

WINNERS—40th ANNUAL CRITICS POLL

DOWN BEAT

Jazz, Blues & Beyond

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Haden & Metheny

Joe Henderson
Triple-Crown Poll Winner
Terence Blanchard
Paul Bley





BETH HERZHAFT

16 CHARLIE HADEN & PAT METHENY A Healthy Dose Of Disrespect

How did a couple of farm boys from the Midwest end up sharing the cover of DB? When their names are Charlie Haden and Pat Metheny, that's how. Their ongoing friendship and musical collaboration spills over for all to read and see, courtesy of **Josef Woodard**.

Cover photograph by Beth Herzhaft.

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22 40th ANNUAL DOWN BEAT INTERNATIONAL CRITICS POLL

It's been 40 years since the Critics started casting their ballots. This year offers the usual suspects, with plenty of surprises. Clue: One of 'em's named Joe.

30 TERENCE BLANCHARD Back From Frustration

"A lot of people are afraid of themselves," trumpeter Terence Blanchard declares. Afraid or not, he's enjoying a career that's currently ripe with bandleading and making movie music. **Wayne K. Self** catches up with him.

34 PAUL BLEY Bley In, Bley Out

He's played it straight. He's played it jagged. Pianist Paul Bley has been around the block a few times, and with quite the cast of characters. **Art Lange** reports on Bley's piano odyssey.

Joe
Henderson



HYOUVELZ

A Healthy

Dis



BETH HERZHAFT

From outward appearances, Pat Metheny and Charlie Haden might not seem to have a lot in common. Guitarist Pat (b. 1954) has a bushel of hair and a tan that won't quit. Bassist Charlie (b. 1937) is pale, with closely-cropped hair. But closer examination of their ongoing friendship and musical collaborations reveal the folly of banking on outward appearances.

In fact, both hail from small towns in the Midwest—Charlie from Shenandoah, Iowa and Pat from Lee's Summit, Missouri—and both regularly express a debt to Ornette Coleman, whose own blend of folk sensibilities, open-mindedness, and an eclectic bent can also be detected in the Metheny-Haden contingent.

Their mutual-admiration society began long ago. To be exact, it was 20 years ago that Pat saw Charlie perform with Ornette Coleman at the University of Miami, where the young guitarist was still honing his sound. Later, the two shared concert bills—Pat playing with Gary Burton, Charlie with Keith Jarrett. Finally, with Pat's special '79 project, *80/81*, they actually shared musical space and struck up an instant affinity.

Later in the '80s came the luminous, low-key *Rejoicing* and, more significantly, *Song X*, a project with Ornette Coleman that's inarguably one of the most potent, incendiary jazz albums of the '80s. They also played together on Michael Brecker's debut as a

D o s e o f

respect

By Josef Woodard

leader. At the moment, they're talking now about another joint project, possibly an all-acoustic session. But don't quote 'em on that.

Both are romantics who like to create albums with a vaguely cinematic quality, tendencies reflected in different ways on their respective new projects. Pat's *Secret Story* is his most ambitious project to date, featuring a large, shifting cast of players (he counts 82 musicians, including Charlie), varying textures, and the London Orchestra. It has the makings of a concept album, but Pat comments that "I don't want people to think it's a really programmatic piece, because each piece does function separately and independent from the others. But you do get a sense of motion with this, I think. It seems like the record evolves to a certain place, emotionally."

Haunted Heart, the third project by Charlie's Quartet West, waxes nostalgic for '40s repertoire (and '40s-esque originals), and comes replete with actual archival "sound bites" from the era. In effect, Jo Stafford, Billie Holiday, and Jeri Southern drop by to sing a few bars (see p. 37).

"I want people to feel what it was like in the '40s," Charlie says of the album. "That's when popular music in the United States was so beautiful. Frank Sinatra, the Pied Pipers, Duke Ellington, Fletcher Henderson, Tommy Dorsey, Billie Holiday. That's when popular music had deeper values, to me. This was music that was selling millions of records."

With his innate melodicism and considerable sophistication, Metheny remains one of the most singular and influential—not to mention widely popular—jazz guitarists. Haden, who came to fame in the Ornette Coleman Quartet in the late '50s, has been, in the last few years, recording up a storm (see his discography for a hint of his activity just since his last *DB* story, Sept. '87). His profound 1991 album, *Dream Keeper*, by his Liberation Music Orchestra, was an unequivocal critical smash, winning both *Down Beat* Critics and Readers polls for best jazz album last year. (Charlie also won as top acoustic bassist in both polls, and is this year's critics choice as well—see p. 26.)

Recently, the two got together in a West Los Angeles hotel room for a rambling *lête à lête*. Later that evening, while the fast friends were mugging during a photo session, the photographer asked

Metheny to move away from the light; he was soaking up light due to his "ruddy" complexion. "That's me, Ruddy. And he's Scruffy," Pat pointed to Charlie, laughing. "Scruffy and Ruddy, that's what we'll call the duo album."

Parting ways, Charlie offers a handshake and his standard farewell, "solid, Jackson." "Don't ever change," Pat says in retort. With that, Scruffy and Ruddy slip into the Los Angeles sunset, until they meet again.

JOSEF WOODARD: *Let's trace your relationship together. 80/81 was the first record together, but I assume there was something leading up to that. How far back do you go and how did you meet?*

PAT METHENY: I actually first saw you live when I was going to the University of Miami. You were playing with Ornette in the cafeteria opposite [Charlie] Mingus. He had to borrow your bass. That was 1973.

CHARLIE HADEN: Oh, yeah, I remember that. As soon as I got to the hotel, I had a call. It was Mingus, who was staying at the same hotel. He said, 'Bass? Could I borrow your instrument?' I said, 'You can *have* my instrument.' He played on it and really liked it. I didn't touch that fingerboard for about four weeks after that.

It's funny, he called me 'Bass'—never called me Charlie. This completely floored me the other day: I was in Washington D.C. doing a panel for Jazz Presenters for the National Jazz Service Organization. Jack Walrath, who used to play trumpet with Mingus, was there, and he said, 'You know, I don't know if anybody ever told you this, but when I was with Mingus, I asked him who his favorite bass players were one day. He said Jimmy Blanton and you.' I said, 'What? Are you serious? Why did he always call me 'Bass'?' [laughs]

JW: *How did 80/81 come about? Had that been gestating for awhile?*

PM: I realized that I had, by that time, made records for about four years and had really given no kind of evidence that I primarily was playing more straightahead music. That's really what I played until I started making my own records. I, of course, had always loved Charlie and had become friends with Jack DeJohnette. Jack and Charlie, at that point, had never played together. I thought that would make a great combination. That was the nucleus of it.

Then, I thought the contrast between Dewey Redman and



MARK MILLER

something you do to really hear it. It does sound pretty good. We played a lot and did have a thing together, with Jaco and Moses, too.

To me, Moses is still one of the most underrated drummers and musicians I know. I don't know why he hasn't gotten the recognition he deserves. He sounds great on that record and everything he does.

CH: How did you meet Manfred [Eicher, producer of ECM Records]?

PM: Gary Burton. I did a couple of ECM records with him.

CH: So Manfred met you playing with Gary and then . . .

PM: You really want to talk about Manfred, Charlie? [laughs]

CH: I was just curious how you started recording for ECM, because I would have thought you would have started recording for Columbia or something.

PM: Actually, at that time, ECM was really the place to be and I was really lucky to get the chance to record for them. There was a period in ECM's history where every single record they put out was fantastic. To be a part of that at that time was really unbelievable. I would have preferred to be on ECM rather than any other label.

JW: *Charlie, as acoustically-inclined as you have been, you have a unique way of complementing certain electric guitar players, especially with Pat, and behind John Scofield and Bill Frisell on the new Grace Under Pressure project. Do you have any special fondness for the*

Michael Brecker would be interesting. I think it was about four or five months of really working after the release of *80/81*. We have become really good friends since then. We talk all the time.

JW: *Subsequently, you have both been involved in projects together every few years, almost at even intervals: Rejoicing, Song X, Michael Brecker's album . . .*

PM: It seems like we do things regularly. We did a bunch of stuff that hasn't been recorded.

JW: *At the 1989 Montreal Jazz Festival, Charlie was an honored guest, featured in a series of different concerts including a trio set with Pat and Jack DeJohnette. That same year, Pat, you played in the streets of Montreal with your group for an estimated 115,000 people. How did that experience?*

PM: I played there, that one night, and then the next night I played with you and Jack, which was a contrast, and it was one that I didn't successfully make. It's hard for me, when I'm in the Group mode, to instantly go to playing with a trio. Those are the two extremes of what I do. The amazing thing about that was that there were 115,000 people out there really listening. It wasn't like a party vibe. But it was like blocks and blocks of people really putting their attention on the music.

JW: *Pat, your first solo album, 1975's Bright Size Life, with Jaco Pastorius and Bob Moses, was a really strong, interactive album. How did you feel about it?*

PM: For years, I couldn't even listen to it, because I thought I sounded really bad on it, and that Jaco and Moses sounded great on it. But then I heard it maybe a year ago, the first time I ever really heard it. Sometimes, you have to get years away from

guitar?

CH: I loved making both records with John, the new one and *Time On My Hands*. He plays so free and beautiful, and Bill really reminds me of my country roots. I grew up around guitar players. Mother Maybelle [Carter] had a big influence on me, as did the Delmore Brothers. In the mid-'50s, I played on the TV show *Ozark Jubilee* and played with Hank Garland, Thumbs Carlisle, and Chet Atkins. In L.A., I played with Joe Pass and Gabor Szabo. Mick Goodrick plays guitar in the Liberation Music Orchestra, and he's a real special player. Then I did a duet concert with Jim Hall at the 1990 Montreal Festival.

But my favorite player is Pat. He has a special sound and sense of melody that's completely original. He's made this wonderful acoustic sound with all of his electric equipment. He also plays great acoustic guitar, too. Very soon, I want to play some acoustic duet concerts. I think he wants to do it, too. Pat has become one of my closest friends in life since we've known each other.

JW: *This raises the issue of common ground between you two.*

PM: If you want to talk about common ground, we literally have some common ground in that the towns we grew up in were very close together.

CH: When I was four, we moved to a farm outside Springfield, Missouri. We had a radio show from that farmhouse. My dad always wanted a farm. We used to go out and milk the cows every morning and then do a radio show with a remote control from our living room. We'd start by singing "Keep On The Sunny Side."

PM: Charlie's got some great tapes of these radio shows. We've been planning on doing a record together, which we'll do soon. I

really want to base it around some of those things. There's the kind of Missouri thing. These tapes would just really be a cool thing to base a record around.

JW: *So would you actually sample from these tapes?*

PM: [laughing] We're not telling. It's still a secret.

CH: I used to hear stories that Bird played in territory bands around 1937, the year I was born. He would come down to Rockaway Beach, Missouri at the Pavilion and play in the dance bands there in Kansas City. He would go in the woods where I used to go when I was a teenager, and practice. I mean, we were probably in the same place. It's unbelievable.

I always felt like I was born in the wrong era. I wanted to know John Garfield and go play with Charlie Parker. But if I had done that, I wouldn't have played with Ornette. That has the same significance and same importance as far as discovery is concerned. I'm so thankful to have been a part of that, and still am. One of the great moments in my life was introducing Ornette and Pat. The common thing that goes around in my head, besides all the other projects I'm involved in, is 'How do I play with Ornette Coleman?'

We were playing at the [Village] Vanguard, Billy [Higgins] and I and Pat. I was talking to Pat about Ornette and Pat was a little shy about meeting him. I said, 'Call him up.' He said, 'Are you sure I could just call him up? Maybe if you bring him into the club.' I brought him down to the Vanguard, and they hit it off right away, because Ornette senses the sincerity in a person right away. He's got that telescopic, intuitive sense. I knew they were going to hit it off, and I knew we were going to play. We made one of the greatest records [Song X] ever made, as far as I'm concerned, and then we did a tour. And that was the most unforgettable tour.

PM: On the tour, it got to the point where it wasn't even notes

anymore, but was just sound. That's really a rare place. I can only think of a few times in life where I've experienced that, where you don't think of it as individual components: it really becomes this complete sound that everybody's participating in.

JW: *You're talking about creating this new, collective energy that everyone contributes to. That's really an ideal in jazz that's rarely achieved, isn't it?*

PM: Well, I think anytime you get good musicians together, that happens to one degree or another. Regardless of the music you're playing, that happens. To me, the combination of Charlie and Ornette playing together is one of the magic combinations in the world today.

JW: *Ornette Coleman is an interesting figure, not only because of his obvious improvisational skills, but because he's a great and unique melodist. Do both of you feel that he has influenced your writing?*

PM: For me, the thing about Ornette that's so incredible is that he's one of the only musicians I can think of who has a complete musical universe at his fingertips all the time. Almost everybody else is dealing with a little bit of this or that. Ornette started from the ground up and invented this way of playing. That, to me, is truly inspirational. But, more than that, it's the sense that he's really defined his own terms as a musician. I aspire to that myself, in a different way. I don't think I'll ever do it at that level. But I do want to try to make each thing that I do have my own stamp on it, with my own kind of language and stylistic zone that I work in.

I've got a question for Charlie. What do you think about the younger musicians today?

CH: Well, I'll answer that with an example. I was just in Paris with the Liberation Music Orchestra, and my regular two tenor players,

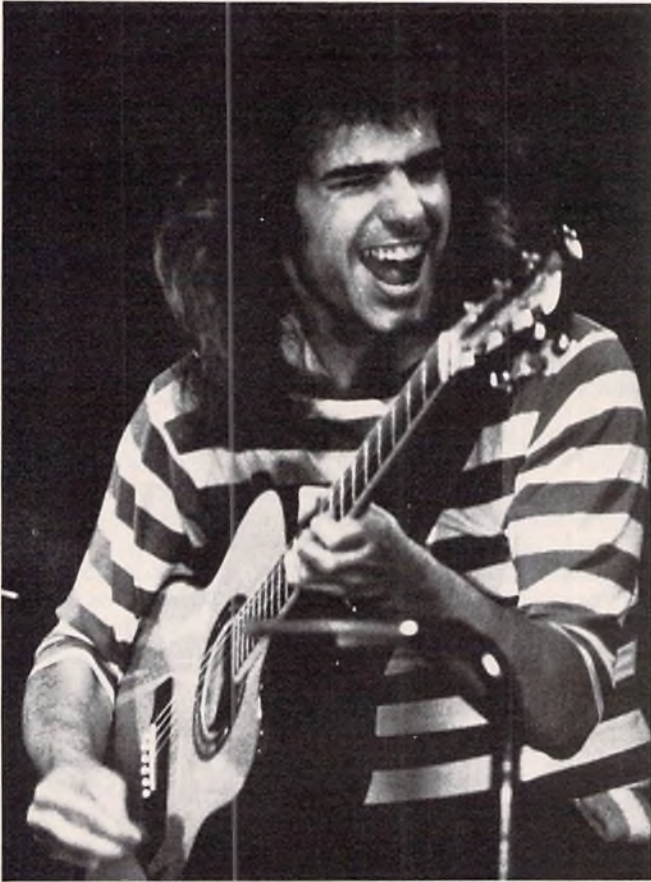


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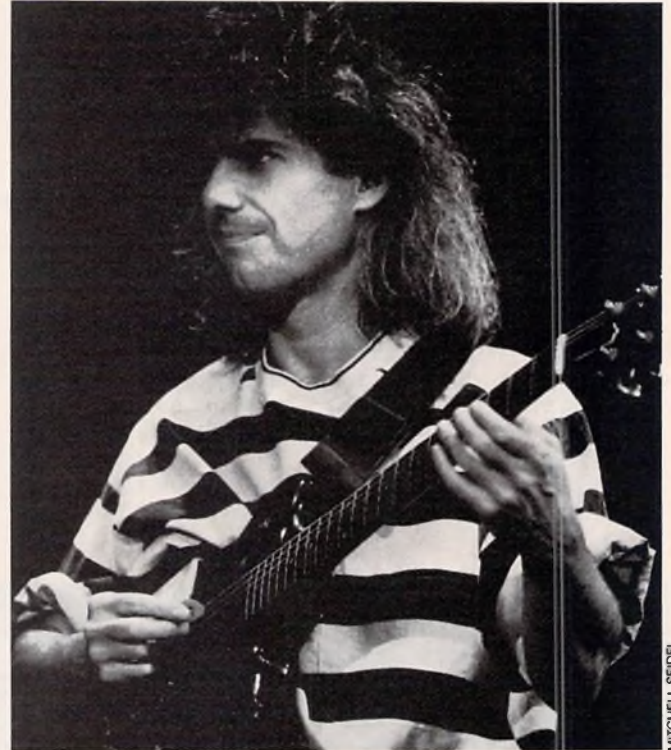
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Mr. Dewey Redman and Mr. Joe Lovano, couldn't make the gig. So I hired Javon Jackson—a great tenor player in his 20s—and Dewey's son, Joshua Redman, who is playing really fantastic. I think that there are some great new musicians who are dedicated to acoustic music and acoustic sound and beauty. Among the bass players I like is Chris McBride. And I'm amazed by [pianist] Gonzalo Rubalcaba. These two guys are so mature for their age, and so humble. They have this graceful gentlemanness about them. Normally, a person that age wouldn't have that. If you strive to be a great human being, musicality will follow.

To answer your question: Yeah, I think there are some good young musicians who have values.

PM: I've been thinking a lot about this. In some ways, I'm very conservative, because I believe that it's really really important for young musicians to have a deep understanding of what has preceded them on their instrument in music.

But what I notice, when I look back on musicians that I really love, is that, mixed in with that same process—which everybody has to go through—almost all the musicians who really affect me have had a healthy dose of disrespect. Maybe disrespect is too strong a word, but it's the sense that 'Yeah, that's been done, but let's try to do this a little differently this time.' Ornette has a heavy dose of that. He's a rebel. If you say 'left,' he's going to say 'right.'

Charlie, I think you've got that as a musician. You push against things. And that pushing against things is something that I have always been attracted to about jazz. People talk about rock & roll as being the music of rebellion. To me, jazz is the music of rebellion. It's really the music about individuality and coming up with your own point of view and your own way of looking at things.

So, much as I'm encouraged by the fact that there are lots of younger musicians who have the capacity to understand and deal

with the music that has historically preceded us by the last 40 or 50 years, sometimes I wish there were a few more rabble-rousers in that group. To me, when people talk about the tradition, that's as much part of the tradition as anything.

For me, when I first started playing, I was so into Wes Montgomery, it was weird, actually. I played with my thumb, I played in octaves. I did everything I could do to sound like Wes Montgomery. When I showed up around Kansas City and started to do that, instead of people coming up to me and saying, 'Hey,

that's great. You sound like Wes Montgomery,' I got comments like, 'Hey, Wes Montgomery already did that.' And that was so good for me.

CH: I agree with you, and what you're talking about is very rare in all art forms—when someone challenges the art form and challenges the world and take risks to express the passion or the vision inside them. It's very rare. I hope that there are young musicians coming up in jazz who feel this responsibility—this mission. I don't know what to call it.

PM: It's like a search.

CH: Yeah, that's it. You start on your search and you don't question it. It's like a quest. You've gotta' do it. You're compelled. I've always felt compelled. I've always felt obsessed with discovery and with learning and having no choice in the matter, trying to bring the music to as many people as possible, and maybe to touch their lives in some way.

JW: *Charlie, what motivated the formation of the Liberation Music Orchestra in the late '60s?*

CH: It was brought about by the Vietnam War, by the turmoil that was going on in the world caused by United States aggression. I felt I had to do something about it in my own way. I'm a musician and not a politician, and I don't pretend to be. But I think that every artist dedicated to their art form is really politically motivated, because what they're really doing is bringing beauty to the world against all odds. Plus, I always dreamed about inspiring great improvisers. It would be like putting together the greatest

basketball team, if you're a basketball fan, because that's one of the sports that's really like jazz. It's so spontaneous.

PM: [laughs] It's so much like jazz. It really is. You've got four or five players. You kind of have some stuff worked out, but then if somebody gets the feeling, they run with it.

JW: So, then, what's making a basket analogous to?

PM: Playing the good notes, hitting the good chords. Swing. DB

PAT'S EQUIPMENT

While Metheny has experimented with various guitars and instruments over the years, his equipment of choice has remained fairly constant in the last few. "At a certain point, I felt that I didn't want to keep expanding," he says. He still uses a Gibson 175 and Ibanez 175 model electric guitars, a Coral Electric Sitar, and a Roland GR-330 guitar controller which interfaces with a Synclavier. He also occasionally uses Ibanez Series electric 12-string guitars. For acoustics, he favors custom-made 6- and 12-stringed instruments by Linda Manzer, and also uses an Ovation nylon-string guitar.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader/co-leader

SECRET STORY—Geffen (tba)
QUESTION AND ANSWER—Geffen 24293
 (w/Dave Holland, Roy Haynes)
LETTER FROM HOME—Geffen 24245
STILL LIFE (TALKING)—Geffen 24125
SONG X—Geffen 24096 (Ornette Coleman)
THE FALCON AND THE SNOWMAN—EMI 17150
FIRST CIRCLE—ECM 823 342
REJOICING—ECM 817 795
TRAVELS—ECM 2-810 622
OFFRAMP—ECM 817 138
80/81—ECM 2-815 579
AMERICAN GARAGE—ECM 827 134
AS WICHITA FALLS, SO FALLS WICHITA FALLS—ECM 821 416 (Lyle Mays)

NEW CHATAUQUA—ECM 825 471
PAT METHENY GROUP—ECM 825 593
WATERCOLORS—ECM 827 409
BRIGHT SIZE LIFE—ECM 827 133

with Jack DeJohnette

PARALLEL REALITIES—MCA 42313

with Gary Burton

REUNION—GRP 9598
PASSENGERS—ECM 835 016
DREAMS SO REAL—ECM 833 329
RING—ECM 829 191

with Steve Reich

ELECTRIC COUNTERPOINT—Nonesuch 79176

with Joni Mitchell

SHADOWS AND LIGHT—Asylum 704

CHARLIE'S EQUIPMENT

Haden's cherished bass was made by Jean Baptiste Vuillaume around 1840. For the G and D strings, he uses Golden Spiral strings by D'Addario, and for the A and E strings, he uses Thomastik Spirocore strings, made in Austria. He swears by gut strings. "That's how you get the wood sound," he says. "Bass players will spend thousands of dollars for great, old acoustic instruments, and then they put these metal strings on and put the strings real close to the fingerboard. Then they get these terrible pickups and turn the treble up on the amp. It sounds like a Fender bass. They could have saved a lot of money."

For amplification, he uses a Galleon-Kruger MB-200 amp, and a custom pickup made by the Swiss Stefan Schertler.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

DREAM KEEPER—Blue Note 95474 (w/ Liberation Music Orchestra)
THE BALLAD OF THE FALLEN—ECM 811 546 (Liberation Music Orchestra)
LIBERATION MUSIC ORCHESTRA—Impulse! 39125
HAUNTED HEART—Verve 513 078 (Quartet West)
IN ANGEL CITY—Verve 837 031 (Quartet West)
QUARTET WEST—Verve 831 673

Rubalcaba)
THE BLESSING—Blue Note 97197 (Gonzalo Rubalcaba)
YEAR OF THE DRAGON—JMT 834 428 (Geri Allen, Paul Motian)
SEGMENTS—DIW 833 (Geri Allen, Paul Motian)
YOU'VE GOT TO PAY THE BAND—Verve 314 511 110 (Abbey Lincoln)
DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME—MCA 42229 (Michael Brecker)
AN EVENING WITH JOE HENDERSON, CHARLIE HADEN AND AL FOSTER—Red 123215

as a sideman

GRACE UNDER PRESSURE—Blue Note 98167 (John Scofield)
TIME ON MY HANDS—Blue Note 92894 (John Scofield)
POP POP—Geffen 24426 (Rickie Lee Jones)
NIGHT ON THE TOWN—RCA 2041 (Bruce Hornsby)
ANOTHER HAND—Elektra Musician 61088 (David Sanborn)
DIALOGUES—Antilles 422-849 309 (Carlos Paredes)
DISCOVERY—Blue Note 95478 (Gonzalo

FIRST SONG—Soul Note 121222 (Enrico Pieranunzi)
MEMOIRS—Soul Note 121240 (Paul Bley, Paul Motian)
SILENCE—Soul Note 121172 (Chet Baker)
ON BROADWAY, VOL. 1—JMT 834 430 (Paul Motian)
ON BROADWAY, VOL. 2—JMT 834 440 (Paul Motian)
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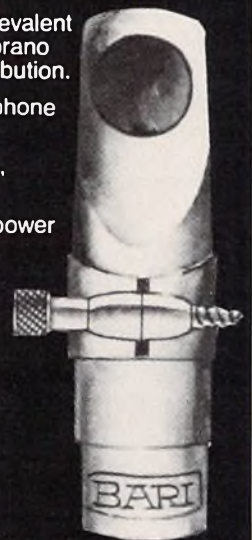
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DOWN BEAT'S

40th Annual Int'l Critics Poll

THEY ALL LOVE JOE, THE SEQUEL

Ah, Blessed Mother of Eternal Surprise. For the 40th edition of this little poll, the critics cooked up a couple of major upsets.

Joe Henderson not only broke Sonny Rollins' nine-year reign as Tenor Saxophonist of the Year, and snatched Album of the Year honors from a crowded field, but he also earned his first crown as *Down Beat's* Jazz Artist of the Year.

Also, Don Byron won both the "Established Talent" and "Talent Deserving Wider Recognition" categories for Clarinetist of the Year honors. Byron, who's won the TDWR category three years in a row, shot to the top on the strength of his *Tuskegee Experiments* (Elektra Nonesuch—see "Reviews" May '92), a stunning concept album titled after two horrific projects involving black men at Alabama's Tuskegee Institute.

But this year truly belongs to Henderson. We should have seen it coming. Back in March, the veteran tenor saxophonist graced the cover of this magazine along side the title "They All Love Joe," in reference to the thousands of musicians who have been influenced by his mastery. Then, Henderson's *Lush Life* (Polygram/Verve—see "Reviews" Mar. '92), a beautiful tribute to the music of Billy Strayhorn, became a certifiable jazz hit. As of this writing, it's perched atop *Billboard* magazine's Traditional Jazz chart.

Still, Henderson's triple crown was a long shot. He has been underrated, underappreciated, and overlooked for so long that we figured he would place in one or two categories, but certainly not *win three!*

To some degree, Wynton Marsalis and a number of other musicians deserve a hand for reintroducing Henderson to a wider audience. Henderson sat in with Wynton on last year's *Thick in the South* (Columbia—see "Reviews" Nov. '91), part one of the *Soul Gestures In Southern Blue* trilogy. Richard Seidel, vice president of Polygram Jazz and producer of *Lush Life*, also deserves kudos for uniting a great player with a strong concept, and believing in both.

But in the end, the triple crown simply represents that Henderson's time has finally arrived. You play that good for that long, and you're bound to be king of the hill someday. We hope Joe enjoys the view from up there. He deserves it.

—Frank Alkyer

JAZZ ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 68 Joe Henderson, *Lush Life* [Verve]
- 67 Stan Getz/Kenny Barron, *People Time* [Verve]
- 52 Randy Weston, *The Spirits Of Our Ancestors* [Antilles]
- 33 Sonny Sharrock, *Ask The Ages* [Axiom]
- 32 Muhal Richard Abrams, *Blu Blu Blu* [Black Saint/Soul Note]
- 25 Howard Shore/Ornette Coleman, *Naked Lunch* [Milan]
- 24 David Murray, *David Murray Big Band* [DiW/Columbia]
- 23 Wynton Marsalis, *Soul Gestures In Southern Blue* [Columbia]



MITCHELL SEIDEL

BLUES ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 50 Buddy Guy, *Damn Right I Got The Blues* [Silvertone]
- 35 John Lee Hooker, *Mr. Lucky* [Pointblank/Charisma]
- 27 Buddy Guy/Junior Wells, *Alone And Acoustic* [Alligator]
- 23 B.B. King, *Live At The Apollo* [GRP]
- 21 Robert Ward, *Fear No Evil* [Black Top]
- 16 Stevie Ray Vaughan, *The Sky Is Crying* [Epic]
- 15 Champion Jack Dupree, *Forever And Ever* [Bullseye Blues]



MARC FORKEMPER



KEVIN MAZUR

R&B/SOUL ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 26 Prince, *Diamonds And Pearls* [Paisley Park/Warner Bros.]
- 19 Public Enemy, *Apocalypse '91 The Enemy Strikes Back* [Def Jam/Columbia]
- 16 Ruth Brown, *Fine And Mellow* [Fantasy]
- 15 Dirty Dozen Brass Band, *Open Up Watcha Gonna Do For The Rest Of Your Life* [Columbia]
- 15 Aaron Neville, *Warm Your Heart* [A&M]



SUSANA MILLMAN

WORLD BEAT ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 32 Mickey Hart, *Planet Drum* [Rykodisc]
- 22 The Master Musicians Of Jajouka, *Apocalypse Across The Sky* [Axiom]
- 18 Al Di Meola, *World Sinfonia* [Tomato]
- 10 Baaba Maal, *Baayo* [Mango]

ROCK ALBUM OF THE YEAR

- 26 Neil Young, *Arc/Weld* [Reprise]
- 22 Red Hot Chili Peppers, *Blood, Sugar, Sex, Magik* [Warner Bros.]
- 19 Bonnie Raitt, *Luck Of The Draw* [Capitol]
- 19 U2, *Achtung, Baby* [Island]
- 17 Nirvana, *Nevermind* [Geffen]



STEVE BABINEAU



WORLD BEAT ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 44 **Milton Nascimento**
42 Salif Keita
42 Tito Puente
28 Mickey Hart
19 Astor Piazzolla
17 Fela Kuti

- TDWR**
23 **Margareth Menezes**
21 Trilok Gurtu
18 Ivo Papasov
16 Jerry Gonzalez
12 Salif Keita



SUE MINGUS

REISSUE OF THE YEAR

- 55 **Nat King Cole, *The Complete Capitol Recordings Of The Nat King Cole Trio* [Mosaic]**
46 John Coltrane, *The Prestige Recordings* [Prestige]
36 John Coltrane, *The Major Works* [Impulse!]
33 Sun Ra, *Saturn Reissues* [Evidence]
30 Billie Holiday, *The Complete Decca Recordings* [Decca]
22 Count Basie, *The Complete Decca Recordings* [Decca]
20 Jimmy Giuffrè, *1961* [ECM]

RECORD LABEL OF THE YEAR

- 90 **Blue Note**
66 Verve
65 Mosaic
55 Antilles
52 Concord
46 DIW/Columbia

JAZZ ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 98 **Joe Henderson**
53 David Murray
47 Wynton Marsalis
41 Dizzy Gillespie
40 Benny Carter
40 Branford Marsalis

Talent Deserving Wider Recognition

- 24 **Don Byron**
21 Roy Hargrove
18 Steve Coleman
18 Gonzalo Rubalcaba
15 Geri Allen
12 David Murray
11 Henry Threadgill

BLUES ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 108 **B.B. King**
89 Buddy Guy
83 John Lee Hooker
39 Albert Collins
22 Robert Cray
21 Johnny Adams
16 Charles Brown



SUSANA MILLMAN

- TDWR**
30 **Joe Louis Walker**
25 Luther Allison
21 Robert Ward
20 Willie Kent
13 Lil' Ed
11 Little Jimmy King
10 Charles Brown

R&B/SOUL ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 51 **Ray Charles**
35 James Brown
31 Prince
30 Aaron Neville
29 Maceo Parker

- TDWR**
14 **Charles Brown**
13 Allen Toussaint
10 Johnny Adams
10 Kid Creole
10 Otis Clay

ROCK ARTIST OF THE YEAR

- 47 **Neil Young**
44 Sting
22 Paul Simon
22 Richard Thompson
18 David Byrne
18 Van Morrison
14 Prince

- TDWR**
20 **Dave Alvin**
19 Bruce Cockburn
18 John Hiatt
13 Richard Thompson
10 Chris Whitley

COMPOSER

- 87 **Muhai Richard Abrams**
78 Carla Bley
56 Henry Threadgill
39 David Murray
29 Randy Weston
28 Anthony Braxton
28 Benny Carter

- TDWR**
33 **Ed Wilkerson**
25 Geri Allen
24 Bobby Watson
23 Willem Breuker
20 Julius Hemphill
19 Bobby Previte

- TDWR**
41 **Delfeayo Marsalls**
31 John Snyder
22 Nils Winther
16 Jost Gebers



MARC POKEMPFER



MICHAEL WILDERMAN

ARRANGER

- 101 **Carla Bley**
55 Benny Carter
52 Toshiko Akiyoshi
44 Henry Threadgill
41 Frank Foster
37 Sun Ra

- TDWR**
40 **Bob Belden**
36 Butch Morris
32 John Zorn
31 Willem Breuker
25 George Gruntz

PRODUCER

- 145 **Michael Cuscuna**
85 Orrin Keepnews
40 John Snyder
38 Giovanni Bonandrini
22 Carl Jefferson

BIG BAND

- 85 **Sun Ra Arkestra**
81 Count Basie
76 Charlie Haden's Liberation Music Orchestra
57 David Murray
53 Akiyoshi/Tabackin
48 Carla Bley

- TDWR**
48 **Willem Breuker Kollektief**
48 **George Gruntz Concert Band**
46 Peter Apfelbaum & the Hieroglyphics Ensemble
35 Ed Wilkerson's Shadow Vignettes
27 Either/Orchestra
21 Clayton/Hamilton

ACOUSTIC
JAZZ GROUP

- 76 **Wynton Marsalis**
- 63 Art Ensemble of Chicago
- 61 Phil Woods
- 40 Randy Weston
- 38 Branford Marsalis
- 36 Keith Jarrett Standards Trio
- 32 World Saxophone Quartet

TDWR

- 43 **Ralph Peterson Fo'tet**
- 39 8 Bold Souls
- 35 Harper Brothers
- 27 Bobby Watson
- 27 Steve Lacy
- 18 Dirty Dozen Brass Band

ELECTRIC
JAZZ GROUP



MARC POKEMPER

- 78 **Ornette Coleman**
- 72 John Scofield Band
- 55 Bill Frisell Band
- 51 Chick Corea's Elektric Band
- 45 Yellowjackets
- 30 Pat Metheny Group

TDWR

- 38 **Naked City**
- 29 Steve Coleman & Five Elements
- 27 Bill Frisell Band
- 23 Sonny Sharrock
- 15 Bela Fleck & the Flecktones
- 14 Ronald Shannon Jackson
- 13 Yellowjackets

BLUES GROUP

- 69 **B.B. King**
- 51 Kinsey Report
- 31 Albert Collins & the Icebreakers
- 29 Cheatham's Sweet Baby Blues Band
- 28 Robert Cray
- 25 Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women
- 12 Roomful of Blues

TDWR

- 28 **Holmes Brothers**
- 22 Lil' Ed & the Blues Imperials
- 18 Cheatham's Sweet Baby Blues Band
- 13 Little Charlie & the Nightcats

ROCK GROUP

- 25 **Grateful Dead**
- 24 REM
- 22 Neil Young
- 21 Red Hot Chili Peppers
- 20 Los Lobos
- 18 Nirvana
- 15 Little Village
- 15 Living Colour

TDWR

- 20 **NRBQ**
- 15 Big Audio Dynamite
- 13 Eye & I
- 10 Little Village

R&B SOUL GROUP

- 82 **Neville Brothers**
- 46 Dirty Dozen Brass Band
- 35 Ray Charles Orchestra
- 22 Public Enemy
- 22 Prince & NPG
- 19 Maceo Parker & the JB Horns

TDWR

- 62 **Roy Hargrove**
- 52 Wallace Roney
- 40 Terence Blanchard
- 39 Claudio Roditi
- 31 Jack Walrath
- 28 Graham Haynes

SOPRANO SAX

- 257 **Steve Lacy**
- 108 Branford Marsalis
- 84 Wayne Shorter
- 65 Dave Liebman
- 59 Bob Wilber
- 45 Jane Ira Bloom



TDWR

- 54 **Jane Bunnett**
- 48 Jane Ira Bloom
- 43 Courtney Pine
- 41 Greg Osby
- 27 Branford Marsalis
- 25 Ravi Coltrane

ALTO SAXOPHONE

- 134 **Phil Woods**
- 128 Jackie McLean
- 92 Benny Carter
- 91 Ornette Coleman
- 63 Bobby Watson
- 48 Frank Morgan
- 37 Lee Konitz

TDWR

- 62 **Bobby Watson**
- 40 Steve Coleman
- 39 Vincent Herring
- 36 Christopher Hollyday
- 34 Antonio Hart
- 32 Kenny Garrett
- 31 Steve Potts

TENOR SAXOPHONE

- 201 **Joe Henderson**
- 165 Sonny Rollins
- 104 David Murray
- 43 Johnny Griffin
- 43 Branford Marsalis
- 32 Joe Lovano

TDWR

- 56 **Ralph Moore**
- 45 Joe Lovano
- 34 Courtney Pine
- 27 Von Freeman
- 24 Craig Handy
- 19 James Clay
- 19 Gary Thomas



MICHAEL WILDERMAN

BARITONE
SAXOPHONE

- 145 **Hamiet Bluiett**
- 128 Gerry Mulligan
- 94 Nick Brignola
- 41 John Surman
- 39 Ronnie Cuber
- 34 Cecil Payne

TDWR

- 57 **Nick Brignola**
- 36 John Surman
- 30 Gary Smulyan
- 29 Mwata Bowden
- 21 Peter Brötzmann
- 20 Don Byron
- 20 Joe Temperley



MYLES ROTHSTEIN

TROMBONE

- 170 **Ray Anderson**
- 168 J. J. Johnson
- 123 Steve Turre
- 48 Craig Harris
- 26 Curtis Fuller
- 26 Jimmy Knepper
- 24 Kevin Eubanks

TDWR

- 76 **Robin Eubanks**
- 51 Fred Wesley
- 43 Frank Lacy
- 40 Craig Harris
- 33 Steve Turre
- 31 George Lewis



MITCHELL SEIDEL

CLARINET

- 109 Don Byron
- 103 Eddie Daniels
- 79 Alvin Batiste
- 79 Buddy De Franco
- 46 Kenny Davern
- 35 Phil Woods

TDWR

- 97 Don Byron
- 49 Dr. Michael White
- 35 Ken Peplowski
- 26 Marty Ehrlich
- 25 Tony Coe

FLUTE

- 165 James Newton
- 114 James Moody
- 105 Lew Tabackin
- 85 Frank Wess
- 35 Henry Threadgill

TDWR

- 42 Kent Jordan
- 25 Dave Valentin
- 24 Henry Threadgill
- 23 Sam Rivers

VIBES

- 199 Milt Jackson
- 168 Bobby Hutcherson
- 115 Gary Burton
- 42 Lionel Hampton
- 22 Steve Nelson
- 20 Gunter Hampel

TDWR

- 86 Steve Nelson
- 62 Jay Hoggard
- 57 Brian Carrott
- 38 Khan Jamal

ACOUSTIC PIANO

- 101 Tommy Flanagan
- 83 Kenny Barron
- 76 Cecil Taylor
- 58 Oscar Peterson
- 58 McCoy Tyner
- 55 Don Pullen
- 48 Randy Weston
- 42 Keith Jarrett
- 42 Hank Jones

TDWR

- 53 Geri Allen
- 38 Marilyn Crispell
- 32 Benny Green
- 32 Gonzalo Rubalcaba
- 30 Marcus Roberts
- 24 Myra Melford

ORGAN

- 149 Jimmy Smith
- 86 Jimmy McGriff
- 62 Jack McDuff
- 61 Don Pullen
- 60 Sun Ra
- 43 Charles Earland
- 42 Joey DeFrancesco

TDWR

- 91 Don Pullen
- 69 Barbara Dennerlein
- 64 Joey DeFrancesco
- 19 Wayne Horvitz
- 15 Jimmy McGriff
- 14 Amina Claudine Myers

SYNTHESIZER

- 130 Sun Ra
- 109 Joe Zawinul
- 50 Wayne Horvitz
- 46 Herbie Hancock
- 38 Chick Corea

TDWR

- 35 Wayne Horvitz
- 31 John Surman
- 28 Lyle Mays
- 22 Don Preston
- 17 Pete Levin



PETER BASTIAN

ACOUSTIC GUITAR

- 111 John McLaughlin
- 92 Jim Hall
- 87 Joe Pass
- 78 Kenny Burrell
- 27 Ralph Towner
- 24 Derek Bailey

TDWR

- 44 Howard Alden
- 35 Bereli Lagrene
- 26 Fareed Haque
- 24 Egberto Gismonti

ELECTRIC GUITAR

- 158 John Scofield
- 139 Bill Frisell
- 53 Sonny Sharrock
- 46 Pat Metheny
- 30 Kenny Burrell
- 34 Jim Hall
- 28 John Abercrombie

TDWR

- 45 Sonny Sharrock
- 40 Mark Whitfield
- 23 Jean-Paul Boureilly
- 23 Mike Stern
- 21 Howard Alden
- 21 Kevin Eubanks



ANDREW LEPLEY

DRUMS

- 135 Max Roach
- 104 Jack DeJohnette
- 91 Billy Higgins
- 65 Elvin Jones
- 51 Tony Williams
- 46 Ed Blackwell
- 40 Andrew Cyrille
- 38 Victor Lewis

TDWR

- 75 Ralph Peterson, Jr.
- 62 Marvin "Smitty" Smith
- 46 Kenny Washington
- 34 Victor Lewis
- 31 Jeff "Tain" Watts
- 22 Lewis Nash

ACOUSTIC BASS

- 189 Charlie Haden
- 113 Dave Holland
- 83 Ray Brown
- 71 Milt Hinton
- 39 Fred Hopkins
- 38 Rufus Reid
- 31 Ron Carter
- 24 Ray Drummond



HYOU VIELZ

TDWR

- 62 Anthony Cox
- 61 Christian McBride
- 40 Ray Drummond
- 36 Cecil McBee
- 33 Charnett Moffett
- 31 Fred Hopkins

ELECTRIC BASS

- 190 Steve Swallow
- 41 John Patitucci
- 39 Bob Cranshaw
- 37 Jamaaladeen Tacuma
- 33 Stanley Clarke
- 29 Bill Laswell
- 29 Marcus Miller

TDWR

- 32 Gerald Veasley
- 24 Fred Frith
- 23 Melvin Gibbs
- 19 Bill Laswell

VIOLIN

- 177 Stephane Grappelli
- 104 Billy Bang
- 91 Leroy Jenkins
- 66 John Blake
- 47 Jean Luc Ponty
- 29 Svend Asmussen

TDWR

- 30 Claude Williams
- 21 Svend Asmussen
- 20 Johnny Frigo
- 20 Terry Jenoure

PERCUSSION

- 84 Airtio Moriera
- 78 Tito Puente
- 70 Nana Vasconcelos
- 59 Trilok Gurtu
- 59 Famoudou Don Moye
- 28 Jerry Gonzalez

TDWR

- 53 Poncho Sanchez
- 40 Trilok Gurtu
- 40 Glen Velez
- 20 Jerry Gonzalez
- 19 Giovanni Hidalgo

MISCELLANEOUS INSTRUMENT

- 141 Toots Thielemans (harmonica)
- 62 Howard Johnson (tuba)
- 62 Bob Stewart (tuba)
- 53 David Murray (bass clarinet)
- 42 Steve Turre (conch shells)
- 38 Astor Piazzolla (badoneon)

TDWR

- 36 Diedre Murray (cello)
- 23 Don Byron (bass clarinet)
- 22 Joel Brandon (mouth music)
- 21 Hank Roberts (cello)



RON HEARD

MALE JAZZ SINGER

- 136 Joe Williams
- 100 Bobby McFerrin
- 96 Mel Torme
- 49 Jon Hendricks
- 49 Mark Murphy

TDWR

- 51 David Frishberg
- 40 Mark Murphy
- 23 Ernie Andrews
- 23 Harry Connick, Jr.
- 20 John Pizzarelli

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Miles Davis & Michel Legrand—Dingo (Warner Bros.) **434-894**

The Thelonious Monk Quartet—Monk's Dream (CL Jazz Masterpieces) **357-723**



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George Benson / Earl Klugh—Collaboration (Warner Bros.) **356-501**

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Shakatak—Open Your Eyes (Verve) **430-413**

Take 6—So Much 2 Say (Reprise) **413-310**

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Branford Marsalis—The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born (Columbia) **428-078**

The Manhattan Transfer—The Offbeat Of Avenues (Columbia) **420-208**

Weather Report—Heavy Weather (Columbia) **273-557**

Charles Mingus—Mingus Ah Um (Columbia Jazz Masterpieces) **354-795**

The Dave Grusin Collection (GRP) **378-398**

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Take 6—So Much 2 Say (Reprise) **413-310**

Joe Sample—Collection (GRP) **430-280**

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Various Artists—The Best Of Blue Note, Vol. 1 (Blue Note) **433-466**

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(non-jazz)**

- 58 Aaron Neville
- 45 Frank Sinatra
- 26 Al Jarreau
- 20 Ray Charles

TDWR

- 24 Lyle Lovett
- 22 Dr. John
- 13 Harry Connick, Jr.
- 12 John Pizzarelli

FEMALE JAZZ SINGER

- 149 Betty Carter
- 139 Abbey Lincoln
- 94 Carmen McRae
- 87 Shirley Horn
- 78 Sheila Jordan
- 33 Ella Fitzgerald
- 31 Cassandra Wilson

- TDWR**
- 31 Cassandra Wilson
 - 28 Shirley Horn
 - 26 Nancy King
 - 23 Vanessa Ruben
 - 21 Carol Sloane



**FEMALE SINGER
(non-jazz)**

- 68 Bonnie Raitt
- 65 Aretha Franklin
- 25 Ruth Brown
- 25 Rickie Lee Jones
- 21 Joni Mitchell

TDWR

- 15 Diamanda Galas
- 13 Ruth Brown
- 12 Tracy Chapman
- 11 Vanessa Williams

VOCAL JAZZ GROUP

- 150 Take 6
- 112 Manhattan Transfer
- 68 Hendricks Family
- 32 New York Voices
- 21 Jackie & Roy

TDWR

- 44 New York Voices
- 24 Sweet Honey In The Rock
- 18 Hendricks Family

THE CRITICS

Following is a list of critics who voted in DB's 40th annual International Critics Poll. Eighty-eight critics voted this year, distributing 10 points among up to three choices (no more than five votes per choice) in each of two categories: Established Talent and Talent Deserving Wider Recognition. The participants were:

- Frank Alkyer:** assoc publisher, DB
- Jon Andrews:** DB
- Robert Baranello:** DB; *New York Update*
- Larry Birnbaum:** DB
- Philip Booth:** bassist; *Tampa Tribune*; *Variety*; DB
- Fred Bouchard:** DB correspondent [Boston]; *JazzTimes*; *Quincy Patriot Ledger*; WMBR
- Michael Bourne:** DB; *Hennessey Jazz Notes*; *Jazz Journal*; WBGO-FM [Newark]
- Phil Bray:** photographer
- Pawel Browdowski:** editor, *Jazz Forum* [Poland]
- Sydney Byrd:** photographer
- Thomas Conrad:** contributing writer, *CD Review*
- John Corbett:** DB
- Owen Cordle:** DB; *JazzTimes*; *Raleigh News & Observer*
- Lauren Deutsch:** DB; photographer
- Chip Deffaa:** *New York Post*; author, *Swing Legacy, Voices Of The Jazz Age*
- John Diliberto:** host/producer, *Echoes* [NPR]; DB
- Len Dobbin:** CJFM [Montreal] *Downtown*; *Jazz Report*
- Bill Douthart:** DB; photographer
- Jose Duarte:** Portuguese radio, press, television.

- Lofton Emenari III:** *Third World Press*; *Chicago Citizen*; WHPK-FM
- Gudrun Endress:** editor, *Jazz Podium* [Germany]; Radio SDR [Stuttgart]
- John Ephland:** managing editor, DB
- Enid Farber:** DB; photographer
- J.B. Figi:** program committee, Chicago Jazz Festival
- William Fowler:** Fowler Music Enterprises
- Maurizio Franco:** *Musica Jazz* [Italy]
- Jack Fuller:** editor, *Chicago Tribune*
- Robert Gaspar:** *Jazziz*; *Hartford Advocate*; author, *Everybody And I Stopped Breathing: Jazz In American Poetry*
- Alain Gerber:** *Compact*; Radio France
- Linda Gruno:** DB; *Westword* [Denver]
- Elaine Guregian:** DB; *Akron Beacon Journal*
- Frank-John Hadley:** DB; *Jazziz*; *Living Blues*; author, *The Grove Press Guide To The Blues On CD*
- Michael Handler:** DB correspondent [San Francisco]; jazz video producer
- Dave Helland:** associate editor, DB; author, *Sartre Talks To Teens*
- Patrick Henry:** DBA Jazz
- Geoffrey Himes:** DB; *Washington Post*
- Eugene Holley, Jr.:** DB; *Pulse!*; producer, NPR
- Randi Hultin:** DB correspondent [Norway]; *Jazz Forum*; *Jazz Journal*
- Willard Jenkins:** Exec Dir., National Jazz Service Organization; *JazzTimes*; *Jazz Forum*

- Niranjan Jhaveri:** producer, Jazz Yatra festivals
- Gene Kalbacher:** publisher, *Hot House*; columnist, *CMJ: New Music Report*
- Leigh Kamman:** *The Jazz Image* [Minnesota Public Radio]
- Lars Kostakis:** DB
- Art Lange:** DB
- John Litweiler:** DB; author, *The Freedom Principle*
- Jaap Lüdeke:** AVRO Radio [Netherlands]
- Lars Lystedt:** DB correspondent [Sweden]; *Orkester Journalen*
- John McDonough:** DB; *Wall St. Journal*
- Suzanne McElfresh:** DB; *Creem*; *Seventeen*; *Musician*
- Brian McMillen:** DB; photographer
- Jim Macnie:** Happy Boy Enterprises
- Howard Mandel:** DB; *Pulse!*
- Terry Martin:** Jazz Institute of Chicago Archive
- Mark Miller:** DB correspondent [Toronto]; *Toronto Globe & Mail*
- Dan Morgenstern:** director, Institute of Jazz Studies [Rutgers U.]
- Michael G. Nastos:** DB correspondent [Detroit]; *Cadence*; *Ann Arbor News*; WEMU-FM [Ypsilanti, MI]
- Dan Ouellette:** DB; *Pulse!*; *San Francisco Bay Guardian*
- Don Palmer:** DB; honorary chair emeritus, Twain's Tin Ear Productions
- Michael Point:** DB; *Pulse!*; *Austin American-Statesman*
- Doug Ramsey:** *JazzTimes*, *Texas Monthly*; author, *Jazz Matters*
- Howard Reich:** *Chicago Tribune*
- Ebet Roberts:** photographer

- Jim Roberts:** editor, *Bass Player*
- Mark Ruffin:** jazz editor, *Chicago Magazine*; WNUA-FM [Chicago]
- Robert D. Rusch:** editor, *Cadence*
- Ben Sandmel:** DB
- Gene Santoro:** *The Nation*; *Pulse!*
- Mitchell Seidel:** DB; *JazzTimes*; *Swing Journal*
- Wayne K. Self:** DB; Mid-America Arts Alliance
- Chris Sheridan:** DB; author, *Count Basie: A Bio-Discography*
- Bill Shoemaker:** DB; *JazzTimes*
- Fred Shuster:** DB; *Los Angeles Daily News*
- Joel Simpson:** DB correspondent [New Orleans]
- Jack Sohmer:** musician, DB; *JazzTimes*; *The Mississippi Rag*; *Miami News-Times*
- David Steinberg:** *Albuquerque Journal*
- Andrew Sussman:** *Fanfare*
- Ron Sweetman:** CKCU-FM [Ottawa]
- Luis Vilas-Boas:** Cascais Jazz Festival
- Ron Welburn:** DB; *JazzTimes*
- Brooke Wentz:** DB; *Ear*; *Option*
- Kevin Whitehead:** DB; NPR's *Fresh Air*
- Michael Wilderman:** DB; photographer
- Carlo Wolff:** *Billboard*; *Boston Globe*; *Request*
- Josef Woodard:** DB
- Scott Yanow:** DB; *JazzTimes*; *Jazziz*; *Cadence*; *Jazz Forum*
- Shoichi Yui:** jazz critic
- Rafi Zabor:** Big Winkies
- Mike Zwerin:** *International Herald Tribune* [Paris]



Terence Blanchard's cameo role in Spike Lee's film *Malcolm X*

DAVID GAHR

Back From Frustration

TERENCE BLANCHARD

By Wayne K. Self

In the studio, Terence Blanchard's muted trumpet lays out long, flowing lines of blue, sounding nothing like, yet absolutely reminiscent of, Miles. This tribute is the melancholic title track to Blanchard's latest release, *Simply Stated*. To break up the tension once the take is in the can, Blanchard recalls Art Blakey's reprimand after hearing too many mock-Miles renditions of "My Funny Valentine." Blanchard rasps Buhainia-like, "First of all, Miles put his *name* on that tune. . . ."

"A lot of people are afraid of themselves," Blanchard explains later. "Because once they deal with that, they have to deal with the possibility of being rejected. And for a lot of people, that's a frightening thing."

The spotlight shines on the young lions, those players less than 25 years old who have reached a degree of prominence by playing the jazz of another generation (see "Have They Delivered?" DB June '92).

Trumpeters like Roy Hargrove, Ryan Kisor, or Marlon Jordan—where will they end up in five years time? If the accomplishments of trumpeter Terence Blanchard, age 30, are any indication, the sky's the limit.

Little more than a decade ago, Blanchard went from work in Lionel Hampton's big band to a four-year stint with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers (where he took over Wynton Marsalis' freshly vacated seat). There he partnered with brother Branford's replacement, saxophonist Donald Harrison, who, like Blanchard, is a graduate of the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts (NOCCA). Together, they recorded a total of five albums for Concord Jazz and Columbia. A job with a studio "pit orchestra" for one of controversial filmmaker Spike Lee's early movies ultimately launched Blanchard's sideline as a soundtrack writer/arranger.

"It started with *School Daze*," Blanchard says. "[Tenor saxophonist] Harold Vick contracted me for a big-band session in a scene

called 'Straight And Nappy (The Wannabe Song)'. We had this trumpet and tenor tradin' off; Branford was supposed to be the 'wannabe' and I was supposed to be the 'jigaboo.' Spike heard me there."

Hearing Blanchard's complex compositions and solos, or watching his intense concentration onstage, it's likely Lee saw his own vision as a filmmaker mirrored in Blanchard's determined intention to speak his musical piece. Lee enlisted the trumpeter for *Do The Right Thing*, and then had Blanchard arrange strings behind an a cappella performance of "Sing Soweto," for *Mo' Better Blues*; this while handling trumpet duties in Branford's quartet, which performed the soundtrack. Blanchard also served as Denzel Washington's coach in helping the actor credibly "play" the trumpet during several nightclub scenes. His first opportunity at soundtrack writing and arranging came with *Jungle Fever*, and he's now completing the same duties for Lee's latest film dramatizing the life of Malcolm X.

"I became a musician," Blanchard says, "because I love to play the music and that, culturally, what I do will impact on other people."

The rapport between Lee and Blanchard reflects a certain shared esthetic: "When I'm dealing with Spike's films," Blanchard notes, "I really deal with his subject matter. It's hard to make a big statement because the music takes a back seat. The music is just the window dressing; it can be a helluva window dressing, but it's still not the primary focus."

But in 1989, Blanchard's accelerating career slowed almost to a standstill due to a debilitating condition. He discovered that he'd been forming his embouchure incorrectly, frequently cutting his lips in the process. Its seriousness led to a year's layoff that, for less-driven players, might have signalled the end.

"The artistic side demanded that," Blanchard explains. "It wasn't like an injury. Some of my teachers just never realized what I was doing; they did not know that I was getting cut all the time because the lip was over the teeth. It's actually supposed to be in front—not over them. When I found out, I took the time to use everything I knew to rebuild my embouchure. I'm at a point where I'm performing, but now I'm on the right track. I can see where all the work will yield some results."

"See," he continues, "before, when I was playing, it was still a mystery to me because I would do all of the exercises but some aspects were inconsistent, and I didn't know what was going on; I figured it was my embouchure. Now I'm consistent because the foundation is laid."

It would be easy for Blanchard to claim this strength of will as one of his own making, but he doesn't, giving Joseph Oliver Blanchard his due. His father provided him with a lasting model of motivation: "He's a guy with a serious passion for the music. He studied it; he wanted to become an opera singer but didn't pursue it because of the racial stigma during those times. He never became embittered. The music was the only thing that he focused on. That's what I saw growing up.

"It affected me later on, but during the process I just thought he was crazy."

The elder Blanchard shored up young Terence's discipline at critical moments, affording him time to understand the nature of personal growth.

"I think that's what happens to a lot of people," he notes, contrasting his father's alternately subtle and overt guidance with what easily could have resulted without intervention. "They get to that point of serious frustration and turn back. They don't keep going, not realizing that when you're at a serious point of frustration, that's a serious growth period. And you're starting to realize something about your abilities as a musician. We go through it all the time on the road. Sometimes I get depressed; you know, you're getting tired of playing certain things every night."

At age five Blanchard began picking out tunes like the *Batman* TV show theme on his grandmother's piano. Hiring a teacher immediately, the elder Blanchard soon made a piano available at home. "He would actually sit there while I practiced," Blanchard exclaims. "He'd sit on the couch and listen until I got it straight. If I made a mistake, he would stop me and say, 'Go back; go back. Do it again; you've got to get it right.'"

"I hated it; I hated it with a passion."

One day in fourth grade, he heard a trumpeter named Alvin Alcorn at an assembly. Alcorn unleashed the trumpet bug that bit Blanchard and wouldn't let go: "Somethin' about it just caught my attention. I had heard trumpet players before but there was somethin' about him that I loved. Come to find out later on, my father knew him."

He remembers running into Alcorn a few years later: "My daddy saw his car, rolled down the window, and said, 'Hey, Alvin, how you doin'? This is my son, man; he plays trumpet now. He wants to play jazz.' And Alvin says: 'I can't teach him how to play jazz; he has to learn it for himself.' Something about that statement just shocked me into reality.

"There were no young musicians that we could see playing jazz at that time, in the '70s," Blanchard explains. "Everything was Top 40. We found support in each other. I could talk about music with them and I learned from those guys because they had

teachers before I did. They were studying with this cat named John Longo [currently playing with the Ellington orchestra]. I would ask them: 'What is he showing you?' That's how I would learn little things until I got a teacher."



MITCHELL SEIDEL

Among the youths he grew up with who played, he remembers Leroy Jones, today a member of Harry Connick, Jr.'s band, known then by the nickname "Jazz" because he could improvise so well. There were also three others he met around age 12—flutist Kent Jordan and the Marsalis brothers. Taking pains to explain that they weren't special, Blanchard says they were all just kids who developed, pursued, and talked about an interest. Under Ellis Marsalis' tutelage at NOCCA and with George Jensen's private lessons, he began learning jazz history by listening to recordings of Bird and Clifford Brown. After graduating from NOCCA, Blanchard studied classical music with William Fielder and jazz with Kenny Barron at Rutgers. But he also points to the Crescent City as a major influence, describing its impact.

"It's an interesting and, I think, great place to learn from, especially during the time I was growing up. You could still go

hear people like [banjoist/guitarist] Danny Barker and [trumpeter] Teddy Riley play." Blanchard, who lived in suburban New Orleans, caught two buses to school, necessitating daily walks through the French Quarter. "Some of those clubs used to have 24-hour music and bands would rotate, so I could just walk down Bourbon Street and hear some of these bands on the way home. It was good; I got a chance to hear the right cats."

Assessing his debut as a leader, Blanchard doesn't feel last year's *Terence Blanchard* fully reflected his band. Logistical problems like his Columbia contract and juggling studio schedules while completing *Jungle Fever* affected the record. His dissatisfaction was compounded because the group didn't get a chance to play the music much prior to recording it. He describes how the group—saxophonist Sam Newsome, pianist Bruce Barth, bassist Rodney Whitaker, and drummer Troy Davis—has since jelled:

"I looked for somebody with similar goals as myself and the rest of the band. Sometimes you hire cats and they're real talented, but that doesn't mean they have the passion for the music. I'm also looking for somebody who's interested in bringing something to it, not just being a member of the band. I am one who'll tell you I don't know it all. Hence, the reason for getting strong, very creative musicians as sidemen.

"For the tune 'Wandering Wonder,' I tried to take a more orchestrated approach with a small band in terms of having everything basically written out. The solo form is one thing, but when you listen to the melody, there's a counterline with the rhythm from the piano, then another rhythm for the bass. A tune like that was the kind of thing I was really into at one time, trying to orchestrate everything so I could basically have what I heard in my mind.

"I wrote 'Wandering Wonder' that way because I didn't know what was going to happen with my band and wanted to make sure everything was in place so, no matter who's playing, the music would sound a

EQUIPMENT

Blanchard plays a Raja 1 b-flat trumpet made by David Monette of Chicago, and uses an Integral B2 mouthpiece. "I like the horn because it's very heavy, which I think cuts down on the vibration

from the metal so it'll project a little more. It has a quality that really helps me control the sound. We use microphones, but the more I've been playing, the more it doesn't matter."

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

SIMPLY STATED - Columbia CK 48903
TERENCE BLANCHARD - Columbia CK 47354

with Donald Harrison

SCHOOL DAZE - EMI/Manhattan 48680
CRYSTAL STAIR - Columbia CK 40830
BLACK PEARL - Columbia CK 44216

with various others

FI-FI GOES TO HEAVEN - Concord Jazz 316 (Joanne Brackeen)
NEW YORK SCENE - Concord Jazz 4256 (Art Blakey & the Jazz Messengers)
MO' BETTER BLUES - Columbia CK 46792 (Branford Marsalis)

certain way. 'Sing Soweto' is a perfect example of that, too. It's a tune I had written in 3/4, and Troy came up with the idea of putting in that rhythm that he plays.

"One of the first things you'll hear with this next record is that the band itself sounds more like a band. It really came together, and that's because, after the first record we went out on the road and tried to deal with the music all the time.

"When you contrast *Terence Blanchard* with some of the tunes on this album—like 'Glass J' [glass johnson: the crackpipe], the head is orchestrated but the solo form isn't. I really give the musicians freedom to do whatever they want to. That's what I'm really starting to go into now in terms of writing for quintet. I feel like it's starting to take off in a certain direction, which is very melodic, heavily based in the jazz tradition. That's why I entitled it *Simply Stated*. I just feel like the band is together and a lot of musical things happen on this album. Stylistically, it's different from the first album, too. I didn't write a lot of the compositions. I

"When you're at a serious point of frustration, that's a serious growth period. And you're starting to realize something about your abilities as a musician."



wanted to deal with some swing on this album—and I hate to use that term because I feel like it's been overused; but it's true."

Blanchard took stock of the jazz scene as he saw it during that time, and his musings became an indelible part of those compositions: "A lot of the younger guys didn't have contracts; they weren't even on the scene yet. When I was traveling across the country, I met guys who had a lot of talent but didn't have any direction. They didn't realize or nobody was telling them that they needed to be in New York. Or they didn't understand the process of getting a gig with a band and working through fundamental problems. Working on your concept in somebody else's group, hopefully getting the chance to play with as many groups as you can, and then, finally, getting your own band. Those were some of the problems that I saw . . . and some of these guys still haven't really surfaced yet."

On more recent New Orleans visits, Blanchard encounters young jazz musicians playing in alternative performance spaces,

houses, and lofts. Remembering the dearth of jazz there in the 1970s, Blanchard sees positive signs indicative of both a jazz resurgence and of youth involvement in more constructive activities instead of the drugs and violence so many fall victim to. He also appreciates the potential for reconnecting jazz to its African-American roots.

"A lot of these kids grow up with no respect—for themselves *and* others. One of the most frustrating things for me is to

play a gig and the majority of people there are not black. The things that they deal with every day do not have anything to do with jazz."

Blanchard echoes a sentiment expressed by many a musician, undoubtedly still true about playing jazz despite trendy hoopla: "You have to love it yourself; you have to be sincere. That's the only way one can really produce any kind of art that people will enjoy." **DB**

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Bley In, Bley Out

PAUL BLEY

By Art Lange

The date is November 30, 1953. In a New York City recording studio a nervous 21-year-old Juilliard student from Montreal is making his first LP as a leader, among heady company. On drums is Art Blakey. The bassist is also the session's producer, Charles Mingus. The pianist is Paul Bley.

Today, 39 years later, Paul Bley is one of the most prolific pianists before the public. His available CDs overflow the bins at your local store—and yet each one is different, distinctive. Bley is a thoughtful man, prone to philosophize, and his career has been a continual quest in search of new challenges and new solutions. "I'm only interested in projects that cannot be done by someone else, or handled in a way that's not being handled by someone else. If someone else is doing it, I'll buy the CD. It's a lot easier to buy a CD than to make one. It's cheaper, for one thing."

Bley's latest release, *Memoirs*, is a trio date with Charlie Haden and Paul Motian. It's a reunion of sorts, and a consolidation of many of the musical impulses which have inspired Bley and piqued his curiosity. They play "Monk's Dream," which is appropriate since at least a portion of the pianist's characteristic, sparse phrasing is dependent upon precedents set by Monk and, earlier, Count Basie. All three offer original tunes, which bring out the best of Haden's warmth, Motian's flow, and Bley's lyricism. And there's an Ornette Coleman tune, because Ornette . . . well, we're getting ahead of the story.

Bley and Motian have worked and recorded together, off and on, since 1963. But his collaboration with Charlie Haden goes back to 1957. After becoming a popular club pianist in his hometown of Montreal, after studying composition and conducting at Juilliard (Mingus, in fact, first hired him to conduct his octet in a recording session, and waxed their trio date a couple of weeks later), after living in New York and gigging with Bird and Jackie McLean and many



MITCHELL SEIDEL

others, Bley went West with drummer Lennie McBrowne and bassist Hal Gaylor. Vibist Dave Pike joined the group, Haden replaced Gaylor on bass, and they cut a disc for GNP Crescendo, with liner notes and one composition by Paul's wife-to-be, one Carla Borg. Soon, Billy Higgins took over the drums and before long asked if a couple of jam-session friends of his, trumpeter Don Cherry and an unusual alto sax player, could sit in. As Bley told Bill Smith in a 1979 interview, "After playing one set with them Charlie and I went out in the backyard and had a confrontation. We said, 'Look, we've been working at this club for a long time and most probably could stay here as long as we wanted. If we fire Dave Pike and hire Don and Ornette we won't last the week. We'll be lucky to last the night. What shall we do?' And we looked at each other and said, 'Fire Dave Pike!'"

Working with Ornette and digging into his seemingly bottomless bag of freely expressionistic compositions stretched Bley's playing into areas of microtonality and open structure. Eventually, Cherry and Coleman left to accept John Lewis' invitation to attend the Lennox School of Music, and a few months later Paul and Carla Bley left L.A.,

driving coast-to-coast and arriving just in time for Paul to squeeze onto the piano bench on the semester's final jam session's final tune—a lucky break which brought him to the attention of his next employers, George Russell and, most importantly, Jimmy Giuffre.

Multi-reedman and composer Giuffre had fronted previous drummerless trios since his "Four Brothers" days with Woody Herman, but the early '60s trio with Bley and kindred bassist Steve Swallow (on acoustic) was the freshest, the freest, and the most sublime. Their three-part melodic invention and rhythmic counterpoint, loose tempos and spontaneous improvisation epitomizes "chamber jazz" at its most lucid and luminous, and has proven to be a still-fertile area for improvisers today (see "Reviews" May '92). Bley recalls, "Giuffre conceived our music as being contrapuntal; the three instruments were discrete contrapuntal lines, and that took away the [conventional] tutti effect. And once the music changes every instrument up there has to be reassessed as to its validity. So just as Coleman's music challenged the validity of the pianist as accompanist, Giuffre's music challenged the validity of the drum/bass format as a rhythm machine. Now each instrument becomes its own rhythm machine, and since you were playing music with or without tempo, the group could consist of a cello and flute and oboe, and that would be a jazz trio. We found that one of the ways to get out of a particular era in music that has us locked in is to change the instrumentation."

Bley's role-redefining with Coleman and Giuffre set him up for his own subsequent pathbreaking trio dates for Savoy (with Swallow and drummer Pete LaRoca) and ECM. These sessions, and those with Gary Peacock or Mark Levenson on bass and Motian or Barry Altschul in the drum chair, proved a major advance on post-Bill Evans piano trio interaction. Bley relates, "I was interested in liberating us from barlines and chorus lengths, and in liberating the harmony of the trio and the open palette of the solo. The solo in the middle of the written music was wide open from A to Z. That's a format I still like to do, keep it wide open in terms of what you're playing."

The mid-'60s found Bley expanding on these principles, primarily on tunes by his two ex-wives, Carla Bley and Annette Peacock. (Bley has always encouraged his wives' compositional inclinations. Carla Bley needs no special praise here, her large body of work speaks for itself. But Annette Peacock's music has long been undervalued, and a forthcoming hat ART trio date by Bley, Gary Peacock, and Franz Koglmann will hopefully refocus some attention on her frequently dark, introspective, and fascinat-

ing pieces.)

There was, during this time, a brief departure for a notable gig with Sonny Rollins—one which may have, indirectly, changed jazz history. We'll let Bley pick up the story. "Miles and Sonny Rollins were both looking for pianists, and specifically the calls went out to Herbie Hancock and myself . . . would both of us please come to Birdland that Monday night. I didn't have the money to get into Birdland that night; it was only with the help of a conga drum player, whose name escapes me, who got me past Pee Wee Marquette and down the stairs into the

backstage area, where I ran into Herbie. He alluded to the fact that we had both got the call and, always being the gentleman, he said, 'Which job do you want?' Which led me to believe I had first choice, and to this day I am convinced he was serious. Sonny was on the stage, and I had thought that Don Cherry had misguided Sonny by trying to humor Sonny in his desire to break free of chord changes.

"New York was full of saxophone players who had broken free of chord changes by 1962—Gato Barbieri, Pharoah Sanders, and 40 other people whose names may or may

not strike a bell. So I thought it was a waste of somebody who was such a master tune player—plus who had failed in the attempt to break free of changes. I felt it was my mission to play standards with Sonny Rollins, to the point where no one would know what the standard was except the bass player, who, if he heard the bottom note of the chord the pianist was playing, would agree he was in the right place, but by listening real hard could superimpose on top of the harmony, the standard, a total freedom. So I said to Herbie, 'That's very sweet of you, I think I'll go up and play a tune with Sonny.'

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Well, I never got off the stage. I just finished the set. I had the job, from the first tune. So I got to play with Sonny; we played tunes for a year or so, we made some recordings, and it was an incredible experience in terms of strength and endurance. Now, if I've ever played anything, from the beginning of the first time I ever played to last night, I can play that again if I choose to, and for as long as necessary. I developed this capacity for

"There's nothing inherent in a written piece of music that dictates exactly how it should be played."



endurance out of pain, playing with Sonny Rollins, and it has stood me in good stead."

Though we can only idly speculate on how Bley's radical theories might have influenced Miles had he made a different choice, his work in the '60s, both in trio and solo, should not be underestimated. Bley's reconsideration of rhythm and harmony, form and tempo, paved the way for players as stylistically diverse as Keith Jarrett and Bill Frisell. The early '70s found him on a new path, exploring electronics and early (and especially awkward) synthesizers; he even recorded with Pat Metheny and Jaco Pastorius well in advance of their days of fame.

The '80s and, now, the '90s have been a period of consolidation for Paul Bley. He has

not changed his outlook or his playing, but he has expanded the arena of his interests. He's revisited the standard and bebop repertoires in his own unique fashion, acknowledging, "Post-Rollins, standards have been totally ignored. As a matter of fact, Ornette came way too soon in the history of jazz because there's at least another 10 years of material, ways of developing standards, or jazz standards as well, anything with chord changes."

As for bebop . . . "I always thought it was totally useless for players to finish playing a bebop tune and then take a bebop solo, exactly like the person who played the song in the first place. There's nothing inherent in a written piece of music that dictates exactly how it should be played. You play the flavor, the mood, but you don't necessarily play someone else's solo." He's reunited with Giuffre and Swallow, with no loss in their empathy or inspiration, and even adapted his approach to Schoenberg and Webern's theories on a remarkable, spontaneously improvised trio CD for hat ART, *12 (+6) On A Row*.

Bley's marvelously etched, moody, romantic, sometimes melancholy piano has never quite received the recognition it deserves, but his quest, fueled by inner resources and personal challenges, identifies him as an individual in a world of increasing soundalikes. He admits, "If I thought for a moment that there was nothing new to be done, whether it was playing a tune in a different way or taking Schoenberg's atonality as a premise for a project, then I would happily retire to the country and enjoy the company of my children and come out only for those events that were really useful."

DB

EQUIPMENT

"My first choice would be a Bosendorfer Imperial; second probably a Steinway 'D'. I don't own a piano for my own use right now, but we have a six-foot Kawai for the children." A strong advocate of electronic keyboards in the early '70s, Bley has

concentrated on the acoustic instrument for over a decade, though he's said that he's reconsidering his approach, and that for this year's Montreal Jazz Festival appearance might use a Yamaha DX1 as a keyboard controller with touch control.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

MEMOIRS — Soul Note 121240-2
BEBOP — SteepleChase 31259
REJOICING — SteepleChase 31274
MY STANDARD — SteepleChase 31214
PAUL BLEY GROUP — Soul Note 1140
SONOR — Soul Note 1085
QUESTIONS — SteepleChase 1205
TANGO PALACE — Soul Note 1090
SOLO PIANO — SteepleChase 31236
SOLO — Justin Time 28-2
PAUL BLEY QUARTET — ECM 835 250-2
NOTES — Soul Note 121 190-2
FRAGMENTS — ECM 829 280-2
THE FLOATER SYNDROME — Savoy Jazz 4427
TURNING POINT — I.A.I. 123841-2
OPEN, TO LOVE — ECM 827 751-2
BALLADS — ECM 1010 (out of print)
WITH GARY PEACOCK — ECM 843 162-2

with Jimmy Giuffre

1961 — ECM 849 644-2
QUIET SONG — I.A.I. 123839-2
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with Franz Koglmann

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REVISITED — EmArcy 826496-2 (Charlie Mingus)
THE COMPLETE CANDID . . . — Mosaic 4-111 (Charlie Mingus)
ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE (1963-64) — RCA/Bluebird 2179-2 (Sonny Rollins)
OUT OF NOWHERE — Candid 79032 (Don Ellis)

Key

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



Miles Davis

DOO BOP—Warner Bros. 9 26938: *MYSTERY; THE DOO BOP SONG; CHOCOLATE CHIP; HIGH SPEED CHASE; BLOW; SONYA; FANTASY; DUKE BOOTY; MYSTERY (REPRISE); DOO BOP (EDIT)*.
Personnel: Davis, trumpet; Easy Mo Bee, instrumental programming, voice; Deron Johnson, keyboards (2, 5, 6, 8); J.R., A.B. Money, voice (2).

★★★★★ 1/2

Those who hail Miles for hitting upon something entirely new on these sessions, his last-known recordings, are missing the most exciting part of it all. Some of these tracks could have easily been on *Tutu*, *Amandla*, or maybe even 1974's *Get Up With It* (with Al Foster's hi-hats splashing on a hip-hop groove).

What excites me most about *Doo Bop*, the joyous teaming up of Miles and young rapper and instrumentalist Easy Mo Bee, is the way Miles was *playing* in his last days. "Chocolate Chip" is some of his best—clear, darting phrases, punctuated by generous, dramatic space. He scampers like a kitten on the supergroove "High Speed Chase." His muted trumpet is doubled by steel drum for a minute, there's a sax point/counterpoint line at another spot, and he kicks alone with the drum track for a few frenetic measures. Where he has sounded tentative at times on recent recordings, here he starts and ends his ideas crisply. The mute is in most of the time and his sound doesn't change much, but his phrasing and concept adapt sharply from tune to tune.

"Yo chief, blow," raps Easy Mo Bee in a rich baritone. The sounds on these tracks aren't as sophisticated as what the trumpeter was getting in recent years from Jason Miles and Marcus Miller, but they're fresh and closer to the street. Bee throws out a collage of beats and samples that soothes with almost a Barry White vibe, and startles with undefinable sounds from the 'hood, some cries industrial,

some human. Keyboardist Johnson adds tasty, spicy sounds, solos, and cluster chords to help it work. Miles and Easy really hit it off musically—I just wish he was still around to jam with folks like Ice T, Whodini, Queen Latifah, PE, and Geto Boys.

Miles' embrace and encouragement of the new has made an impact on musicians of all ages. It's a hell of an exit, Chief.

—Robin Tolleson



**Charlie Haden/
Quartet West**

HAUNTED HEART—Verve 513 078: *INTRODUCTION; HELLO MY LOVELY; HAUNTED HEART; DANCE OF THE INFIDELS; THE LONG GOODBYE; MOONLIGHT SERENADE; LENNIE'S PENNIES; EV'RY TIME WE SAY GOODBYE; LADY IN THE LAKE; SEGMENT; THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL; DEEP SONG*. (66:14)

Personnel: Haden, bass; Ernie Watts, tenor saxophone; Alan Broadbent, piano; Larance Marable, drums.

★★★★★

A set of wistful ballads and gentle bop classics—with his Quartet West Haden paves no new paths but makes some gorgeous music all the same. The only unusual feature of this, the group's fourth release, is its use of three old recordings, each addended onto new quartet versions. After a seamless cross-fade (or dissolve, if we accept Haden's stated cinematic aspirations), Jo Stafford sings the title cut (1947), Jeri Southern sings Cole Porter's "Ev'ry Time We Say Goodbye" (1954), and Billie Holiday sings "Deep Song" (1947), each one drawing its contemporary update into an interesting melange of melody, memory, words, and the texture of different recording technologies. (Check out Haden's '76 duet with Paul Motian, "For A Free Portugal" on *Closeness* for A&M, for a politically acute version of his sampling method.)

Watts' soulful sound is full of composure; he douses the ballads in vibrato and swiftly sneaks through the changes. Broadbent is out-front, unafraid of flash (sometimes a bit too fearless, methinks), and his playing is often awash in ideas, evident in his excellent solo on Bird's "Segment." But it is Haden's obese bass, without which the session would be unremarkable—his folksy, stepwise solos, of course, but moreover his urgent walking, his harmonic sophistication and his huge sound. If, as he suggests, this disc should be treated like a film (it opens with snatches of '30s Warner Bros. fanfare and *The Maltese Falcon* soundtrack), I'll gladly buy the popcorn.

—John Corbett



Santana

MILAGRO—Polydor 314 513 197-2: *MILAGRO; SOMEWHERE IN HEAVEN; SAJA/RIGHT ON; YOUR TOUCH; LIFE IS FOR LIVING; RED PROPHET; AGUA QUE VA CAER; MAKE SOMEBODY HAPPY; FREE ALL THE PEOPLE (SOUTH AFRICA); GYPSY/GRAJONCA; WE DON'T HAVE TO WAIT; A DIOS*. (71:16)

Personnel: Carlos Santana, guitars; Chester Thompson, keyboards, background vocals; Benny Rietveld, bass; Paul Rekow, congas, lead vocals (cut 1); Karl Perazzo, percussion, vocals; Billy Johnson, drums (3,4); Tony Lindsay, (5,8), Alex Ligertwood (2), Larry Graham (3), lead vocals; Wayne Wallace, trombone (7,9,11); William Ortiz and Robert Kwock, trumpet (7,9,11); Melecia Magdaluyo, sax (7,9,11); Bad River Singers (7); Jorge Santana, acoustic guitar (3); Linda Tillery and Lygela Ferragallo, vocals (6); Rebecca Mauleon, acoustic piano (7); John Coltrane, tenor sax (12); Miles Davis, trumpet (2).

★★★★★

Santana's debut on Polydor (after a run of 26 albums on Columbia) combines the fiery abandon of *Abraxas* and *Caravanserai* with the catchy pop sensibilities of *Zebop!*. A live-in-the-studio session intended to honor the memories of Bill Graham and Miles Davis, *Milagro* has it both ways, ranging from saccharine Hallmark card sentiments like "We Can Make It Work" and "Life Is For Living" to ferocious instrumental jams like "Gypsy/Grajonca" and the dark, jazzy "Red Prophet."

Guitar fans will have plenty to drool over as Carlos unleashes with the kind of vengeance we haven't heard from him since *Lotus and Love*. *Devotion*, *Surrender*, his mid-'70s statements of psychedelic excess. Even on the schlockier numbers his tone is so ballsy, his attack so consistently fierce that he simply can't be denied. He machine-gun picks his way through "We Can Make It Work" before unleashing at the tag, slices through ebullient cheese like "Free All The People" and "Life Is For Living" with toe-curling intensity, and erupts on the religious paean, "Somewhere In Heaven." He also comes out of the chute with his wheels screeching on "We Don't Have To Wait," the churning Latin groove of "Agua Que Va Caer," and a rumba rendition of the Marvin Gaye tune "Right On."

I could have done without Carlos' Barry White-ish love rap on "Your Touch," but he redeems himself with another killer solo on this commercial funk vehicle, spurred on by ex-Miles Davis bassist Benny Rietveld. Miles himself makes an appearance on this record via sampling, as does Coltrane. On the album's brief closer, "A Dios," Carols lifts a signature trumpet phrase from "Blues For Pablo" off *Miles Ahead*, and some heightened tenor work from the "Mars" section of Trane's duet album

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 —Bill Milkowski



**8 Bold Souls/
 Edward
 Wilkerson, Jr.**

SIDESHOW—Arabesque Jazz 0103: *BLACK HERMAN; GLASS BREAKERS; LONELY WOMAN; SIDESHOW; LIGHT ON THE PATH.* (65:58)

Personnel: Wilkerson, alto, tenor saxophones, clarinet, alto clarinet; Mwata Bowden, clarinet, baritone, tenor saxophones; Robert Griffin, trumpet, flugelhorn; Isaiah Jackson, trombone; Aaron Dodd, tuba; Naomi Millender, cello; Harrison Bankhead, bass; Dushun Mosely, drums, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★

**Ethnic Heritage
 Ensemble**

HANG TUFF—Open Minds 2405: *HANG TUFF; BOBO; AFRO SLICK; PEACE ON EARTH; TRANE IN MIND; INDESTRUCTIBLE CONSCIOUSNESS.* (60:54)

Personnel: Wilkerson, alto, tenor saxophones, clarinet, piano, percussion; Kahil El'Zabar, trap and earth drums, sanza, ankle bells, percussion; Joseph Bowie, trombone, congas.

★ ★ ★ ½

Wide-ranging Wilkerson is the most interesting AACM composer in a decade, and 8 Bold Souls is his best vehicle. Like Henry Threadgill's late septet, it can sound like an exploded brass band pointed toward or away from a funeral, but Wilkerson's no clone. For one thing, there's a lot more Sun Ra in his gently dissonant background voicings and subtle Egyptian rhythms, notably on "Black Herman." He also has a singular sense of pace: no other jazz composer unspools his pieces so slowly. (The shortest track here is eight minutes; two run 17.) On "Glass Breakers," a vamping bass-and-cello intro takes two minutes before we get a snippet of a transparent, John Carter-esque theme, not fully revealed till a minute later.

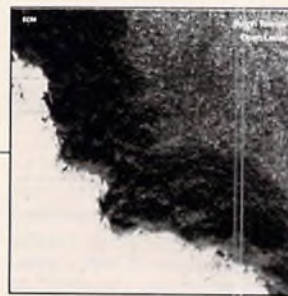
Such foreshadowing gives these pieces organic unity, but their deliberate progress makes you long for some three-minute miniatures. Wilkerson's multithematic compositions are as far from hyperkinetic postmod-jumpcut jobs as possible. Transitions or accelerations are slow and gradual. Instead of having their say on every tune, most Souls are restricted to one or two long solos. But as a result, there's only one throaty clarinet solo by the gifted Mwata Bowden ("Sideshow"), not nearly

enough.

As composer, Wilkerson wants to circle the globe with every tune—from free-time to swing-time to AACM stately ritualism, the Souls get to it all. ("Path"'s sprightly harrnon-trumpet theme takes off from Miles' "Human Nature," though this tubafied funk is hipper than the music of Miles' last bands.) "Lonely Woman," given a blownout, blowsy treatment, isn't as good as the originals, but maybe I'm bugged 'cause it's become Ornette's "'Round Midnight"—his one sweet tune everyone plays, neglecting more challenging works.

On *Hang Tuff*, Kahil El'Zabar's Ethnic Heritage Ensemble comes off like a superhip street band. The title track's a chant, and "Peace On Earth" is Kahil's Marvin Gaye-style message song, sung over simple chording piano. Kahil is one of the most Afrocentric jazz percussionists. Using hands or sticks, his drum vamps structure the loose jams that form the meat of this set. On tenor, Wilkerson's main axe, Edward builds on the emotionally direct but controlled vocalism of Chicago elders Von Freeman and Fred Anderson. Trombonist Bowie likewise plays free with great control, tact, and restraint. EHE's catholicity illustrates what AACM open-mindedness has always been about, just as 8BS shows what satisfying fruits that attitude can bear.

—Kevin Whitehead



Ralph Towner

OPEN LETTER—ECM 314 511 980-2: *THE SIGH; WISTFUL THINKING; ADRIFT; INFECTION; ALAR; SHORT 'N STOUT; WALTZ FOR DEBBY; I FALL IN LOVE TOO EASILY; MAGIC POUCH; MAGNOLIA ISLAND; NIGHTFALL.* (53:46)

Personnel: Towner, classical and 12-string guitars, synthesizer; Peter Erskine, drums, ddrums.

★ ★ ★

Recent reissue-driven retrospectives of fusion's first years have generally underplayed the guitar-oriented acoustic melding of jazz with both indigenous musics and chamber music, an area in which Ralph Towner continues to play a central role. While Towner discreetly expanded his palette in the past decade with the synthesizer, his core sensibility has remained steadfast. Towner's trademark blend of a classically informed virtuosity, a Bill Evans-influenced melding of lyricism and quiet intensity, and a back-to-the-land era slant on wonder and communion, is, for the most part, well forwarded on *Open Letter*.

The program has two large portions of works featuring synth tracks and the contributions of Peter Erskine, whose loose funk-inflected



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rhythms on "Infection" give Towner the springboard to quick-cut between agile runs and slashing chordal punctuations. Towner's measured use of electronics remain an intriguing element of compositions such as the pensive opener, "The Sigh," and the evocative closer, "Nightfall." The few missteps in employing the synths and electronic percussion occur on "Alar," which suffers from portentous tympani effects, "Adrift," a reminder that electronics can't replace the late-percussionist Collin Wolcott's touch, and "Magic Pouch," an excursion into overly-sunny pop-jazz.

Tucked among and between the over-dubbed and collaborative pieces are four exceptional unaccompanied guitar solos teeming with melodic richness and inventive voicings. Two are Towner originals—the aptly-titled "Wistful Thinking" and the sleek, aptly-titled "Short 'N Stout." Towner's sugar-free romanticism is very well represented by "I Fall In Love Too Easily," the Cahn-Styne chestnut, and Evans' "Waltz For Debby" (perhaps Towner, one of Evans' most astute interpreters, could someday write an album-length letter to the pianist; *Here, here!*—ed.). These solos comprise a cogent quarter-hour argument for Towner's status as a major jazz stylist. But, the gist of *Open Letter* is that Towner still finds much of his inspiration beyond jazz's confines.

—Bill Shoemaker



David Sanborn

UPFRONT—Elektra 61272: *SNAKES; BENNY; CROSSFIRE; FULL HOUSE; SOUL SERENADE; HEY; BANG BANG; ALCAZAR; RAMBLIN'*. (58:07)

Personnel: Sanborn, alto sax; —basic band: Marcus Miller, electric bass, keyboards, electric guitar, bass clarinet; William "Spaceman" Henderson, electric guitar; Ricky Peterson, organ (except cuts 5,7), piano (7); Steve Jordan, drums; Don Alias, percussion; —plus: John Purcell, saxello (1,9), alto flute (2), tenor sax (3,6); Randy Brecker (4), Herb Robertson (9), trumpet; Dave Bergeron, trombone (4,6); Chris Bruce (4), Hiram Bullock (4), Eric Clapton (5), electric guitar; Richard Tee (5), organ; horn sections (5,7), 17 vocalists (7).

★ ★ ½

Last year's jazzy *Another Hand* was Sanborn's change of pace—if not the masterwork reviewers hailed—but *Upfront* is back in his old commercial ruts. He's best on a Stuff-styled "Soul Serenade" where, as my friend Irving Stone says, Sanborn plays clichés with real conviction. Set him up in front of a vamp-till-we-fade riddum track or hand him a Stuff-y ballad ("Benny"), and he'll do something agreeable, even if it's only romping on his

usual licks.

Upfront makes a nice keg-party dance record, but you'll forget the music before the hangover comes on, with one exception, Marcus Miller's static funk arrangement of "Ramblin'" is so appallingly stolid—so unOrnettey—it'll stick. Even loose cannon Herb Robertson's been blanded out. Miller's slick production conquers everything—it's as if all the soloist's choices have been made for him before he enters the studio.

Sanborn's career is starting to look like Pat

Metheny's. He knows where the money is made, and will slip an Ornette tune onto a commercial record ("Ramblin'" sucks, but Ornette's checks will be nice), and will use his clout to make more creative records occasionally, to show he's real and to boost deserving musicians. That's a smart business plan. But to go in consecutive albums from "First Song" with Haden and Frisell to Joe Cuba's "Bang Bang" with handclaps and silly vocals—who'd believe in evolution after this?

—Kevin Whitehead

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Sing & Swing

by John Litweiler

Most of **Big Crosby's And Some Jazz Friends** (Decca GRD-603; 59:10: ★★★★★½) comes from the '40s, when singer and actor were inseparable. There's superb melodic invention ("When My Dreamboat Comes Home"), quick humor (the stylistic parodies of "Moonburn"), crooned lines ("Sunny Side Of The Street"), and many felicities, such as the long, curved notes with concluding grace notes that make "I Ain't Got Nobody" a near-masterpiece. Of his jazz friends, only singers Connee Boswell and



EDGAR A. SULLIVAN

Der Bingle: singer and actor as one

Louis Armstrong prove Crosby's equal; some, like Jack Teagarden, sound shy here. The disc includes attractive passages of Muggsy Spanier's cornet, Lionel Hampton's vibes, and Woody Herman's clarinet, among others. Four tracks include Crosby's impressions of black singing, on which Hampton's "shuffle, shuffle, shuffle" is the appropriate sarcastic comment.

Most of **Louis Armstrong's Rhythm Saved The World** (Decca GRD-602; 61:54: ★★★★★½) is from 1935, when Armstrong began fronting the Luis Russell band; though Russell/Pops Foster/Paul Barbarin (piano-bass-drums) is surely the best pre-Basie big-band rhythm team, the arrangements are surprisingly weak. I doubt any Crosby vocal ever matched the emotive power of Armstrong singing "Shoe Shine Boy," or invested hack lyrics with such humanity. In fact, a fair number of these songs are rescued from deserved oblivion by Armstrong's variations and scat interludes. Despite the grand final cadenzas, much of his younger trumpet bravura is subdued here. Instead, he offers lovely melodic creations, as on "Red Sails In The Sunset," "Falling In Love With You," and two quite different takes of "Solitude" (a song that sounds made to order for him).

Half of **Carmen McRae's Here To Stay** (Decca GRD-610; 52:56: ★★★★★½) is from mid-'50s small-group dates; despite her technique and the purity of her voice, the net effect is of cold, random skill; and some mannerisms, such as her reducing of melodies to even-noted riffs, are tiresome. But the other half is from 1959 big-band dates, and includes a touching ballad version of "I See Your Face Before Me." She swings through the other big-band tunes with a neo-Vaughan wildness and wit, and invents genuinely imaginative melodies on "That's For Me." Among the soloists, tenorman Zoot Sims especially adds to the pleasure.

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- 7 Only one selection counted in each category.



Gerry Mulligan

RE-BIRTH OF THE COOL—GRP GRD 9679: ISRAEL; DECEPTION; MOVE; ROUGE; ROCKER; GODCHILD; MOON DREAMS; VENUS DE MILO; BUDO; BOPCITY; DARN THAT DREAM; JERU. (50:03 minutes)

Personnel: Mulligan, baritone saxophone; Wallace Roney, trumpet; Phil Woods, alto saxophone; John Clark, french horn; Dave Bergeron, trombone; Bill Barber, tuba; John Lewis, piano; Dean Johnson, bass; Ron Vincent, drums; Mel Torme, vocal (11).

★ ★ ★ ½

Mulligan/ Rogers/ Metronome All-Stars

BIRTH OF THE COOL, VOL. 2—Capitol Jazz 7 98935-2: FOUR MOTHERS; DIDI; SAM AND THE LADY; POPO; OVER THE RAINBOW; APROPOS; WESTWOOD WALK; SIMBAH; WALKING SHOES; ROCKER; A BALLAD; TAKING A CHANCE ON LOVE; FLASH; ON-TET; EARLY SPRING; LOCAL 802 BLUES. (46:41 MINUTES)

Personnel: (cuts 1-6) Rogers, trumpet; John Graas, french horn; Gene Englund, trombone; Art Pepper, alto sax; Jimmy Giuffre, tenor sax; Hampton Hawes, piano; Don Bagley, bass; Shelly Manne, drums. (7-14) Mulligan, baritone sax, piano; Chet Baker, Pete Candoli, trumpet; Graas, french horn; Ray Siegel, trombone; Bud Shank, alto sax; Don Davidson, baritone sax; Bob Enevoldsen, vibes; Joe Mondragon, bass; Chico Hamilton (7,9-11), Larry Bunker (8,12-14), drums. (15-16) Miles Davis, trumpet; Kai Winding, trombone; John LaPorta, clarinet; Lee Konitz, alto sax; Stan Getz, tenor sax; Serge Chaloff, baritone sax; George Shearing, piano; Terry Gibbs, vibes; Billy Bauer, guitar; Eddie Safranski, bass; Max Roach, drums.

★ ★ ★ ½

Miles' name is on it, but the '49-'50 *Birth Of The Cool* sessions were collaborative. In retrospect, Gerry Mulligan and the other arrangers and players responsible prefigured the '60s AACM: a collective which devised an alternative concept which didn't condemn prevailing trends (bop or late Trane, respectively) but took a less hot, more coloristic approach. The cool nonet was a scaled-down Claude Thornhill band, anticipating in its economy later mid-size bands like AACMer Henry Threadgill's septet.

Not that you had to wait that long. As the too-short-for-CD Vol. 2 (perhaps better called *Growth Of . . .*) makes clear, the news spread fast. Shorty Rogers' 1951 octet was the first of many West Coast bands to build a whole style on the cool nonet, though no one else did it as ably as Shorty (for a more complete picture,

get Mosaic's terrific Rogers box). Mulligan's '53 tentet revived "Rocker" and "Godchild" (as "Ontet") from the original *Cool* dates, and likewise honored their esthetic. Even on the '51 Metronome All-Stars session, one of those more-or-less generic poll-winners conclaves, the rhythm section's understated swing and the pastel charts show the same pervasive influence.

On Mulligan's new *Re-Birth*, the old charts still sound fresh. Faithfully transcribed, they're

crisply played—maybe too crisply. On the head of *Birth's* "Move," arranger John Lewis' lovely background figures were soft-edged, intensifying the gauzy Thornhill effect. On *Re-Birth* they're Kenton-tight, the original warmth unsuccessfully reconstituted using studio echo. Also on "Move," the trumpet solo has wisely been shifted from first to third position, so you're not tempted to compare Roney's improvisation with Miles' compact gem. Despite the Miles-heir mantle conferred on him at

The Callet Trumpet Mouthpiece VS. The Other Guy's

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Montreux, Wallace alternates strong and weak accents more regularly than even a young Davis, who as a boxer knew to bob and weave.

Phil Woods is on alto, not originator Lee Konitz. The liner notes say Lee's absence was due to scheduling conflicts; they don't mention the date was booked before anyone asked him when he was available. If Mulligan wanted to comment on the cool legacy now, then Konitz—a continuously inventive improviser who's led his own nonet—is irreplaceable. The Birdier Woods gives the music a sharper, more conventional edge. Mulligan rewrites cool even as he celebrates it.

But it's good that we can hear the parts more clearly (despite the too-bright and echoey recording). Heard fresh, the last episode of "Moon Dreams," arranged by Gil Evans, strikingly anticipates Mingus' stately (and not so cool) orchestral works. However, guest Torme's occasional polysyllabic excesses ("Dar-na-nar-nar-narn that dream") wreck Kenny Hagood's old feature.

Re-Birth's speedy spring release was designed to drum up interest in Mulligan's reformed tentet, touring this summer. Their shows should be good (blasting PAs aside). But as usual with repertory bands, at home they're no substitute for the original recordings. If you cue up *Re-Birth* a quarter as often as you do *Birth* (currently Capitol 92862), your priorities are screwy.

—Kevin Whitehead



Wynton Marsalis

BLUE INTERLUDE—Columbia CK 48729: *BROTHER VEAL; MONOLOGUE FOR SUGAR CANE AND SWEETIE PIE; BLUE INTERLUDE (THE BITTERSWEET SAGA OF SUGAR CANE AND SWEETIE PIE); AND THE BAND PLAYED ON; THE JUBILEE SUITE; SOMETIMES IT GOES LIKE THAT.* (71:30)

Personnel: Marsalis, trumpet, piano (cut 3); Marcus Roberts, piano; Wessell Anderson, alto saxophone; Todd Williams, tenor, soprano saxophones, clarinet; Wycliffe Gordon, trombone; Reginald Veal, bass; Herlin Riley, drums.

★★★★½

With *Blue Interlude*, Wynton Marsalis states his new priorities. First, he's a composer. Next, he's an ensemble player, and finally, a soloist. The composition "Blue Interlude" is the first of his

long-form works, in which Marsalis the composer demonstrates what he's learned from the masters.

Marsalis tells the story of a romance through a series of encounters, essentially dialogs—argumentative, flirtatious, or intimate—between Sugar Cane, whose theme is voiced by trombone, piano, or tenor, and Sweetie Pie, speaking through the alto, soprano, or bass. A chorus of horns comments on the action. Solos and duets lead to ensemble passages with a strong dose of the blues. The composer's introductory "Monologue" identifies the protagonists and tells the tale, though it's like hearing a smugly hip version of "Peter And The Wolf."

"Blue Interlude" is big and ambitious, and it beautifully executes Marsalis' stated fundamentals of jazz: a communal conception of improvising, vocal effects on instruments, swinging rhythms, blues, and a sense of mystery and melancholy. You'll hear echoes of Duke and Mingus, naturally, and Marsalis arranges some wonderful Ellingtonian voicings (and growlings) for his chorus.

Marsalis clearly wants to use all the tonal colors on his palette in various combinations (often featuring the versatile Todd Williams), and there's less space for solo trumpet than I'd like on "Blue Interlude." Imagine Michael Jordan taking fewer shots in order to refine his passing skills. The rest of the album occupies

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more familiar New Orleans territory with Marsalis and company in peak form, but "Blue Interlude" is what you'll talk about later.

—Jon Andrews



Tom Scott

BORN AGAIN—GRP GRD-9675: *CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT; BACK BURNER; FREE HAND; CLOSE VIEW; SILHOUETTES; WAY BACK WHEN; SONG #1; BORN AGAIN.* (45:22)

Personnel: Scott, tenor, alto, soprano saxes, woodwinds; Randy Brecker, trumpet, flugelhorn (cuts 1-3,6); Pete Christlieb, tenor sax (1-3,6); George Bohanon, trombone (1-3,6); Kenny Kirkland, piano; John Patitucci, bass; William Kennedy, drums; Mike Fisher, percussion (3,7,8).

★★★★

Born Again is a solid, straightahead acoustic-jazz session from Tom Scott. You're thinking, "What next? *Kenny G Plays Monk*?" A little skepticism about this conversion is understandable, but many of these tunes predate Scott's fusion work (notably, Steely Dan, the L.A. Express and Joni Mitchell), reaching back to dates with Oliver Nelson and Quincy Jones.

Wayne Shorter's "Children Of The Night" sets the tone for *Born Again* with a graceful, nocturnal blues led by bassist John Patitucci. Scott credits Nelson as a strong influence on his arrangements, particularly "Back Burner," and his affection for the work of Miles Davis and Herbie Hancock is evident. Scott works out on three saxophones with a warm tone and nimble phrasing, especially in his exchanges with pianist Kenny Kirkland. The front line showcases Randy Brecker, playing with a true convert's fervor and saluting Davis on "Way Back When," and the under-recorded tenor Pete Christlieb, recently of *The Tonight Show*. *Born Again* contains some of Patitucci's most impressive acoustic work, and Kirkland comps beautifully throughout, evoking Hancock on "Song #1," which borrows chords from "Maiden Voyage."

One can't escape the irony of "mainstream" jazz eclipsing fusion in popularity. Scott may be doing the right thing for the wrong reason, but *Born Again* is a lot of fun. So forgive his past transgressions. Except, perhaps, his stint

on *The Pat Sajak Show*.

—Jon Andrews



Benny Green

TESTIFY!—Blue Note CDP 7 98171 2: *INTRODUCTION; DON'T BE 'SHAMED; HUMPHREY; BU'S MARCH; BEAUTIFUL MOONS AGO; TESTIFY!; CARL'S BLUES; DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE; I SHOULD CARE; THE SHEIK OF ARABY; MCTHING; BILLY BOY.* (62:10)

Personnel: Green, piano; Christian McBride, bass; Carl Allen, drums.

★★★★

You know how good it sounds when a piano trio is grooving on block chords and the pianist breaks into a tinkle with the bass walking big

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underneath and the drums soft-shoeing then kicking the beat. Well, there's a lot of that here. It has been hip since the '50s, and it's still hip—at least with Green, McBride, and Allen "live at the Village Vanguard."

One thinks of the great groove-piano trios—Ahmad Jamal, Oscar Peterson, Ramsey Lewis, the Three Sounds (Gene Harris)—and related pianists like Red Garland, Erroll Garner, Wynton Kelly, and Horace Silver. Green seems intent on continuing the tradition in performances such as his title tune, McBride's "McThing," and the traditional "Down By The Riverside." The title tune resembles a gospel hymn, the kind of roots music that informed hard-bop in its heyday. "McThing" testifies to its composer's role as equal partner in this trio. "Down By The Riverside," besides its gospel message, shows what this band can do with dynamics.

But all is not funk. The ballads—"Beautiful Moons Ago" (by Nat "King" Cole, surely one of Green's models as a trio pianist) and "I Should Care"—illustrate the pianist's ability to embroider a pretty melody. There are also boppish tributes: Green's "Humphrey" for pianist Walter Davis, Jr.; his "Bu's March" for former employer Art Blakey; and "Billy Boy" for Jamal and Garland, who recorded celebrated versions.

In a larger sense, this album cooks in a way that, despite its precedents, defuses the de-

vu-versus-originality question. File it alongside your most swinging Oscar Peterson, et al., albums for frequent future reference.

—Owen Cordle



Jimmy Scott

ALL THE WAY—Sire 4-26955: *ALL THE WAY; EMBRACEABLE YOU; ANGEL EYES; AT LAST; SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME; EVERY TIME WE SAY GOODBYE; I'LL BE AROUND; MY FOOLISH HEART; I'M GETTING SENTIMENTAL OVER YOU.*

Personnel: Scott, vocals; Kenny Barron, piano; Ron Carter, bass; Grady Tate, drums; John Pisano, guitar; David "Fathead" Newman, tenor saxophone; unidentified string section.

★★★★★

Jimmy Scott is one of the great jazz singers, fully worthy of comparison with Dinah Washington or Betty Carter. His astonishing voice, the gospel-groomed product of a rare hormone disorder, soars effortlessly in the alto range. But that didn't stop female fans from swooning during his '50s heyday, when he influenced everyone from Nancy Wilson to Stevie Wonder. By the next decade he was washed up, a victim of record-company ripoffs, marital strife, and a drinking problem. But after a number of failed comebacks, he's back at age 67 with what may be his finest album ever.

All *The Way* features the same sort of torchy ballads Scott has always favored, Broadway and Tin Pan Alley standards that he stretches and bends into tortured tales of unrequited love. His once-girlish tone is now womanish, making up for lost brightness with decades' worth of accumulated pathos; but his tear-jerking vibrato, dramatic phrasing, and precise enunciation are still intact. His elastic, hornlike approach sometimes suggests Carter's, less on material they share—"Every Time We Say Goodbye" or "My Foolish Heart"—as on "I'll Be Around," where he swoops down on a low note with excruciating poignancy. Without the r&b flavor of his early recordings, his accompaniment—an all-star rhythm section with strings or tenor sax—has a timeless feel, perfectly complementing Scott's world-weary languor.

—Larry Birnbaum



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Jodie Christian

EXPERIENCE—Delmark DD 454: *BLUESING AROUND; MOOD INDIGO; FAITH; END OF A LOVE AFFAIR; THEY CAN'T TAKE THAT AWAY FROM ME; IF I COULD LET YOU GO; REMINISCING; BLUES HOLIDAY; ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE; GOODBYE.* (58:59)

Personnel: Christian, piano, whistling (cut 8); Larry Gray, bass (4,6,9); Vincent Davis, drums (4,6,9).

★ ★ ★ ★

Jodie Christian is the exception to the rule that Chicago has a highly factionalized jazz community, for he has worked with everyone from Ira Sullivan to Roscoe Mitchell. This is not to suggest that Christian is merely a versatile pianist, though he brings numerous stylistic approaches into play on *Experience*. On this incredibly long overdue debut as a leader, Christian takes his place in Chicago's rich postwar piano tradition. His harmonic sophistication compares favorably with Chris Anderson's, his bluesy power with Harold Mabern's, and his lyrical filigrees with Ahmad Jamal's. Still, Christian, an early AACM member, asserts his maverick credentials in subtle, satisfying ways.

Experience is a telling title for this collection, as it documents both the standard repertoire and trio music that is a large part of Christian's working life, and a more private side, unfettered by professional demands. But, instead of a dichotomous program, Christian's worldly-wise persona makes *Experience* seamlessly cohesive. He proves to be a more than sensitive interpreter; his "Mood Indigo" is spattered with bright, highlighting arpeggios and deep-hued voicings. He deftly leads Larry Gray and Vincent Davis through shifts in tempo and mood on the three trio cuts, particularly on "All The Things You Are," where he adjusts pacing and dynamics on an almost phrase-by-phrase basis.

But, there are four Christian originals—three unaccompanied solos and the straight-up bop of "Blues Holiday," which features Christian's fluent, winsome whistling—that put an even bigger distance between Christian and your garden-variety hometown legend. "Bluesing Around" is a panoramic survey of blues variations that range from pounding rudimentary figures to complex overlays of cascading lines and jarring chords, ending with show-stopping bravado. "Reminiscing" has a quiet, dramatic sweep, as Christian alternates between foreboding phrases anchored by ominous bass notes and languid passages that seep into silence. Finally, "Goodbye" has the pensive lyricism that tells you Christian has seen it all at least once.

—Bill Shoemaker

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RECORD & CD REVIEWS



Scott Hamilton

RACE POINT—Concord Jazz CCD-4492:
*GROOVE YARD; CHELSEA BRIDGE; RACE POINT;
CLOSE ENOUGH FOR LOVE; OH, LOOK AT ME NOW;
ALONE TOGETHER; I'VE JUST SEEN HER; LIMEHOUSE
BLUES; YOU'RE MY THRILL; YOU SAY YOU CARE;
THE SONG IS YOU. (57:39)*

Personnel: Hamilton, tenor saxophone; Gerry
Wiggins, piano; Andy Simpkins, bass; Jeff Ham-
ilton, drums; Howard Alden, guitar (cuts 2, 5, 9,
11).

★★★★★

Hamilton/ Peplowski/ Robinson

GROOVIN' HIGH—Concord Jazz CCD-4509:
*BLUES UP AND DOWN; YOU BROUGHT A NEW KIND
OF LOVE TO ME; THAT OLE DEVIL CALLED LOVE;
SHINE; THE GOOF AND I; WHAT'S NEW; I'LL SEE
YOU IN MY DREAMS; GROOVIN' HIGH; BODY AND
SOUL; THE JEEP IS JUMPIN'. (65:12)*

Personnel: Scott Hamilton, Ken Peplowski,
Spike Robinson, tenor saxophones; Gerry Wig-
gins, piano; Howard Alden, guitar; Dave Stone,
bass; Jake Hanna, drums.

★★★★★

During the past 15 or so years, Scott Hamilton has grown in stature to become the most well-versed tenorman of his time in the art of classic swing. His tone, always lush and heartfelt, especially on ballads, has of late taken on a maturity of expression that brings him even closer to his original models, Coleman Hawkins and Ben Webster. Significantly, this most recent solo release was recorded last September, just one week after his 37th birthday, and, as has already been said of so much of his earlier work, this, too, appears to be his best to date. Some of the better tracks, such as "You're My Thrill" and "The Song Is You," are those upon which his only partner is the versatile and highly persuasive guitarist Howard Alden.

But this is not to slight the overall effectiveness of the quartet, and, in particular, the contributions of Jeff Hamilton, whose closing chase choruses with Scott highlight the quickly paced blues original, "Race Point," and the equally bright "Limehouse Blues." Perhaps the most definitive of all of Scott's performances, though, is the slow ballad, "I've Just Seen Her," for on this paean to Webster his sound and phrasing are at their most beautiful. Wiggins, a superlative accompanist, solos in his characteristically spare, Basie *cum* Buckner manner, while Simpkins does just what a good, levelheaded bassist should do—he plays swinging time.

Recorded one day before *Race Point*, Scott was, if anything, even more on his toes for his meeting with Peplowski and Robinson, the British-born "brother" whose presence here marks his debut session for Concord. While Peps is perhaps more well-known for his superlative command of swing-rooted modern clarinet, he is also an impressive player of straightahead, broad-toned tenor; and if it weren't for his wider vibrato and the heavier weight of his sound, it would sometimes be easy to confuse his playing with Hamilton's. No such problem of identification exists with Robinson, however, for he is clearly of the Getz/Sims school. All three men obviously enjoy the rapport that they share, and this is especially evident in their ensemble phrasing on Stitt's "Blues Up And Down," Al Cohn's "The Goof And I," and Johnny Hodges' "The Jeep Is Jumpin'."

Combative tenor duos, such as those with Dexter and Wardell, Jaws and Griff, and Gene and Sonny, have always been popular with a certain segment of the jazz audience. But seek not here for that sort of cutting-contest excitement. The work of these three men more closely resembles that of Hawk and Ben or Al and Zoot, or perhaps even an ideal blending of those two thoughtful and mutually appreciative pairs.

—Jack Sohmer



Lyle Lovett

JOSHUA JUDGES RUTH—MCAD-10475: *I'VE BEEN TO MEMPHIS; CHURCH; SHE'S ALREADY MADE UP HER MIND; NORTH DAKOTA; YOU'VE BEEN SO GOOD UP TO NOW; ALL MY LOVE IS GONE; SINCE THE LAST TIME; BALTIMORE; FAMILY RESERVE; SHE'S LEAVING ME BECAUSE SHE REALLY WANTS TO; FLYSWATTER/ICE WATER BLUES; SHE MAKES ME FEEL GOOD. (57:41)*

Personnel: Lovett, guitar, vocals; Russ Kunkel, drums; Leland Sklar, bass; Matt Rollings, piano; Hammond B-3 organ; Dean Parks, electric guitar, acoustic slide guitar (12); Ray Herndon, Billy Williams (1), Johnny Lee Schell (5), electric guitar; Rickie Lee Jones, harmony vocals (4); Plas Johnson (6), Larry Williams (7), tenor sax; Gregory Smith, baritone sax (7); Daniel Higgins, alto sax (7); Leo Kottke, acoustic guitar (8,9); John Hagen, cello (8,9); Edgar Meyer, acoustic bass (9,11); Jay Dee Maness, pedal steel (10); Emmylou Harris (10), Francine Reed, Arnold McCullen, Kathy Hazzard, Sir Harry Bowens, Sweet Pea Atkinson, and Kevin Dorsey (2,7,9), Willis Ann Ramsey and Arnold McCullen (12), harmony vocals.

★★★½

On his fourth album, Lovett again flashes the kind of deliciously wicked wit and musical

eclecticism that have branded him as an outsider in Nashville circles. His enigmatic storytelling style seems equally informed by the likes of Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson on the one hand, Randy Newman and Tom Waits on the other. Any authentic country flavorings ("I've Been To Memphis," "She's Leaving Me Because She Really Wants To") are always underscored with a healthy dose of irony. And his ruminations on the topics of love, death ("Since The Last Time," "Family Reserve"), and longing are done with tongue planted firmly in cheek.

Besides dipping into an intimate mode on dark laments like "She's Already Made Up Her Mind" and the haunting "North Dakota," a duet with Rickie Lee Jones, Lovett is also fond of gospel vamps ("Church"), light-swing fare and jump blues. "All My Love Is Gone," with laid-back brushwork by Russ Kunkel and crying tenor sax by Plas Johnson, has the smoky ambiance of an after-hours gin joint. "She Makes Me Feel Good" swaggers with r&b ebullience and the cheeky "You've Been So Good Up To Now" is a romping boogie blues delivered with a smirk.

But his most revealing moments come on the poignant "Flyswatter/Ice Water Blues" and the mournful "Baltimore." The pure, naked emotion of these slice-of-life tales cuts directly to the heart.
—Bill Milkowski



Indigo Girls

RITES OF PASSAGE—Epic 48865: *THREE HITS; GALILEO; GHOST; JOKING; JONAS AND EZEKIAL; LOVE WILL COME TO YOU; ROMEO AND JULIET; VIRGINIA WOOLF; CHICKENMAN; AIRPLANE; NASHVILLE; LET IT BE ME; CEDAR TREE. (56:05)*

Personnel: Emily Saliers, Amy Ray, guitar, vocals; Sara Lee, bass; Budgie, Jerry Marotta, Kenny Aronoff, Talvinde Singh, drums, percussion; John Jennings, Cooper Seay, electric guitar; Lisa Germano, Nollaig Ni Chathasaigh, fiddle; Ronan Browne, uilleann pipes; Benmont Tench, organ; Edgar Meyer, acoustic bass; Martin McCarrick, cello; Maggie, Terre, and Suzzy Roche, Michael Lorant, Jackson Browne, David Crosby, background vocals.

★ ★ ★ ★

Contrary to any literal interpretation of the band

name, Indigo Girls is neither a blues group or, by standard definition, a girl group. Rather, they are riding the crest of the current folk-music wave—on their own terms. Ray and Saliers, the singer/songwriting pair at the core of the group, have been active since the mid-'80s. Their fifth release on Epic shows a new level of maturity, but not at the expense of a sparkly inventiveness.

Compared to more stripped-down backing in the past, *Rites Of Passage* is more a production number, featuring sprinklings of unusual instrumentation and rich vocal weaves by the Girls and added vocal texture from the Roches. Ray's lyrical originality supercedes the craft of her songs, which lean toward more harmonically static melodies. Meanwhile, Saliers is prone to penning small wonders, such as "Galileo," a sly reflection on reincarnation ("how long till my soul gets it right?") or the striking "Virginia Woolf." Her "Airplane" is a poetic jewel about conquering fear of flying, about being "inspired by gravity."

Acoustic- and/or folk-based music no longer has to exist only in a cultish periphery the way it did several years ago. Into this new folk-friendly environment, Indigo Girls fits snugly. At the same time, their music needn't be attached to any ism or prefaced by a neo-. It's good music, pure and simple, which is to say it's neither pure nor simplistic. —Josef Woodard



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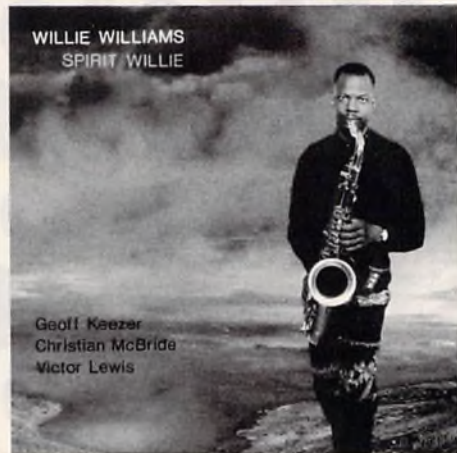
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Clifford Jordan

DOWN THROUGH THE YEARS—Milestone MCD-9197-2: *I WAITED FOR YOU; HIGHEST MOUNTAIN; CON MAN; DOWN THROUGH THE YEARS; DON'T GET AROUND MUCH ANYMORE; STATUS QUO; JAPANESE DREAM; THIRD AVENUE; CHARLIE PARKER'S LAST SUPPER.*

Personnel: Jordan, Lou Orenstein, Willie Williams, tenor sax; Jerome Richardson, Sue Terry, alto sax; Charles Davis, baritone sax; Kiane Zawadi, euphonium; Brad Shigeta, trombone; Stephen Furtado, Dean Pratt, Dizzy Reece, Don Slicker, trumpet; Ronnie Mathews, piano; David Williams, bass; Vernel Fournier, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2

HIGHEST MOUNTAIN—Muse MCD 5445: *JOHN COLTRANE; HIGHEST MOUNTAIN; BLUE MONK; MIDNIGHT WALTZ; ONE FOR AMOS. (43:10)*

Personnel: Jordan, tenor sax; Cedar Walton, piano; Sam Jones, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

A Chicago schoolmate of Johnny Griffin and John Gilmore whose later associations include Horace Silver, Lee Morgan, Max Roach, and Charles Mingus, tenor sax journeyman Clifford Jordan is just beginning to win popular recognition as he enters his seventh decade. A perceptive consolidator with a distinctive bluesy sound, he's lent his dark, supple tone and angular, insightful phrasing to genres from r&b to the avant garde. His latest album is a live celebration of his roots in swing and bop, while a reissued 1975 session, also live, finds him grooving in a Trane-ish mode.

Down Through The Years captures one of the Monday-night big-band sets Jordan has been leading lately at Condons in New York. More than half the compositions are Jordan's, expanded from their original combo settings into rich, modern charts reminiscent of the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis band and performed by a similarly solid, hard-swinging cast. Jordan's horn throbs with mature passion, assuming a Ben Webster-ish growl on the Dizzy Gillespie ballad, "I Waited For You," ripping through the modal lines of his own "Third Avenue," and gushing gutbucket moans on "Highest Mountain," his adaptation of the spiritual "Gwine Up." Other outstanding soloists include Kiane Zawadi and Sue Terry, but the driving, exquisitely sensitive rhythm section of Ronnie Mathews, David Williams, and Vernel Fournier nearly upstages the ensemble.

Highest Mountain, recorded at a Paris club in 1975, has the feel of ongoing evolution rather than retrospection. The opening track, a chanted Coltrane tribute written by Spike Lee's father, Bill, sets the mood, followed by a take on "Highest Mountain"—the only Jordan original here—that's much looser and more



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exploratory than the new big-band version. Jordan's slightly grainy tone is smoother and less urgent than the buzz-saw timbre he now favors, sounding almost too relaxed on a lackadaisical performance of "Blue Monk." The stellar rhythm trio is likewise laid-back, simmering rather than searing, but the empathetic warmth and unfailing good taste of all four players is consistently rewarding.

—Larry Birnbaum



Jeremy Steig

JIGSAW—Triloka 7190: *WASHINGTON PLACE; SEASCAPE; WHILE MY LADY SLEEPS; TEARS FOR CHARLES STREET; CIRCULAR NORTON; SIFU'S SONG; ET TU TWEETUS; JIGSAW; SPRING STREET; NAIMA.* (51:37)

Personnel: Steig, flute; LeeAnn Ledgerwood, piano; George Wadinus, guitar; Joe Chambers, drums; Steve LaSpina, acoustic bass; Zev Katz, electric bass.

★ ★ ★

Ali Ryerson

BLUE FLUTE—Red Baron 48851: *THE SONY SIDE; BLUE FLUTE; ASTERIE; I FALL IN LOVE TOO EASILY; COOL; NOCTURNE; WALTZ FOR HARRY.* (49:59)

Personnel: Ryerson, flute; Red Rodney, flugelhorn; Kenny Barron, piano; Santi Debriano, bass; Roy Haynes, drums.

★ ★ ½

The flute has had a checkered past in the annals of jazz. While attempting to battle its way out of footnote status, the instrument has failed to assert its presence as a lead voice with any consistency over the years. Ryerson's fourth jazz album, and her first domestic recording, is an auspicious stateside introduction. A classically trained musician and daughter of jazz guitarist Art Ryerson, Ryerson demonstrates her fluency in the subtle, ineffable ways of swing, an attractively rich tone, and vigorous rhythmic articulation. On this Bob Thiele-produced session, Ryerson is outfitted with solid, straightahead colleagues: Rodney's supple flugelhorn flights, Barron's typical finery, and, freshest of all, Haynes' naturally-flowing drum rustle.

The main problem on *Blue Flute* is weak material, consisting mostly of derivative exercises that fail to excite new ideas and pale in comparison to the potency of "I Fall In Love Too Easily" or Phil Woods' "Waltz For Harry." This is strictly straightahead stuff, and the hints of venturesomeness in Ryerson's solos suggest that she might be better served in a more daring setting.

Jigsaw, Steig's return to recording action after 10 years away, is also a feather in the cap of former Steely Dan Walter Becker's nascent jazz producer career. But the results are decidedly mixed. Some of Steig's material attempts to cash in on a pop-jazz sensibility, but in a mode of commercial jazz that is out of date with the prevailing WAVE syndrome of the moment. As such, it's almost accidentally hip, by virtue of historical disorientation. Almost. The title cut is an enticingly quirky assem-

blage, with a smirking, restless tonal center. Better yet, Steig's "Sifu's Song" has an almost chamber-jazz quality in its incisive melody that frames a beautifully elliptical drum solo by Chambers.

A bold technician, Steig caresses long notes with a wide, warbly vibrato (sometimes excessive) and hurls flurries across the grooves, occasionally singing through the flute and, on Ledgerwood's "Circular Norton," whooping between phrases.

—Josef Woodard

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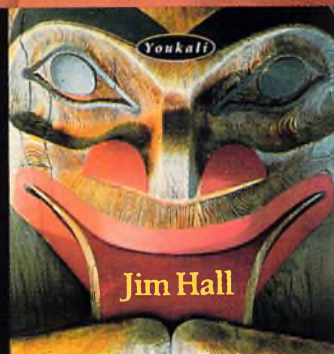
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Bedrock Beauties

by Howard Mandel

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tion program, which removes surface clicks but may slightly attenuate high frequencies (and does little to filter out hiss). The Fats Waller was reprocessed through the similar CEDAR system, and the Bessie Smith classics restored "from vinylite test pressings, as opposed to commercial shellac pressings," for "true fidelity with minimal surface noise, without the use of artificial filtering or enhancement." There's overall improvement of presence and clarity from previous LP editions, but

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Ma Rainey with fellow musicians: more bottom crawler than nightingale

expect no miracles. It's history read by laser light—lend an ear, get an education. The Milestones are shorter by a few tracks than they were as '70s double-disc record albums.

The **Original Dixieland Jazz** (nee Jass **Band**, reviled and revered since the debut of "Livery Stable Blues" in March 1917, retains its uncontested rough energy (see **DB** Feb. '92). *The 75th Anniversary* (RCA/Bluebird 07863 61098-2; 69:06: ★★) of its Victor sides (recorded into 1922) displays the quintet and sextet (plus vocalists) in the rude glory of its barnyard imitations, novelty imprecations, woodblock syncopations, and arranged polyphony. Larry Shields' clarinet whistles and Eddie Edwards' trombone growls over a heavy beat through chaotic ensemble passages. Hats off to blustery cornetist Nick LaRocca for sheer hustle and wiseguy taste—he left America simple "Margie," faux-Sephardic "Palestena," and a workhorse "St. Louis Blues." Like it or not, the ODJB can't be forgot.

New Orleans Rhythm Kings And Jelly Roll Morton (Milestone MCD-47020-2; 75:05: ★★★★★) stars a slicker, collectively improvising front line of cornetist Paul Mares, trombonist George Brunies, and clarinetist Leon Ropollo, who blend in a more legato, relaxed, piquant, and polished style. The horns still exploit extreme and vocal-like noises, but as an octet (sax, piano, banjo, bass, and drums) in 1922, a quintet in '23, and a tentet (with Jelly Roll on eight tracks) at July '23 sessions, the NORK unfurls a flowing swing feel that its stop times don't destroy. Nor do stiff theatrical charts and squared-off ragtime rhythms deter the Big NORK Three's rapport; Morton's contribution (aside from his compositions) isn't so obvious. Audio quality's not bad; a crisp "Tiger Rag" will refresh dixieland fans' memories, and "Map Leaf Rag" is definitive. Consider NORK the pre-birth of cool.

Louis Armstrong And King Oliver (Milestone MCD-47017-2; 69:11: ★★★★★½), together in the Creole Jazz Band with trombonist Honore Dutrey, Lil Hardin, and the Dodds brothers in '23, confidently took jazz beyond showiness to majesty. Besides clarinetist Johnny's piping commentary, the incredibly quickwitted, spontaneous duo-brass breaks, "Weather Bird Rag," rare "Workingman's Blues," and "Zulu's Ball," Pop's early solos are knockouts—cogent statements, assured and sassy. The seven tracks with his Red Onion Jazz Babies of '24 with Sidney Bechet and Alberta Hunter were hot, too. The French Masters of Jazz series offers quieter transfers; anyway, Creole tracks are the first

jazz masterworks.

Jelly Roll Morton 1923/24 (Milestone MCD-47018-2; 74:36: ★★★★★) comprises the 16 encyclopedic piano solos Ferdinand LeMenthe cut in June and July '24 in recorded sequence; four solos from a month or two earlier; two '23 orchestra tracks; one with piano, comb, kazoo, and clarinet; one by his Incomparables, and two duets with a rough-edged Joe Oliver. Mr. Jelly Lord's keyboard touch is dry, almost professorial, but his ideas are wry, suspenseful, and certainly timeless, having informed everyone ever after. Extraneous noise is distracting, but suffered gladly for the music's sake.

Bix Beiderbecke *And The Chicago Cornets* (Milestone MCD-47019-2; 76:47: ★★★) shows how quickly jazz spread and developed; the Wolverines' had fashioned lessons from the ODJB, NORK, and unrecorded others



The Wolverines, with (far right) Tommy Dorsey and Bix Beiderbecke (second from right) circa 1924

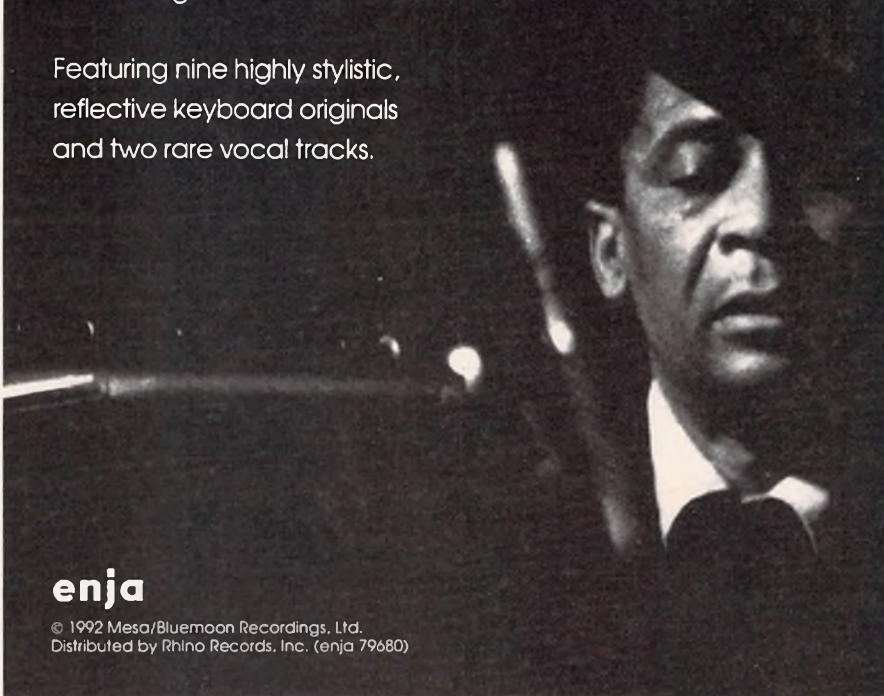
into charts by the spring 1924. However, they're timbrally light and rhythmically uptight compared to the Creole Jazz Band. In the liner notes, Max Harrison writes of Bix as a modernist; engineer Robert Parker says he played *loud*. Neither claim is substantiated here; at age 20, Bix struts like a parade cornetist, slurring notes with a wink and flourishing off-beat placements preciously; his best recorded work was yet to come. And Muggsy Spanier's Bucktown Five, in bonus tracks, are crudely provincial.

Ma Rainey (Milestone MCD-47021-2; 71:49: ★★★★★) had a limited but commanding voice, more bottom crawler than nightingale; a couple ways to build phrases, sweeping up or letting down; one basic tempo, faster than a dirge but slower than a trot; and implacable faith in earthy triumph over adversity. This was plenty to establish a genre that thrives on authentic emotion. Recording from '24 to '28 with Don Redman, Fletcher Henderson, Armstrong, Coleman Hawkins, Blind Blake, "Georgia Tom" Dorsey, and Tampa Red among her sidemen in accompaniments that only had to be serviceable, but are more often than not inspired, Gertrude Mallissa Pridgett moves us still. "Take Ma Rainey's advice: trust no man!"

Blind Lemon Jefferson (Milestone MCD-47022-2; 72:40: ★★★★★), the quintessential Texas street bluesman, is not well served by hiss despite greater definition for his open-throated hollers, falsetto cries, unsuppressed moans, which overlap his weirdly timed single-note, big-box guitar phrases. His five sessions recorded between 1926-'30 resulted in 25 songs. Two have piano and one a

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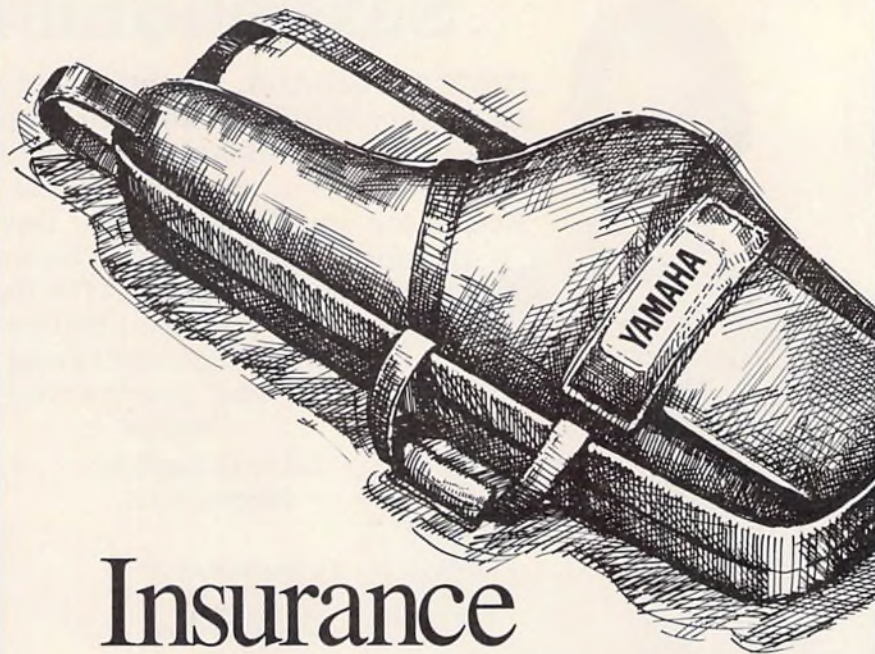
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second guitar. But the main action is Lemon's finely nuanced delivery of lyrics and licks on "Matchbox Blues," "That Black Snake Moan," "Please Keep My Grave Clean"—classics of real folk blues.

Bessie Smith 1925-1933 (Nimbus/Hermes 6003; 63:32: ★★★★★) sang with authority equal to mentor Ma Rainey's, but with more flexibility and variety of storytelling techniques, greater tonal range, and finer articulation. Her accompaniment, whether by a fairly large show band or just a couple musicians (they might be Armstrong, Eddie Lang . . . James P. Johnson) is highly professional. So far, few songs here are covered on the more trebly Columbia packages; Robert Parker's enhancements on DRG sound cleaner yet. The Empress did no wrong.

Fats Waller *And His Buddies* (RCA/Bluebird; 65:22: ★★★★★½) is well-recorded, hip, and musically modern—meant to be sophisticated entertainment—despite corny vocals (not by Fats) attending Eddie Condon, Red Allen, Teagarden, Krupa, and other luminaries in December '29. Waller has great fun, whether rolling out detailed piano jump motifs or swelling with tongue-in-cheek sentiment on pipe organ on 13 earlier tracks, some (including "Thou Swell") with James P. Johnson on piano, cornetist Jabbo Smith, and multi-reedist Gravin Bushell. No wonder the world opened up to jazz and blues—the music offered both solace and gleeful spirit. **DB**



Delfeayo Marsalis

PONTIUS PILATE'S DECISION—NOVUS 63134-2: *PONTIUS PILATE'S DECISION; ADAM'S ECSTASY; EVE'S DELIGHT; BARABBAS; THE WEARY WAYS OF MARY MAGDALENE; NICODEMUS; SON OF THE VIRGIN MARY; REVERENT JUDAS ISCARIOT; SIMON'S JOURNEY; THE LAST SUPPER; THE CRUCIFIXION.*

Personnel: Marsalis, trombone; Joshua Redman (cut 1), Mark "Nat" Turner (3, 4, 7-10), tenor saxes; Branford Marsalis (2, 5, 6, 9, 10), soprano sax; Wessel Anderson, alto (3, 8), soprano (10) saxes; Mark Gross (4, 9, 10), alto sax; Scotty Barnhart (3, 9, 10), Wynton Marsalis (4, 5), trumpet; Victor "Red" Atkins (1, 3, 5, 7), Kenny Kirkland (2, 8), Marthaniel Roberts (4, 6), piano; Chris Thomas (1), Bob Hurst (2, 3, 6-10), Reginald Veal (4, 5, 8), bass; Jeff "Tain" Watts (2, 6, 8, 10), Jason Marsalis (1, 3, 5, 7, 8), Herlin Riley (4), drums; Kimati, percussion (10).

★★★★½

The elevated notion behind Delfeayo Marsalis' first feature recording is that jazz modernism can be used to musically limn incidents and persons in the Bible. Only learned Christians also keen to jazz's spiritual meaning could hope to evaluate the trustworthiness of his choices. Thus, self-sufficient secularists unresponsive to profound correlations are advised to approach the young "trambonist" and producer's music without paying mind to its scriptural "Themes." Delfeayo may very well frown on the arbitrary creation of a wall between Church and Jazz, but this way he skirts charges of pretension or proselytism from the unredeemed.

Four Marsalis siblings and a host of highly cultivated friends convey strength of resolve, countenancing no breaches of serious-minded endeavor. One and all are tragedians of sorts, but they work through heavy spirits to cheerier places with their performances. Wynton and Branford's playing is at all times incisive and accomplished, their phrases indivisible from the swinging rhythm. Delfeayo, robust and questing, hones his personality, and Jason (age 14!) impresses on drums. Up-and-coming pianist "Red" Atkins possesses a certain bluesy wit. As a composer, Delfeayo is alert to form, timbral projection, and the personalities of the players. Just his percussion-spiced music for "The Crucifixion" seems make-believe, a threnody too pleased with itself, religious or not. —Frank-John Hadley

Branford Marsalis



Michael Brecker



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1 David Sanborn

"Ramblin'" (from *UPFRONT, Elektra*) Sanborn, alto sax; Marcus Miller, bass guitar; Steve Jordan, drums; Herb Robertson, trumpet; Ricky Peterson, Hammond B-3 organ; William "Spaceman" Patterson, guitar.

That's an Ornette tune . . . I don't know the title. There are various compositions by Monk, Ornette, Duke Ellington, Gershwin that can be interpreted in as many ways as possible, and I think this was a very effective concept. It's very functional music. It compels you in some way to participate musically. I couldn't stop tapping my feet. I don't know who the people are but it almost sounded like it could be a very hip Jamey Aebersold rhythm section record that you could play along with. The rhythm was unrelenting, very effective. And the solos were well-placed. Who was the sax player?

BM: *David Sanborn.*

LK: Really? I'm surprised. I didn't hear that affected note he's so known for. Sometimes David gets a little bit schmaltzy, but his playing here was very economical and fit right into the texture of the piece. Well-done, I'd give it 4 stars.

2 Benny Carter

"Three Little Words" (from *WONDERLAND, Pablo*) Carter, alto sax; Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, tenor sax; Harry "Sweets" Edison, trumpet; Milt Hinton, bass; Ray Bryant, piano; Grady Tate, drums.

You know, Benny Carter was one of my first inspirations when I was just learning. Now he's an inspiration just for surviving so gracefully. Sometimes I haven't liked his actual playing that much. I'm always very respectful of it, but I have the feeling that he never let himself really absorb Bird's playing in some way. He kind of stopped at that point. And in some way, it's an ego thing . . . trying to preserve your position in the scheme of things. But I certainly do admire his ability as a musician and as a saxophone player. So I'd give this 4 stars. I'm still trying to figure out how to play the most effective music, like everybody is . . . and I am convinced that the only way to do it is to be as aware as possible of what's going on currently. Don't get stuck in a style. That's the next thing to death in some way. Benny definitely had a style and he developed that style in his way. I'm sure people say that about me, that they would rather hear me play the way I played 40 years ago. But I've had to try to move on and weed out what I thought was extraneous, looking for the essential notes. But I think Benny is playing a bigger game than that. He's more than just a saxophone player. He is a writer, trumpet player, personality, citizen of the world.

LEE KONITZ

by Bill Milkowski

Sax great Lee Konitz began his career in Chicago in 1945. Two years later he went out with the Claude Thornhill Orchestra, and in later years participated in some historic jazz recordings with Thornhill, Gil Evans, Lennie Tristano, Stan Kenton, Gerry Mulligan, and Miles Davis. His dry, vibratoless tone was unique at a time when nearly every young sax player was imitating Charlie Parker. Konitz's innovative approach influenced many alto saxophonists during the 1950s, but he's never stood still, refining his sound and concept through the years.

A passionate improviser on both alto and soprano saxes, Konitz, who is approaching 65, continues to explore sound with the zeal of a youngster: check out his latest for Soul Note, *Zounds*. Konitz was recently named winner of the prestigious Jazzpar Prize, awarded by the Danish Jazz Society. Look for his upcoming guest appearance on Paul Motian's next trio recording.



HYOU VIELZ

3 Steve Lacy/ Mal Waldron

"Hot House" (from *HOT HOUSE, RCA/NOVUS*) Lacy, soprano sax; Waldron, piano.

I'm pretty sure that's Steve Lacy and Mal Waldron. Again, all of this material is available for any kind of exploitation that the performer sees fit. And the more imaginative the better. But I've always felt about this kind of material, namely bebop, that playing that kind of thematic material immediately starts the whole process at a very high level, and in terms of developing the music the soloist would be obliged to pick up from there and continue that development. And that was always very difficult for me, but I always felt that that was my obligation in some way.

Obviously, these two don't feel that way here. They go into half-time almost immediately, and Mal's playing is very baroque—like . . . of course, there's a connection with that in bebop, I think. And Steve is playing a half-time feeling most of the time. But I think it was effective and I enjoyed listening to it. Steve has such a distinctive sound, but I don't think standards are his forte. But I admire Steve. I think he's a first-rate musician and I'm pleased to see that he's finally getting the recognition. I would give that 4 stars.

4 Jimmy Lyons/ Andrew Cyrille

"Exotique" (from *BURNT OFFERING, Black Saint*) Lyons, alto sax; Cyrille, drums.

They could probably go on for two more hours. That's really amazing. It was just a little bit too long for me at this moment. I don't know who the saxophone player was, but he had an unending palette at his disposal; and in this context, I think he did great. Who is it?

BM: *Jimmy Lyons and Andrew Cyrille.*

LK: Uh-huh. It's funny, because I had the thought that in the next few minutes he'd go into out-and-out Bird. There certainly was the tonality of Bird in there. Then I had to think, "What would Bird have done if he played this kind of music?" But it's clear that Jimmy certainly profited from his time spent with Cecil [Taylor]. He really tapped a very vital source of energy and patterns to play. I didn't really know Jimmy. I wondered sometimes about his function with Cecil because it was so close to a Bird kind of feeling. But this is the first time I heard him by himself, more or less. It's very well-done. I appreciate what he's doing here. I've tried to incorporate this dimension into my playing more and more. It's a whole other discipline, and he's got that mastered. 5 stars.

DB