid Being," the Bissonette-fueled "Samba Di Somewhere" (where the leader solos on piano and guitar), to the rocking "Robo-Roo." Steve Tavaglione puts in a good effort on saxes, electronic and acoustic, blending well but leaving the soloing spotlight to Gambale. One suspects that Tavaglione could step out of the Sanborn mode if he wanted to. Joe Heredia is a new name on drums amongst the other fusion heavyweights employed, and shows much promise. Flugelman Gary Grant fills the cracks marvelously on the Latin ballad "Mambojambo."

Gambale's singing voice is reminiscent of Jon Anderson (of Yes), not quite as pure or solid, a little shaky on "Obsessed For Life," but he gets his point across. He vocalizes well on "Kuranda," does a nice job in Portuguese on "Obrigado Fukuoka," and sounds like Sting on the album-ending verse "One Not Two." To fans of guitar, anyone who's seen his instructional tape or his work with the Elektrik Band, his guitar adventures are not a surprise. A dose of his other voice is nice, too.

Scott Henderson is one of the guys Gambale idolized when first moving to Los Angeles and beginning studies at the Guitar Institute. Henderson has kept Tribal Tech together through his days with the Joe Zawinul Syndicate and Chick Corea, and the current Tech on *Nomad*



### FRANK GAMBALE

**THUNDER FROM DOWN UNDER**—JVC JD-3321: *HUMID BEING; FASTER THAN AN ARROW; SAMBA DI SOMEWHERE; KURANDA; OBSESSED FOR LIFE; LEAVE OZONE ALONE; THE LAND OF WONDER; OBRIGADO FUKUOKA; ROBO-ROO; FORGOTTEN BUT NOT GONE; MAMBOJAMBO; ONE NOT TWO.* (58:25)

**Personnel:** Gambale, guitars, keyboards, vocals; Kei Akagi (cut 1), Freddie Ravel (1, 8),

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## VOTE!

READERS POLL  
BALLOT

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is solid indeed. You might suspect bassist Willis wrote the opening "Renegade," the way he covers the bass, flirting with the times, expanding the rhythm consciousness. Keyboardist David Goldblatt makes interesting things happen throughout, and co-wrote "Robot Immigrants" with percussionist Dutz, a nice ensemble piece that builds steam effectively before the leader takes it out with a blast.

The guitarist shows all kinds of colors, but mostly he loves to rip. He doesn't worry about saving anything, in fact he almost blows all gaskets on the first tune, staking a claim right

away. On "Tunnel Vision" he flows and glows like Allan Holdsworth, and gets nice kicks from drummer Houghton. The skinsman makes good sense of the Tribal Tech tunes and gets the sparks flying well. "No No No" starts out with a pretty tame reggae groove, soon gets out there a bit as Houghton spars with Goldblatt and Henderson. On "Bofat" the guitarist comes out burning like Steve Morse, but the tune's head shows overexposure to Weather Report. This album doesn't have the consistency of their previous *Dr. Hee* (on Passport Jazz), but it's still a solid effort, and worth

checking out. (reviewed on CD)

—Robin Tolleson



## KOKO TAYLOR

**JUMP FOR JOY**—Alligator 4784; *CAN'T LET GO; STOP WATCHING YOUR ENEMIES; HEY BABY; TIRED OF THAT; IT'S A DIRTY JOB; JUMP FOR JOY; TIME WILL TELL; THE EYES DON'T LIE; FISHING TRIP; I DON'T WANT NO LEFTOVERS.* (47:02 minutes)

**Personnel:** Taylor, vocals; Chriss Johnson, guitar; Jim Dortch, keyboards; Jerry Murphy, bass; Roy "Kille-" Allison, drums; Billy Branch, harmonica (cut 10); Lonnie Brooks, guitar (6); Elmer Brown II, trumpet; Henri Ford, Gene Borge, tenor sax; Edwin Williams, Orville McFarland, trombone; Willie Henderson, baritone sax.

★ ★ ½

"Queen of the Blues" Koko Taylor offers up her usual melange of hard-partying rowdiness, take-no-mess sass, and occasional hints of vulnerability. It's all delivered in her trademark leather-lunged roar, complete with constricted squeals on the high notes and raucous shouting in the lower registers.

Much about Taylor is very appealing. In today's rock & roll world of Madonna-style aging schoolgirl slut sex queens masquerading as models of liberation, the aggressive dignity of a sexual anthem like "Hey, Baby" ("All you pretty men/so far and in between/I don't need the fancy type/I need one that's clean!") is both refreshing and edifying. And Taylor's refusal to take any mess from recalcitrant lovers ("Tired Of That," "The Eyes Don't Lie") fuses with her exuberant party tunes to portray a "Wild Woman," in the grand tradition of Ida Cox, who won't "Have The Blues" very often.

But Taylor's apparent compulsion to make almost everything into an anthem largely ignores the more subtle aspects of blues expression. This unfortunate tendency toward the grandiose is reflected in her accompaniment. "Time Will Tell," a lovely gospel-blues ballad, breaks the mold, but the overall sound here is ponderous, heavy on the Wagnerian swells and almost totally lacking in subtlety and dynamics. Guest guitarist Lonnie Brooks manages some tasteful licks ("It's A Dirty Job"), Billy Branch's supple harp ("I Don't Want No Leftovers"), and keyboardist Jim Dortch's adventurous explorations ("Fishing Trip") provide some relief; but the rhythm section seems generally content to lumber along in a bone-crunching boogie grind, and somebody really ought to teach guitarist Chriss Johnson about rests. There's a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 60

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**1 SHIRLEY HORN.** "I Wanna Be Loved" (from *CLOSE ENOUGH FOR LOVE*, Verve) Horn, piano, vocal.

I'm glad we started with Shirley; she's not only one of the all-time vocal geniuses, but she—and Herbie Hancock, Blossom Dearie, and Reuben Brown—are the best chord voicers in the world. Sometimes you think she has 11 fingers; she'll change one note and the chord alters meaning. I tell my students to listen to her and Miles for their use of space: you don't have to fill in every measure. She draws you so into the ideas of the song that you find yourself agreeing with her: "That's right, the world *does* owe us a loving!" How can I say it? 5+ + + stars.

**2 FRED ASTAIRE.** "Puttin' On The Ritz" (from *THE ASTAIRE STORY*, DRG) Astaire, vocal; Oscar Peterson, piano; Flip Phillips, tenor sax; Charlie Shavers, trumpet.

There's another delight of my life. You think of Astaire singing and dancing, but he was also a good drummer. His percussive abilities were in his hands *and* feet. He's one of the greatest vocal artists of any time. He stands up and speaks to you. 5+ +. That's the album he made with Norman Granz, so it must be Oscar on piano and . . . Ben Webster? I can recognize Miles, Art Farmer, and Clark Terry, but so many other trumpeters derived from Dizzy. . . . They're all just having a ball.

**3 CASSANDRA WILSON.** "Woman On The Edge" (from *JUMPWORLD*, JMT) Wilson, vocal.

That's Samantha or Amanda, uh . . . Wilson! Or is it Carmen Lundy? I was waiting for her to come out with this because she'd done an album of standards that I didn't want to hear any more versions of. She doesn't sound like Abbey Lincoln, but she has that same courage of not even attempting to sound like anybody but herself. I love the rhythm; the band is recorded great! Wonderful singing. Though, because the lyric is obscure and far-out, she might have worked harder on the vowel sounds, to make the words exactly clear. 4½.

**4 MANHATTAN TRANSFER.** "Capim" (from *BRAZIL*, Atlantic) Djavan, guest vocal, composer.

You see me smile; my heart is in Brazil. I first heard Djavan in a Rio street shop; it was a little jazz tune with trumpet, sort of Brazil bebop maybe he'd picked up from Filoh. This is Transfer's most effective tune on the album, because it really recaptures the spirit of the tune and they didn't try to use an English lyric, which don't work unless

**MARK MURPHY**  
by Fred Bouchard

**M**ark Murphy is the wittiest and most resourceful jazz singer in America. The Bay Area-based singer with the magisterial, adenoidal baritone has deeply mined samba and blues, homaged Nat Cole and Jack Kerouac, written good lyrics, and made a score of impassioned albums with top players since 1959 (mainly on Muse).

Murphy's timing is razor-sharp, his phrasing transcendent, his range olympian, backing up whimsy with hard work. Murphy constantly surprises: at Boston's Scullers Lounge in April he tacked rap onto an Ivan Lins samba, cluck-scatted on Louis Jordan's "Chickens," hushed the room with a dead-slow "Night We Called It A Day," and broke it up with a headlong version of Tadd Dameron's "If You Could See Me Now." Reared on bop and the Beats, Murphy



wails scat like a brass player and interprets tunes he handpicks from many musical gardens.

On his first Blindfold Test, he had a near-max i.d. quotient and scattered stardust liberally.

there's a connection between the flow of Portuguese and the English. They perform the Portuguese clearly and naturally; I congratulate them highly on coming as close as any group to getting Portuguese *down*. The rhythm section's hot and the recording marvelous. 5+.

**5 CARMEN McRAE/ BETTY CARTER.** "Stolen Moments" (from *THE DUETS*, GAMH) Carter, McRae, vocals; Oliver Nelson, music; Edward Fisher, lyrics.

Betty played me tapes of one of the nights [she and Carmen] did, and despite the rough edges, there's some happenin' shit, like when Betty is comping behind Carmen. I don't know who wrote this new lyric, with the solo in it, but it works nicely for them. Inspired by them, I tried to get a trio record going with Sheila Jordan and Shirley Horn, but I haven't managed it yet. Maybe some courageous producer will help me. 5.

**6 REBECCA PARRIS.** "The Island" (from *DOUBLE RAINBOW*, Weston-Blair) Parris, vocal; Ivan Lins, music; M&A Bergman, lyrics.

That's my girl, Rebecca, about to make a big emergence on the scene. She gets a lot of air play in San Francisco, too. This lyric is uncomfortable for a guy to sing; it's very Marilyn Bergman. Alan must've been out that day! This is live and strangely recorded, but Rebecca really gets into it: [vocally, it's lovely when] she pushes it from her throat up into the nose. It's just a gorgeous song, and certainly this is one of the best record-

ings of it ever. 5.

**7 BOBBY McFERRIN.** "Opportunity" (from *SPONTANEOUS INVENTIONS*, Blue Note) McFerrin, solo voice; Joan Armatrading, composer.

That's one of the best recordings of a voice I've ever heard. Certainly no overdubs! Bobby has such amazing dexterity, jumping from range to range. I'd love to hear the words a little clearer, but he's said he's less interested in the words than the music. He has incredible rhythm and feeling, and singers are copying his licks. I saw Bobby in London with Urszula Dudziak, Norma Winstone, and Jay Clayton doing group improvisation: that's his next thing. He's a very well-rounded musician, and a clever guy. I'd give that 5 just for the recording!

**8 JACKIE CAIN/ROY KRAL.** "Two Peas In A Pod" (from *IN THE SPOTLIGHT*, ABC-Paramount) Cain, vocal; Kral, piano, vocal.

5,001 stars for my darlings from Montclair, N.J.! They were doing consistently marvelous music even before I broke in in Buffalo in 1957, '58. This is that vintage, but see how modern it sounds? They never let anything get in the way of their spare approach. Roy is one of the rare surviving true bop pianists; Bob Dorough is another. They show the great taste and care [that comes] from never compromising. I'd love them to tour forever. They are two peas whose pod I love. May the force be with them. **DB**



## TERUMASA HINO

THE JAPANESE BRASSMAN,  
BLUETRUCK FROM BIRTH,  
GOES STRAIGHTAHEAD.

by Howard Mandel

**T**erumasa Hino's a go-for-it brassman—it's obvious from his stance at the microphone, no less than from his sound. Leading his Bluestruck band at Sweet Basil last spring, the slender, youthful 48-year-old with wavy hair, a pencil-thin mustache, and finely-tailored suit perched on tip-toe, shoulder hunched high as though to get downward-slanting power behind the cornet with which he shot lines deep into the eye of a '90s bop maelstrom. Even more so than on his band's eponymous and well-crafted *Bluestruck* (co-arranged by Don Sickler, licensed in the U.S. by Blue Note Records and including such notables as John Scofield, Bobby Watson, and Onaje Allan Gumbs), Hino live shows enthusiasm for the chase, originality of expression, and sureness of purpose. But then, his course has never been in doubt.

"I got the horn when I was nine years old; before that I tap danced, because my father is tap dancer and trumpeter," says Hino. His English is comprehensible but askew; he's only lived in New York City since '75. Still, jazz was his birthright.

"When I was born, my father listening all the time to records by Satchmo, everybody. My father took me to many American movies, with Harry James playing, or whoever. So I grew up automatically in jazz field, nothing Japanese influenced. Of course, later I look more inside, and realize I'm so Japanese in identity."

If a young man with a horn and the image of Betty Grable's husband on his mind seems an anomaly for U.S.-occupied Japan after World War II, Hino claims it wasn't odd at all. "Japan loves America, its frontier spirit, all its energy. Even *during* the war. One famous jazz vocalist was a telegraph soldier, doing Morse code," he recalls. "And while we fighting with you, he tuning in radio, finding American jazz stations, listening! After the war, American cars, American lifestyle, American films were the dream."

Like many an American hero, Hino achieved his dream through self-discipline, hard work, and lucky meetings. "I don't have any education in music because no teacher around me. Father taught me how to grab the instrument and how to make a noise, that's all. Myself, so many wastes of time. Cut my lips until blood came because I don't know how to blow. Then I was in junior high school, 13 or 14 years old, I started work in U.S. Army Camp Drake. Jazz swing band, big band."

By age 19 Hino had joined the Tokyo equivalent of the Jazz Composers Orchestra Association, improvisers determined to make music of their own rather than imitate note-for-note solos heard on imported records. "Yosuke Yamashita, the pianist, was in same band, a quintet, and he wrote some very 'out' things. We tried breaking glass, we switched trumpet mouthpiece to clari-

*To Loneliness* (on Inner City) in January '75, then moved to the States. Hino returned to Germany as a member of Gil Evans' orchestra in '78. His association is documented in Evans' *Little Wing* (also on Inner City). Hino's also recorded with Ron Carter, Tony Williams, and Elvin Jones, among others.

He has an unusual sense of the connections between jazz and traditional Japanese cul-



HYOUWELZ

net, the alto mouthpiece on trumpet—we tried all those things. Inside I'm a very free musician, though now I play more straight-ahead. I can go back and forth anytime I want to."

While still in high school, Hino had heard Louis Armstrong in a local theater, and further exposure to touring American musicians followed. "In the '60s, Art Blakey and Jazz Messengers and also Horace Silver Quintet came. That time, I couldn't afford a nice ticket. In the third balcony, upstairs, cheap tickets I got, and as soon as they started, goose bumps all over me. I couldn't believe it! And then I went to backstage dressing room, and I met Blue Mitchell, Lee Morgan, start talking, ask questions how to play. I got friends.

"They were kind of teachers, because a Japanese playing horn—and somebody who sounds like sometimes Freddie Hubbard, sometimes Blue Mitchell, Lee Morgan—they amazed. We hang out, and have after-hours session."

Celebrated as Japanese jazz's future while still in his early 20s, Hino performed at the Berlin Jazz Festival in '65 and '71, recorded three of his original compositions with Japanese sidemen in an electric idiom on *Speak*

ture.

"We don't have so much harmony in Japan; traditionally, only a melody line and rhythm. The African pentatonic scale, like Coltrane played, modes, and the blues scale, remind me of Japanese folk and traditional songs. Also, Japanese drums. The power is the same."

Hino learned another, harder lesson in the U.S.A. "When I first came I want to test myself in this great country. Any jazz club I go, I ask, 'Can I play? Can I sit in?' Always I did it. And I was thinking, not so much good in American musicians here. I have more fire and energy.

"One and a half years later, something I'm missing, I'm empty. What's the problem? I found out: American musician is much more relaxed. Always I'm standing up to jump in so hard. When I went to Europe critics say, 'Karate jazz, kamikaze jazz,' and they love it. But I played a jam session one night with Art Blakey, and he said, 'Hino, you don't have to prove yourself. You're Hino.' I was very shocked.

"Oh, I still do that karate jazz, that's what I'm fighting. I have to calm down, settle down, take time, relax. That's what I learned from the States." **DB**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 48

lot of cheer-in-your-beer fun here, but not much to nourish the soul after the party's over. (reviewed on CD) —David Whiteis



## GEORGE ADAMS

**AMERICA**—Blue Note 93896: *AMERICA The Beautiful; Tennessee Waltz; Motivation; Old Folks At Home; Gee Baby, Ain't I Good To You?; Take Me Out To The Ballgame; You Are My Sunshine; Georgia On My Mind; Have You Thanked America?; The Star Spangled Banner.* (52:57 minutes)

**Personnel:** Adams, tenor saxophone, vocals (cuts 3, 5, 9), flute (4); Hugh Lawson, piano (except 6, 10); Cecil McBee, bass (except 6, 10); Mark Johnson, drums (except 6, 10).

★ ★ ★

Adams' '89 *Nightingale* was put down in some circles for being unironic, but his sincere approach to corny songs was fresh—something only a player with such a pretty sound could pull off. But *America's* flagwavers beg for cheeky treatments they rarely get. Aside from the half-time march intro, he plays "America The Beautiful" straight. Singing his own "Have You Thanked America?" ("From the Great Lakes to the Gulf/You can never get enough"), George talks out of both sides of his mouth like a politician, wryly mocking and shamelessly milking the same sentiment. Old comrade Blood Ulmer's "Are You Glad To Be In America?" would have been a savvier choice.

Yet, again, he transcends dubious material—accenting the blue in Old Glory's color scheme—and throws in other stuff for relief, like his juke-joint jump with vocal, "Motivation." "Gee Baby" succinctly showcases his soulful, direct, resonant tenor sound, and Lawson displays blues sense to match, but Adams sings there, too; his occasional vocals used to be a pleasant diversion, but his untutored voice doesn't warrant so much exposure. He shouldn't distract us from his soul tenor: George's excited staccato variations on "The Tennessee Waltz" will stand comparison with Sonny Rollins' recent version.

But something's missing. Back with Mingus and in partnership with Don Pullen, George's greatest asset was his ability to effectively combine the sensibilities of the freejazz and the bluesy balladeer. Save for the a capella "Ballgame," which suggests how much Adams learned from Albert Ayler's takes on innocuous themes, *America*, like *Nightingale*, focuses mostly on the safer side of his art. He should remember that American motto: Be All That You Can Be. (reviewed on CD) —Kevin Whitehead

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