

56th ANNUAL READERS POLL

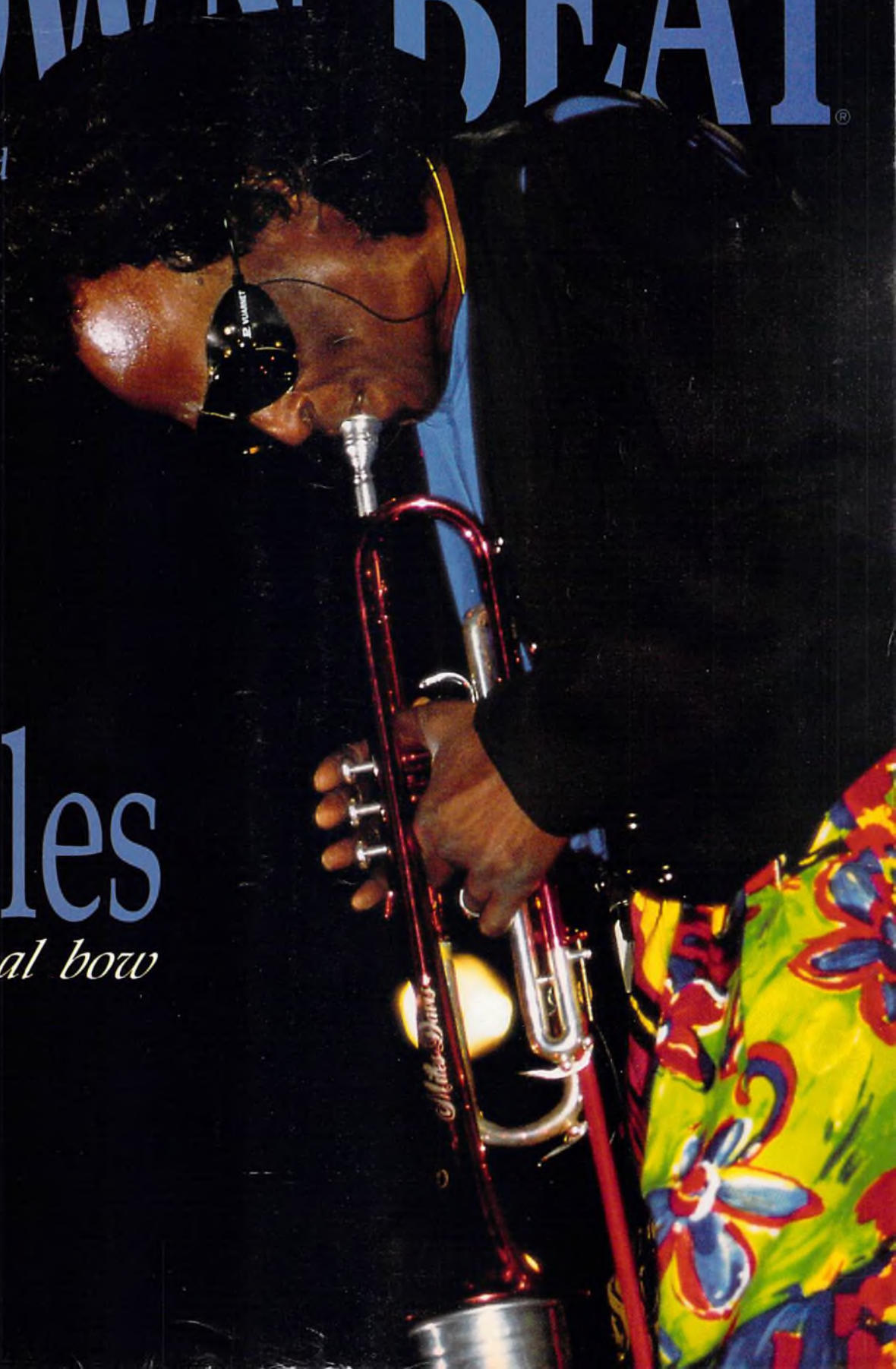
# DOWN BEAT

Jazz, Blues & Beyond

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# Miles

*The final bow*



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## 16 SKETCHES OF MILES

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# Sketch

For those who've come to jazz during any of the 45 years since America got hip in the aftermath of World War II, it's hard to accept that Miles Dewey Davis III—Junior, the Cool One, the Black Prince, the Man with the Horn—is dead. All his life he was a survivor. The precocious and relatively privileged son of a rural Illinois oral surgeon, Miles dropped out of conservatory training to study the hard blues of New York City nights in the fast company of Bird, Diz, Monk, Newk, Blakey—and he never looked back. Brilliantly original and rangy, he forged an international career of mass popularity, artistic credibility, and influence, winning a total of 29 *Down Beat* polls for best trumpet in the process. He was a public contradiction, apparently arrogant but at some musical core tender and shy. He was always in touch with his tradition but always ahead—*way* ahead—of the pack.

"Miles' sound entered into whatever he played," says Jackie McLean, who essayed Davis' originals "Bluing," "Dig," "Out Of The Blue," and "Denial," plus the standards "My Old Flame" and "It's Only A Paper Moon" in October, 1951 as a 16-year-old alto saxist in the 25-year-old trumpeter's band. "I didn't love all the things he did in later years with his fusion bands, but as long as he was playing he captured that tone, and the music was his."

What a tone it was, and what it sang of Miles' soul! Crisp and/or cooing, crooning, muted or mewling, fierce as though shredding complacency or tender as a man treading on eggshells, Miles' playing the trumpet is at once and forever identifiable and inimitable.

"I admired that," McLean admits, "and wanted it—a real personal sound, a sound people could recognize in just a couple of notes as *mine*." What Miles' sound said created controversy throughout a musical community, reacting in thrall or dismay to his dry but overtone-rich, middle-register "voice," the poised charts of *The Birth Of The Cool*, the dramatic economy of his '50s combos, the moody modal lyricism of *Kind Of Blue*, the orchestral manifestations conducted by Gil Evans, the fluid freedoms of Miles' '60s quintet, his psychedelic adventures in the later '60s, excesses of the '70s, reemergence in the '80s, and completely uncharacteristic recapitulation of old times in Montreux and Paris just last summer. Ironically, touchingly, the pioneer of future jazz—personal expression over basic blues structures and vamps (not to exclude composed passages and processes), taking advantage of popular rhythms, tunes, and state-of-the-art studio techniques—ended up reprising his roots and early successes, performing Gil Evans' scores and his own hits with famous sidemen of his past.

"To me, the fusion wasn't serious enough or deep enough," says McLean, citing an orthodox position on Davis' exploration of music far from the bop with which he'd begun. "Miles played a very technical, traditional music before 1969, following Ellington and all the great masters. Then, for fame or money or something—I'm



# es of Miles



by Howard Mandel

sure *not* because of his musical tastes—he decided to go this other way. I like some of the newer stuff, ‘Mandela’ and a few other tunes. And you’ve got to give him credit: he’s the one who set up this whole marriage between rock & roll, or rhythm & blues, and traditional jazz. He opened up a whole market for people who play something heavier than ‘Here comes Char-lie’ four-chord rock.”

This view prevails among many players of Miles’ generation: Tommy Flanagan, Jimmy and Percy Heath, Milt Jackson, J. J. Johnson, John Lewis, Max Roach, and Art Taylor from his Blue Note and Prestige albums come to mind. Since trumpeter Wynton Marsalis assumed a jazz leadership role, adapting some of the look and attitudes Miles posed in the ‘50s upon joining Columbia Records, the reboppers have embraced this opinion, too. But some musicians appraise Davis’ post-acoustic jazz otherwise.

“Every style he played became a genre,” keyboardist Gil Goldstein proclaims, waiting at the bar at Sweet Basil before a set with the loud, young Miles Evans band. Goldstein prepared Gil Evans’ fragmentary charts for Davis’ Montreux fest concert at Quincy Jones’ request, and is a font of backstage stories regarding that videotaped event. “Even the things everybody hated, that the musicians said were bullshit, now they’re all styles. To me, that makes the whole thing about Wynton and their debate so stupid. How are you going to compare these guys? *Everything* Miles did became a classic.”

Chick Corea, among other collaborators from Miles’ last 25 years, agrees. “He put the cap on a certain style of acoustic jazz music with Herbie and Ron and Tony and Wayne.” Corea says of Davis’ great combo with Hancock and Carter and Williams and Shorter. “And then he let the world of changing harmonies go, started going into vamps and jungle music, primitive rhythms and abstracted melodies. The years *we* were on tour”—Corea worked from ‘68 to ‘70, with Shorter, Dave Holland, Keith Jarrett, Joe Zawinul, David Liebman, Steve Grossman, Jack DeJohnette, and various others—“the sets I played in would be one improvisation from beginning to end with a few little cues from Miles to change the tempo or the key. Every tune we played was in this incredible abstract form; the meat of the rendition was a free improvisation.”

Though one of the most experimental, transitional, and productive periods of Miles’ prime, he was poorly documented from the late ‘60s to the mid-‘70s. “They [Columbia] never released any live stuff from that band—it was too ‘out,’ I think. There’s not much you could say about this music or do with it,” Corea suggests. “There weren’t any particularly memorable melodies or songs. But I remember a fun, searching energy and spirit of improvisation. There never was a studio version of the music we played, either.”

Teo Macero, Davis’ Columbia producer from *Kind Of Blue* in ‘59

through *Star People* in ‘83, regrets dozens of lost opportunities and notions gone awry. “CBS didn’t want live albums of Miles,” he reports. “Some executive would always want him to go back to a quartet setting, or do another *Sketches Of Spain*—not that they liked *that* when it was recorded. I used to tell them, ‘He’s a great artist. You can’t screw around with a great artist, you’ve got to encourage him to move forward.’ He should have done something with the London Philharmonic. He and Gil wanted to do something together again.

“Miles changed every five years, whenever he got a new girlfriend. I thought *Jack Johnson* was a step in the right direction. I wanted to put out a record every month by Miles. I wanted to take a sound truck on the road with the band and record everything they did. But I didn’t control the purse strings. Even his covers were controversial, the cartoons, the big-bellied black lady on *Big Fun*—and I had to fight the stupidity every day.

“As documentation, there are cassettes that Miles gave me, recorded on the road, and takes that are still in the can at Columbia or here in my place, which are important parts of his legacy. He paid his dues, but his was a typical artist’s life. The work is not recognized until they’re gone. I can’t believe that still goes on.”

## THE HORN

Larry Ramirez, chief design technician for brass for the G. Leblanc Corp., began adding his personal input to specifics of Miles Davis’ horns in 1979.

“Two horns were made for his debut in the late ‘70s after he’d been out for several years,” recalls Ramirez, who’d idolized Davis since childhood and had tried to emulate his trumpet sound. “Miles liked a very, very dark tone, but one with rich sound qualities, lots of harmonics or overtones coming through. To get that we had to deal with the materials, how they’re tempered, and the tapers used throughout the horn.”

Davis wanted an extra-heavy instrument—“It may be only a half ounce to you or me, but to a musician it makes a tremendous difference,” says Ramirez—and a black, mirror-like finish that required four coats of lacquer on his customized Martin Committee model. He used the same mouthpiece for years, cornet-like with its relatively deep cup and average rim, which helped mellow his sound. Ramirez had just finished designing a flugelhorn for Davis when he died.

“Miles was a real gentleman, and always treated me great,” remembers Ramirez. “Miles played a lot of things I felt inside.”

—H.M.



Miles was no Van Gogh—more like Picasso. Most, if not all, dimensions of his music, sound, and attitude were hailed worldwide during his life. Still, his death sends us back to our memories and record collections, seeking out the overlooked pleasures. The music is put in fresh perspective by the passage of his time, and ours.

"I think there's more to be understood than what we've gotten so far," says Dan Morgenstern, director of the Institute for Jazz Studies at Rutgers University. "Especially that music of the '60s starting with *Miles Smiles* and going to *Filles de Kilimanjaro*, which is a step towards the fusion stage. *Bitches Brew* and all that, has some fascinating stuff which the people who were involved, except perhaps for Wayne Shorter, didn't pursue. And I'd like to point out that Miles was quite a trumpet player. Listen to the way he plays with Tadd Dameron on that Paris Jazz Festival date in '49. He's playing off Dizzy, he hits some high notes, he plays that bebop. There are people who say he created his own spare, lyrical style because he couldn't cut the other stuff. I don't think that's true. He could have cut it, if he had wanted to pursue that.

"Instead, he found his own voice, which is the point of the whole thing. And it wasn't by default. He could hit some pretty incredible notes even in his 60s."

What was incredible about those notes, and what remains so elusive of analysis in Miles' art, is the power of personality behind them. "There's this one track on *Miles And Monk At Newport*,



RONALD HOWARD

with Coltrane and the sextet, which is one of my favorite live Miles performances," Chick Corea recalls. "They do a version of 'Straight No Chaser,' an F blues, and his solo on it, four choruses or so, is a totally marvelous, simple masterpiece. I've listened to it over and over again, and once for a lark I transcribed it, wrote it down.

"Miles' solos are really interesting to look at on music paper, because there's nothing to them. On a Trane solo or Charlie Parker solo, you can string the notes out and see all these phrases and harmonic ideas, patterns, all kinds of things. Miles doesn't use

Miles Davis, the trumpeter and composer whose restless musical innovations and provocative image affected world culture with the values of jazz, died September 28, 1991 at St. John's Hospital and Health Center in Santa Monica, California, where he'd been hospitalized for weeks following a stroke.

Davis, born May 25, 1926 in Alton, Illinois and raised in East St. Louis, was given a trumpet for his 13th birthday. Two years later he had a union card so he could perform with Eddie Randall's Blue Devils. Clark Terry was his mentor, and Davis filled in for an ailing trumpeter with Billy Eckstine's band in 1944. That September he enrolled at Juilliard School of Music in New York City, and was befriended by Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, who brought him into bebop circles. The next year, Davis recorded with singer "Rubberlegs" Williams and quit his formal training. In November '45 he recorded "Now's The Time" and "Ko-Ko" in Parker's quintet. Davis' August 1947 debut as a recorded leader featured Parker on tenor saxophone.

In 1948, with a coterie of composers, arrangers, and players who gathered at Gil Evans' 52nd St. apartment, Davis formed a nine-piece band that eventually recorded *The Birth Of The Cool*. In 1954 he overcame the effects of heroin addiction to affirm his singular style and talents as a soloist, songwriter, and combo leader. Recordings with Sonny Rollins, Horace Silver, and Thelonious Monk preceded Davis' establishment of a memorable, popular, and influential quintet with John Coltrane, Red Garland, Paul Chambers, and Philly Joe Jones, documented on Prestige and Columbia Records.

Davis' speaking voice, permanently scarred from shouting soon after throat surgery, reflected the intimate import of his trumpet sound. His elegance and extravagance, dramatic outbursts and lyrical moodiness were mirrored in his lifestyle, which fascinated fans who might otherwise know little of jazz.

Davis, however, never rested on his achievements or celebrity. He progressed from a classic modal album, *Kind Of Blue*, to interpretations of Gershwin's *Porgy And Bess* and Joaquin Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*, both orchestrated for large ensembles by Gil Evans. His great acoustic '60s quintet gave way to breakthroughs in electrically amplified and studio manipulated albums, including the jazz-rock foundation, *Bitches Brew*. Davis experimented with extended free improvisations, funk, and new pop formulations, also creating jazz soundtracks.

In 1975, afflicted with health problems and drug habits, Davis retired, returning with the 1980-'81 album, *The Man With The Horn*. Throughout his last decade he toured and recorded prodigiously, co-wrote with Quincy Troupe *Miles: The Autobiography*, and accepted a Grammy Award for lifetime achievement. His final performances were recreations of his Gil Evans' collaborations conducted by Quincy Jones and a reunion concert in Paris with protégés and friends from diverse phases of his career.

Davis' three marriages ended in divorce: he had three sons, a daughter, and four grandchildren. A memorial service October 5 at St. Peter's Lutheran Church was attended by several hundred admirers. The Reverend Jesse Jackson, Bill Cosby, Quincy Jones, Herbie Hancock, Max Roach, and George Wein were among the speakers, and the rock star Prince's letter was read. —H.M.



IN MEMORIAM | MILES DAVIS

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patterns. He doesn't string notes out. It's weird. Without the expression, and without the feeling he put in it, there's nothing there."

"What I learned from Miles is that he goes with his feelings of the moment," says guitarist John Scofield, who toured with Davis from '82 to '85, recording *Star People*, *Decoy*, *You're Under Arrest*, and bits of the soundtrack *Siesta*. "You have to learn to trust your own human instrument to read what's supposed to happen. That, for me, is the great message from Miles.

"We would play in huge venues to thousands of people, and he was able to reach those people and have them love the music. They loved it because of a feeling that came from his trumpet playing and the mood of the musicians around him. He was able to convey that to us in unspoken ways, and create a mood through music right there on the spot. Not the same mood as the night before . . . different, but picking up on certain things.

"It made me realize the power of his tradition, which I think is the jazz tradition," Scofield reasons. "I've never met anybody who is more of a bopper."

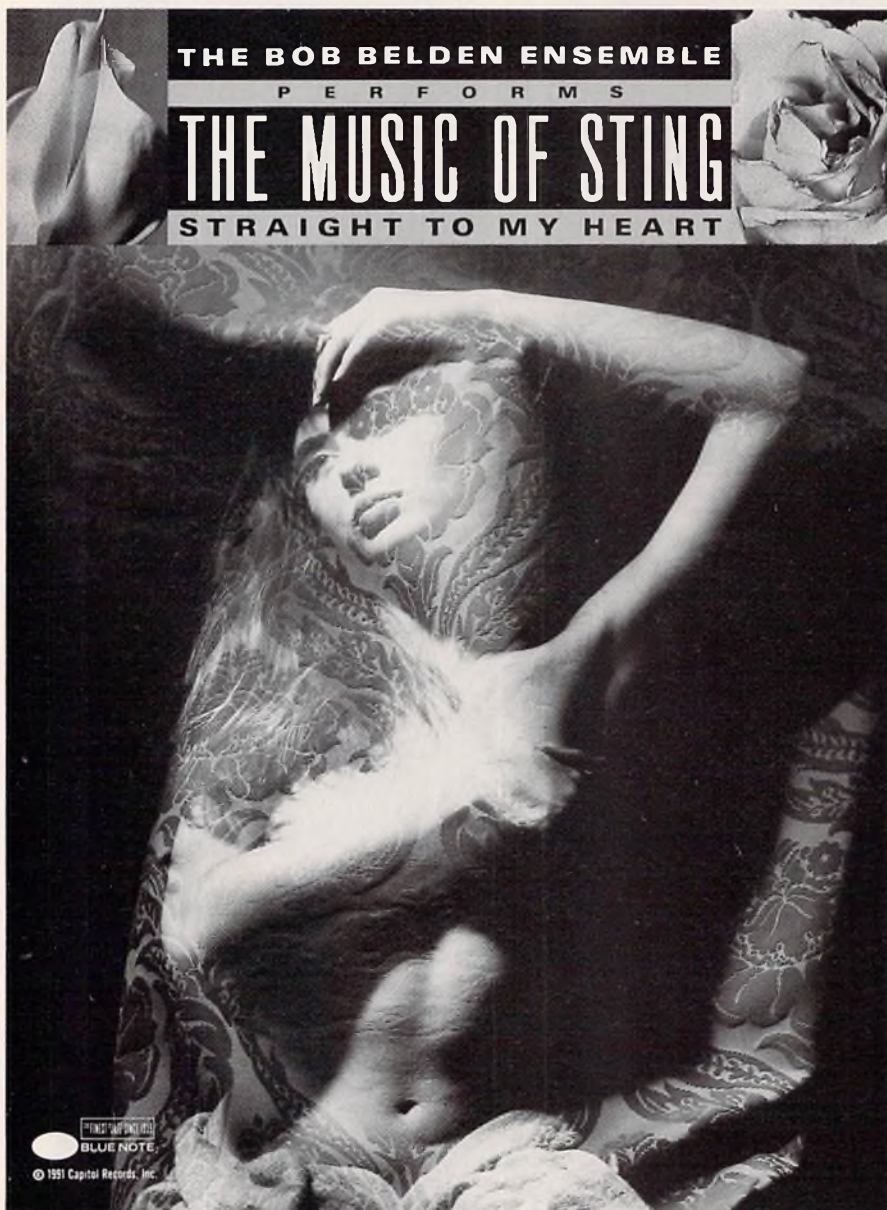
"*Siesta* and *Tutu* were projects," explains Marcus Miller, the multi-instrumentalist who produced Miles' three albums on Warner Bros., and continues working with people like Luther Vandross and Dave Sanborn. "They were not representative of how he usually made music. I envisioned *Amandla* as closer to the sound of his band, with Ricky Wellman on drums, Foley on guitar, and Kenny Garrett playing alto. I would never contend that what we did could compete with what Miles did in the '50s, but it served a purpose in his career.

"What Miles told me was, 'Hey man—you brought me back!' People were talking about him again. I put rhythms that are going on now with elements that Miles had been into before. A lot of people could relate to that. I got him out from behind his mute, so you could hear that beautiful tone. Older people with open minds enjoyed it, and young people *loved* it.

"The first thing I learned from Miles was about being true to yourself," Miller explains. "Here was a guy who was acclaimed and criticized, and nothing that was ever said to him made him change what he felt he had to do. That's very important for a musician to learn, because you can be so easily swayed by people who have nothing to do with what you're about. They only know what you've already done; they have no idea of your goals.

"You've heard people say, when their parents have died, they finally feel like adults? Even if they're in their 50s? That now they're really on their own? Musically, I feel that way about Miles. I'm on my own now. This is it now. Figure out what to do, and do it. Right now, I'm working on an instrumental record of my own."

In that sense, Miles may yet serve as a father to us all. **DB**



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# The Miles Files

Compiled by Frank Alkyer

**T**ime passes and Miles is gone. He left some great music, forever presenting the next new "thing." But he also left his opinions on music, his life and times, his contemporaries, politics, and practically any other subject imaginable.

Over the years, Miles appeared in the pages of *Down Beat* hundreds of times—recording after stellar recording, brushes with the law, blindfold tests, retrospectives on his career, leaving the business, making triumphant comebacks, and most recently, performing the arrangements of Gil Evans

for one magical evening at the Montreux Jazz Festival (see *DB* Oct. '91).

Of all the articles, most special are his *Down Beat* conversations. It was always a challenge to get Miles to sit down and talk. More than a few *DB* writers and editors had been frustrated, stood up, and even tossed out. But once Miles began an interview, it was always interesting. The following are excerpts from six classic conversations. Insightful, arrogant, touching, and sometimes a bit lurid, Miles pulled no punches—ever!



**O**ctober 1988 was the final *DB* interview with Miles Davis. John Ephland was told he might get 45 minutes. Miles talked for nearly two hours. Here's what he had to say . . .

**On moving around while playing:** "I walk around all the time because there's different sounds on stage. . . . Nobody wants to stand still and play, you know what I mean? It's old-time, man; it's Jim Crow. Not Jim Crow, Uncle Tommish when you go to the microphone and you play and you step back and bow to the audience, like the audience is doing something for them when they're really teachin' the audience. . . .

Well, you know the way John [Coltrane] played, it was all the stuff he played was throwin' him off-balance anyway. So it didn't matter whether he was standin' in front of the mic or what. And sometimes, I can't remember him even goin' to the microphone or him bein' in the vicinity of the microphone. But not like old musicians with bebop cliches and stuff."

**On the value of recordings:** "It's like a program. It's like a menu, when you go out—say, 'Here's "Tutu," here's what they're gonna play.' But, it ain't gonna sound like that. See, here's what they're gonna play, this is a guide, this is 'Tutu.' It goes like this, but it goes farther when we play it, you know?"

**On rock & roll and jazz:** ". . . you've got to realize it's 1988 and the shit rubs off on you whether you like it or not. All the television shows, all the MTV, and all the black soul sound. And when you write music, it's gotta seep in."

**On critics:** "They have a place, yeah. But, it's just that the musician shouldn't cater to 'em. If your own peers don't tell you how sad you are, the critic can't tell you, you know? A lot of times a critic says, 'That sounds good,' and you think it sounds like shit. But it's individual taste. And it does destroy a lot of careers."

**On Charlie Parker:** "If you listen to Ben Webster, you can hear Bird. You can hear the same breaks, like in 'Cottontail' and 'C Jam Blues.' It sounds just like Bird. And Ben was a supporter of Bird when people and critics didn't know what to write. . . . He was just one of those things that happen every 100 years. I mean, he could do anything."



**I**n 1984, it had been a decade since Miles had been interviewed for *Down Beat*. He had dropped out of the scene in the mid-'70s, come back triumphantly in 1980, and had just released *Decoy*, his fourth album since returning.

"I don't mind talkin' if people are listenin'," Miles told Howard Mandel in the December issue. "Just don't ask me no bullshit. I don't want to be compared to any white musician." And that was just the beginning . . .

**On why he stopped playing:** "I don't know, but I was bored with myself. I was bored with the business end of it; that's always been terrible. You know, if you don't watch your money and have somebody who knows about how to invest it, somebody will steal you blind."

**On recording:** "There ain't nothin' happenin' in the studio; you don't get no feelin'.





VERYL OAKLAND



. . . It's not the retakes; it's the feelin' you put in it . . . I mean, you can't say 'I love you' twice. You have to say it when you feel it."

**On practice:** "I practice every day. Got to do that—you don't practice, you can't play nothin'. Scales, mostly—trumpet stuff. Long tones are best. If I can play a low F sharp, loud and clear, then I know my tone is there. I had to work real hard to get that tone back when I came back; it took me two years to get it right. Now that it's back, I'm gonna keep it."

**Advice to young musicians:** "They have to get their own sound. The notes go with your sound. It's like color. My color—I'm Black, brown, with a little red-orange skin. Red looks good on me. You have to do the same with music. If you have a tone, you play notes to match your sound, your tone, if you're gonna make it pleasin' to yourself—and then you can please somebody else with it."

**On finding new directions:** "Because I know Herbie [Hancock] so well—he's like what people call a genius; he's something else. But Keith [Jarrett], Chick [Corea], they're all crazy like that in the genius way—they play so much there ain't nothin' left for them to do but funk with somethin' else. . . . You owe that to music. A lot of guys are wearin' clean shirts, and drivin' new cars, from copyin' me. They have jobs. But they owe Dizzy somethin', and Louis, and people like that, for what they did that was great. Why not try to do somethin' yourself? Even if nothin' else but for the fans' sake, 'cause they done heard all this stuff. . . . Well, everybody wants a new sandwich. Whatcha gonna put on a hamburger next? You know?"

**T**he July 18, 1974 Miles interview with Gregg Hall had to be the wildest. No one knew what would happen. Earlier in the year, Miles had thrown another writer out for being a "white woman." But this time, Miles was in a crazy, talkative mood. . . .

**On wardrobe:** "Well, you know, in the first place, I have always known what to wear for myself and then other people try to copy it. . . . Well, that's part of it, you know. Like when I go on the bandstand, man, for 35 or 45 minutes, I'm playing by myself, and I'm sweating like a mother-f\*\*ker and the bitches are just sittin' there looking to see what I've got on and I'm playing my ass off and they don't hear what I'm playin', you know. . . ."



**On women:** "Yeah, I have a thing about helping black women, you know. Because when I was using dope it was costing me a couple of grand a day, and I used to take bitches' money. So when I stopped to clean up, I got mad at *Playboy* and I wouldn't accept their poll because they didn't have no black women in their magazine, you know. So I started putting them on my [album] covers. So I put Cicely's [Tyson] picture on my record [*Sorcerer*]. It went all around the world."

**On playing black colleges for free:** "All they have to do is pay my transportation and pay the band. I really feel like I don't do anything. I would like for black people to look at me like [boxer] Joe Louis [*laughter*]. Maybe it will never happen, maybe it's just wishful thinking."

**On practice:** "I never touch my horn unless I have a job. Then, it's fresh that way. In fact, I don't know how to play it [*laughter*]."

**On presidents Nixon and Kennedy:** "Man, Nixon ain't no worse than no other president. . . . John Kennedy was the worst president. He didn't do nothing but have a lot of hair."

**On Roberta Flack and Al Green:** "Yeah, I like Roberta [Flack]. But, you know if Al Green had one tit, I'd marry that motherf\*\*ker."

**On Marvin Gaye:** "The next time you see Marvin, tell him that what he writes, if he wants me to play it, to just call me up and tell me where he is. He's a mother-f\*\*ker! Man, I aint' never heard nothing like 'You're The Man.' And 'What's Happening Brother'—god damn! That tune is so hip, boy, Marvin should do a show with it. I love him, man."

**On Mick Jagger:** "Oh, f\*\*k him. Who's Mick Jagger, anyway!"

**T**he April 6, 1967 article by George Hoefer proved to be interesting in it's historical examination of Miles' career to that point. Even in discussing his beginnings, though, Miles was forever feisty. . . .

**On his beginnings:** "You want me to tell you where I was born—that old story? It was in good old Alton, Ill., on May 25, 1926. And I had to call my mother a week before my last birthday and ask her how old I would be."

**On his first trumpet:** "My father gave me a trumpet—because he loved my mother so much!"

**On getting a job offer with Tiny Bradshaw's band in 1942:** "The fellows in the band had their hair slicked down. They wore tuxedos, and they offered me \$60 a week to play with them. I went home



and asked my mother if I could go, but she said no, I had to finish high school. I didn't talk to her for two weeks."

**On going to Juilliard in 1944:** "I spent my first week in New York and my first month's allowance looking for Charlie Parker."

**On Charlie Parker:** "I roomed with Parker for a year and followed him around down to 52nd St. Every night I'd write down chords I heard, on matchbook covers. Next day, I'd play those chords all day in the practice rooms at Juilliard, instead of going to classes."

**On joining Parker in 1945 at the Three Deuces in New York:** "I used to play under Bird all the time. When Bird would play a melody, I'd play just under him

and let him lead the note, swing the note. The only thing that I'd add would be a larger sound. I used to quit every night. I'd say, 'What do you need me for?'"

**On jazz' direction:** "I think a movement in jazz is beginning away from the conventional string of chords and a return to an emphasis on melodic rather than on harmonic variation. There will be fewer chords but infinite possibilities as to what to do with them. It becomes a challenge to see how melodically inventive you are."

**On wardrobe:** "I don't go with this bringin' 'dignity' to jazz. The way they bring 'dignity' to jazz, by wearing their formal clothes and bowing and smiling, is like Sugar Ray Robinson bringing dignity to boxing by fighting in a tuxedo."



WILLIAM P. GOTTLIEB

With Howard McGhee, circa 1948



CECIL CHARLES

With Chet Baker, Sept. 13, 1953

**B**y Nov. 2, 1955, Miles was already a DB poll winner, a huge personality, and outspoken, as Nat Hentoff revealed. . . .

**On the West Coast scene:** "My general feeling about what's happening on the coast is like what Max Roach was saying the other night. He said he'd rather hear a guy miss a couple of notes than hear the same old cliches all the time. Often when a man misses, it at least shows he's trying to think of something new to play. But the music on the coast gets pretty monotonous even if it's skillfully done. The musicians out there don't give me a thrill the way Sonny Rollins, Dizzy [Gillespie], and Philly Joe Jones do. I like musicians like Dizzy because I can always learn something from him; he's always playing new progressions, etc. Kenny Clarke, too, is always experimenting."

**On Dave Brubeck:** "Well, Dave made one record I liked—'Don't Worry About Me.' Do I think he swings? He doesn't know how. [Paul] Desmond doesn't swing, either, though I think he'd play different with an-

other rhythm section. Frankly, I'd rather hear Lennie [Tristano]. Or for that matter, I'd rather hear Dizzy play the piano than Brubeck, because Dizzy knows how to touch the piano and he doesn't play too much. A lot of guys are so conscious of the fact that the piano has 88 keys, they try to do too much. [Art] Tatum is the only man who plays with a whole lot of technique *and* the feeling, too. Along with Bud Powell, he's my favorite pianist."

**On the Modern Jazz Quartet:** "I was talking about small groups before. I can't omit the Modern Jazz Quartet—that's the best group out. That piece, 'Django,' is one of the greatest things written in a long time. You know, John Lewis teaches everyone all the music in that group."

**On writing:** "My favorite writer has been Gil Evans. He's doing commercial things now, but if you remember, he did the ensemble on 'Boplicity' and several other fine things around that time. In answer to that critic who recently asked why a song like 'Boplicity' isn't played by modern groups, it isn't played because the top line isn't interesting. The harmonization is, but not the tune itself."

"A lot of musicians and writers don't get the full value out of a tune. Tatum does and Frank Sinatra always does. Listen to the way Nelson Riddle writes for Sinatra, the way he gives him enough room, and doesn't clutter it up. Can you imagine how it would sound if Mingus were writing for Sinatra? But I think Mingus will settle down; he can write good music."

"Billy Eckstine needs somebody like Sinatra, by the way, to tell him what kind of tunes to sing and what kind of background to use."

**On swinging:** "What's 'swinging' in words? If a guy makes you pat your foot and if you feel it down your back, you don't have to ask anybody if that's good music or not. You can always feel it."

**M**iles gave what appears to be his first, full-length DB interview in the Jan. 27, 1950 issue. His fourth release on Capitol, "Venus De Milo/Rouge," was scheduled for release at the time. At 23, some of his comments, particularly on tradition, sound surprisingly like another young trumpeter who came along 30 years later. Did someone say "Wynton"?

**On Dixieland:** "I don't like to hear people put down Dixieland. Those people who say there's no music but bop are just stupid; it just shows how much they don't know."

**On tradition:** "No, I never played Dixieland. When I was growing up I played like Roy Eldridge, Harry James, Freddie Webster and anyone else I admired. You've got to start way back there before you can play bop. You've got to have a foundation."

**On playing:** "I play high when I work with a big band, but I prefer not to. A lot of trumpeters, Gillespie is one, have trouble controlling their tone when they play low. I don't want to have that trouble."

**The "greatest" band:** "[Claude] Thornhill had the greatest band of these modern times, except for Eckstine, and he destroyed it when he took out the tuba and the two French horns."

**On Sidney Bechet:** ". . . we played opposite him at the Paris Jazz Festival last year—[he] played some of the things Charlie Parker plays, particularly a riff on 'Ko-Ko.' We talked to Bechet over there, and asked him where he had gotten the riff. He told us it was from an old march, and had been transposed from a flute or clarinet part. I've heard Parker do a lot of things that show a Bechet influence, and Johnny Hodges, too."

**On not getting work:** "I've worked so little. I could probably tell you where I was playing any night in the last three years."

**On playing with Parker or Lee Konitz:** "It sounds like one horn." **DB**



# Miles

## For The Record

**T**he recording legacy of Miles Davis spans the entire period of what we refer to as modern jazz. From his first session in 1945 with "Rubberlegs" Williams (*First Miles*) to his rousing triumph at the Montreux Jazz Festival this past summer (taped by Warner Bros.—see *DB* Oct. '91), a listener can fully appreciate the totality of Miles' output.

Miles' recording career can be grouped into periods: his tenure as a sideman (1945-47), the *Birth Of The Cool* sessions (1948-50), the "lost" period (1950-53), hard-bop (1953-55), the great quintets and sextets (1955-63), the second great quintet (1964-68), fusion (1969-75), "the comeback" (1980-91). All periods are fully documented

with a few exceptions. He was only a sideman on five occasions since 1956.

For the 1951-56 period, the boxed-set released by Prestige (*Chronicle: The Complete Prestige Recordings*) is monumental in its importance to Miles' development as a bandleader. The Columbia box set (*The Columbia Years 1955-85*) offers a general overview with the addition of a few bonus tracks not released at the time of their respective recordings.

Domestically, Columbia has still to release many of the out-of-print LP configurations from the '60s and '70s (*Sorcerer, Miles In The Sky, In Concert*, etc.). However, the Japanese and European counterparts of Columbia (CBS and Sony) have issued many of them and can be imported.

Columbia still has material in the can. There is a club date from the hungry i in California, at least five more records that could come from the Plugged Nickel ses-

sions, a concert with Gil Evans from Berkeley, California, and a 1969 session with Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, Joe Zawinul, John McLaughlin, Wayne Shorter, Dave Holland, and Joe Chambers. There are at least 50 concert dates from Europe from 1963-73 that will eventually see the light of day. One day, recordings will surface of the band from 1962, with Sonny Stitt and J.J. Johnson. There are quintet dates with Shorter, Corea, Holland, and Jack DeJohnette (The "Lost Quintet") from Europe that are astounding (check out *Double Image*—Rome, 1969).

All in all, the recording legacy of Miles is rich and varied. These sessions also document the growth of such notable sidemen as Keith Jarrett, John Coltrane, Cannonball Adderley, Hancock, Bill Evans, Shorter, Holland, Ron Carter, Mike Stern, John Scofield, etc., in their early developmental stages. [See Miles' "family tree" of musicians, pp. 40-41.] —Bob Belden

### MILES DAVIS SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

#### the '40s

- FIRST MILES (1945)—Savoy SJL-1196
- BIRD: THE SAVOY RECORDINGS (1945-47)—Savoy ZDS-8801
- BIRD: THE COMPLETE CHARLIE PARKER ON VERVE (1946-47)—Verve 10-837141-2
- THE LEGENDARY DIAL MASTERS VOL. 2 (1946-47)—Stash St-CD-25
- SESSIONS LIVE VOL. 1 (1947-48)—Zeta ZET-703(m)
- SESSIONS LIVE VOL. 2 (1947-48)—Zeta ZET-712(m)
- BIRTH OF THE COOL (1949-50)—Blue Note C21Y-92862
- COOL BOPPIN' (1948-49)—Fresh Sound FSCD-1008
- AT THE PARIS JAZZFEST 1949—Columbia PG-34804\*

#### the '50s

- BIRDLAND DAYS (1950-51)—Fresh Sound FSR-CD 124
- THE PERSUASIVELY COHERENT... (1950)—Alto AL 701\*
- JIMMY FORREST/MILES DAVIS (1952)—Prestige P-7858\*
- MILES DAVIS QUINTET/SEXTET (1952)—Fresh Sound FSCD-1000
- MILES DAVIS VOL. 1 (1952-'54)—Blue Note B21Y-81501
- MILES DAVIS VOL. 2 (1953)—Blue Note B21Y-81502
- BLUE HAZE (1953-54)—OJC CD-093-2
- AT LAST (1953)—OJC CD-480-2
- WALKIN' (1954)—OJC CD-213-2
- BAG'S GROOVE (1954)—OJC CD-245-2
- BLUE MOODS (1955)—OJC CD-043-2
- LIVE AT THE CAFE BOHEMIA (1955)—Chakra CH 100\*
- MILES DAVIS/MILT JACKSON ALL-STARS (1955)—OJC CD-0120-2
- THE NEW MILES DAVIS QUINTET (1955)—OJC CD-006-2
- WORKIN' (1956)—OJC CD-296-2
- STEAMIN'... (1956)—OJC CD-391-2
- RELAXIN'... (1956)—OJC CD-190-2
- 'ROUND ABOUT MIDNIGHT (1956)—Columbia CK-40610
- MILES AHEAD (1957)—Columbia 8633\*
- MILES AHEAD (alternate takes) (1957)—Columbia CK-40784
- ASCENSEUR POUR L'ECHAFAUD (1957)—Phillips 822 566-2
- MILES IN AMSTERDAM (1957)—OMS OMS-7003\*
- MILESTONES (1958)—Columbia CK-40837
- '58 SESSIONS (1958)—Columbia CK-47835
- LEGRAND JAZZ (1958)—Phillips 830 074-2
- MILES AND MONK AT NEWPORT (1958)—Columbia PCT-08978 (cassette only)
- PORGY AND BESS (1958)—Columbia CK-40647
- ALL-STARS (1959)—Jazz Band EB 409\*
- KIND OF BLUE (1959)—Columbia CK-40579

#### the '60s

- SKETCHES OF SPAIN (1960)—Columbia CK-40578
- LIVE IN SWEEDEN (1960)—Dragon DRLP 90/91
- LIVE IN HOLLAND (1960)—Unique Jazz U19\*
- FREE TRADE HALL VOL. 1 (1960)—Magnetic MRCD 102
- FREE TRADE HALL VOL. 2 (1960)—Magnetic MRCD 103
- STOCKHOLM, 1960—Royal Jazz RJD 509
- SOMEDAY MY PRINCE WILL COME (1961)—Columbia CK-40947
- IN TRANSITION (1961)—Magnetic MRCD 125
- LIVE AT THE BLACKHAWK VOL. 1 (1961)—Columbia CK-44257
- LIVE AT THE BLACKHAWK VOL. 2 (1961)—Columbia CK-44425
- AT CARNEGIE HALL (1961)—Columbia PCT-08612 (cassette only)
- LIVE MILES (1961)—Columbia CK-40609
- QUIET NIGHTS (1962)—Columbia PCT-08906 (cassette only)
- SEVEN STEPS TO HEAVEN (1963)—Columbia PCT-08851 (cassette only)
- LIVE IN ST. LOUIS (1963)—Magnetic MRCD 125\*
- LIVE IN EUROPE (1963)—Columbia PCT-08983 (cassette only)
- COTE BLUE (1963)—JMY 1010-2

- MY FUNNY VALENTINE (1964)—Columbia PCT-09106 (cassette only)
- 'FOUR' & MORE (1964)—Columbia PCT-09253 (cassette only)
- HEARD 'ROUND THE WORLD (1964)—Columbia C2-38506\*
- LIVE ON THE STEVE ALLEN SHOW (1964)—TEPPA T-76\*
- LIVE IN PARIS (1964)—Moon MCD-021-2
- THE COMPLETE COPENHAGEN CONCERT (1964)—Magnetic MRCD 117
- LIVE AT THE 'HUNGRY I' (1964)—Columbia (unissued)
- E.S.P. (1965)—Columbia CK-46863
- COOKIN' AT THE PLUGGED NICKEL (1965)—Columbia CK-40645
- LIVE AT THE PLUGGED NICKEL (1965)—Columbia C2-38266\*
- GINGERBREAD BOY (LIVE AT PORTLAND ST. COLLEGE) (1966)—Stone\*
- MILES SMILES (1966)—Columbia PCT-09401 (cassette only)
- SORCERER (1967)—Columbia PCT-09532 (cassette only)
- NEFERTITI (1967)—Columbia CK-46113
- WATER BABIES (1967-68)—Columbia 34396\*
- NO BLUES (LIVE IN PARIS) (1967)—JMY 1003-2
- LIVE IN BERKELEY (1968)—Columbia (unissued)
- MILES IN THE SKY (1968)—Columbia PCT-09628 (cassette only)
- FILLES DE KILIMANJARO (1968)—Columbia CK-46116
- IN A SILENT WAY (1969)—Columbia CK-40580
- BITCHES BREW (1969)—Columbia G2K-40577
- DOUBLE IMAGE (LIVE IN ITALY) (1969)—Moon MCD 010/11-2
- CIRCLE IN THE ROUND (1955-70)—Columbia C2K-46862
- DIRECTIONS (1960-70)—Columbia KC2-36472\*

#### the '70s

- JACK JOHNSON (1970)—Columbia PCT-30455 (cassette only)
- BLACK BEAUTY (LIVE AT FILLMORE WEST) (1970)—CBS-SONY SOPJ-39-40\*
- LIVE AT FILLMORE EAST (1970)—Columbia (unissued)
- LIVE AT FILLMORE (1970)—Columbia 30038\*
- MILES AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT (as part of First Great Rock Fests of The '70s) (1970)—Columbia G3X-30805\*
- LIVE EVIL (1970)—Columbia CGT-30954 (cassette only)
- LIVE IN SWEEDEN (1971)—Miles MD-1\*
- LIVE AT PHILHARMONIC HALL (1971)—Session 123\*
- ON THE CORNER (1972)—Columbia 31906\*
- IN CONCERT (1972)—Columbia 32092\*
- BIG FUN (1969-72)—Columbia CSP-A2 21398
- GET UP WITH IT (1970-74)—Columbia 33236\*
- DARK MAGUS (1974)—CBS/Sony SOPZ 96/97\*
- AGHARTA (1975)—Columbia C2K-46799
- PANGAEA (1975)—Columbia CK-46115
- w/ LARRY CORYELL (1978)—Columbia (unissued)

#### the '80s

- THE MAN WITH THE HORN (1980-81)—Columbia CK-36790
- WE WANT MILES (1981)—Columbia C2-38005\*
- STAR PEOPLE (1982-83)—Columbia 38657\*
- DECOY (1983)—Columbia CK-38991
- AURA (1984)—Columbia CK-45332
- YOU'RE UNDER ARREST (1985)—Columbia CK-40023
- FARENHEIT (1985)—Columbia CK-40273
- TUTU (1986)—Warner Bros. 25490-2
- SIESTA (1988)—Warner Bros. 25655-2
- AMANDLA (1989)—Warner Bros. 25873-2

#### the '90s

- DINGO... CHIEN DU DESERT—Warner Bros. 26438-2

\* out of print in U.S.



# DOWN BEAT's 50th Annual Readers Poll

## FINAL-LEE MORGAN ENTERS DB's HALL OF FAME

Lee Morgan's last gig was a headline grabber: "Lover Guns Down Jazz Trumpeter in Night Club." The victim, once a cocky kid from Philadelphia, had matured into a player who combined hard-bop fire, off-handed lyricism, and sarcastic humor. Thirty-three is too young to die in anybody's book, but fortunately he recorded early and often.

This recorded legacy has propelled him into the *Down Beat* Hall of Fame 19 years later, an election that perfectly reflects today's jazz climate, when 19-year-olds are

playing hard-bop with astonishing facility. Morgan, born July 10, 1938, is one of their models, someone who represents the last pure evolutionary strain of harmony-based acoustic jazz. The trumpet line goes like this: Dizzy and Miles were the hot and cool of bebop, with Fats Navarro an important, underrated adjunct, and Red Rodney hot on their heels. These begat Clifford Brown and Kenny Dorham, another underrated player. Out of these came Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard, Donald Byrd, and later, Woody Shaw.

Morgan had the most humor of his generation. He would follow the jauntiest bop phrase with a downturned, mocking ending. He tempered his swaggering flights with an almost insouciant lyricism, and there were half-valve insinuations everywhere, like someone in his Sunday finest ducking into storefronts on his way down the street. He could kid around with a single note or lick, turning it blue in multiple ways from melancholy to exuberant while he played rhythm as much as melody.

He began his big-time career at 17 with Dizzy Gillespie's big band. At 19, he recorded with John Coltrane on the latter's famous *Blue Trane* session for Blue Note. Two stints with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers (1958 to '61 and '64 to '65) framed his most successful Blue Note album, *The Sidewinder* (84157)—the title track even made the bestseller list. One could find here and in two follow-up albums, *The Rumproller* (84199) and *Search For The New Land* (84169), for example, plenty of Morgan compositions for a fine retrospective at Lincoln Center or one of our other estimable venues of today. These and eight more Blue Note titles under Morgan's name are currently available.

Perhaps because his exaggerated blues nuances, ironic twists of phrase, and personal vibrato are just too hard to capture with the same degree of ease, few young trumpeters today directly emulate Morgan. Perhaps Philip Harper comes closest. "The thing about Lee that really grabbed me was his aggression. But it wasn't so aggressive that it covered up the melody, beauty, and warmth in his sound," explained Harper. "On top of that, women really love Lee Morgan because his sound was very sexy. His way of playing the blues has a down-home, soulful feel that was one everybody could relate to."

And *Down Beat* readers, by their votes, have solidified his place in jazz history.

One aside is that the woman who pulled the trigger on him on February 19, 1972, at Slug's in New York City, is widely reported to be collecting royalties from his music. To the degree that we can determine it, this is false, and Morgan's widow receives the performance royalties. —Owen Cordle



### HALL OF FAME

231	Lee Morgan
114	Dave Brubeck
105	J.J. Johnson
93	Gerry Mulligan
90	Maynard Ferguson
78	Keith Jarrett
78	Wayne Shorter
69	Horace Silver
67	Elvin Jones
57	Sonny Stitt



**JAZZ ALBUM OF THE YEAR**

- 146 **Dream Keeper**, Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra (Blue Note)
- 136 *Extensions*, Dave Holland (ECM)
- 110 *Red Alert*, Red Rodney (Continuum)
- 104 *Curiosity*, Abstract Truth (Acoustical Concepts)
- 85 *Tribute*, Keith Jarrett Trio (ECM)
- 47 *Meant To Be*, John Scofield (Blue Note)
- 40 *Crazy People Music*, Branford Marsalis (Columbia)
- 40 *Standard Time III*, Wynton Marsalis (Columbia)



**WORLD BEAT ALBUM OF THE YEAR**

- 330 **The Rhythm Of The Saints**, Paul Simon (Warner Bros.)
- 53 *The River*, Ali Farka Toure (Mango)
- 34 *Txai*, Milton Nascimento (Columbia)
- 32 *The Best of Tom Ze*, Tom Ze (Luaka Bop/Sire)



**JAZZ MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR**

- 378 **Wynton Marsalis**
- 106 Red Rodney
- 88 Charlie Haden
- 61 Branford Marsalis
- 56 Sonny Rollins
- 54 Stan Getz
- 52 Dizzy Gillespie
- 44 John Scofield
- 40 Dave Holland
- 38 Jackie McLean
- 38 David Murray

**BLUES/SOUL/R&B ALBUM OF THE YEAR**

- 249 **Brother's Keeper**, Neville Bros. (A&M)
- 231 *Roots Revisited*, Maceo Parker (Verve)
- 108 *Family Style*, Vaughan Brothers (Epic)
- 81 *Graffiti Bridge*, Prince (Paisley Park/Warner Bros.)
- 57 *All My Life*, Charles Brown (Bullseye Blues/Rounder)
- 45 *Midnight Stroll*, Robert Cray (Mercury)
- 39 *The Complete Recordings*, Robert Johnson (Columbia)



**POP/ROCK ALBUM OF THE YEAR**

- 206 **The Soul Cages**, Sting (A&M)
- 176 *The Rhythm Of The Saints*, Paul Simon (Warner Bros.)
- 99 *Time's Up*, Living Colour (Columbia)
- 72 *Ragged Glory*, Neil Young & Crazy Horse (Reprise)
- 53 *Enlightenment*, Van Morrison (Mercury)
- 32 *Night Ride Home*, Joni Mitchell (Geffen)



**BLUES/SOUL/R&B MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR**

- 288 **B.B. King**
- 180 Ray Charles
- 171 Maceo Parker
- 153 Aaron Neville
- 72 Prince
- 69 John Lee Hooker
- 60 Robert Cray
- 42 James Brown

**POP/ROCK MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR**

- 200 **Sting**
- 166 Paul Simon
- 60 Neil Young
- 45 Frank Zappa
- 36 Joni Mitchell
- 36 Richard Thompson
- 33 Van Morrison
- 27 Eric Clapton



**WORLD BEAT MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR**

- 141 **Milton Nascimento**
- 84 Tito Puente
- 81 Paul Simon
- 40 Youssou N'Dour
- 27 Eddie Palmieri
- 24 Jerry Gonzalez
- 22 Peter Gabriel
- 22 Astor Piazzolla

**JAZZ ACOUSTIC COMBO**

- 242 **Phil Woods**
- 187 Wynton Marsalis
- 155 Harper Brothers
- 151 Red Rodney
- 120 Chick Corea Akoustic Band
- 83 World Saxophone Quartet
- 81 Art Ensemble of Chicago
- 73 Keith Jarrett Trio
- 57 Branford Marsalis
- 57 Bobby Watson's Horizon

**JAZZ ELECTRIC COMBO**

- 608 **Miles Davis**
- 340 John Scofield
- 316 Yellowjackets
- 296 Chick Corea Elektric Band
- 220 Pat Metheny
- 144 Ornette Coleman & Prime Time
- 128 Bill Frisell
- 108 Metheny/Haynes/Holland
- 72 John Zorn & Naked City
- 64 Steve Coleman & Five Elements

**JAZZ BIG BAND**

- 564 **Count Basie Orchestra**
- 417 Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra
- 150 Sun Ra
- 141 Abstract Truth
- 132 Dizzy Gillespie's United Nation Orchestra
- 87 Bob Mintzer
- 84 Akiyoshi/Tabackin
- 81 Mel Lewis
- 63 Gene Harris
- 63 Rob McConnell
- 62 Maynard Ferguson

**POP/ROCK GROUP**

- 294 **Living Colour**
- 153 Rolling Stones
- 141 Sting
- 69 Neil Young & Crazy Horse
- 60 Paul Simon
- 54 Los Lobos
- 52 Fishbone



RON HEARD

GENE AMBO



## BLUES/SOUL/R&B GROUP

- 564 **Neville Bros.**
- 220 B.B. King
- 196 Kinsey Report
- 140 Ray Charles
- 116 Robert Cray
- 108 Dirty Dozen Brass Band
- 60 Albert Collins
- 60 Maceo Parker

## WORLD BEAT GROUP

- 107 **Tito Puente**
- 70 Jerry Gonzalez
- 70 Ladysmith Black Mambazo
- 27 Mahlatini & The Mahotella Queens
- 27 Youssou N'Dour

## COMPOSER

- 243 **Carla Bley**
- 225 Henry Threadgill
- 165 Benny Carter
- 120 John Vanore
- 91 Garry Dial
- 90 Toshiko Akiyoshi
- 77 Bobby Watson
- 60 Abdullah Ibrahim
- 59 Geri Allen



ENID FARBER

## ARRANGER

- 384 **Carla Bley**
- 195 Benny Carter
- 183 Frank Foster
- 144 Henry Threadgill
- 132 John Zorn
- 105 Sun Ra
- 96 Toshiko Akiyoshi
- 87 Bobby Watson
- 63 Quincy Jones

## TRUMPET

- 657 **Wynton Marsalls**
- 312 Miles Davis
- 201 Lester Bowie
- 189 Tom Harrell
- 189 Red Rodney
- 159 Roy Hargrove
- 102 Don Cherry
- 97 Freddie Hubbard
- 66 Clark Terry
- 63 Arturo Sandoval
- 60 Maynard Ferguson
- 47 Dizzy Gillespie

## TROMBONE

- 394 **J.J. Johnson**
- 332 Ray Anderson
- 168 Steve Turre
- 108 Robin Eubanks
- 67 Bill Watrous
- 58 Curtis Fuller
- 41 Craig Harris
- 40 Carl Fontana
- 28 George Lewis



MITCHELL SEIDEL

## FLUTE

- 342 **James Newton**
- 250 James Moody
- 122 Lew Tabackin
- 96 Dave Valentin
- 86 Frank Wess
- 69 Henry Threadgill
- 66 Herbie Mann
- 51 Kent Jordan
- 36 Gary Thomas
- 35 Hubert Laws
- 35 Sam Rivers

## CLARINET

- 456 **Eddie Daniels**
- 226 John Carter
- 207 Buddy DeFranco
- 129 Don Byron
- 88 Phil Woods
- 72 Alvin Batiste
- 53 Kenny Davern



LISA ROSE

## SOPRANO SAXOPHONE

- 446 **Steve Lacy**
- 370 Wayne Shorter
- 356 Branford Marsalis
- 115 David Liebman
- 73 Jane Ira Bloom
- 52 Bob Wilber
- 47 Courtney Pine



DONNA PAUL

## ALTO SAXOPHONE

- 537 **Phil Woods**
- 417 Frank Morgan
- 297 Bobby Watson
- 165 Ornette Coleman
- 165 Jackie McLean
- 117 Kenny Garrett
- 99 Christopher Hollyday
- 92 Steve Coleman
- 87 Benny Carter
- 84 David Sanborn

## TENOR SAXOPHONE

- 564 **Sonny Rollins**
- 288 Stan Getz
- 258 Branford Marsalis
- 219 Joe Lovano
- 213 David Murray
- 153 Michael Brecker
- 144 Joe Henderson
- 60 Ralph Moore
- 54 Chris Potter
- 48 Wayne Shorter

## BARITONE SAXOPHONE

- 434 **Gerry Mulligan**
- 314 Hamiet Bluiett
- 267 Nick Brignola
- 81 Ronnie Cuber
- 70 John Surman
- 64 Howard Johnson
- 41 Cecil Payne

## ACOUSTIC PIANO

- 285 **Keith Jarrett**
- 189 Oscar Peterson
- 177 Marcus Roberts
- 160 Tommy Flanagan
- 153 McCoy Tyner
- 150 Geri Allen
- 147 Cecil Taylor
- 126 Chick Corea
- 126 Don Pullen
- 114 Kenny Barron
- 81 Muigrew Miller
- 54 Herbie Hancock



HYOUWIEZ



## ORGAN

- 474 **Jimmy Smith**
- 221 Joey DeFrancesco
- 146 Barbara Dennerlein
- 122 Jimmy McGriff
- 80 Carla Bley
- 74 Sun Ra
- 70 Don Pullen
- 66 Charles Earland
- 41 Jack McDuff

## SYNTHESIZER

- 282 **Joe Zawinul**
- 232 Chick Corea
- 216 Sun Ra
- 186 Herbie Hancock
- 140 Lyle Mays
- 104 Wayne Horvitz



PAUL NATAKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

## ACOUSTIC GUITAR

- 304 **John McLaughlin**
- 300 Jim Hall
- 211 Joe Pass
- 91 Kenny Burrell
- 42 Earl Klugh
- 42 Ralph Towner
- 40 Pat Metheny
- 37 Egberto Gismonti
- 34 Jerry Garcia
- 34 Bireli Lagrene
- 30 Fareded Haque



HYOU VIELZ

## ELECTRIC GUITAR

- 350 **Pat Metheny**
- 318 John Scofield
- 168 Bill Frisell
- 92 Jerry Garcia
- 80 Kenny Burrell
- 74 Jim Hall
- 56 Mike Stern
- 45 Joe Pass
- 40 Kevin Eubanks
- 36 George Benson
- 36 Mark Whitfield
- 35 John Abercrombie
- 33 Sonny Sharrock



MARK MILLER

## ACOUSTIC BASS

- 390 **Charlie Haden**
- 294 Dave Holland
- 242 Ray Brown
- 140 Ron Carter
- 102 Rob Wasserman
- 58 Milt Hinton
- 58 Charnett Moffett
- 58 Rufus Reid
- 34 Marc Johnson
- 34 John Patitucci
- 30 Ray Drummond

## ELECTRIC BASS

- 534 **Steve Swallow**
- 312 Marcus Miller
- 296 John Patitucci
- 149 Bob Cranshaw
- 148 Rob Wasserman
- 111 Jamaaladeen Tacuma
- 75 Stanley Clarke
- 46 Bill Laswell

## DRUMS

- 462 **Jack DeJohnette**
- 327 Max Roach
- 198 Elvin Jones
- 189 Tony Williams
- 120 Roy Haynes
- 114 Marvin "Smitty" Smith
- 114 Jeff Watts
- 103 Billy Higgins
- 90 Victor Lewis
- 69 Louie Bellson
- 68 Joey Baron
- 60 Peter Erskine
- 59 Dave Weckl
- 45 Paul Motian

## PERCUSSION

- 447 **Tito Puente**
- 348 Airtó
- 336 Naná Vasconcelos
- 195 Trilok Gurtu
- 141 Famoudou Don Moye
- 90 Don Alias
- 76 Poncho Sanchez
- 57 Mino Cinelu



TERI BLOOM

## VIBES

- 530 **Milt Jackson**
- 432 Gary Burton
- 256 Bobby Hutcherson
- 74 Lionel Hampton
- 54 Jay Hoggard
- 40 Steve Nelson
- 30 Dave Samuels
- 28 Terry Gibbs

## MISCELLANEOUS INSTRUMENT

- 470 **Toots Thielemans (harmonica)**
- 130 David Murray (bass clarinet)
- 129 Bob Stewart (tuba)
- 89 Steve Turre (conch shells)
- 66 Astor Piazzolla (bandoneon)
- 54 Michael Brecker (EWI)
- 47 Bela Fleck (banjo)
- 42 Howard Johnson (tuba)
- 35 Hank Roberts (cello)

## MALE SINGER

- 395 **Joe Williams**
- 330 Bobby McFerrin
- 315 Mel Tormé
- 216 Jon Hendricks
- 171 Harry Connick, Jr.
- 165 Mark Murphy
- 111 Aaron Neville
- 66 Al Jarreau
- 42 Ray Charles

## FEMALE SINGER

- 471 **Betty Carter**
- 318 Carmen McRae
- 279 Cassandra Wilson
- 186 Shirley Horn
- 161 Ella Fitzgerald
- 126 Sheila Jordan
- 108 Dianne Reeves
- 108 Diane Schuur
- 81 Abbey Lincoln
- 45 Joni Mitchell



RICHARD LAIRD

## VIOLIN

- 550 **Stephane Grappelli**
- 164 Jean Luc Ponty
- 149 John Blake
- 134 Billy Bang
- 54 Leroy Jenkins
- 31 Michal Urbaniak

## VOCAL GROUP

- 765 **Take 6**
- 396 Manhattan Transfer
- 264 Hendricks Family
- 99 Sweet Honey In The Rock
- 90 New York Voices
- 85 Ladysmith Black Mambazo
- 84 Jackie & Roy



# *From Basel With Love:* *Making of The Chicago Cantata*

**GEORGE GRUNTZ**

By John Corbett



JOHN BOOZ

**W**ord spreads fast in a country the size of Switzerland, especially regarding its small but very active jazz community. So, after Swiss composer/pianist George Gruntz had a second highly successful appearance with his Concert Jazz Band in the city of Chicago, a growing affinity was noted by the proper authorities. When the national clock ticked a 700th annum, the Swiss government asked Gruntz to help them celebrate the anniversary by writing a jazz piece dedicated to Chicago, to be premiered at the city's 1991 jazz festival. Gruntz

prefaced enthusiastic acceptance with a humble "why me?"

"The 700-year anniversary, that's one thing," said Gruntz. "And, of course, such a piece must be written where jazz—played mostly by Chicago musicians—is married with blues and gospel. But the question was, when it comes to the music, should it be a Swiss to write a piece like this?"

Compounding this question, he mused that surely such a crossing of stylistic lines must be commonplace in such a musical city. In fact, the musics operate quite exclusively,



perhaps signaling the difference between a European experience of American music on club circuits and at festivals, on the one hand, and the ecology of local scenes in the U.S. on the other. This observation, coupled with the suggestion that he might provide an outsider's perspective on the city's music, convinced him that the project had met its appropriate maker.

Gruntz is no newcomer to the now-fashionable method of mixing genres, styles, and media. Inspired early by jazz soundtracks, Gruntz went on to compose for the screen and stage. On his long list of interspecies accomplishments, he has also written for ballet, worked on a film project with Bedouin musicians in Tunisia, and co-penned the jazz opera, *Cosmopolitan Greetings*, with poet Allen Ginsberg, composer Rolf Liebermann, and playwright Robert Wilson. Gruntz' long tenure as producer of the Berlin Jazz Festival has provided him with a bird's-eye view on the international jazz scene, enabling him to hand-pick his Concert Jazz Band and hone his remarkable skills as a director, organizer, and all-around diplomat.

Such were the interests and abilities Gruntz brought to the Chicago piece in its

preliminary stages, which began with two trips to Chicago to choose the players. "Right away, we went to see Sunnyland Slim, Pinetop Perkins, went to churches on Sunday," he says, fondly. "The feeling was absolutely great, so warm. Leo Krumpholtz, who had produced my band here twice before, took me around and later sent me tapes of live material."

Gruntz finally settled on two gospel groups and four blues performers. "I was looking for a certain kind of counterpoint between musicians," he recalls. "The Norfleets promised to give me the traditional, five-voice male choir: very deep, soft singing. The Linton family, on the other hand, was the younger bunch with female voices, more on the shoutin' side."

Gruntz had booked harmonica player/singer Billy Branch into a previous Berlin festival, so he decided that—along with his guitarist, Carl Weathersby—Branch "... would be the young side of Chicago blues, and on the other side, Sunny [Sunnyland Slim] would be the legendary side that really came up the river from the South. And in between, Pops Staples, who has a Delta blues background but is a gospel singer."

**A**fter choosing these partners, Gruntz decided on a Chicago-heavy jazz nonet, with trombonist Ray Anderson, trumpeters Lester Bowie and Franco Ambrosetti, Howard Johnson on tuba and baritone sax, Chico and Von Freeman on reeds, Malachi Favors on bass, Reggie Nicholson on drums, and Gruntz at the piano.

Finally, for a text, the city of Chicago suggested Sterling Plumpp, poet and professor at the University of Illinois, with whom "... it was love at first sight." From 60 or 70 poems, Gruntz chose one, "My Feeling Tone," to be the lyrical element in the work, which he had decided would be a cantata.

"This meant that it was thought mainly in vocal terms, not instrumental," explains the composer. "So all the themes are in the hands of the singers and the jazz band acts like a symphony orchestra in opera, to accompany, to interlude, to postlude, to prelude." The jazz and blues improvisations would thus build on a very basic compositional framework, which would act as both springboard and connective tissue.

With this, Gruntz aspired to bring the musicians together as a tribute to Chicago's

**T**his year's festival drew a good bit of steam from local groups, though there were plenty of peaks from afar as well. Of the former, two were AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) affiliates. Tenor saxophonist Vandy Harris and his Front Burners played a relatively hemmed-in set, exchanging their usual urgent overblow for a Gene Ammons-ish blues base that featured the great trumpet (sometimes two at once) of Bob Griffin. Ernest Dawkins' New Horizons Ensemble dug into a slightly more adventurous hard-bop set, showcasing his neat compositions and excellent alto work.

In another vein, C. Wardell Reese's Jazz Motivators steamed up the big stage with a traditional Chicago organ combo, pedals, and keys manned by the formidable Chris Foreman. Ex-south-sider Ray Anderson led a raucous quartet that camped it up and got on down, the trombonist displaying his penchant for artfully mixing overstatement and implication.

From Japan, soloist Yosuke Yamashita covered the piano from end to end, proving himself an uncompromising virtuoso, skilled interpreter, and forceful experimenter. Versions of Ellington and Monk were treated with grit and grace, each piece drawing to a close like the end of a wrestling match.



Double-barrelled Bob Griffin of the Vandy Harris Front Burners

Several groups sported drummers who spoke with strange accents. Elvin Jones dropped tom-tom bombs on his Jazz Machine, with Sonny Fortune blowing hydrochloric sax over Willie Pickens' pert piano. Marilyn Crispell's piano trio, with drummer Gerry Hemingway and bassist Reggie Workman, gave a brilliant, stormy performance, cut short by a sympathetic cloudburst. Hemingway's peculiar metrical sense

and wonderful timbral range were particularly evident in his solo space.

Likewise employing a rubbery sense of time, Swiss drummer Daniel Humair propelled the quartet Quatre, with Italian trumpeter Enrico Rava, pianist Franco D'Andrea, and Czech bassist Miroslav Vitous. The group dynamic was thoroughly fresh and exciting, popping instantaneously in and out of free-bop compositions.

—J.C.



Ever since King Oliver asked young Louis to join him by the Lake, jazz' most stimulating improvisational forum, the jam session, has been an honored Chicago tradition. Forgoing the array of jazz and blues bars that light the city from its north and western edges to its southern tip, buoyed festgoers strode the night to several choices within a mile of Grant Park's bandshell.

The long-lived option was Joe Segal's session at his Jazz Showcase in the Blackstone Hotel. This year started early, with former Chicagoan Lee Konitz fronting a house band with bop pianist Stu Katz doubling on vibes and bassist Larry Gray, with George Marsh and the

energetic Wilbur Campbell on traps. The pre-fest "Jazz Club Tour" saw drummer Bobby Durham close the evening with a brilliant solo at searing speed. Other sets during the week included locally emerging pianists Laurence Hobgood and Bethany Pickens, and from Elvin Jones' group, Chicago pianist Willie Pickens, bassist Chip Jackson, and the crystalline ornithological alto of Sonny Fortune in a dazzling Sunday closer.

Moving off Michigan Avenue, a block south on Wabash, Buddy Guy's downtown blues bar, Legends, featured dynamic Detroit bluesman Larry McCray Friday night. Less than a mile south, SouthEnd Musicworks booked Midwes-

tern artists of the alternative music scene to anchor its avant events. There were groups fronted by drummers Damon Short and former Detroit native Dushun Mosley, now a Chicago resident, notably covering a Lester Bowie, Billy Brimfield, Ray Anderson, Malachi Favors Maghostut set kicked off by Chico Freeman. Horn conflagrations with Kidd Jordan, Douglas Ewart, Ernest Dawkins, and Fred Anderson burned another night. Sunday's final blaze featured impromptu trios around pianist Yosuke Yamashita.

Given these mixes, Chicago's shifting winds promise that the after-hours jam tradition is in safe hands. —Jim De Jong

Afro-American musical history without making them "illustrate" it. And, of course, his European heritage influenced the piece as well. "There are these sections where I used this gospel backbeat, a kind of 'boom-chick, boom-chick,' a little mixed meter. It's funny because it is, on one hand, gospel, on another, backbeat from New Orleans . . . you hear New Orleans and I hear Kurt Weill, you know!"

In rehearsal, Gruntz worked with an admirable mixture of calm and resolve, ironing out transitions and pulling the enormous ensemble through the very filmic score, encouraging people to improvise at length in their solos. A nervous Pops Staples whispered in Gruntz' ear from time to time, and the whole group (quite a sizable audience in itself) let out a holler when Slim sat down at the keys. As the finale rang out in rehearsal, the air buzzed with anticipation of the meeting of such disparate, but commonly-rooted musics.

In its performance on the third day of the festival, and with a fluctuating 23-piece ensemble, *The Chicago Cantata* played with mixed results. Staples didn't quite belt it out, the blues vocal mix was generally too low, and some of the timing on entrances and exits was not exactly, well . . . Swiss. Chico Freeman had missed the rehearsals, and was replaced by Mwata Bowden, who diligently duked it out on tenor with the tough senior Freeman, though the anticipated father/son sparks obviously weren't there.

But if it was not a fully polished masterwork, the ambitious *Chicago Cantata* nevertheless provided a unique musical context. Ray Anderson and Sunnyland Slim engaged in a fabulous duet, Malachi Favors played a beautifully boxy solo, and Lester Bowie looked and sounded like he would bust a blood vessel behind the effervescent choral finale. **DB**



George Gruntz leads the ensemble in song.

## GEORGE GRUNTZ' EQUIPMENT

Gruntz prefers Steinway pianos, which he says are "ideal for any jazz musician, with their crystal-clear attack." He owns a Steinway B, but opts for a Steinway D in performance. When composing

at his country cottage, Gruntz uses a 1920's Bechstein given to him by a loving fan. He also plays church organ ("baroque disposition only") and a Neupert harpsichord.

## GEORGE GRUNTZ SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

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# Key

- Excellent ★★★★★
- Very Good ★★★★★
- Good ★★★
- Fair ★★
- Poor ★



## Abbey Lincoln

**YOU GOTTA PAY THE BAND**—Verve 511 110-2: *BIRD ALONE; I'M IN LOVE; YOU GOTTA PAY THE BAND; BROTHER? CAN YOU SPARE A DIME; YOU MADE ME FUNNY; AND HOW I HOPED FOR YOUR LOVE; WHEN I'M CALLED HOME; SUMMER WISHES; WINTER DREAMS; UP JUMPED SPRING; A TIME FOR LOVE.* (58:30)

**Personnel:** Lincoln, vocals; Stan Getz, tenor sax; Hank Jones, piano; Charlie Haden, bass; Mark Johnson, drums; Maxine Roach, viola (cuts 1, 10).

★★★★★

Lady Day and Pres must have revisited Earth the day this record was made—an album with bittersweetness and poignancy in the air. Lincoln's voice is the black earth, Getz's saxophone soft summer clouds. Knowing he was dying, how could they get through Lincoln's "When I'm Called Home" without pity? Such is the triumph of great art, of which this album is an example.

The stories and songs are free of artifice. Lincoln's voice has a thousand shades of black: black comedy, irony, tragedy, sexiness, insouciance . . . , none used manipulatively. You have to hear only the standard, "A Time For Love," to know that she's so far beyond the myth of "I'm hip" that she's something else in addition to a "jazz singer."

And Getz, in his last studio appearance, and with courage and his fantastic ear, cools us with the truth that the best jazz is instinctive. You could wilt in the presence of his tone and lyricism.

These performances complement each other in black and white. Compare the principals' timbre on the Lincoln-R. B. Lynch bossa, "And How I Hoped For Your Love," for instance. And everywhere there is the tuxedoed eloquence of Jones' accompaniment, black and white keys struck in perfect taste.

The album offers five Lincoln originals, the lyrics autobiographical, her singing moreso. Perhaps "Bird Alone" says it best: vulnerability above aloofness. Such vulnerability is rare in jazz, almost as rare as the combination of a Billie Holiday and a Lester Young—or a Lincoln and a Getz. (reviewed on CD) —*Owen Cordle*



## Dizzy Gillespie

**THE WINTER IN LISBON**—Milan 7313835600-2: *OPENING THEME; SAN SEBASTIAN; LUCRETIA'S THEME; MAGIC SUMMER (VOCAL VERSION); ISTHMUS; MAGIC SUMMER (ORCHESTRAL VERSION); LISBON; MAGIC SUMMER (PIANO VERSION); BURMA; BILL'S SONG; FINAL THEME.* (56:40)

**Personnel:** Gillespie, Tony Kadleck, trumpet; Jerry Peel, Bob Carlisle, Robby Roulch, Russ Rizner, french horn; Mario Rivera, soprano sax, flute; Danilo Perez, piano; George Mraz, bass; Grady Tate, drums; Wint Garvey, Sandra Billingslea, violin; Richard Spencer, viola; Akua Dixon, cello; Leola Jiles, vocals.

★★★

## Bebop & Beyond

**PLAYS DIZZY GILLESPIE**—Blue Moon R2 79170: *WHEATLEIGH HALL; MANTECA/A NIGHT IN NAZCA; I WAITED FOR YOU; THAT'S EARL, BROTHER%N ALMA; DIDDY-WA-DIDDY; FATHER TIME; RHYTHM MAN (DO NOT DISTURB).* (63:11)

**Personnel:** Gillespie, trumpet, vocals, rhythm-stick (cuts 1-6); Warren Gale, trumpet, flugelhorn; Mel Martin, soprano, alto, tenor sax, flute; Randy Vincent, guitar; George Cables, piano; Jeff Chambers, bass; Donald "Duck" Bailey, drums (1,2,4,8); Vince Lategano, drums, timbales (2,5-7); John Santos, congas, bongos, percussion (2,5-7).

★★★★

The ever-resourceful Mr. Gillespie, now in his 70s, carries on. To wit, these albums, one the soundtrack to an unreleased film in which he plays a main character, the other an NEA-funded project that teams him with Mel Martin's San Francisco-based band and guests. As we said, resourcefulness is the key to the trumpeter's musical longevity. He still has his humor, perfect sense of timing and rhythm, and that crackling tone, although it's a bit faded these days.

On the *Bebop & Beyond* album he even nails a few high notes, with subsequent notes and runs trailing out of the sky like sparklers. This is some of his best recorded work in years, a case of mutual inspiration perhaps. Martin doesn't have grandiose plans for the trumpeter, he wisely places him in the middle of the band, cooks up personalized charts that retain the

essence of Gillespiana, and turns him loose. The honored guest can't miss with these cats who have done their homework. "Manteca," adapted from Gillespie's 1961 Carnegie Hall concert album (Verve, out of print), features not only a flaring Gillespie solo but adds an exciting, rhythmically charged Martin sequel called "A Night in Nazca" (including a superbly crafted soprano saxophone solo). Another plus is the cool Gillespie vocal on "I Waited For You," followed by his patented muted trumpet work. Gale, although more Hubbard-ish, frequently pays tribute to the master's tone and phrasing. Cables performs with his customary taste and gracefulness, and Bailey's interactive bebop drums are a treat.

The soundtrack is a mixed bag: lush orchestral pieces, impressionistic piano tracks, cooking combo cuts, a female vocal. The combination of Gillespie's compositions and Slide Hampton's charts strike you as effective film music in an atmospheric sort of way. Gillespie nuzzles the blues on "San Sebastian," with some hefty Mraz bass behind him, and "Isthmus" is good for some trumpet fireworks. "Opening Theme" makes you want to hear more of the Hampton orchestral style, but alas it's limited on this album. As on the *Bebop & Beyond* album, there's a fine drummer aboard, Grady Tate. One correction: the liner notes have Gillespie born in Cheraw, North Carolina. Make that South Ca'lina, jazz historians. (reviewed on CD) —*Owen Cordle*



## Bob Belden

**STRAIGHT TO MY HEART: THE MUSIC OF STING**—Blue Note CDP 7 95137 2: *INTRODUCTION; WRAPPED AROUND YOUR FINGER; ROXANNE; STRAIGHT TO MY HEART; SISTER MOON; DREAM OF THE BLUE TURTLES; EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE; THEY DANCE ALONE; SHADOWS IN THE RAIN; CHILDREN'S CRUSADE; I BURN FOR YOU.* (60:30)

**Personnel:** Belden, arranger, synth (cuts 1,2), tenor sax (10); with ensemble and guests, including Chuck Wilson, Mike Migliore, Tim Ries, Rick Margitza, Ron Kozak, Glenn Wilson, Jim Powell, Tim Hagans, Peter Reit, John Fedchock, George Moran, Bob Stewart, Marcus Rojas, John Hart, Joey Calderazzo, Marc Copland, Kevin Hays, Doug Hall, Adam Holzman, Pat Rebillot, Darryl Jones, Jay Anderson, Dennis Chambers, Jeff Hirshfield, Abraham Adzeneya, Ladji Camara, Jerry Gonzalez, David Earle Johnson, Dianne Reeves, John Scofield, Billy Childs, Fareed Haque, Phil Perry, Bobby Watson, Benny Green, Mark Ledford, Kirk Whalum, Jimi Tunnell.

★★★★

Sting's minimalist, texture-rich style with the



Police and his own band caught Bob Belden's ear and imagination. In devoting an album to his music, the arranger brings out a depth of emotion and wealth of colors. When pop music is arranged well for big band—*The Gil Evans Orchestra Plays The Music Of Jimi Hendrix*, from 1974, and 1988's *The Hoops McCann Band Plays The Music Of Steely Dan* come to mind—there's obviously respect paid to the composers, but great liberties are taken as well, with rhythm, melody, harmony, and texture. Here, "Every Breath You Take" is given an African facelift, and "Dream Of The Blue Turtles" charges like the Herd.

Belden's ensemble is full of creative musicians, and his guest superstars are placed in perfect roles. Dianne Reeves, John Scofield, Billy Childs, and Dennis Chambers sit in on "Wrapped Around Your Finger," each contributing mightily. As classy a vehicle as that one is, Belden's rendering of "Roxanne" is headier, using just enough of the tune to be effective. The horns are musical bookends covering the entire spectrum, trumpets up high, bones deep and low, and trumpeter Tim Hagans rides the shifting moods inside and out.

Belden doesn't mind borrowing from an idea Gil Evans had 25 years ago, from an arrangement Coltrane played, or a tune Stanley Turrentine and Oliver Nelson wrote. Any notion is fair game. The horn arrangement on one song is based on pianist Wynton Kelly's comping be-

hind Miles on the *Live At Carnegie Hall* album. He changes Sting's "Straight To My Heart" from 7/4 to 6/4, brings in acoustic guitarist Fareed Haque and tenorman Rick Margitza for a Latin-jazz waltz with New York percussionists Jerry Gonzalez and David Earle Johnson. With this release, and last year's *Treasure Island* (Sunnyside SSC 1041D), Belden has to be considered a major arranging talent. (reviewed on CD)  
—Robin Tolleson



### Chuck Loeb

**BALANCE**—DMP CD-484: *EN EL RIO*; *DADDY LONGLEGS*; *STARSTREAM*; *BALANCE*; *ETERNAL*

*FLAME*; *THE DAY AFTER YESTERDAY*; *ESPIONAGE*; *THE HELLO*; *DEAR JOHN*; *STRAIGHT A'S*; *FAITH ALONE*. (57:45)

**Personnel:** Loeb, electric and acoustic guitars, synthesizer, computer programming; Jon Werking, acoustic piano and keyboards; Marc Johnson, acoustic bass; Paul Socolow, electric bass (cuts 1, 6); Zach Danziger, drums; Carmen Cuesta, vocals; Bob Mintzer, tenor sax, bass clarinet (2); Nelson Rangell, alto sax (8).

★ ★ ★ ½

The connection to Pat Metheny is obvious here. Loeb studied with Metheny and shares his fondness for a warm guitar tone, legato lines, and buoyant Brazilian rhythms, best exemplified here on the breezy "En El Rio" and the brisk "Espionage." Loeb and pianist Jon Werking further conjure up a Metheny-Lyle Mays vibe on "Starstream."

The title cut is an aural happy pill, destined for much radio airplay. "Straight A's" is more upbeat, radio-friendly fare. More ambitious is "Daddy Longlegs," which finds the guitarist dipping into a modern-day Miles bag, circa *Tutu*. And as producer Marcus Miller did on that Miles project, Loeb fills out the low end on this song by doubling the acoustic bass with the intriguing sound of bass clarinet, courtesy of Bob Mintzer, who also kicks in a swinging tenor solo at the tag.

A nice touch is Loeb's take on the Bangles pop number "Eternal Flame," rendered here

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Before you is, to our knowledge, the first of its kind: a "family tree" of musicians Miles Davis associated with in one form or another. At the far left are the notable musicians Miles played with early in his career starting in New York in 1944. This period reflects Miles' side-man days. The late '40s and early '50s illustrate his emergence as a leader, including the *Birth Of The Cool* sessions in 1949-'50, followed by significant gigs and recordings on the Blue Note and Prestige record labels. Throughout, names of both recording mates as well as sometimes-live-performance-only musicians are listed. In some cases, names appear more than once or with a bold background, the latter referring to significant members of various Miles bands.

—Bob Belden

JAMES F. QUINN

1944

1950's



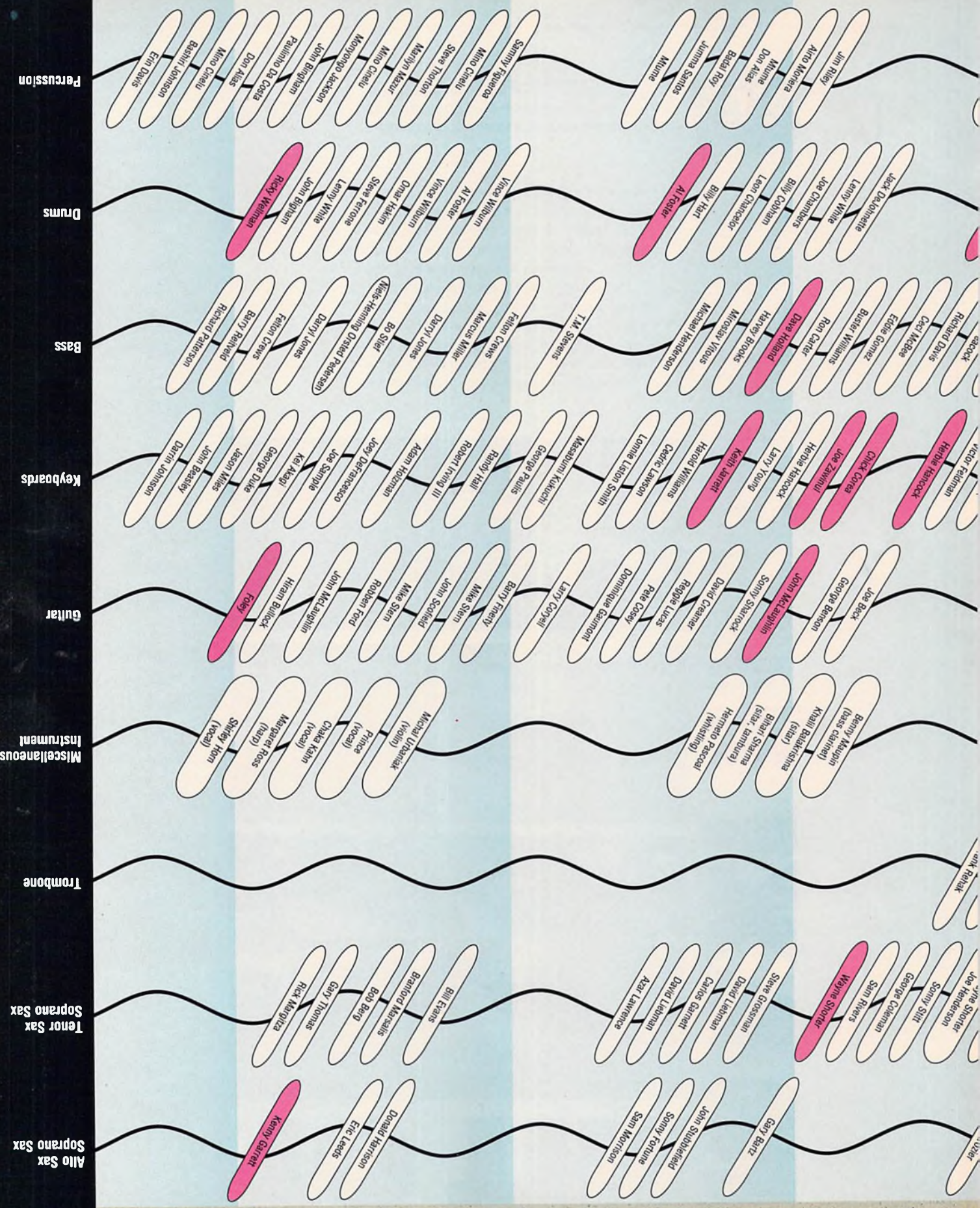
# LES LEGACY

1960's

1970's

1980's

1990's



Due to space considerations, chronological accuracy may be a bit compromised.



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Both Rykodisc recordings, produced by drummer cashing in on the recent interest in world music.

The net effect is to give more weight to the assertion that Hart is not just a rock & roll musician, but a percussionist. Some of the same players from that album have showed up on Hart's two Rykodisc releases, the most notable being Indian tabla master Zakir Hussain. Some of the arrangements, beats, and just plain focus on percussion are. Some of the cryptic—the arrangements, beats, and just how much more playfully engaging—and less '72's psychedelic *Rolling Thunder*, to notice Hart has come since his first solo album, it is a playground. One only has to hear how this isn't a chops-oriented playground, but mically and dancewise.

the listener to the point of participation, rhytmically and dancewise.

composed by mostly name players, unwilling takes place are a number of collaborations added as percussive complements. What more drums-only series of recitals, with vocals percussive fierceness—have given way to a variety of sonic alluring but lacking in overall (see *DB Nov. '91*) At *The Edge's Atmosphere* more like a primer for this year's *Planet Drum* At *The Edge* (see "Reviews" Jan. '91), sounds heard back to back, Mickey Hart's '90 release.

**Mickey Hart**

PLANET DRUM—Rykodisc RCD 10206: Udu Chant; Island Groove; Light Over Shadow; Dance Of The Hunter's Fire; Jive; "You Are The One"; The Hunt; Temple Caves; The Dancin Sorcerer; Bones; Lost River; Evening Samba. IANU "Surprises"; Mysterious Island. (50:01) Personnel: Hart, Zakir Hussain, Sikiru Adepoju, Airtio Monera, Babatunde Olatunji, Frank Colon, Giovanni Hidalgo, Flora Purim, Carli Orbach, T.H. "Vikku" Vinayakram, Bruce Langhorne, Gordy Ryan, Jeff Steiling, various percussion (e.g., Udu Drum, berimbau, tabla, mada, shaker, bones, balafon, bells, dundun, congas, shaker, ghatam), vocals; Motonga Casqueiro, vocals.

★★★★★

—Bill Milkowski  
 Wes Montgomery (reviewed on CD)

—John Ephland  
 could go on, but you get the idea. (reviewed on CD)

Hart, have exotic, aural affinities with the ECM school. In a way, this serves to detract from a kind of music that, to this listener, requires a greater, earthier, less cathedral-like ambience. Nonetheless, the playing is a wonderful sampler for both the novice and the pro, sparking interest—as is Hart's main objective, I'm sure—in further investigations of world rhythms and these players in particular.

The melodic qualities of percussion rise to the surface. For example, Hart's bones and

paying tribute to another towering influence, the mellow "Dear John" finds the guitarist featuring Nelson Rangell's urgent alto sax and Weckl. "The Hello" is a pocket groove number link in the lineage from Steve Gadd to Dave technician at the age of 22, is clearly the next Zech for some daredevil drum fills as the piece energized "Day After Yesterday" they unleash Daznigter's subtle bushtwork. Then on the economy underscore this tune alongside Zech Johnson's huge bass presence and sense of "Old Folks." Marc as a somber ballad, à la



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**TURN IT AROUND**—Rounder CD 3116: *Down By The Delta; Passionate Kiss; Don't Look At My Girl Like That; Just A Human; Turn It Around; Shoulda Coulda Woulda; The High Cost Of Loving; Sweets For My Sweet; Tell Me How; I Think You Know*. (43:22)

**Personnel:** Robillard, guitars, vocals; Susann Forrest, vocals; Scott Appelrouth, electric, acoustic basses; Doug Hinman, drums; Malcolm Walsh, organ (cuts 1, 2); the Pink Tuxedos (George Henderson, Dennis McCarthy, Gary Cummings, Robert Cummings, Joseph Amaral) (3), John Paul Gauthier (8), background vocals.

★★★★ 1/2

## Fabulous Thunderbirds

**WALK THAT WALK, TALK THAT TALK**—Epic/Associated ZK 47878: *Twist Of The Knife; Ain't That A Lot Of Love; Work Together; Born To Love You; Need Somebody To Love; Feelin' Good; Roller Coaster; Sweet Thang; Can't Stop Rockin'; When I Get Home; Paralyzed*. (50:35)

**Personnel:** Kim Wilson, vocals, harmonica; Duke Robillard, guitars, vocals; Kid Bangham, guitars; Fran Christina, drums, percussion; Preston Hubbard, acoustic, electric basses; Steve Jordan, guitar, percussion, backing vocals; Austin De Lone, keyboards; the Uptown Horns (7), Willie Mitchell & the Memphis Horns (5), horns; the Gospel Hummingbirds, backing vocals (3).

★★★★

If we were talking sports, you'd have to say the Fabulous Thunderbirds bolstered their lineup and significantly strengthened their chances for postseason play by luring a great free agent—primo blues-rock guitarist Duke Robillard—into the fold. The founder of seminal r&b big band Roomful of Blues, Robillard has been unleashing killer roots rock while fronting his own trio for several years. In addition to blazing new territory with his band (augmented superbly on the new release by singer Susann Forrest), Robillard successfully integrates his stinging licks, tremoloed riffs, and searing solos into the T-Birds' mix on his debut recording with the band.

*Walk That Walk, Talk That Talk* not only features hard-driving, blue-collar rock 'n' blues tunes, but also showcases a couple sweet-soul beauties that serve as respites from the ecstatic stuff—of which there is an abundance. There are many highly-charged highlights, including the rip-roaring, sweat-inducing boogie, "Feelin' Good," and the buoyant "Work Together," a modified 12-bar blues with a gospel flavor thanks to the Gospel Hummingbirds' supporting vocals. Group leader Kim Wilson leads the sonic assault with gutsy

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vocals, the Memphis Horns contribute soulful lines to the slow dance "When I Get Home," and guitarist Kid Bangham, another r&b scene vet and T-Birds rookie, swaps inspired phrases with Robillard throughout. The album is excellent, but Robillard's latest is even better.

With no other guitarist to comp for, Robillard unloads and struts his guitar prowess. Case in point: the rollicking shuffle, "I Think You Know," where he takes flight into an extended solo that is pure ecstasy. He romps through the piece, coaxing amazing blues and rock tones and textures out of his ax. It's a recommended earphone listen. But there's much more to be had here than guitar virtuosity. The energy level never flags, and the set list is a strong one, featuring a Tex-Mex/cha-cha blues take on Buddy Holly's "Tell Me How," the explosive rocker "Shoulda Coulda Woulda," and the rousing "Don't Look At My Girl Like That," with its catchy chorus given a gospel touch by the Pink Tuxedos. The Forrest-Robillard vocal collaboration is a big plus, and an extra bonus are the liner notes that detail how Robillard achieves his masterful guitar effects on each number. (reviewed on CD) —Dan Ouellette



**Oscar Peterson  
 Trio**

**SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE BLUE NOTE**—Telarc 83306: *Kelly's Blues; Nighttime; Medley: Love Ballad/If You Only Knew; You Look Good To Me; Old Folks; Reunion Blues; Song to Elitha.* (67:13)

**Personnel:** Peterson, piano; Herb Ellis, guitar; Ray Brown, bass; Bobby Durham, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

While certain facets of the music world are busy rediscovering the majesty of the grand piano in a jazz context, one of its most venerable virtuosos is still busy living out his legacy. Few jazz pianists have so adeptly combined technical prowess with tradition-reverent poetry. Peterson's new release, like his Telarc album last year (see "Reviews" Jan. '91), is a bit of a redux in that he reunites with his '50s trio—guitarist Herb Ellis and bassist Ray Brown, fleshed out with drummer Bobby Durham. But the music, ironically, sounds more contemporary than it would have had it been released into the jazz market of 10 years ago. What goes around comes around, and, whatever the cultural climate, quality will out.

Ellis has less of the surehanded dynamism of Peterson's more recent guitar collaborator, Joe Pass, but he acquires himself admirably

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alongside a leader who is the epitome of a hard act to follow.

More than half the tracks are from Peterson's pen, from the standard blower's vehicle, "Kelly's Blues," to the Chopin-esque harmonic turns of "Love Ballade." But the pinnacle here is sans band: his solo reading of "Old Folks" goes through pure rubato elegance, brief stride tangents, steady-as-she-goes half-time passages, and right-hand pyrotechnics that just won't quit. Very damn good for an old folk.

Here is another of those heroic "returns" from someone who never left. (reviewed on CD)

—Josef Woodard



## Charles Gayle Trio

**SPIRITS BEFORE**—Silkheart 177: *ETERNAL NOW; SPIRITS BEFORE; HEART'S NECTAR; EARTH'S FAMILIES; GIVE; BLACK OIL; SOMETIMES.* (67:07)  
**Personnel:** Gayle, tenor sax; Sirona, bass; David Pleasant, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

Do you read often that Albert Ayler's music was a dead end, and free jazz is extinct? Cue up "Sometimes" or "Give." Ayler wrote simple ditties and then twisted them till they transcended themselves. Charles Gayle starts from scratch; his themeless improvisations range from a piercing falsetto to a bar-walker's low honks. Broad one second, pleadingly thin the next, his lines dart and squiggle like the painter Miro's. Gayle is a neo-conservative's nightmare: he knows the saxophone, as blues torch and interval machine, but he's an unregenerate energy player who delivers. As 52-year-old Gayle says, he doesn't keep up with trends.

Few outside lower Manhattan knew of him till Silkheart recorded three albums in a week in 1988, of which *Spirits Before* is prime. His well-meaning producers paired him with Denmark's John Tchicai for *Always Born* (Silkheart 115), but Charles works best with regular partners used to the emotional and musical rhythms of his sets. Pleasant is his drummer of (eccentric) choice. Few drummers ebb and flow with such exaggeration; his broken rhythms are as irregular but steady as rain. He's not everyone's idea of a swinger, but there are many ways to swing. Bassist Sirona's responsive, rubbery tone and elastic time stretch to meet both his mates and band them together. On the right night, Gayle live is one of jazz' sublime experiences; *Spirits Before* will clue you why. (reviewed on CD)

—Kevin Whitehead



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## Latin Jazz Sizzlers

by Larry Birnbaum

Judging by current playlists and sales charts, Latin jazz has finally reached the mainstream, reflecting both Latin mastery of bebop harmonics and jazz's absorption of third-world rhythms. Recent releases reveal craftsmanship slightly outrunning creativity, with Cuban pianist **Gonzalo Rubalcaba** providing a brilliant exception. His second U.S. album, *The Blessing* (Blue Note B21Z97197; 56:37: ★★★★★), is another trio session with bassist Charlie Haden, this time featuring drummer Jack DeJohnette. Recorded in a Toronto studio, it sounds more spontaneous than the prior live-at-Montreux date (see "Reviews" July '91), with all three players edging expertly down a postmodern groove. Rubalcaba's formidable technique is never flashy as he runs the gamut from Monkish romps to Evans-like broodings to Taylor-esque eruptions, splicing in classical and salsa motifs. Steeped in Cuban soul, he spins silk from the corny "Besame Mucho" and transcends Latin jazz with a disarmingly fresh take on Ornette's "The Blessing" and a deconstruction of Trane's "Giant Steps" that's so subtle, it's like being strip-searched with your clothes on. (reviewed on cassette)

**Jerry Gonzalez and the Fort Apache Band** pushed Latin jazz past old limits on previous albums, but on *Earthdance* (Sunnyside SSC 1050D; 76:27: ★★★★★) they give salsa short shrift and focus on hard-bop, with Gonzalez' congas relegated mostly to intros and endings. On material by Monk, Wayne Shorter, and Ron Carter, his deftly-assured trumpet retraces the tough-but-tender steps of Miles' classic sextet, with Joe Ford and Carter Jefferson walking nimbly in Cannonball's and Coltrane's shoes. But what was startling then is soothing now, and with little Afro-Cuban thrust, even on the rumba-based original "Los Roncos," the group blunts its bicultural bite.

Pianist **Hilton Ruiz** has chased crossover rainbows from bop to funk and back, but on *A Moment's Notice* (Novus 3123-2-N; 54:29: ★★★★★½) he strikes gold smack in the middle of the Latin jazz spectrum. Backed by a glove-tight ensemble, the pianist sticks to vamping basics, stretching out only on the concluding Trane tribute, "Naima." But with a galvanic rhythm section that includes Daniel Ponce and Fort Apache stalwarts Andy Gonzalez and Steve Berrios sparking reedmen George Coleman, Kenny Garrett, and Dave Valentin to incandescence, Ruiz can afford to coast.

Best known as Eddie Palmieri's lead trumpeter, **Charlie Sepulveda** floats buttery high notes and blends lustrously with saxophonist David Sanchez on his jazzy solo debut, *The New Arrival* (Antilles 314-510 056-2; 55:35: ★★★★★½). Holding their own with guests like tenorist Ralph Moore and pianist Danilo Perez, his youthful band shows poise if not depth, flagging on an all-original program of fusion-tinted ballads and tough, uptempo bop tunes as Richie Flores crackles the congas.

Holland's **Nueva Manteca**, part of a lively European scene, switched from salsa to Latin jazz after pianist/leader Jan Laurens Hartong





JULES ALLEN

Charlie Sepulveda: buttery high notes

returned from a visit to Cuba. Their second album, *Afrodisia* (Timeless CD SJP 355; 64:48; ★★★½), features New York timbales ace Nicky Marrero, who stayed in the Netherlands after playing with the group. Proving their prowess in two alien idioms, these Dutchmen fly through ambitious but derivative arrangements of bop standards—including three by Monk—with more Latin feel than most Hispanic jazzers, bogging down only on Hartong's classically inflected, Arabic-flavored "Alborada." (reviewed on CD unless otherwise noted) **DB**

## Barron of the Ivories

by Josef Woodard

**V**eteran pianist **Kenny Barron's** role in the ranks of current jazz pianists is that of a reliable pillar in the firmament of the jazz piano tradition. But, an ever-active musician, he's hardly a legend or museum piece, as shown by the recent warm flood of Barron recordings on the scene. An alumnus of bands led by Dizzy Gillespie, James Moody, Freddie Hubbard, and others, Barron worked with his own post-Monk group Sphere, and offered his silken, seasoned touch to the late Stan Getz' final band.

If not a stylistic groundbreaker or rebel by instinct, Barron is a player of enough refined taste and technical fortitude to give the jazz piano tradition both a good name and renewed vitality. This crop of new releases from Barron, in different settings, offers an enlightening overview of the pianist's range and gifts. Taken as a whole, these recordings present the portrait of a 48-year-old pianist very much in his stride.

Barron shines in the flattering light of a trio on *The Only One* (Reservoir 115; 66:03; ★★★★★), joined by his partner in Sphere, drummer Ben Riley, and bassist Ray Drummond. The title cut, by Barron, nods respectfully in the direction of Thelonious Monk—a "Well You Needn't"-like number full of tilted arpeggios and spunky clusters. The remainder of the set follows a more elegant agenda, including a rich solo version of Billy Strayhorn's "Warm Valley," a muscular "Tone For Joan's Bones," and Barron's own reflective ode to an avenue, "Dolores St. S.F."



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ENID FARBER

Kenny Barron: in his stride

Barron and Riley team up again under the aegis of the eminent bassist Red Mitchell's *Talking* (Capri 74016-2; 68:32: ★★★★★), and ignite the Monk flame on the too-rarely played little ditty, "Locomotive." By and large, the fare is slightly warped straightahead, but the way Mitchell takes the melodic lead on "I'm Old Fashioned" indicates an ironic attitude *vis a vis* the title. Mitchell's distinctive fat sound and intelligent compositions warrant attention, sure, but Barron can't help but, if not steal the show, then take the decisive lead in the collective three-way talking going on.

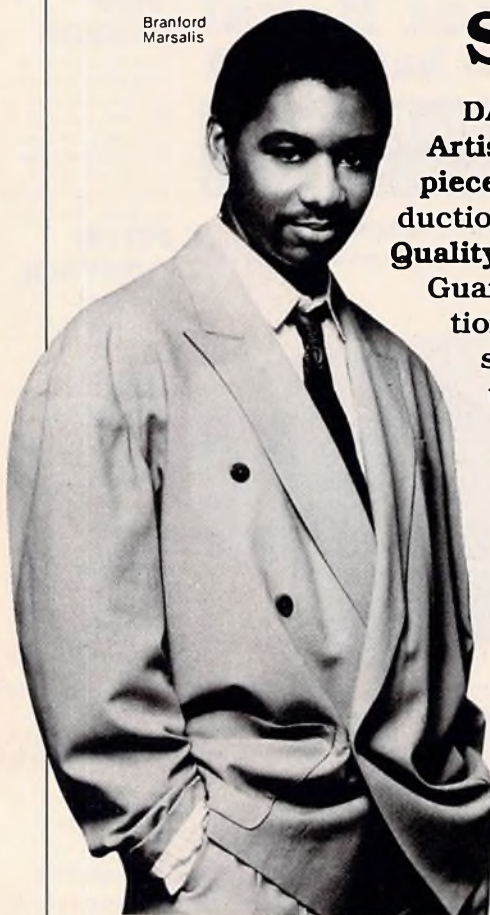
Bolstered by its quartet setting with tenor

saxist Ralph Moore, bassist David Williams, and drummer Lewis Nash, *Invitation* (Criss Cross 1044; 57:32: ★★★½) is a well-rounded set, from the select standard fare headed by the title cut—Branislav Kaper's bittersweet anthem—to Barron originals, and capped off by a sidestepping, striding, Sphere-ish treatment of "Blue Monk." Bebop reasoning fuels Barron's up-tempo "And Then Again," angular 3/4 balladry marks his "Dewdrop," and a loopy samba lobe defines "Joanne Julia," written for his wife.

Barron's quintet, heard on *Quickstep* (Enja 79669; 61:13: ★★★½), is essentially a hard-bop-oriented configuration consisting of too-rarely heard trumpeter Eddie Henderson, tenor saxist (and composer) John Stubblefield, bassist David Williams, and drummer Victor Lewis. Lewis also contributes compositionally, as on his oddly lyrical and lugubrious "Big Girls," stretched out here into a slow-brewing 15-minute piece. Barron's title cut is, *vis a vis* the title, a swingingly brisk but melancholy number. A cohesive and musically well-equipped unit in the hard-bop pentagon tradition, this is a quintet deserving wider recognition.

Almost too much of a good thing takes place on *Rhythm-A-Ning* (Candid 79044; 68:42: ★★★), where Barron and fellow-pianist John Hicks go toe to toe, hand over hand. Apart from such past pairings as Tommy Flanagan

Branford Marsalis



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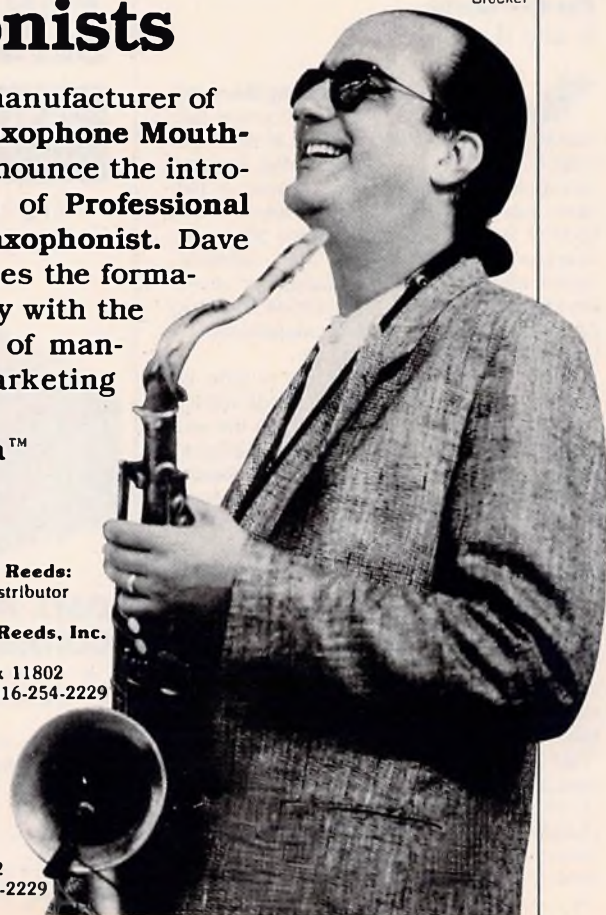
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Michael Brecker





and Hank Jones, successful piano duos have been rare, in part because it's such a big, self-reliant instrument that extreme subtlety and telepathy is required. Too often on this live date, recorded at the Riverside Park Arts Festival in NYC, things turn into a pianistic muddle. It has some beautiful moments, such as on the afterglow of Barron's "Sunshower" or the sheer, go-for-broke dervish dance of the title cut of Monk's classic.

Barron's solo performance on *Live At Maybeck Recital Hall, Volume Ten* (Concord Jazz

466-C: ★★★★★) is the latest in a live-piano series which has included John Hicks, Joanne Brackeen, Stanley Cowell, and Marian McPartland (see "Reviews" Mar. '91). It kicks off with a bravura, unsentimental "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You" that demonstrates Barron's Art Tatum/Bud Powell influence. What ensues is the self-generating energy of an assured solo flight that veers from a rhapsodic "Spring Is Here" to the boppish dazzle of Barron's "And Then Again." (reviewed on cassette, all others on CD)

DB



**Turtle Island String Quartet**

**ON THE TOWN**—Windham Hill Jazz 01934 10132-2: *LOVE FOR SALE; BODY AND SOUL; FASCINATING RHYTHM; MANOIR DE MES REVES/BLUES EN MINEUR; ANGEL EYES; A SMOOTH ONE; OH LADY BE GOOD; LI'L DARLIN'; RACHEL'S DREAM; IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD; I LOVE YOU; CHEEK TO CHEEK.* (56:42)

**Personnel:** Darol Anger, violin, baritone violin; David Balakrishnan, violin; Katrina Weede, viola; Mark Summer, cello; Dr. Billy Taylor, piano (cuts 1,5,6); Victor Gaskin, bass (1,5,6); Bobby Thomas, drums (1,5,6); Vince Lateano, drums (4,8,12); Bill Douglass, bass (2,12); Davis Ramey, guitar (12).

★★★★

**Greene String Quartet**

**THE STRING MACHINE**—Virgin Variations 91632: *WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE; DESERT ROSE; THE STRING MACHINE; BLUES: "DE PROFUNDIS"; HOEDOWN MEDLEY; HARLEM NOCTURNE; FROM THE DIARY OF A FLY; SIR ROGER DE COVERLY; BLEU TRES FOU; FOUR STUDIES.* (48:31)

**Personnel:** Richard Greene, violin; Margaret Wooten, violin; Jimbo Ross, viola; Melissa Hasin, cello.

★★★½

*On The Town* is the most focused, cohesive work the Turtle Island String Quartet has produced. For now, they've stepped away from rampant eclecticism and concentrated their efforts on an album of jazz standards. The material seems pretty safe—lots of Gershwin, Ellington, Porter, etc. The challenge comes with the arrangements. The Turtle Islanders step up with inventive charts which emphasize the quartet's rhythmic style. The arrangement and adaptation of these songs for string quartet sounds perfectly natural. (Then again, a kazoo quartet could play these classics and sound good.) You can hear TISQ functioning like a horn section, supporting and encouraging Darol Anger and David Balakrishnan's solos. Anger, in particular, loves the style of swing jazz violin à la Venuti or Grappelli. Three tracks featuring the Billy Taylor Trio are highlights, turning the soloists loose over a traditional rhythm section. The augmented band recalls Max Roach's Double Quartet in a playful mood.

The Greene String Quartet performs 20th century music informed by popular music and jazz sensibilities. They improvise, and they play fast. *The String Machine* shifts into gear with a notorious (they hope) cover of Guns 'n' Roses' "Welcome To The Jungle." This is high-concept bravado and, with smears and snarls played by Richard Greene over tense rhythms,

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it mostly works. Programming Axil and Slash alongside Copland and Bartok must say something, though I don't yet know what.

The Greene Quartet keeps you off balance with short, swift, diverse selections in styles ranging from commissioned "serious" works to "Harlem Nocturne" (featuring Melissa Hasisin's walking cello lines) to an arrangement of Copland's "Hoedown" which lets the harmonic richness of the writing come out through the cornpone. *The String Machine* veers towards "traditional" classical music, but retains its sense of fun—it's upbeat, always interesting, and it keeps moving. (reviewed on CD)

—Jon Andrews



## Ricky Ford

**HARD GROOVIN'**—Muse MCD 5373: *MASAMAN; MR. C.P.; NEW BOP; D.D. BLUES; HARD GROOVIN'; FUNDAMENTAL MOOD; JITTERBUG WALTZ; MINORITY.* (47:12)

**Personnel:** Ford, alto, tenor sax; Roy Hargrove, trumpet; Geoff Keezer, piano; Bob Hurst, bass; Jeff Watts, drums.

★★★★½

**EBONY RHAPSODY**—Candid CCD79053: *EBONY RHAPSODY; MON AMOUR; INDEPENDENCE BLUES; MIRROR MAN; IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD; SETTING SUN BLUES; BROADWAY; RED, CRACK AND BLUE.* (56:11)

**Personnel:** Ford, tenor sax; Jaki Byard, piano; Milt Hinton, bass; Ben Riley, drums.

★★★★½

*Ebony Rhapsody*, a live date at Birdland in New York City, has Ricky Ford surrounded by mentors and elder statesmen Byard, Hinton, and Riley while *Hard Groovin'* highlights the saxophonist in a studio session in the company of much-heralded youngbloods Hargrove, Keezer, Hurst, and Watts. Ford shines in both settings, blowing potent, robust tenor lines on top of separate but equally compatible rhythm sections.

Byard enlivens the Birdland gig with his wonderfully eccentric piano work, particularly on "Mirror Man," "Red, Crack, And Blue" (with its "Blue Monk" quote), and "Independence Blues." The Judge oozes charisma on the bandstand with banter, chuckles, and shouts of encouragement, all while propelling the music forward. Check Milt's steady pulse and signature slap bass technique on the title cut, a swinging slant on a Franz Liszt classic. Ford's sense of improvisational daring is perhaps best captured on his lengthy unaccompanied intro to "Mon Amour," a feat that only fully mature players can pull off, and Ricky

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● With one disc, Gonzalo Rubalcaba expanded the boundaries of the art of jazz piano. No other jazz artist of recent memory has garnered the critical and popular acclaim that this Cuban powerhouse did in the last six months since the release of his American debut "Discovery - Live In Montreux".

● Last May, the day after a legendary performance at Toronto's El Mocambo Club, Gonzalo entered the studio with CHARLIE HADEN and JACK DeJOHNETTE to record "The Blessing", his second Blue Note disc. Ten tunes, including Coltrane's "Giant Steps" and Ornette's title song, are given readings of remarkable taste and strength that will have critics scrambling for more superlatives.

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does so with aplomb. He stretches on the challenging "Setting Sun Blues" and blends beautifully in an empathetic duet with Mill on "In A Sentimental Mood." Ricky evokes the earthy quality of Ben Webster on "Red, Crack And Blue," and on "Broadway" he plays with the gutsy fervor of an Illinois Jacquet.

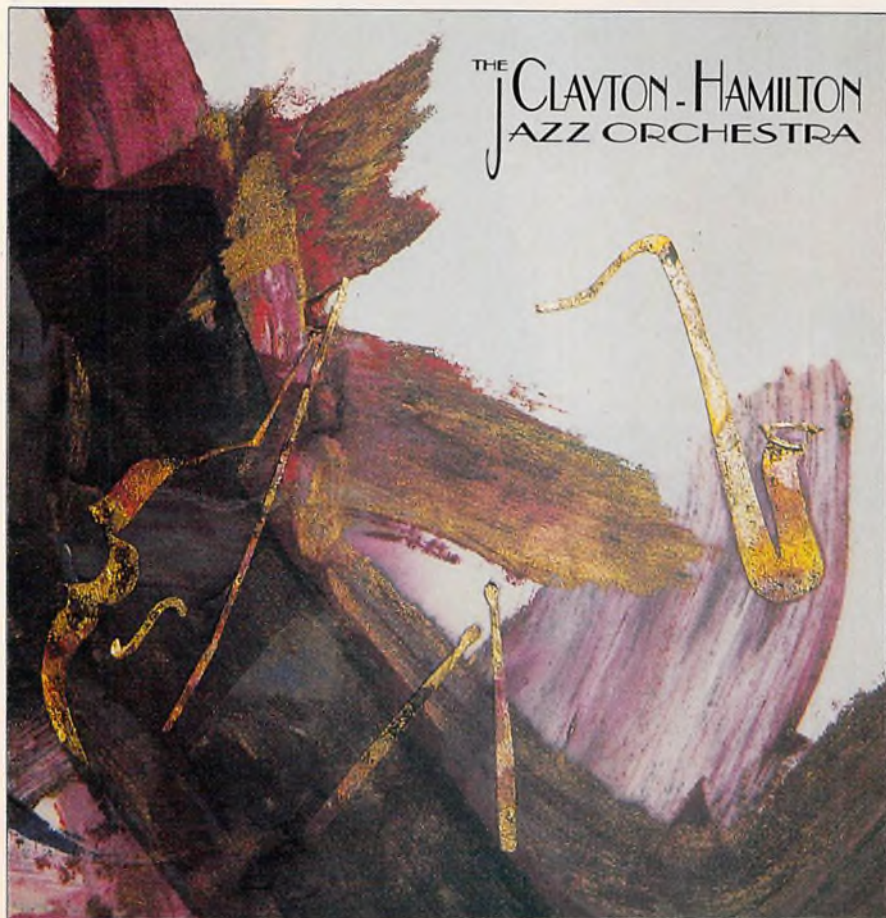
Ford is in fast company on *Hard Groovin'*, but these talented youngbloods show that they can relax and swing easy as well as burn a

blue streak. Hargrove is a strong presence in the lineup with his bright tone and cutting attack, most impressively showcased on Keezer's "Masaman" and Ford's tempo-shifting tribute to Bird, "Mr. C.P." He also plays some lovely muted trumpet on the relaxed Ford original, "D.D. Blues." Ford is pushed to some fervent peaks on the burning title cut. But the depth of his tenor playing really becomes apparent on a gorgeous ballad like "Fundamental

Mood," in which he summons up the lush tones and vocal phrasing of a Dexter Gordon or Coleman Hawkins. This moving piece also showcases Keezer's keen sense of rhythm and harmonic invention.

For a change of pace, Ford closes the set on alto, burning his way through an uptempo "Minority" as Hargrove and Keezer match him stride for stride. An exciting band fronted by a formidable talent. (reviewed on CD)

—Bill Milkowski



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## Uncle Festive

**THE PAPER AND THE DOG**—Bluemoon 79169:  
*THE PAPER AND THE DOG; THE ROAD TO KENT; JESSICA; BOY KING; FANTASTIC THEN; THE SUPER; GREEN VILLAGE; SUNDAY THOUGHTS; ALL RISE; UP AND DOWN (AND SPEEDIN' ALL OVER); NOT FOR NOTHIN.'* (53:07)

**Personnel:** Ron Pedley, keyboards; John Pondel, guitarist; Marc Levine, bass; Bud Harner, drums.

★ ★ ½

Uncle Festive, now with several releases to its credit, is still poised precariously between jazz and pop sensibilities. They want the world to forget their "day gig" as the backup band for Barry Manilow, but a marketplace savvy informs their music. Still, the band rises above the calculated vapidness of many of their L.A.-based, pop-jazz contemporaries, and they allow puckish humor and a certain stylistic adventurousness to creep into the mix.

Originality is not always their strong suit. On their latest album, the title cut is an all-too-exacting replica of the hip-hop fusion of Miles Davis' last two albums. They also serve up a funk-fortified version of "Jessica," the catchy Allman Brothers instrumental written by Dickie Betts. On the fade-out (another concession to pop-music strategies), guitarist Pondel offers a lesson in how Betts-ish pentatonic major-scale riffs can be happily married to more complex Larry Carlton-style phrases. On more personal turf, Pondel's "Green Village" is a suave Latin-ish groover with echoes of Pat Metheny. Pedley is an especially distinctive player and writer, whose lines—on paper and on keyboard—are both clean-burning and slightly twisted. His "Up And Down" is a rubbery little ditty that leaves you whistling and pleasantly puzzled.

In Uncle Festive's music, pop and jazz enjoy an uneasy, unsettled relationship—the paper wags the dog, and vice versa. It's a good sign of life at a time when so much fuzak rolls merrily, thoughtlessly along on its way to the bank. (reviewed on CD)

—Josef Woodard



## Get Serious

### Three To Get Ready

by Art Lange

**T**hough in jazz's earlier days the trio of choice usually included a reed instrument (or trumpet) with piano and drums, the piano/bass/drums combo has grown in popularity since the advent of bebop. And few keyboard artists have fronted a piano trio with the grace and flexibility of **Hank Jones**. On a newly released concert performance from 1979, *In Japan* (All Art Jazz 11001; 51:54: ★★★★★), he brings his impeccable taste to a program of swing era standards which affirm his allegiance to the Teddy Wilson school of light, effortless, blissfully smooth legato phrasing. George Duvivier is a rock on bass, while drummer Shelly Manne won't stay in the background, always finding something ear-catching to accent.

On the ironically titled *What's New* (DIW 605; 45:51: ★★★★★), veteran **Walter Bishop Jr.** shows how the jagged phrasing of bebop can transform a standard repertoire not unlike Jones'. Bishop's spurts of notes provide space and momentum, he quotes Debussy as easily as Monk, and even looks forward with a hypnotic view of Wayne Shorter's "Speak No Evil." But with bop back in style (witness that his accompanists, Peter and Kenny Washington on bass and drums, respectively, are of a younger generation), Bishop reminds us of his master status.

Up-and-comer **Benny Green** is a student of Bishop's and dedicates one number from his *Greens* (Blue Note 7 96485 2; 63:26: ★★½) to his teacher. But though he bounces from bop to Silver-standard soul-jazz to Basie-ish restraint, much of the music on this CD suffers from too much preparation or uncomfortably slow tempos. What Green lacks here is the sense of spontaneity which **Hod O'Brien** brings to a *Ridin' High* (Reservoir 116; 67:49: ★★★★★). An out-and-out Bud man, O'Brien's right hand essays a flood of Powell-like statements; his phrasing is not as attractively shaggy as Bishop's, say, but is impressive for its evenhanded, inventive demeanor. And ballads like O'Brien's own "Nathalie," innocent with warm melodic twists, are a bonus.

As **Eddie Higgins** points out in his notes to *Those Quiet Days* (Sunnyside 1052D; 56:44: ★★★★★½), the piano/guitar/bass combination has famous precedents (Tatum, King Cole, Peterson). Most surprising here is Kevin Eubanks' mellow, modest contribution—he swings sprightly on "Straight No Chaser" and evokes an understated elegance on "Kevin's Waltz." Pianist Higgins can caress a melody, too, or inject Powell's "Celia" with a buoyant lilt (and the consistency of Rufus Reid's time means a drummer isn't missed). But mostly the moods are subdued.

Which is not the case with the *For All The Marbles Suite* (ASP 31990; 61:12: ★★★★★½) by pianist **Simon Nabatov**. This is powerhouse playing on a primarily modal base, with a large range of harmonic materials at hand. The flexibility of support from bassist Mark Helias and drummer Barry Altschul allows Nabatov to exploit the full spectrum of the



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keyboard, inject some "free" episodes along with brief pre-swing parodies, and basically just build up a strong head of steam. This disc

brought to mind Chick Corea's *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs*—high praise indeed. Pianist **Richard Grossman** is an advo-



DARRYL PITTMORE

Hank Jones: impeccable taste

cate of spontaneous composition, and his *Trio In Real Time* (9Winds 0134; 69:23: ★★★½), with bassist Ken Filiano and drummer Alex Cline, finds the threesome acutely attuned to each other. Yet the music is often more interesting for the way they fit together than for what they convey. Grossman's playing can be stark or scattershot, and he seems to prefer prickly phrases that jolt or clash instead of cohere. Cline's is an unorthodox clatter of textures and timbres suited to the brittle climate.

**Vinny Golia's Chamber Trio** surveys a different tack. On *Worldwide & Portable* (9Winds 01413; 58:42: ★★★★★), mood takes precedence over instrumental detail, reflecting the "chamber" influence. Golia likes dark sonorities, choosing bassoon, bass clarinet, baritone sax often, lending a subterranean tinge to much of the music, and the frequent reliance on free tempos—or no tempos—give the isolated moments of finger-snapping swing that much more punch. Filiano is again the bassist, and Wayne Peet's canny piano is a plus.

The compositional ethic that underscores Golia's disc is carried to the extreme on the **Michel Ratté Trio's** *Musique Idee* (Amplitude 4017; 51:57: ★★★½). Improvising on rigorously atonal material, their lucid trio structures paradoxically sound ultra-controlled, despite the attractive, sympathetic development of themes. Ratté's rational approach to the drums may remind you of Paul Motian or Barry Altschul, but he alone provides rhythmic thrust; Yves Charuest's cool sax and Guillaume Dostaler's keyboards (calmly supportive on piano, his synth's pitch vagaries sound like Sun Ra's early explorations) never cut loose, building tension by refusing to let the music swing.

A perfect compromise is reached in the music of the **Schlippenbach Trio** on *Elf Bagatellen* (FMP 27; 72:21: ★★★★★). The sense of discovery—self-discovery by the musicians, as the music is engaged through their particular instrumental techniques, and passed along to the listener—is palpable. Saxist Evan Parker's splintered lines leap into uncharted territories as pianist Alex von Schlippenbach and percussionist Paul Lovens consort, constrainedly changing the shape of their liquid forms. From extreme eruptions to quiet introspection, the music can be complex and erratic; it helps the more familiarity you have with their unique tonal language. But this is a good entranceway for the uninitiated—experienced listeners will be merely amazed. (all reviewed on CD)

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**Sue Raney**

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**Personnel:** Raney, vocals; Alan Broadbent, piano, leader; Conte Candoli, trumpet; Bill Watrous, Dick Nash (cuts 3,4,7,8), trombone; Bob Cooper, tenor sax; Andy Simpkins, bass; Jake Hanna, John Guerin (1,5,9,12), drums.

★★★★

Sue Raney shows qualities that I like in a singer. She sings in fine pitch, with pleasing phrasing, and just a little vibrato. She spans her wide range well and effortlessly: low without hooting, high without screeching. Raney's fine balance extends beyond the vocal to the

interpretative. Her whispers hiss not, nor are they stagy. Her upswept glisses leave me a bit giddy, yet her ebullience never bubbles over into cloying effervescence; and her spotting of it is effective.

Though Raney's repertoire is your basic '30s-to-'50s mainstream swing, she neatly sidesteps big-band nostalgia at every turn by infusing refreshing twists: the relaxed, bluesy coda to "Love Walked In" sounds natural and unaffected. (Bopwise, there's the broadly bent "So What" vamp framing a stop-time "Indian Summer" and a hair-raising "Donna Lee" interpolated with "Indiana.") Raney's nice touches let in ace sidemen at every turn (the head-to-head duo with Bill Watrous, whose smooth trombone opens "How Deep" and

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buffers over "Mood Indigo," the rarely-heard verse with just Broadbent to a very low-key "Foolish Things"). And, while she herself strays but rarely from the melody and scats only "Donna Lee" (in unison), arranger Broadbent maxes solo space at every turn by working in voice-overs: even "Poor Butterfly" lets each frontliner take eight without squeezing. Raney and he save a tender, touching "My Foolish Heart" just for themselves.

After this pleasant encounter, I'm going to dig out Raney's 1984 and 1987 dates on this dependable label with pianist Bob Florence. (reviewed on CD) —Fred Bouchard



### Timbuk 3

BIG SHOT IN THE DARK—I.R.S. X2-13094:  
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THE BORDER CROSSING; BIG SHOT IN THE DARK;  
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& ME); WAKE UP LITTLE DARLIN'; '49 PLYMOUTH;  
THE LITTLE THINGS; SUNSHINE (INSTRUMENTAL).  
(46:31)

Personnel: Pat MacDonald, electric and acoustic guitars, vocals, harmonica, soundbites; Barbara MacDonald, electric guitar, vocals, violin, percussion; Wally Ingram, drums, percussion, claps; Courtney Audain, bass, steel drums, keyboard, percussion, claps, background vocals; John "Mambo" Treanor, washboard (cuts 3, 4, 9); Liz Harrah, organ (1); Evan Jones, lead and slide guitars (6); Gary Moon, claps.

★ ★ ★ ★

*Big Shot In The Dark* marks the coming of maturity for Timbuk 3. While it is the band's fourth album, it's the first featuring the full standard rock band format of two guitars, bass, and drums. The move pays off for bandleaders Pat and Barbara MacDonald, who started off as a duo, using a boombox for their programmed rhythm section. While they've recorded their share of finely crafted, catchy pop melodies since their 1986 debut, Timbuk 3's songs have lacked the punch and tightness they have here. It also helps that the newest band member, Trinidad-born and Austin-based Courtney Audain, not only serves up steady bass lines but contributes impressive percussion textures as well, most notably in his steel-drum reprising of "Sunshine."

Lyricaly, Timbuk 3 once again avoids mindless pop patter in favor of serving up challenging themes that pivot on the questioning of societal values. There are the recurring images of fallen angels and allusions to an American chauvinism that led to the Persian Gulf War. One number is a sardonic critique of the Disneyland-is-heaven mentality, while the title

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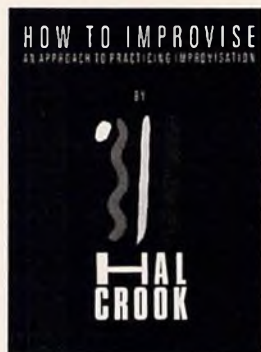


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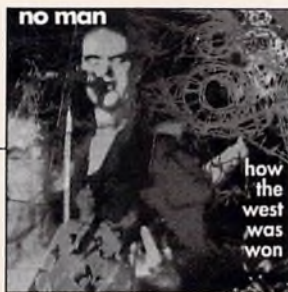
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Then there's the gem of the bunch, the slow acoustic blues, "Wake Up Little Darlin'," which offers a gleam of hope, "There must be some answers/Hiding in the shadows." The tune provides a winsome touch to the strong collection. (reviewed on CD) —Dan Ouellette



### No Man

HOW THE WEST WAS WON—SST 281: CARTOON, CARTOON (WHERE'S THE EXIT?); BOOMERANG; HOW THE WEST WAS WON; REACH FOR THE SKY; HERE WE GO; THE SET-UP; WOUNDED WORLD; GRABBED STAR; IT'S JUST A DAY; NO WARNING; CALL ON ME; (ASTRONOMY ENGINE). (43:05)

Personnel: Roger Miller, guitars, vocals, sequencing, bass, percussion; Russ Smith, bass, guitar, vocals; Andy Deckard, percussion, vocals (cuts 3, 8, 9); Ken Winokur, percussion (4, 10).

★ ★ ★ ½

No Man is the post-punk, post-pop handiwork, primarily, of Bostonian Roger Miller, with help from four- and six-stringer Russ Smith. No, it's not *that* Roger Miller—no cool incantations of "trailer for sale or rent" here. Rather, this Miller is the reformed punk hellion behind the influential band Mission of Burma. That band came to a halt when Miller acquired tinnitus (a hearing impairment caused by exposure to deafening sound levels: poetic justice). Ears ringing, he retreated into the studio and experimented by pushing the envelope of possibilities with an electric piano.

With No Man, there is a kind of stripped-down directness combined with a self-effacing sense of humor that is reminiscent of Timbuk 3. Just add plenty of gnarly guitar tones, a do-it-yourselfer's studiocraft, and brute energy force. No Man is a logical extension of the literate noise guitar bands which have preceded it on the SST label: Hüsker Dü, Meat Puppets, Sonic Youth.

To Miller's credit, it's not easy to get a quick idiomatic fix on No Man. Odd sound sources crop up in the mix, and Miller constantly shifts between the twin stances of punker and popster. Political content is more tongue-in-cheek than earnest, as when, on the title tune, he

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sings "Glorify the ruthless/And Praise the oppressive/Advertise the useless/And make a sale—all right!" Stylistically, Miller dances on the line between the pop-palatable and the outer limits, without succumbing to sheer esoterica or to fashionable REM cloning. "It's Just A Day" is as pop-hooky as the peculiar instrumental closer "(Astronomy Engine)" is a curve-ball, like a psychedelic dream in a bowling alley.

Although it could stand a little scrub-up in the sonic realm (is that still sacrilege by leftover punk standards?), *How The West Was Won* is a reliable indicator that the thrash-throes of punk have a valid afterlife. (reviewed on CD)

—Josef Woodard



### Jesse Davis

**HORN OF PASSION**—Concord Jazz CCD-4465: *C. P. TIME; HERE'S THAT RAINY DAY; STARDUST; STOP & GO; FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE; LI'L MAC; VIOLETS FOR YOUR FURS; GONE WITH THE WIND; TESTIMONIAL; CAT TALK.* (60:36)

**Personnel:** Davis, alto sax; Mulgrew Miller, piano; Rufus Reid (cuts 1-3, 5, 7, 8), Tyler Mitchell (4, 6, 9, 10), bass; Jimmy Cobb (1-3, 5, 7, 8), Eric McPherson (4, 6, 9, 10), drums; Antoine Roney, tenor sax (4, 6, 9, 10).

★ ★ ★ ½

Someone has tagged the current generation of young jazz musicians "rebo" players. The title fits Davis, a devotee of Bird. Twenty-five when he recorded this debut, he shows facility as an improviser and embellisher. He plays with a bounce that stops just short of Cannonball's, and certain of his nuances suggest Frank Morgan. His Bird is more by inference (tone and phrasing) than by rote lines. The elements of surprise and emotion are greater in his model, but Davis does make a strong case for the title of this album.

"C. P. Time" (C. P. is Charlie Parker) kicks it off with proof that Davis can fly. The venerable ballad, "Stardust," demonstrates his skill at embellishment. "Cat Talk" is a conversation in the blues, and "Gone With The Wind" exemplifies how he swings.

There are two bands, with Davis and the ever-charged Miller the common link. The pianist swings a-plenty and breaks charmingly into block chords at the right times. The quintet tracks, comprising originals by Davis, appear more adventurous, perhaps because of the interplay of the two saxophones and Roney's Trane-like angularity. Altogether, Davis, another New Orleans native, is as adept as anyone his age recording today. (reviewed on CD)

—Owen Cordle



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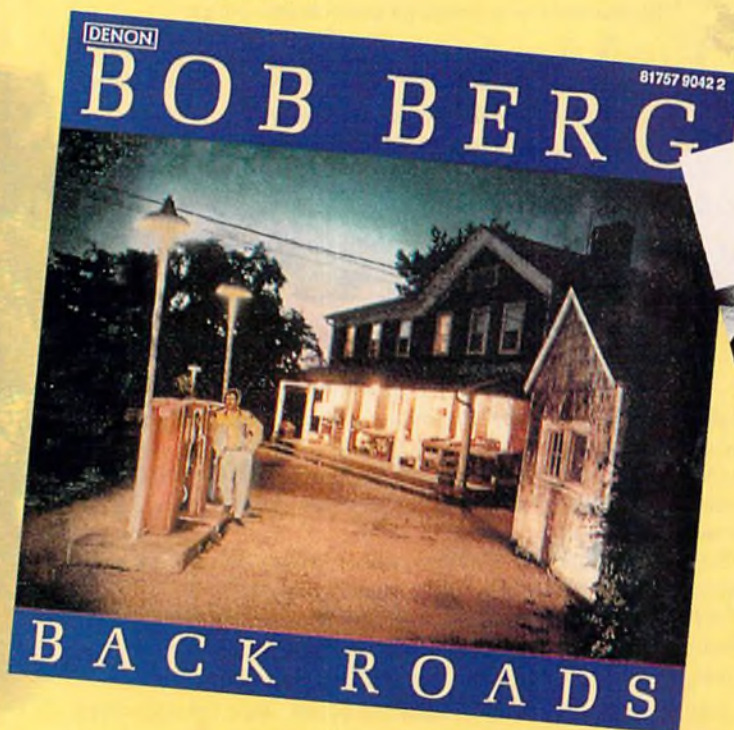
## Drove 'O' Rova

by John Corbett

**C**ranking out a massive load of new releases, reissues, and special projects, **Rova** is not only the hardest-working saxophone quartet in blow-business, they are also the finest. Four new CD's are representative only insofar as the group doesn't sit still for long but keeps on pushing, trying new things, going new places, looking for fresh turf. Such is the result of a long partnership, the group having had only one personnel change in its 14-year existence. In fact, that transition—Steve Adams' replacing Andrew Voigt on primary alto duties—is charted on these releases.

Two of the discs were recorded in the Soviet Union, straddling the great *perestroika* divide. In 1983, Rova made vanguard jazz history by touring the U.S.S.R. under semi-legitimate state sanction. *Saxophone Diplomacy* (hat ART 6068; 61:35; ★★★★★) features the excellent live results, sporting familiar Rova originals and arrangements of two Steve Lacy compositions. On the CD reissue, Hat Hut has intelligently dropped a rather dull encounter with Russian bass and drums, and the rest of the music is as intense, earnest, and exciting as it was then. It is not, however, quite as polished as the 1989 trip documented on *This Time We Are Both*

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(New Albion 041; 67:03: ★★★★★), which could set a new standard for live music on record, its warm, crisp recording capturing the kind of spark only ignited in the finest performance circumstances. On a piece like tenor player Larry Och's "Torque," Rova integrates player choice into its compositional structures, so that this live recording not only consists of newly improvised solos, but different player



PEETER VILMIS

Restless Rova: (l-r) Bruce Ackley, Steve Adams, Larry Och, and Jon Raskin

combinations, variable section durations, and a resulting flexibility in overall architecture. This all adds up to extremely fresh music contingent on just the kind of quick-thinking, big-picture inventiveness that Rova carries off so seamlessly.

Naturally, this makes the Latvian performance of "Torque" quite different from its studio incarnation on *Long On Logic* (Sound Aspects 037; 63:23: ★★★★★). In fact, Rova brought plenty of "live" spark with them into those studio sessions, during which they played their own music (Adams' thick composition "K/24" constituting his first contribution to the Rova repertoire), and four commissioned works—

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three by Fred Frith and one by Henry Kaiser. The Frith pieces are as clever and neat as the best of his work, replete with gleeful folk singsongs and shameless showboating. For instance, a hocket section appears in "Long On Logic" during which each member pops one note at a time, culminating in a piecemeal melody. Bruce Ackley's soprano intro to Frith's "Hope" is especially lush and hot, and the quartet's version of Kaiser's "Sugagaki For Conlon" is an appropriate mix of the mechanistic and muscular. Both baritonist Jon Raskin's "Wig Hat Six Step" and Ochs' "The Shopper" offset Rova's bubbling improv interaction with a funky, jerky stop-time stagger.

"The Shopper" also appears on the quartet's encounter with Anthony Braxton, *The Aggregate* (Sound Aspects 023; 69:17: ★★★★★), once again in a very different form. Braxton's impact on the development of the contemporary saxophone quartet is clear, a composition of his having inaugurated the World Saxophone Quartet. On this date, his alto work on the title cut is as absolutely devastating as his 46-minute epic "Composition 129+" is daunting in size and scope. As with all of Rova's consistently wonderful music, however, intent listening is richly rewarded by this monumental soundscape, with its jagged edges, compositional perches, and instrumental diversity. (all reviewed on CD) **DB**

## Yule Jewels

by Robin Tolleson

'T is the season that some musicians try to cash in on the Holiday spirit with hastily conceived, generally uninspired Christmas collections. Fortunately, this year there are some jewels in the rough. Two that stand out for entertainment and originality are guitarist **Tuck Andress'** *Hymns, Carols And Songs About Snow* (Windham Hill 01934 10135; 41:40: ★★★★★), and *He Is Christmas* (Reprise 9 26665-2; 35:36: ★★★★★½) by the extraordinary vocalists **Take 6**.

Andress' second solo outing includes a slow, bluesy "Santa Claus Is Coming To Town," a flying improvisation on "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen," a diligent, down-home "Rudolph," and a sublimely dissonant "Angels We Have Heard On High." He performs lead and accompaniment simultaneously, and by blending equal doses of wit and invention into his arrangements, Andress reminds us of the joy and innocence of the holidays.

Take 6 is on their home court with *He Is Christmas*. They really sink their gospel teeth into it; but the jazz, pop, and funk they're so comfortable with shines through as well. As usual, their arranging is right on target. "Hark The Herald Angels Sing" is regal and respectful, while they recreate a jazz combo vocally on an unorthodox "Away In A Manger." "Oh! He Is Christmas" (penned by Claude Mc-Knight) is a smooth, controlled funk, and for a looser take on things they throw in a rousing, swinging "Amen." Amazing how these guys



# Notes From Rayburn

are so technically outstanding and warm, too.

Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker" gets good coverage from two quite different sources this season. Eleven artists conspire on 16 selections to create *The Narada Nutcracker* (Narada ND-63904; 52:49: ★★★), forming a sort of modern chamber orchestra with strings, woodwinds, guitar, and keyboards. The music has a traditional feel as well as a fresh slant, and is performed energetically. **The Modern Mandolin Quartet's** *The Nutcracker Suite* (Windham Hill 01934 11108-2; 46:25: ★★★½) is certainly a stretch, not something found in the traditional mandolin repertoire; but then that's the name of the game for the MMQ. The arrangements and performances sparkle, and in leaving room for the music to breathe, Mike Marshall and his able mates (with guests Ransom Wilson and Edgar Meyer) free up the imagination.

*GRP Christmas Collection Volume II* (GRD-9650; 53:33: ★★★½) has several high points in the mix. "Angels We Have Heard On High" is funky up nicely by keyboardist Don Grusin, with guest vocalists from his daughter's elementary school adding an offbeat, fun touch. Saxman George Howard's reading of "The First Noel" is inspired, with much flutter and flourish from the soprano man. Trumpeter Arturo Sandoval takes an interesting approach to "O Come All Ye Faithful," pinning a classical intro on it before opening up for some serious blowing. Carl Anderson's pipes are impressive and Acoustic Alchemy does some festive picking, but the other performances are on the sterile side, and don't win arranging points, either.

Pianist **Peter Kater's** *The Season* (Silver Wave SD 702; 41:54: ★★★) is a lush affair, featuring traditionals (including the underplayed "I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day") and four original instrumentals that capture the feeling of the season. He slows down "Jingle Bells" to give the melody some due, and sends the song on a whole new adventure. Kater plays mostly acoustic, some tasty synth, and is joined by sax, flute, and violin. Another sleeper from Silver Wave, *Portraits Of Christmas* by **Wind Machine** (SD 606; 50:06: ★★★), is a pleasant and cheery offering. The group plays specially designed high-pitched guitars (guitjos) that sound a bit like dulcimers. They ring out strong on "Carol Of The Bells," "What Child Is This?" and other standards and originals. Good ensemble playing—not flashy. The arrangements, like the beautifully harmonious "O Holy Night," have some nice twists, but are mostly kept quite traditional.

**The Beach Boys' Christmas Album** (Capitol CDP 7950842; 36:01: ★★★½) is fun, especially if you like your carols to sound like "Little Deuce Coupe." There are five Brian Wilson-penned Christmas tunes on this mid-'60s reissue, along with typical standards. The Boys show off their best Four Freshmen voices on a bouncy, big band version of "Frosty The Snowman" and on a squeaky-clean, string-engulfed "Blue Christmas." The arrangers may have gone a bit too far in their orchestrations, including a hilariously somber "We Three Kings," but when this one stays light it reminds you of waves, sand, bikinis, and all those things Christmas is known for.

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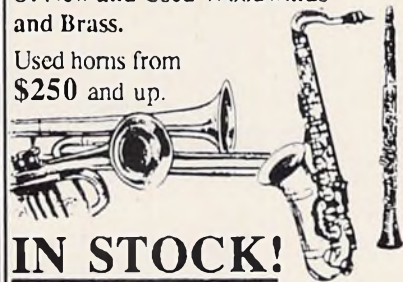
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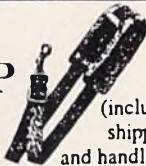
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# BLINDFOLD TEST MILES DAVIS

By LEONARD FEATHER

Miles Davis is unusually selective in his listening habits. This attitude should not be interpreted as reflecting any general misanthropy. He was in a perfectly good mood on the day of the interview reproduced below; it just happened that the records selected did not, for the most part, make much of an impression.

Clark Terry, for example, is an old friend and idol of Davis' from St. Louis, and the Duke Ellington Orchestra has always been on Davis' preferred list.

Davis does not have an automatic tendency to want to put everything down, as an inspection of his earlier *Blindfold Tests* will confirm (*DB*, Sept. 21, 1955 and Aug. 7, 1958).

The Cecil Taylor item was played as an afterthought, because we were discussing artists who have impressed critics, and I said I'd like to play an example. Aside from this, Davis was given no information about the records played.

## THE RECORDS

1. Les McCann-Jazz Crusaders. *All Blues* (Pacific Jazz). Wayne Henderson, trombone; Wilton Felder, tenor saxophone; Joe Sample, piano; McCann, electric piano; Miles Davis, composer.

What's that supposed to be? That ain't nothin'. They don't know what to do with it—you either play it bluesy or you play on the scale. You don't just play flat notes. I didn't write it to play flat notes on—you know, like minor thirds. Either you play a whole chord against it, or else . . . but don't try to play it like you'd play, ah, *Walkin' the Dog*. You know what I mean?

That trombone player—trombone ain't supposed to sound like that. This is 1964, not 1924. Maybe if the piano player had played it by himself, something would have happened.

Rate it? How can I rate that?

2. Clark Terry. *Cielito Lindo* (from *3 in Jazz*, RCA Victor). Terry, trumpet; Hank Jones, piano; Kenny Burrell, guitar.

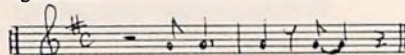
Clark Terry, right? You know, I've always liked Clark. But this is a sad record. Why do they make records like that? With the guitar in the way, and that sad piano player. He didn't do nothing for the rhythm section—didn't you hear it get jumbled up? All they needed was a bass and Terry.

That's what's up music, you know. Record companies. They make too many sad records, man.

3. Rod Levitt. *Ahi Spain* (from *Dynamic Sound Patterns*, Riverside). Levitt, trombone, composer; John Beal, bass.

There was a nice idea, but they didn't do nothing with it. The bass player was a \_\_\_\_\_, though.

What are they trying to do, copy Gil? It doesn't have the Spanish feeling—doesn't move. They move up in triads, but there's all those chords missing—and I never heard any Spanish thing where they had a figure that went



That's some old \_\_\_\_\_, man. Sounds

like Steve Allen's TV band. Give it some stars just for the bass player.

4. Duke Ellington. *Caravan* (from *Money Jungle*, United Artists). Ellington, piano; Charlie Mingus, bass; Max Roach, drums.

What am I supposed to say to that? That's ridiculous. You see the way they can \_\_\_\_\_ up music? It's a mismatch. They don't complement each other. Max and Mingus can play together, by themselves. Mingus is a hell of a bass player, and Max is a hell of a drummer. But Duke can't play with them, and they can't play with Duke.

Now, how are you going to give a thing like that some stars? Record companies should be kicked in the \_\_\_\_\_. Somebody should take a picket sign and picket the record company.

5. Sonny Rollins. *You Are My Lucky Star* (from *3 in Jazz*, RCA Victor). Don Cherry, trumpet; Rollins, tenor saxophone; Henry Grimes, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

Now, why did they have to end it like that? Don Cherry I like, and Sonny I like, and the tune idea is nice. The rhythm is nice. I didn't care too much for the bass player's solo. Five stars is real good? It's just good, no more. Give it three.

6. Stan Getz-Joao Gilberto. *Desafinado* (from *Getz-Gilberto*, Verve). Getz, tenor saxophone; Gilberto, vocal.

Gilberto and Stan Getz made an album together? Stan plays good on that. I like Gilberto; I'm not particularly crazy about just anybody's bossa nova. I like the samba. And I like Stan, because he has so much patience, the way he plays those melodies—other people can't get nothing out of a song, but he can. Which takes a lot of imagination, that he has, that so many other people don't have.

As for Gilberto, he could read a newspaper and sound good! I'll give that one five stars.

7. Eric Dolphy. *Mary Ann* (from *Far Cry*, New Jazz). Booker Little, trumpet; Dolphy, composer, alto saxophone; Jaki Byard, piano.

That's got to be Eric Dolphy—nobody else could sound that bad! The next time I see him I'm going to step on his foot. You print that. I think he's ridiculous. He's

a sad \_\_\_\_\_.

L.F.: *Down Beat* won't print those words.

M.D.: Just put he's a sad shhhhhhhhh, that's all! The composition is sad. The piano player \_\_\_\_\_ it up, getting in the way so that you can't hear how things are supposed to be accented.

It's a sad record, and it's the record company's fault again. I didn't like the trumpet player's tone, and he don't do nothing. The running is all right if you're going to play that way, like Freddie Hubbard or Lee Morgan; and you've got to inject something, and you've got to have the rhythm section along; you just can't keep on playing all eighth notes.

The piano player's sad. You have to *think* when you play; you have to help each other—you just can't play for yourself. You've got to play with whomever you're playing. If I'm playing with Basie, I'm going to try to help what he's doing—that particular feeling.

8. Cecil Taylor. *Lena* (from *Live at the Cafe Montmartre*, Fantasy). Jimmy Lyons, alto saxophone; Taylor, piano.

Take it off! That's some sad \_\_\_\_\_, man. In the first place, I hear some Charlie Parker cliches. . . . They don't even fit. Is that what the critics are digging? Them critics better stop having coffee. If there ain't nothing to listen to, they might as well admit it. Just to take something like that and say it's great, because there ain't nothing to listen to, that's like going out and getting a prostitute.

L.F.: This man said he was influenced by Duke Ellington.

M.D.: I don't give a \_\_\_\_\_! It must be Cecil Taylor. Right? I don't care who he's inspired by. That \_\_\_\_\_ ain't nothing. In the first place he don't have the—you know, the way you touch a piano. He doesn't have the touch that would make the sound of whatever he thinks of come off.

I can tell he's influenced by Duke, but to put the loud pedal on the piano and make a run is very old-fashioned to me. And when the alto player sits up there and plays without no tone. . . . That's the reasons I don't buy any records. 