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Jack of All Trades

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Blindfolded

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Jacky Terrasson & Cyrus Chestnut

END FAREER

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A man with short dark hair, a mustache, and round glasses is shown from the waist up. He is wearing a bright blue suit jacket over a yellow and black patterned shirt. He is holding a black and white electronic keyboard with both hands. The background is a wall covered in colorful graffiti. The text 'HIP HOP' is written vertically in white on a black background in the upper right corner.

**HIP HOP**



# HERBIE

By Pat Cole

**O**n a Beverly Hills street, a quick drag race away from Sunset Boulevard, Herbie Hancock sits in the backyard of his home like a king on a throne. Black is his color on this day—black pants, black shirt, black shoes. He is smiling, and one reason why is the debut of his long-awaited new recording. “Oh, you haven’t heard it yet?” the master pianist asks a guest. “Come listen to it in the studio.”

He weaves through the corridors of his expansive home and locks his cats in the bedroom. He then struts through his media room, down a stairway decorated with gold records to his center of creativity. He grabs a DAT tape on the recording console, punches it up on a pair of Meyer Sound speakers, and leaves the room.

The first song, “Call It ‘94,” is a funky, foot-tapping tune that sets the pace for what’s to come. Ten more songs follow. Is it jazz? At times. Is it fusion? Could be. Is it funky? Oh, yeah. Is it hip-hop? Absolutely. Does it break new ground? His fans will issue the final verdict, but it’s a good bet that it will.

One hour later, Hancock grins as the listener compliments the unusual recording. When you try to label it as acid jazz, he smiles, adjusts his glasses with his index finger, and says, “How about just calling it music?”

After a six-year absence, Herbie Hancock has returned to solo recording in grand style: a new sound, a new record deal, and a new focus on technology. It all begins with *Dis Is Da Drum*, perhaps his most ambitious recording since 1983’s *Future Shock*.

Three years in the making, the album is an amalgam of jazz, r&b, and hip-hop rhythms. As usual, it might make those who favor his traditional jazz repertoire cringe, but it will please those who prefer Hancock’s eclectic ways. The songs take the fusion of hip-hop and jazz to new heights. Usually, songs in this genre are top-heavy with hip-hop rhythms while being light on the jazz. But on *Dis Is Da Drum*, the jazz and the funk rhythms are first-class.

A strong cast of characters supports the core of the work. Bill Summers, a former member of the original Headhunters, conceived and produced many of the rhythmic arrangements. Hancock also

called on friends such as trumpeter Wallace Roney, flutist Hubert Laws, Yellowjackets drummer William Kennedy, and reedist Benny Maupin to lock down the CD’s texture.

“It wasn’t an easy record to do. I jumped out there feet first!” says Hancock. “You know, it sounds like the guys who put together this kind of music have a great respect and appreciation for jazz. But these young rap musicians’ and producers’ use of jazz hasn’t really opened up yet. Well, I’m already a jazz player, so I don’t have any problem with that. My problem was that nobody else was doing it. So I had to carve a path for myself.”

**A**fter listening to *Dis Is Da Drum*, one would think that Hancock spent hours listening to hip-hoppers such as Bell Biv DeVoe, US3, or even Digable Planets. Not so, says Hancock, who credits William Griffin and Darrell Robertson with helping him lay down the basic musical elements. “Darrell is like my right-hand guy,” he says. “He knows how to work anything in that studio. He knows how to work the mixing consoles. He knows how to program all the synthesizers, and there are a bunch of different ones. I can’t even do that anymore—I don’t even know where to begin.”

With Hancock and Summers handling the music and Griffin taking on the more technical chores, the team layered many of the tracks with different melodies to create a richness. “We combined samples, and a great amount of the solos were done on acoustic piano,” Hancock explains. “There are acoustic elements. On top of this rhythmic structure there is a harmonic structure with different chords.”

Three years. Dozens of tracks. Countless hours of reworking and remixing. Hancock believes it was well worth the wait. “I’m *really*, really happy with it,” he says emphatically. “I like the mix. The concept is what I wanted, even though it wasn’t really clear to me in the beginning. I realize now this is what I was after, this is what I was pursuing. There is room for growth in it.”

“From the beginning, we envisioned the recording to be





Herbie at home in his studio

KEVIN ELLSWORTH

interactive-capable," he says. "One of the reasons why there are so many tracks is that, in many cases, we left conceptual choices for later. So we recorded two or three different kinds of concepts. And then we chose what we might call the director's cut. That's what the record is."

If you heard rumors that Hancock was supposed to release this CD on the Qwest label, it's true. But in the end, the deal that would have joined him with longtime buddy Quincy Jones collapsed. Why? For one, there were tensions between Hancock's former manager, Tony Meilandt, and Jones. "Let me preface this by saying that I was having managerial problems," Hancock candidly admits. "I don't have the same manager anymore. [David Passick is his new manager.] We weren't seeing eye to eye."

Hancock worried that Qwest couldn't match the opportunities that his new label, Polygram, could bring to the table. Qwest, although distributed by Warner Bros., is a relatively new label still building a reputation for itself. Polygram, with its global network of distributors, could put Hancock's records in just about any music store in the world. In addition, Hancock thought he could get better marketing support from Polygram. Plus, he has a ready-made jazz outlet with them.

"Qwest was a fairly new label," he says. "I moved from Columbia

mainly because of that relationship with Quincy Jones. I thought me and him would be kickin' butt. What I didn't realize was that as successful as Qwest has been, it wasn't a full-fledged label. Frankly, I was afraid of being with a newly formed incarnation. I guess we could say. I didn't want to be a guinea pig."

So in April of last year, Hancock's lawyer, Ken Hertz, called his old high-school buddy, Guy Eckstein, who is now an A&R v.p. at Verve Records. He told him that Hancock wanted to change labels; specifically, he wanted to come to Polygram. Eckstein was ecstatic. "And after that conversation, I quickly went down the hall and told the president of the company that we had a shot at getting Herbie, who is the crown jewel of jazz musicians," Eckstein said.

It didn't take the brass at Verve very long to realize that Herbie belonged on the label's roster. A group of Verve executives, including Eckstein, flew to Hancock's home to listen to six songs from what would become *Dis Is Da Drum*. "We were just absolutely floored," says Eckstein. "There are certainly other acid-jazz records, but he was the first one who did it in a musical way. He didn't sample any horns or anything. He pulled all the elements from *Headhunters*, the straightahead Miles Davis period, and the *Rockit* period into one record. I didn't think he could top any of that."

"After hearing the songs, we just sat down to talk about where he saw himself in the musical realm, and how he could work for Polygram and Phillips [Polygram's parent company], and about how he can be a spokesperson," Eckstein adds. "He's sort of another Quincy Jones in that sense, like a man for all seasons. He does so many other things than just play music. He does soundtrack work, he's on advisory boards."

**N**egotiations ensued, and a consensus was reached. Then Hancock had to ask Jones to let him out of the Qwest deal. Jones eventually agreed. Explains Eckstein: "Quincy didn't want to get in the way of the deal, so he let Herbie out. It was definitely something Quincy didn't have to do."

Now, Hancock has a lucrative deal that will allow him to record whatever type of musical projects he wants through the year 2005. His r&b and pop projects will be distributed by Mercury, and Verve will handle his jazz projects. And if he fancies a classical project, Deutsche Grammophon, Polygram's classical label, would consider pressing it. The contract also gives him flexible periods of time in which to complete projects.

Since *Dis Is Da Drum* straddles the jazz and hip-hop territories, both Mercury and Verve will market and promote the recording to respective audiences they serve. It's the first time the label has cooperatively produced a major project in this way.

In addition, Phillips' new media division, which develops new technology, opened its door to Hancock. What Hancock heard was music to his ears: they wanted him to have a hand in developing interactive music products. Hancock wants to join the ranks of musicians like Peter Gabriel and Todd Rundgren who have developed CD-interactive versions of their music. Simply put, it allows the listener to change, say, the tempo or melodies in a song, and create a whole new rendition of the original work. Phillips is currently developing interactive projects with other companies, including Robert Greenberg & Associates, a special-effects company. "So there are some projects from my video-production company that could be developed for this in some way," he says. "It's right up my alley."

Ironically, Hancock says that he's given up mastering technology on the micro-level. The complexity and tedium of modern synthesizer programming has forced him to delegate those duties to his producers. "Since the 1980s, I stopped doing it," he notes. "I chose to concentrate my efforts on the use of the sounds rather than the technical part of putting it together."

Hancock, nonetheless, hasn't ruled out adding interactive projects to his existing music company that handles his recording proj-



ects. "If I can strut my stuff and prove that I'm able to develop in these areas, they might very well be interested. But right now this is the ground floor for me in these areas. I'm not just thinking about making music in the interactive area. I'd like to be involved on the development team for these concepts."

If it sounds like Hancock is straying, he's not. Look at his impressive career. He's been all over the place. Musically, he is—well, a chameleon. When he was a baby, the story goes, his parents discovered that he would stop crying when he heard the sound of music. He won an award for the performance of a Mozart concerto at age 11. Hancock went on to study engineering at Iowa's Grinnell College; it was here that he learned the fundamentals of electronics, which would pique his interests in electronic fusion in the 1970s.

After graduating and returning to Chicago in 1960, he did the requisite apprenticeships with the masters: Coleman Hawkins, Donald Byrd, Dexter Gordon, and Freddie Hubbard. It was Byrd who, in 1963, recommended that Hancock join Miles Davis. With Wayne Shorter, Ron Carter, and Tony Williams, the fivesome became one of the most important and influential groups in jazz history. Already, Hancock had earned a place in the annals of jazz.

But as the jazz audience splintered in the late 1960s with many musicians and fans becoming more interested in rock, Hancock started writing jingles for Chevrolet, Standard Oil, and Eastern Airlines. There were soundtracks and film scores to write. By 1968, he split from Davis and formed his own group. He began playing electric piano and dabbling in music technology. Herbie Hancock was branching out.

One of his first breakthroughs was the album *Mwandishi*, which was rooted in technology. He continued to explore uncharted territory with *Headhunters* in 1973. This was the album that crossed him over to the mainstream with his funky "Chameleon." Critics snickered, but Hancock didn't flinch. He continued to play acoustic jazz from time to time with Davis quintet alumni. And he continued to explore the possibilities of instrumental music through electronics. In 1983, he struck gold with the number-one dance & soul hit, "Rockit."

**M**eanwhile, Hancock's film scoring career was getting hot. His best-known work was his Grammy-winning score for the 1986 jazz film, *'Round Midnight*. But Hancock's work has been diverse, ranging from serious dramas such as *A Soldier's Story* to comedies like *Jo Jo Dancer*.

From straightahead jazz to opera, from r&b back to straightahead, from bebop to fusion, from fusion to jingles, from film scores to dance music, from fusion again to hip-hop, from acoustic piano to synthesizers and emulators—Hancock has been the quintessential border crosser. And just when people thought Hancock had settled firmly

into contemporary music, he shifted gears one more time and did a Miles Davis tribute tour in 1992 (see DB Sept. '92). The project, co-starring Tony Williams, Ron Carter, Wallace Roney, and Wayne Shorter, was captured on tape during a tour stop in Berkeley, Calif. Almost three years after Davis' death, Hancock seems to have accepted the passing of his mentor.

"Somehow, I dealt with Miles' death, and I focus primarily on how much he has done rather than on how much more he might have been able to do," he says. "The influence that he's had is like several lifetimes. It's been four or five decades. It was time for him to rest."

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So let him rest. He's got to have strength when he comes back—he's going to need it!"

Although Hancock felt honored to do a world tour for his old compadre, he admits that at age 54, the drudgery of touring is one of the least enjoyable aspects of his musical life. "You know, it's funny," he says with a smile, "the performance part of music is rewarding. It's a joy and a struggle at the same time. That's the beauty of it. Traveling and seeing people from different cultures—that's exciting and rewarding. But when it's time to go on the road, the last thing I want to do is leave my house. The last thing I want to do is pack and think about what I want to take with me and what I can't.

"And when you get to the airport—oh man, I just dread that," he says. "But once I get on the plane, I'm cool! You have to hog-tie me to get me away from home. But once I'm on the plane, let's go! And the funny thing is, just as the tour is winding down, I'm sick of it, and I want to go home. Most of my tours have been under six weeks or under two months. Although two years ago, I did the Tribute to Miles tour and we toured on and off for six months."

To keep his mind and soul intact, Hancock

still practices Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism to instill what he calls the power of positive thinking. Twice a day, he will kneel at an altar at home and chant.

And this summer, Hancock will hit the road once again to promote *Dis Is Da Drum* (due out in September). He plans to start the tour in Europe with an eight-piece band and with a U.S. tour scheduled after that, depending on the response to the album.

Beyond that, Herbie is also thinking about his new technology projects. Already, he knows he wants to produce "edu-tainment," or educational-entertainment projects. "I'm open to doing music for games that will be developed as a result of the new emerging technologies," he says. "The power and speed is continually growing in the area of technology. Also I'm interested in the interactive possibilities of the television and telephone."

Looking back on his career, Hancock is well aware that he's left an impressive legacy; but his sense of humility makes him realize that there were many who helped him.

"I've been around for a long time in jazz, and I realize that I had the great opportu-

nity to inherit the influences of the masters like Miles and Bill Evans," he says. "If I start naming them, there will be a long list. I have heard fans who have put me in this 'legend' category. I don't think that way. I'm sitting in this chair right here, so from my perspective, I'm a musician who hopes to be inspired enough to inspire others, to be somewhere along the chain of influences that encourages constructive values like passion, sensitivity, and joy to emerge from music."

It is now dark at the Hancock home. His mind turns to the new record again. He's thinking about changing the name of the last track on the DAT from "Bo Ba De Da" to something else. "I'm not sure I'm going to call it that," he says. "But what else could I call it? That's what the song sounds like: 'bo ba de da.' Well, I'll think about it."

Call it whatever you like, Herbie. DB

## EQUIPMENT

Herbie Hancock uses an array of acoustic and electronic companions to produce his sounds. For starters, he owns a Steinway & Sons nine-foot concert grand; a recent addition is a seven-foot Baldwin grand piano.

For electric music, he has the choice of a Korg T-1, 01/WFD, Wavestation AD, and M-1; a Roland MK80, JD-990, and D550; Ensoniq TS-10; Yamaha DX7II with E! (extra-memory package); Rhodes Chroma with expander; Generalmusic S-2; E-mu Proteus 1, 2, and 3; and a Studio Electronics MIDI Moog.

His outboard equipment includes a Korg A-1; Lexicon 480L and PCM 70; Ensoniq DP-4; Eventide H3000E harmonizer; Zoom 9002; Rane MIDI EQ; Dynamic controllers; Drawmer gates; UREI LA-4s; and Digitech Vocalist.

For electronic percussion work, he uses a LINN 9000 or an Akai MPC-60. Samplers include the Waveframe Audioframe 1000, New England Digital Synclavier 3200, Digidesign Samplecell II, Sound Accelerator II, and Ensoniq ASR-10.

When it comes to microphones, he uses the Shure SM-57, SM-58, and PZM; an AKG C414 and C451; Sennheiser 421 and 411; and assorted beyerdynamic, Nakamichi, and Sony mics.

In the studio, he also has handy a TimeLine MicroLynx synchronizer.

## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

A JAZZ COLLECTION—Columbia 46865  
BEST OF HERBIE HANCOCK—Blue Note 91142  
FEET DON'T FAIL ME NOW—Columbia 35764  
FUTURE SHOCK—Columbia 38814  
INVENTIONS & DIMENSIONS—Blue Note 81147  
MAIDEN VOYAGE—Blue Note 46339  
MAN-CHILD—Columbia 33812  
SOUND-SYSTEM—Columbia 39478  
SPEAK LIKE A CHILD—Blue Note 46136  
TAKIN' OFF—Blue Note 46506  
with Miles Davis  
CIRCLE IN THE ROUND—Columbia 46862  
IN A SILENT WAY—Columbia 40580  
FILLES DE KILIMANJARO—Columbia 46113  
NEFERTITI—Columbia 46113  
SORCERER—Columbia 48954

with various others  
WYNTON MARSALIS—Columbia 37574 (Wynton Marsalis)  
A TRIBUTE TO MILES—Qwest/Reprise 9 45059-2 (Miles Davis Tribute Band)

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Jacky Terrasson & Cyrus Chestnut

ERIC FARMER

# Don't Wanna Be No Young Lion

JACKY TERRASSON & CYRUS CHESTNUT

By Larry Birnbaum

**W**e are young, and we still have a long way to go. But we do have a valid voice," says Cyrus Chestnut. "We're going to fall, but we're going to get up and keep moving." Sitting next to his keyboard colleague Jacky Terrasson at New York's Down Beat club, Chestnut does most of the talking, but the two pianists are equally regarded as rising stars of the post-Marsalis neo-bop movement that's swept the jazz charts and sparked record-company bidding wars. Each has attended Berklee College, worked with Betty Carter, won rave reviews, recently landed a major-label contract, and both work roughly the same mainstream territory; yet their styles, personalities, and backgrounds are quite distinct.

Chestnut, 31, hails from Baltimore, where he played church organ and studied classical piano until discovering jazz at age nine. In high school, he played with Phase, a fusion band led by saxophonist Kim Waters, and after college he toured the Caribbean with trombonist/bandleader Phil Wilson and gigged briefly with a Top 40 cover band. He

spent a year and a half each with vocalist Jon Hendricks and with the Terence Blanchard/Donald Harrison Quintet, pausing in between for a West Coast tour with Wynton Marsalis. But it wasn't until his two-year stint with Betty Carter that he began to attract critical notice. Last year he recorded his U.S. solo debut, *Revelation*, for Atlantic, featuring his former Carter trio mates, bassist Christopher Thomas and drummer Clarence Penn (see "CD Reviews" Apr. '94). The album elegantly showcases his sleek, supple style, a swinging synthesis of Monk, Tatum, Red Garland and Wynton Kelly, redolent with blues and gospel feeling and performed with a masterly touch.

Terrasson, 28, was born in Berlin to a French father and a North Carolinian mother. Raised in Paris, he studied classical piano until he started listening to his mother's record collection and switched to jazz. At 19 he enrolled at Berklee but dropped out after a year to take a gig in Chicago with bassist Dennis Carrol and drummer Marshall Thompson. Back in France, he worked with singer Dee Dee

Bridgewater and saxophonist Barney Wilen, then toured Europe with Ray Brown. Moving to New York in 1990, he played with, among others, Wallace Roney and Jesse Davis, and spent two years with Arthur Taylor's Wailers.

Last fall he joined Betty Carter's band and, a month later, won the prestigious Thelonious Monk Piano Competition in Washington, D.C. "It was kind of surprising," he says, "because I didn't prepare at all." This year he signed with Blue Note and is preparing to record his first American solo date with bassist Ugonna Okegwo and drummer Leon Parker. He draws his straight-ahead approach, more rawboned and angular than Chestnut's, from such sources as Monk, Bud Powell, Ahmad Jamal, Herbie Hancock, Keith Jarrett, and Bill Evans.

**LARRY BIRNBAUM:** *How do you feel about the term "young lions"?*

**JACKY TERRASSON:** I don't want to be a young lion.

**CYRUS CHESTNUT:** I think it's more important to be who we are, for Cyrus Chestnut to be Cyrus Chestnut and Jacky



Terrasson to be Jacky Terrasson.

**LB:** *What about this situation where musicians in their 20s and even teens are being signed to major-label contracts?*

**CC:** That scenario doesn't apply to me, because I was 30 when Atlantic approached me. But with the companies getting behind the jazz artists, I hope it will send a strong message to the whole industry. I have a high expectation for this music, because I believe jazz is a music for all people, and I believe it's something that should be taken seriously, not as a novelty but as a viable music. Just as these major budgets are put into a lot of the rock and pop artists, I think that we jazz artists deserve similar attention, because we have something to say and something that should be shared.

**LB:** *So many of the younger jazz musicians are playing music that originated in the '50s and '60s, while the free-jazz and fusion that came afterward seems to have fallen by the wayside.*

**JT:** One of my goals is to play free within my context. I guess that's the goal of every musician, just to play what you feel.

**CC:** Simply to play music. Personally, I love playing acoustic piano.

**LB:** *But Cecil Taylor, for example, also plays acoustic piano.*

**JT:** I've never heard anything of his, so I can't really comment.

**CC:** He's doing what he wants to do. I believe that's his voice, and that's where he's at. Contrary to popular belief, Cecil has a great history behind him.

**JT:** I heard he used to play more "in."

**CC:** McCoy Tyner started off in the so-called mainstream and then developed a very personal style.

**JT:** But he never put his ass on the keyboard.

**CC:** Again, everyone has his voice. Maybe Cecil feels that he has to put his behind on the piano and McCoy doesn't, but it's all still music. Jacky may go in the right door, and I may say, "Well, I'd rather go in the left door."

**LB:** *When I listen to older bebop players, I hear the swing roots of their music, but that's not the case for most younger beboppers, who sound like they studied the music out of a book.*

**CC:** Well, the older cats had to start from somewhere, just like we younger cats have to. Back in the '50s, a lot of stuff was still handed down, and that information is now in the books. I try to be careful in doing studying and research to find out exactly what was going on as far as the technique, but also trying to understand the spirit of how it was given. Sometimes you can close your eyes and hear something a certain way—you roll it around in yourself and bring it back out again—and in doing that you become more of an interpreter, as opposed to going into a harmony book and studying

the stuff in all 12 keys. The idea is to have the influences but not be a clone.

**LB:** *There doesn't seem to be as much innovation in jazz today as there used to be.*

**CC:** That's the challenge to all of us, to not be satisfied with the status quo and to try to find a different way to go.

**JT:** I think music really reflects how people are at a certain time. In the late '60s and '70s, I guess people were more crazy and

adventurous than they are now. Right now, a lot of people are being conservative about everything.

**LB:** *Today, the jazz market is fairly healthy, but the classic hard-bop records that established today's mainstream style did not really sell well in their own day.*

**JT:** It's not only music, but so many things are just ahead of their time. Van Gogh couldn't sell a painting to get something to

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eat, and now his paintings sell for millions of dollars.

**LB:** On the other hand, you've got musicians like Oscar Peterson, who are criticized for their stylistic conservatism but still attract audiences.

**CC:** You know, the Oscar Peterson albums I really dig are the ones with Ray Brown and Ed Thigpen. There was a lot of swingin' in the house.

**JT:** Do you like the one with Elvin Jones—*We Get Requests*?

**CC:** Oh, yeah, that's a bad one, too. [editor's note: *Ed Thigpen, not Elvin Jones, is the drummer on We Get Requests.*]

**JT:** I didn't think he took any chances after a certain time, but he's a great player. It just seemed like his creativity slowed down.

**LB:** Pianists like Ramsey Lewis, Ray Bryant, and Ahmad Jamal seemed to damage their reputations with pop hits.

**JT:** It's hard to do two things and do them great, like Herbie [Hancock] did.

**CC:** Certain trends happen in time, and everyone feels that in order to be accepted, you have to deal with the trend. And sometimes someone comes through and says, "I don't feel like dealing with the trend. I want to do something different." So when they get started, people say, "What's that mess?" Then after a while, someone says, "That's some hip stuff." And all of a sudden it's like, "Oh, yeah, he's the joint." But everyone has a certain time line, and a person will grow and develop. I think I can speak for both of us: It's our intention just to keep growing, to go on and push forward and never stop.

**LB:** How do you feel about electric instruments? Would you record on an electric keyboard?

**CC:** I've done it. I did two recordings with Kim Waters. But I love playing the acoustic

piano, and that's my whole focus. I'm not down on electronic music—it is what it is—but my full focus isn't there.

**LB:** How about organ?

**JT:** I played organ for a living in Boston. I was playing at Wally's.

**CC:** You did the Wally's thing, too?

**JT:** Every night for four months, playing a Hammond B-3, playing bass and all that.

**CC:** The Hammond was a part of my beginnings in music. It was a part of my church upbringing, so I spent a lot of time on it. And, yeah, I did the Wally's thing and other little places. And when I was in school I was studying synthesizer programming, so I know a little bit about it; but my focus is playing the acoustic piano.

**JT:** There are enough buttons on a piano keyboard.

**LB:** Do you go back and listen to pre-bop pianists?

**CC:** Fats Waller is my man. People thought of him as a showman, but he played a lot of music, and he had such a joyous spirit.

**JT:** I feel the same kind of thing about Erroll Garner. He was one of the most swinging guys, and so natural. I like Tatum, too, and Nat Cole.

**CC:** He was a bad cat. Nat played some piano, boy.

**JT:** I think that's where Oscar got some of his stuff, and from Tatum.

**CC:** That's a part of history. In order to go forward, you've got to know where you came from. We have the great advantage now to have books to get a better understanding of what was going down.

**JT:** And records.

**CC:** Absolutely. But in addition to checking out the technique of the music, the challenge is to check out the spirit of how the music was presented, because everyone has a dif-

ferent thing to say. I may play a C scale and Jacky will play a C scale, and it will still be different.

**LB:** You both have been influenced by Monk.

**CC:** The first jazz record I ever owned was a Monk record, *The Greatest Hits Of Thelonious Monk*, on Columbia. I didn't know what it was. I had a \$2 allowance and went to the five & dime store, and I had just enough. I looked through the record bin, and I saw this nice, neat cover, so I pulled it out, and said, "I want this." I started listening to it, you know—"Straight, No Chaser," "Crepescul With Nellie," "Ruby My Dear" . . .

**JT:** Oh, I know which one that is. That was one of my first records, too.

**LB:** Another thing you two have in common is Betty Carter.

**JT:** It's still kind of fresh. I would say she's demanding, but so far it's been fun.

**CC:** Being with Betty Carter is like going back to school again. It really helped me a lot as far as playing in general, and it's given me a lot of insight. She will get what she wants out of you, one way or the other.

**JT:** She has a very specific feel that she expects behind her. You've got to watch and listen all the time, because you never know what's going to happen.

**CC:** You can't sleep, because if you do, that's your butt.

**LB:** And you both studied at Bevoële.

**CC:** That time of my life was important. It was kind of a growing-up period for me. I learned a lot about myself in Boston, as well as about music. And that's where I first met Betty Carter. I did this incredible thing of walking up on the stage and playing "Body And Soul" with Betty. They thought I did it so spectacularly, but I played the song in the wrong key. Oh, boy! I remember seeing her later at the Village Vanguard, and I walked



back to her and said, "I want to thank you for kicking my butt at Berklee, because you really changed my life. You made me get serious about playing." And she just looked at me like, "What?"

**JT:** I met her three years ago at a restaurant in New York where I was playing. I kept seeing her off and on, and then I was doing this recording for [tenor saxophonist] Javon Jackson [see page 11] that she was producing, and that's when she asked me to be part of her band. I had eight hours to say yes or no, because she was leaving for Europe the next morning, and she wanted to know before she left. So I said, "Yes," and then I said, "No," and then I said, "Yes."

**CC:** One thing that Betty really stressed was not to get into gimmickry. People like to see you play fast, so you figure that will get you over, and sometimes you can go into automatic and stop thinking. Betty stressed that you always have to think, to play something serious and meaningful, and to stay away from the gimmicks.

**JT:** Avoid clichés, tricks.

**LB:** *How do you feel about the New York club scene?*

**CC:** I think the college-age people, the young adults, are looking for something that might be a little bit different to check out.

**JT:** It's a real, honest live music, because that's what this is about. It's not about looks; it's not about doing a show on stage. It's about playing, really.

**CC:** And sharing the music.

DB

## EQUIPMENT

In clubs, says Terrasson, "I try to get a Steinway." Adds Chestnut: "I'm a Hamburg Steinway fan. I'll go up to the Steinway showroom on [Manhattan's] 57th Street and play some of the rentals to choose a piano for a studio session or something, and I can almost tell the difference between a Hamburg Steinway and an American Steinway blindfolded."

"But I can't afford a \$30,000 Steinway yet, so at home I've got a six-foot baby-grand Kanabe that was made in Baltimore in 1934."

"I used to have a seven-foot Baldwin," says Terrasson, "but then I moved, so I had to get rid of the piano. I've been without a piano for the last year or so, but I plan on getting one."

## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

### Cyrus Chestnut

REVELATION—Atlantic Jazz 82518

with various others

ITS NOT ABOUT THE MELODY—Verve 314 513 870 (Betty Carter)

FOLKLORE—MusicMasters 65109 (Vincent Herring)

BLACK PEARL—Columbia 44216 (Harrison & Blanchard)

CRYSTAL STAIR—Columbia 40830 (Harrison & Blanchard)

### Jacky Terrasson

WHAT'S NEW—Jazz aux Remparts 64003

with various others

WAILIN' AT THE VANGUARD—Verve 314 519 677 (Arthur Taylor's Waiters)

BREATH OF SETH AIR—Muse 5441 (Wallace Roney)

TELEPATHY—Muse 5437 (Cindy Blackman)

AS WE SPEAK—Concord Jazz 4512 (Jesse Davis)

CLASSROOM AND ENSEMBLE FACULTY: PHEEROAN AKLAFF JOHN BASILE BOB BELDEN

CECIL BRIDGEWATER JOE CHAMBERS ANDREW CYRILLE HAROLD DANKO GARRY DIAL ARMEN DONENILIAN MARIO ESCALERA IRA GITLER JIM HALL CHICO HAMILTON BILLY HARPER RICHARD HARPER CRAIG HARRIS FRED HERSCH



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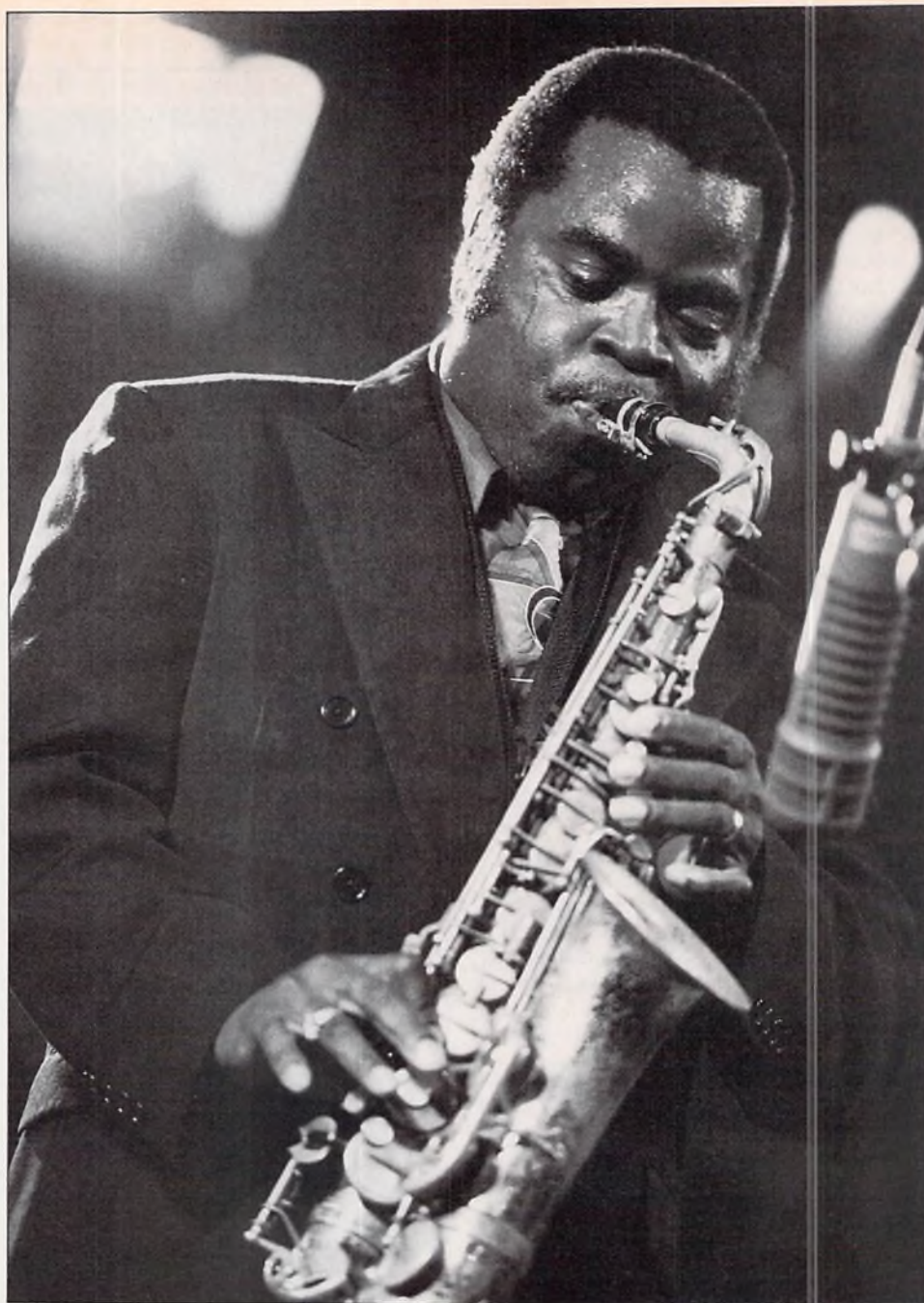
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HYOU WIELZ

## *Funk Of Ages*

**MACEO PARKER**

By Suzanne McElfresh

**F**rom his hometown of Kinston, North Carolina, alto saxophonist Maceo Parker reigns as one of the funkier people alive, and proof is offered by his fourth album in as many years. *Southern Exposure* features Parker's polished saxophone sound and his expertly honed funk sensibility with three different bands. But

mostly, this album is an infusion of New Orleans crawfish-and-po'-boy funk and Maceo's good ol' smothered-steak-and-ham-bone-gravy funk.

On the majority of the tracks, Maceo's alto is backed by guitarist Leo Nocentelli, bassist George Porter Jr. (from the original Meters), drummer Herman Ernest III, and Will Boulware on Hammond B-3 (filling Art Neville's keyboard chair). On another two tracks, Maceo plays with the Rebirth Brass Band (Kermit Ruffins and Derrick Shezbie, trumpets; Stafford Agee and Reginald Steward, trombones; Roderick Paulin, tenor sax; Philip Frazier, tuba; Ajay Mallory, snare drum; Keith Frazier, bass drum). Two remaining cuts—a jazz standard and a chicken-fried funk tune—are performed by



Parker and his longtime associates, trombonist Fred Wesley and tenor saxophonist Pee Wee Ellis, along with Boulware, guitarist Rodney Jones, and drummer Bill Stewart.

"We wanted to get that New Orleans kind of flavor, that different kind of funk," says Maceo, explaining his decision to record the majority of the album in New Orleans. "Fred and Pee Wee and I have performed a few times with the Meters, combining our stuff for a different approach. It creates something new, though you can still dance to it. I mean, funky music is funky music."

Especially when it's being played by Maceo, who guitarist Jones calls "the original." Jones has recorded and toured with Dizzy Gillespie, Ruth Brown, Chaka Khan, Lena Horne, de la Soul, Hank Crawford, Jimmy McGriff, and, since 1990, Maceo. "We're talking about the root," Jones says. "He defined the sound of funk for all pop and r&b music: He is the source. Maceo comes from the [blues and gospel] 'shout' lineage. He's very sophisticated musically, but he always plays from the heart first. It all comes down to the feeling. He plays music to make you feel good."

Undoubtedly, this new album will do just that. On Joe Zawinul's "Mercy Mercy Mercy" and the James Brown-esque call-and-response jam "Walking Home Together," Rebirth's six horn players and two drummers create a whole lot of beautiful noise behind Maceo's slinky lines—snare snapping, 16th-note riffs popping, horns shouting, and the tuba pumping out that bass line. In the background, you can hear the band members hollering and carrying on ("Yeah!" "Whoool!"), making the whole thing sound like one big party—which it was. Afterward, the guys all grabbed a basketball and played a pickup game outside the studio.

"They can get a whole thing out of what I call a marching-band style," Parker says of the brass band's approach to music (their hoops game is another story). "They could just stand on a corner and play; there's nothing electrified."

"It was real *funky*," says Rebirth trumpeter Kermit Ruffins of the session. "And it was definitely an honor to record with Maceo. We copy stuff from him all the time, like when Roderick is playing, we'll yell at him, 'Go, Maceo!' even though it's really Roderick. And we play that same funk beat. We imitate the James Brown funk style, only with the tuba and the two separate drummers. But it's the same horns: the trumpet, sax, trombone."

As for the horn licks you hear behind the soloists, the Rebirth guys used a time-honored arranging method. "One person whispers a riff in somebody's ear, and then he'll whisper it to the next guy," says Ruffins. "Then the other three guys just pick up on it."

*"I try to make the people feel like they're part of the show. I want people to do more than just sit there and clap. When I was with James [Brown], we had a saying: 'Show us a stage. Where's the stage? We'll kill one of 'em.'"*



Equally satisfying are the five tracks featuring the Meters. Nocentelli, Porter, and Ernest conjure that inimitable Meters groove, a combination of chunky rhythms and big, fat spaces that forms one awe-inspiring whole. Boulware's organ on "Blues For Shorty Bill" has an uptown-trio kind of feel as it lays over the band's shuffle backbeat. Nocentelli's lead lines sing on "Splashin'" and "Fun In The Sun," and his rhythm guitar can tease and jangle or lay down a solid fatback foundation. Over it all, Maceo lays back on the funk, blowing hard and soft notes, adding vibrato to sweeten a phrase, a rough edge to intensify the groove. For Maceo, the notes come out as naturally as words, tinged with emotion, full of soul.

**M**aceo had to work hard and spend a lot of time steeping himself in the funk, on the road and in the studio, to get to be as funky as he is today. He spent 26 years (between 1964 and 1990), on and off, recording and performing with James Brown, contributing his personal sound to the collective groove as part of the JB Horns. And he spent four years (1976 to 1980) with George Clinton's various aggregations, soaking up the deep slap of Bootsy Collins' bass and the achingly sweet vocals of Glen Goins and Gary Shider, grooving in the horn section with Fred and Pee Wee and Michael and Randy Brecker.

But, even before all that, there was an inexplicable feeling that made Maceo want to blow. "Something within me just kind of guided and pushed and shoved and pulled. I felt there was something I wanted to say musically. I always loved to play and study my instrument; nobody had to suggest to me that I practice—if anything, my parents would say, 'Why don't you put that sax down?!'"

And so, when Maceo was in sixth grade, he and his brothers, drummer Melvin and trombonist Kellis, started a band based on

the one led by their uncle, Bobby Butler and the Mighty Blue Notes. They started by attending their uncle's rehearsals, which often took place at their father's house. "We were always there, standing on chairs, watching and listening. It was exciting, being that close to the trombones and the saxes and the drums. When they finished, all this music would be in our heads, and we'd try to imitate what they did. We didn't know the names of songs, we just knew the riffs. We were taking in *evvv*erything."

The Blue Note Juniors were hired to play during intermission at their uncle's gigs. "We played almost every weekend. We'd play two or three songs and then get rushed home. It was very exciting, being in an adult world, playing music and getting paid. We'd make \$10 or \$15 per person every night." The hardest part was getting up the next morning for church, where Maceo's father (who owned a dry cleaner's in town) played piano and drums, and both parents sang. "They insisted that we go, and it was hard for us to go from the Saturday night clubs to Sunday school."

Eventually, though, that religious training turned out to be just the preparation Maceo needed, as he discovered upon joining James Brown as a baritone saxophonist (though his main instrument was tenor) in 1964, at the age of 21. "I had the best seat in the house," he says: "Right there, being that close to James and watching the people get so excited—pulling their hair, going into a frenzy, almost fainting. It seemed related to what went on in church, when people got religion and started pulling on their clothes and everything, and that was kinda confusing to me at first. But emotions can go that way."

During his first stint with Brown, in 1964 and '65, the band recorded such hits as "I Got You (I Feel Good)" and "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag." Maceo was then drafted into the army until 1967, when he rejoined Brown to play tenor for three more years. The hits "Cold Sweat," "Say It Loud, I'm Black And I'm Proud," "Licking Stick—Licking Stick," and "Give It Up Or Turnit Loose" were recorded during this time, and by then bassist Bootsy Collins, Pee Wee, and Fred had joined the band. Maceo stayed until 1970, when he decided to try his hand with his own band, Maceo and the King's Men. He returned once more to the Hardest Working Man in Show Business' band from 1973 to 1976, this time to play alto.

Maceo's next stop was George Clinton's freewheeling Parliament, as a member of the Horny Horns section—along with Pee Wee and Fred and the Breckers. "That music was like symphonies to me. You'd go into it thinking it would be simple, but George and the singers would spend a lot of time on the voice parts; they wanted it to



sound like something special. And it was complex music, the rhythmic stuff, the horn stuff, the overdubbed voices. . . ."

Maceo rejoined Brown yet again, in 1984, because "he said he needed me for a couple of weeks." Maceo stayed until 1990, when James went off to prison; that same year, Maceo started leading his own band again, recorded the album *Roots Revisited*, and launched a second career as a bandleader.

To that end, all those years of working with Brown and Clinton have certainly paid off for Maceo: He learned not only how to groove but how to put on a good show.

"I really try to make the people feel like they're part of the show. I want people to do more than just sit there and clap a little. When I was with James, we had a saying: 'Show us a stage. Where's the stage? We'll kill one of 'em.'"

The principle holds true for Maceo's current band, and the effect is amplified when he's joined by Wesley and Ellis, when scheduling permits.

Guitarist Jones calls the horn players "three kindred spirits; three musical brothers, all with a slightly different per-

spective but with a common goal: to make it groove, to make it swing, to make happy music. It's rare to see three people so in tune with each other. One can start a musical conversation, and the others can finish it."

Happy music, groove music, funk—call it what you want, but Maceo calls it "a feeling. It's music you can dance to, and it lies primarily with the drums. The bass player

could swing, playing a walking bass line, but if the drummer is playing a funky beat, it's still gonna be funky. I don't know if you can learn it; I think you've got to kind of feel it, you've got to kind of have it or be born with it.

"What I do, and what I tell young musicians is, 'If it feels good, do it. Play it. Play it!'" **DB**

## EQUIPMENT

Maceo has had his Selmer Mark VI alto saxophone since the mid-'70s, when he returned to James Brown's band for his third stint with Mr. Please, Please, Please. He uses a Brillhart Ebolin mouthpiece and Rico reeds.

Earlier this year, Maceo took his horn to a New York City instrument repair shop to have it gold-plated. "I want it shiny and new-looking for the duration," he says.

Meanwhile, he's been practicing on an extra horn he keeps, but he prefers playing his own familiar sax, as he discovered late last year when he performed in the band for the Rhythm & Blues Foundation Awards ceremony in New York. "They featured me on 'Harlem Nocturne,' but I wasn't playing my own saxophone, so it was difficult for me. I graded myself only an 88 or 90 [percent] on that. It just didn't sound like me."

## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

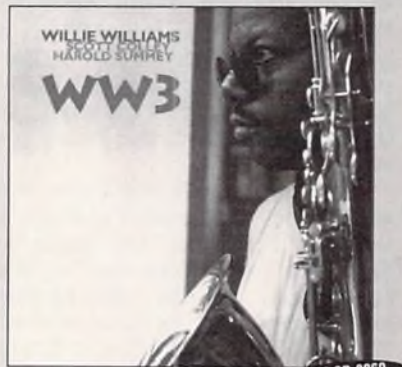
(For additional listings, see **DB** Mar. '91.)

*SOUTHERN EXPOSURE*—RCA/Novus 63175-2  
*LIFE ON PLANET GROOVE*—Verve 314 517 197-2  
*MO' ROOTS*—Verve 314 511 068-2  
*ROOTS REVISITED*—Verve 843 751-2

*FOR ALL THE KING'S MEN*—4th & Broadway 16244-4027-2

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TERI BLOOM

# Jack Of All Trades

JACK WALRATH

By K. Leander Williams

**T**he sound is blaring; of course, it's the break. There's an electro power chord traversing the length of a funky bass line and a kick drum. Atop it all, a vocalist recites terse, biting lyrics in a voice that's part whinny, part field holler, part yodel: somethin' about mules halting to let "Freedom!" pass. Maybe. And right about the time one realizes this Public Enemy-style sermon was actually written by Charles Mingus, a spiraling trumpet begins punctuating the words, orbiting them with open blats and glisses that stagger but somehow maintain control.

Trumpeter Jack Walrath has given me no indication that the first cut on his latest demo tape was a Mingus composition. So when he detects cognizance in my eyes, he smiles an affirmative "yeah." I'm happy to have passed the test. Mingus seems an inevitable subject once you realize that Walrath gained international visibility in the bassist/composer's last working groups. But

right then, as Walrath awaited my response, it also became crystal clear why the title "Master of Suspense"—the name that has identified all of the 47-year-old composer/arranger's leadership projects since his Blue Note debut seven years ago—fits him to a tee.

"I'm interested in all different kinds of things, all kinds of genres," Walrath says proudly. Both his pre- and post-Mingus work lend credence to the statement. Over the past decade Walrath has led Mingus Dynasty, garnered a Grammy nomination for a Hank Williams cover sung by Willie Nelson, held down the lead-trumpet chair in the Muhal Richard Abrams Orchestra, sojourned into Japanese gagaku with strings, and even updated some standards. And to further confound the categorically minded, the quintet music on *Serious Hang*, Walrath's current release, matches his organ-playing, ex-Mingus buddy Don Pullen with guitarist Dave "Fuse" Fiuczynski, bassist Michael Formanek, and drummer Cecil Brooks III. The eclectic program moves from a bar-band blooze version of Mingus' "Better Get Hit In Yo' Soul" to a hilarious cover of James Brown's "Get On The Good Foot" to the aptly titled "Gloomy Sunday," a mournful tune associated with Billie Holiday.

"*Serious Hang* is kind of a precursor to the demo," the Montana native explains. "Recently, I've been told that my music could



possibly crossover—without me really changing anything. It's open enough to work in either a hardcore jazz environment or in something more like a rock setting. We did a week at Sweet Basil a little while ago, and what impressed me the most was the level of audience participation that developed over the course of the week. The people who came in were probably expecting Nat Adlerley or something—which maybe they heard, 'cause he was an early modern jazz influence on me; might even have been the first.

"But, anyway, the audience was clapping and singing along, even on the originals. I think that kind of thing has been missing from jazz over the years, so it felt great to have people responding that way.

"The whole scene seems to be changing up slightly, though," offers Walrath, after a slight pause. "It's welcome because it's been much too conservative, too Reagan-esque, for quite a long time now. Last week I heard Don Byron's band at the Vanguard; they were great. I heard Joe Lovano last night, and they were kinda doing an extension of the early Ornette Coleman quartet. [Drummer] Billy Hart was kicking ass all over the place. So there seems to be a breakthrough on the horizon."

If this seems like optimism from a musician who's been a victim of record-biz shortsightedness (e.g., Blue Note's parent company wouldn't push his Hank Williams cover as a c&w single), Walrath still harbors no illusions about the way music is marketed. "Sometimes people who say they don't like jazz music actually just *think* they don't like jazz music. They don't really know what [jazz] is. So much of what they were told was jazz was kind of subdued or whatever. You know how some jazz radio stations say things like, 'If you wanna sit back and relax and kick your shoes off'? It's a little disturbing because that's not why cats went to hear a Coltrane or a Sonny Rollins play. For me, Trane live was the loudest, most intense thing I'd heard up until that point—just amazing.

"But it's always something different with record companies. I think you can relate to a large amount of people without necessarily limiting yourself, but in most places, you know how it is: One year they'll be signing young people; next year, it'll be old people; the next: white, and then black. For awhile it seemed like the labels were always looking for someone who didn't necessarily come up playing jazz to wear the jazz crown; remember Al Hirt? It was sort of like that with him, but to his credit, in interviews he'd always say, 'Waitaminnit, listen to Dizzy or Clark Terry.' Then in the '70s, in order to get a jazz record out you had to play with Stevie Wonder or some rock band.

"I think it'd be hip to call all jazz 'Western art music,'" Walrath muses. "But there's a stigma placed on 'art' or 'intellectualism' in this country, so the general perception becomes, 'Art!! Yuch, that's no fun!!' So then we have to deal with the way we educate people toward terms. I mean, not long ago I sent some scores from *Gut Feelings* [Walrath's album of compositions for jazz quintet and strings] down to the National Endowment for the Arts—to both the jazz and classical departments. Both wrote me back with letters saying they didn't know exactly where to group them."

*"I've been told that my music could possibly crossover. . . .*

*It's open enough to work in either a hardcore jazz environment or in something more like a rock setting."*



It's a wonder. Walrath's tone is a jazz marvel, a nubby, piercing sound whose burnish harks back to the great trumpeters of yore. Not unlike Louis Armstrong or Dizzy Gillespie, his timbre suggests humor, ambition, and clarity of purpose. It mirrors the pulse of Manhattan—Walrath lives high above the hustle of Times Square—while evoking the wide-open spaces of Montana. (All, incidentally, are qualities captured in Walrath's brilliant, unaccompanied cadenza on "Oldfotalk," a piece from Muhal Richard Abrams' *The Hearinga Suite*.)

"The greatest thing about growing up in Montana," says Walrath, "was that there wasn't any peer pressure. I liked what I liked, and there wasn't anybody around to tell me what was and wasn't cool. Or hot.

"I started playing trumpet when I was about nine," he reflects further. "My mother had some dixieland records around the house, so I was digging that early. The first live professional band I ever heard was Louis Armstrong when I was 11; got to meet him and everything. This was the '50s, so modern jazz wasn't really available. The modern stuff they played on the radio was basically West Coast jazz, which, to me, didn't seem to have the same energy as Armstrong or Buck Clayton. The older stuff seemed more raucous, more raw."

The desire to be close to jazz' more fiery elements never left him. It didn't matter that by the time he received his degree in composition from Berklee in 1968, the entire industry was coming under the commercial influence of rock & roll. Even while Walrath was making the inevitable r&b gigs to make a living, he was also in a looser project called Change with Gary Peacock and Billy Elgart. "It was led by the cat who eventually wrote 'The Monster Mash,'" he remembers, "and the sound was coming out of a James Brown/Otis Redding/soul-revue-type vibe, mixed with Coltrane's *Ascension* and Albert Ayler.

"So we got the idea that we'd go to California and seek our fortunes. Out there a couple of the Mothers of Invention joined the band—Frank Zappa even loaned us his equipment once. But like most cats, we had this illusion about California. We thought we were going to get out there and clean up because the place is so low-energy—which is exactly the reason you don't. Bobby Hutcherson and Harold Land can get away with it, but they seem to be the only cats who can."

After part of the band went off and augmented the Herbie Hancock ensemble that recorded Hancock's *Headhunters*, a dejected Walrath made his way into Ray Charles' band. It was a boon to him for the presence of fellow trumpeter Blue Mitchell. Walrath once told another interviewer that he considered that particular gig the beginning of his professional life. Tapping back into his old gutbucket sensibility, Walrath said that it was with Charles' band that he "learned how to fit in." These skills would help him immeasurably when he decided to go back to New York.

"I had it in my head to play with Joe Henderson and Mingus," Walrath explains. "To me, they were doing the most innovative things compositionally: Joe was doing some stuff that was really influential, harmonically; while Mingus I'd seen on TV, and had heard all of his records." Ironically, Walrath arrived in New York from California in 1973, at about the same time Henderson was moving in the other direction, to Oakland. Although it took Walrath a year's worth of Latin gigs to get to Mingus, by then the trumpeter had made an important contact: a tenorman named Paul Jeffrey.

"Paul was Monk's tenor player and Mingus' copyist at the time," begins Walrath. "I was in [Paul's] octet, and had been telling him how badly I wanted to play with Mingus. So he took me down to the Village Gate, where Mingus had a quartet with George Adams, Dannie Richmond, and Don [Pullen]. I think Hamiet Bluiett had left a month earlier. To be truthful, I didn't really like what I heard—the music didn't seem to have the same energy as the records. I sat in,



though, and Mingus called me a couple of days later."

The Mingus/Walrath composition team might be one of the most underrated partnerships in jazz. They turned the Mingus band into a powerful force on the scene, and set the stage for a full-scale resurgence of the Mingus oeuvre after the leader's death in 1979.

In addition to picking up on Mingus' eclecticism, during his tenure Walrath studied the composer's charts until his grasp enabled him to complete Mingusian fragments in much the same way Billy Strayhorn did for Duke Ellington. Mingus returned the favor in two ways: by recording some of Walrath's tunes (for example, check out "Black Bats And Poles" from *Changes Two*); and by giving Walrath a dictum that, I think, has come to symbolize his illustrious career. "Mingus once said to me that any artist has the ability to repeat himself, but the real ones don't. I've come to believe that. It's like being Clark Kent and not needing to tell anyone you're Superman." **DB**

## EQUIPMENT

Jack Walrath plays an Olds Opera trumpet, a model he says "they haven't made in 20 years" because of its "very large bore." ("Virtually no one would ask for it.")

The mouthpiece, a 2 1/2 C, "is like a toilet bowl, it's so big," Walrath explains. "The smaller horns are more lead-type. It took me an awful long time to play a high C, but I'm glad I stuck with it because now I can play the lower register, too. I've found that players who are hung up on high notes can get sloppy down below."

Walrath also uses a 2 1/2 C mouthpiece on his Couesnon flugelhorn, an instrument that he says "used to be the flugelhorn."

## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

*SERIOUS HANG*—Muse 5475  
*HI JINX*—Stash 578  
*GUT FEELINGS*—Muse 5422  
*OUT OF THE TRADITION*—Muse 5403  
*WHOLLY TRINITY*—Muse 5362  
*A PLEA FOR SANITY*—Stash 223  
*NEOHIPPUS*—Blue Note 91101  
*MASTER OF SUSPENSE*—Blue Note 46905  
*AT UMBRIA JAZZ, VOL. 1*—Red 123182-2  
*AT UMBRIA JAZZ, VOL. 2*—Red 123186-2  
 with Charles Mingus  
*NOSTALGIA IN TIMES SQUARE*—Dreyfuss 36559  
*CUMBIA AND JAZZ FUSION*—Atlantic (out of print)  
*3 OR 4 SHADES OF BLUE*—Atlantic Jazz 1700-2  
*CHANGES TWO*—Rhino 2-71404

with Muhal Richard Abrams  
*FAMILY TALK*—Soul Note 120132-2  
*BLU BLU BLU*—Soul Note 120117-2  
*THE HEARINGA SUITE*—Soul Note 120103-2  
 Mingus Epitaph Band  
*MINGUS DYNASTY—THE NEXT GENERATION*—Columbia 47405  
*EPITAPH*—Columbia 2-45428  
 with various others  
*MILES & QUINCY LIVE AT MONTREUX*—Warner Bros. 45221  
*MOOD SWING*—Soul Note 121207-2 (Manhattan New Music Project)  
*PORTRAITS IN IVORY & BRASS*—Mapleshade 02032 (Larry Willis)

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Art Blakey

## New Message From Art Blakey

*From time to time throughout this our 60th anniversary year, we've been printing "Classic Interviews" from the DB archives. The following is an interview with "Bu" that originally ran in our November 1979 issue.*

By Herb Nolan

**T**he sound of Art Blakey's ground-gravel voice came grumbling from the bedroom. There were unintelligible sounds of annoyance.

"Art stayed up all last night with friends, and now he can't find his hearing aid," apologized Sandy Warren, Blakey's companion and traveling secretary, as she walked into the living room. "Don't worry, he has a spare."

Wrapped in a white terry-cloth robe, looking thinner but fit, his hair gone grey, Blakey let his good humor wiggle loose: "I have no time to think about age. All I do is live. I have no time to celebrate birthdays. That's not important to me because I've been

having so much fun." This is the year Blakey learned to swim.

He touched his spare hearing device, prodding it back in place behind his ear.

"Oh well, I do think about age; nature has a way of making you think about it. I'm losing my hearing. I knew 25 years ago I was going to lose it from playin' music, banging on the drums and being around a lot of noise. I had practically forgot about it."

Blakey at 60 seems timeless—a relentless energy—flowing through jazz, leading a continuing strand of bands that have nurtured an ongoing string of young musicians. Many would become stars and a few legends. The list goes on and on: Freddie Hubbard, Horace Silver, Clifford Brown, Wayne Shorter, Johnny Griffin, Curtis Fuller, Kenny Dorham, Jackie McLean, Hank Mobley, Donald Byrd, Bobby Timmons, Junior Mance, Benny Golson, Lee Morgan, Walter Davis, Chuck Mangione. . . .

As a drummer Blakey developed a driving, emotional style filled with so many levels of sound there is the illusion of great

rhythmic waves washing over and through the music. He offers strength, delicacy, and soul—all mixed into a style that is impossible to mistake for any other drummer. When he plays, his drums go beyond a beat: they provide a whole tapestry of dynamics and color. Someone once described him as sounding like a symphony orchestra behind a soloist.

In 1939 Blakey joined Fletcher Henderson; following that he played with Mary Lou Williams' first big band. He also led his own groups and finally became part of the legendary Billy Eckstine orchestra. He stayed from 1944 until the band broke up in 1947. The band included, among others, Dizzy Gillespie, Fats Navarro, Miles Davis, Kenny Dorham, Gene Ammons, Dexter Gordon, and Charlie Parker. It was with Eckstine that Art Blakey first caught the attention of Blue Note Records owner Alfred Lion. In the years to follow, Blakey would literally become the label's house drummer.

It was after the Eckstine band folded that Blakey made a trip to Africa.

"I didn't go to Africa to study drums—somebody wrote that—I went to Africa because there wasn't anything else for me to do. I couldn't get any gigs, and I had to work my way over on a boat.

"I went over there to study religion and philosophy. I didn't bother with drums, I wasn't after that. I went over there to see what I could do about religion. When I was growing up I had no choice, I was just thrown into a church and told this is what I was going to be. I didn't want to be their Christian. I didn't like it. You could study politics in this country, but I didn't have access to the religions of the world. That's why I went to Africa."

Through the end of the '40s and into the early '50s Blakey worked with various bands including Lucky Millinder's ("the man was the greatest musical director I ever worked with in my life, but if a note jumped up off the floor and slapped him he wouldn't know what hit him") and Buddy DeFranco's. However, the story of Art Blakey is really the story of the band called the Jazz Messengers. Sometimes a sextet, sometimes a quintet, the band led by Blakey has existed in one form or another for more than a quarter of a century.

"The Jazz Messengers really started in 1949," said Blakey, "but then it was called the 17 Messengers. The cats that put the band together came to me and told me I was going to be the leader. Being a musician has nothing to do with being a leader; I was a good organizer. That's always been my talent.

"The 17 Messengers was a good band; there were a lot of great players in it, like Sonny Rollins and Bud Powell. We were just playing around New York—making a few gigs—but economically the band was a



disaster, so we had to break it up.

"A couple of years later I went into Birdland with Clifford Brown, Horace Silver, Curley Russell, and Lou Donaldson for a few weeks. We made some live, unrehearsed records [*A Night At Birdland*, Blue Note], and they did pretty well. After that it was Horace who decided we should organize a group. He said, 'We'll call it the Jazz Messengers.' So it was Horace who really put the name on it, and it stuck.

"At the time we weren't interested in running all over the world, we just wanted to work around New York and make some gigs. We were tired of the jam session thing where you'd get some guys together, go out, and trust to luck.

"We started the group with Kenny Dorham, Horace, Hank Mobley, and Doug Watkins. It started and it continued; it just kept going on and on. I knew if I had problems the guys who had left would come back and help me out until I found someone new."

**A** band that has lasted as long as the Messengers exists almost as an organic, recharging force. There is always another young talent—usually unknown—waiting for a place to play.

"That's how I met Clifford Brown. I told Bird I'm going to Philadelphia, and I've got to have a trumpet player. He said, 'I got a trumpet player for you, you go to the gig and he'll be there. He lives down in Wilmington.' I trusted Bird.

"I went to Philly, and there was Clifford in the dressing room. I'd never seen him before or heard anything about him in my life. He sure surprised the hell out of me.

"See, they may come from a cornfield or anyplace; you can expect to find talent anywhere. The kids in my band bring them to me. I tell them I need a piano player or a trumpet player, and they bring them in.

"I love the young players—they keep me young and learning. But I've got no room for no stars. The Jazz Messengers is the star—all of us together.

"The leader of the band is Art Blakey, and the star is the group. We do it together. If a guy doesn't want to cooperate, if he thinks he's over-talented, if he thinks he plays better and should earn more money—out he goes. He fires himself; I don't fire nobody. Then the kids bring in another musician, and if he works out spiritually with the cats, then straight ahead he gets the music going.

"I don't need a musician on the bandstand who thinks he is better than the rest of them. If he is going to look down his nose at his fellow workers, he's going to do that to the audience. We don't need him. I can't afford any stars, I just want guys who want to learn. I don't choose them for how well they play, I choose them by their attitude toward music.

"As far as my role is concerned, I look at the drums as an instrument of accompaniment. You are supposed to *accompany* the soloist. If I play with a bunch of stars like I did with Gerry Mulligan and Stan Getz at the Hollywood Bowl, I go and ask them if there is anything I can do to make them sound better; if there is any special way you want me to play when you are playing a solo, please tell me.

"I don't believe in throwing a soloist out there; you are not supposed to be in competition with him, you are supposed to accompany this man. By making him sound better, I help myself sound better."

Blakey laughed and poked at his hearing aid. An auto horn blared somewhere down on the street, and he winced. "Noise pollution, that's awful," Blakey said.

"You know what's happening when we are on the bandstand?" he continued. "The people are looking at us, and we are having fun. What are we having fun about? We're looking at them. They're pouring themselves into the music; they're getting carried away. They look at us having a ball, and we're looking at them having a ball. I've seen great, great bands, but they never came across the footlights. They never came

across because they were too busy being cool. Jazz isn't that kind of music; it is happy music, and you are supposed to enjoy what you are doing. If you don't, you are in trouble. You might as well go out and write insurance.

"A lot of people don't have a choice about what they do—I have a choice. We couldn't exist without the taxi driver or the garbage man—they're important. So when he comes in from his job, it's my job to make him happy—to wash away the dust of everyday life. That's what jazz music is all about. If you don't make him happy, you have failed this man. He's paid his hard-earned money to get away from the life outside. He didn't come into the club to be taught or to hear politics. He . . . wants . . . to . . . have . . . a ball.

"I used to love Lee Morgan. He would be up on the bandstand, and if you didn't know who I was you'd swear Lee Morgan was Art Blakey, 'cause he's having a ball. He's all over the stage having a ball with the audience. A lot of people thought he was cocky. Naw, he was just having fun—he enjoyed it—and he didn't mind people seeing him enjoy himself. I like those kind of musicians—just enjoy yourself. Who knows, maybe the next set you won't be here."

DB





# Key

Excellent  
Very Good  
Good  
Fair  
Poor

★★★★★  
★★★★★  
★★★  
★★  
★



## Frank Wess

**TRYIN' TO MAKE MY BLUES TURN GREEN**—Concord Jazz 4592: *COME BACK TO ME*; *TRYIN' TO MAKE MY BLUES TURN GREEN*; *LISTEN TO THE DAWN*; *AND SO IT IS*; *SHORT CIRCUIT*; *LITTLE ESTHER*; *STRAY HORN*; *NIGHT LIGHTS*; *SURPRISE!* *SURPRISE!*; *BLUES IN THE CAR*; *SMALL TALK*; *ALFIE*. (72:43)

**Personnel:** Wess, tenor and alto saxophones, flute, bass flute; Scott Robinson, tenor and baritone saxophones, alto clarinet; Cecil Bridgewater, Greg Gisbert, trumpets; Steve Turre, trombone, conch shells; Richard Wyands, piano; Lynn Seaton, acoustic bass; Gregory Hutchinson, drums.

★★★★★

Wess and Robinson have done a first-class job of composing and arranging for this album. A Basie-like feeling permeates the session, but there are also touches of Ellington, Miles' *Birth Of The Cool* nonet, and the Joneses, Quincy and Thad (which is another way of saying, "Basie," since both wrote for the Maestro). The arrangers' warm tenors (and other horns, too) add to the excitement.

In essence, Wess, who arranged eight tunes, and Robinson, who arranged the others ("Little Esther," "Stray Horn," "Night Lights," and "Blues In The Car"), make this octet sound like a swinging big band. A high-flying chart on Burton Lane and Alan Jay Lerner's "Come Back To Me" makes a strong first impression: this band came to cook. Tenor (both of 'em) and trumpet breaks dazzle. Wess' title tune, with a backbeat groove and voicings worthy of Quincy, continues the seduction. Kenny Burrell's "Listen" introduces Wess' exotic bass flute in a duet with Turre's conch shell. (The man also talks fine wah-wah trombone on Horace Parlan's "Little Esther," which also brings up the subject of Wyands' tasty piano.)

This album also shows a balance: between

tight, agile ensemble turns ("Come Back") and solo-led features (Bucky Pizzarelli's "Stray Horn"), between alternate instrumental combinations (flute and alto clarinet on Robinson's "Night Lights") and traditional brass and saxophones, between cool (Wess' "Small Talk") and hot (a Latinized "Alfie"). What we have here is a lot of imagination, fully realized. Thus, Wess, who performed with Basie from '53 to '64, scores on all counts with this excellent album.

—Owen Cordle



## Gary Thomas

**EXILE'S GATE**—JMT 514 009-2: *EXILE'S GATE*; *LIKE SOMEONE IN LOVE*; *KULTURE BANDITS*; *BLUES ON THE CORNER*; *NIGHT AND DAY*; *NO MERCY RULE*; *A BRILLIANT MADNESS*. (56:06)

**Personnel:** Thomas, tenor sax; Charles Covington (1,4,7), Tim Murphy (2,3,5,6), organ; Paul Bollenback (1,4,7), Marvin Sewell (2,3,5,6), guitar; Jack DeJohnette (1,4,7), Terri Lyne Carrington (2,3,5,6), drums; Ed Howard, bass (2,3,5,6); Steve Moss, percussion (6).

★★★★★ 1/2

Thomas' style is a contemporary synthesis of swing, bop, free jazz, and fusion that brooks no ideological constraints. The two ensembles featured here use nearly identical instrumentation, putting the focus on concept rather than personality, with both groups sounding a little like a cross between Tony Williams' Lifetime and the M-Base Collective. Thomas' dark, muscular tenor lopes and gropes over the churning rhythms and thick metallic textures, turning on a dime from Charlie Parker to Ornette Coleman. You might call it inside-out jazz.

The title track, one of four Thomas originals, grinds ahead as boldly as a tank. Thomas' saxophone twining Coltrane-ish modulations around Paul Bollenback's McLaughlin-esque guitar. The standard "Like Someone In Love" begins and ends in a cocktail-lounge groove but spaces out in between, while "Kulture Bandits" moves from harmolodic funk to a psychedelic jam. McCoy Tyner's "Blues On The Corner" shifts from whirling maelstrom to gentle stream, with Jack DeJohnette steering the current; but Cole Porter's "Night And Day" emerges barely recognizable after a rude battering by Thomas, abetted by Terri Lyne Carrington.

Marvin Sewell sears "No Mercy Rule," Bollenback sizzles "A Brilliant Madness," with Thomas following each guitarist with some tasty cooking of his own. Just as the guitarists both resemble McLaughlin, both organists take after Larry Young, and even the drummers are

almost evenly matched, with Carrington crackling as crisply and nearly as hard as DeJohnette.

—Larry Birnbaum



## Lennie Tristano

**LENNIE TRISTANO/THE NEW TRISTANO**—Rhino 271595: *LINE UP*; *REQUIEM*; *TURKISH MAMBO*; *EAST THIRTY-SECOND*; *THESE FOOLISH THINGS*; *YOU GO TO MY HEAD*; *IF I HAD YOU*; *GHOST OF A CHANCE*; *ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE*; *BECOMING*; *YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT LOVE IS*; *DELIVERANCE*; *SCENE AND VARIATIONS*; *LOVE LINES*; *G MINOR COMPLEX*. (77:28)

**Personnel:** Tristano, piano; Lee Konitz, alto saxophone (5-9); Peter Ind (1,4), Gene Ramey (5-9), bass; Jeff Morton (1,4), Art Taylor (5-9), drums.

★★★★★

**NOTE TO NOTE**—Jazz Records 10: *JUST PREZ*; *PALO ALTO SCENE*; *IT'S PERSONAL*; *NOTE TO NOTE*; *THERE WILL ALWAYS BE YOU*. (40:43)

**Personnel:** Tristano, piano; Sonny Dallas, bass; Carol Tristano, drums.

★★★ 1/2

His reputation precedes him. Lennie Tristano released only a few records in his lifetime, and two classics for Atlantic, *Lennie Tristano* and *The New Tristano*, have been scarce for years. Although the pianist retreated from public view years before his death in 1978, the mystique persists. Remembered as an iconoclast in the studio, a guru to Warne Marsh and Lee Konitz, a radical improviser, and an opinionated critic of rhythm sections, Tristano made an impact on several levels. Foremost was his ability to execute melodic and harmonic inventions at high speeds.

Listening to Rhino's long-overdue reissue of *Lennie Tristano* and *The New Tristano*, which combines the albums (less one track) on one CD, the commotion once stirred up by Tristano can seem puzzling. Tristano's most controversial innovations—multi-tracking and overdubbing (1956) and improvising without chord changes (1949)—have long since been accepted by the mainstream. *Lennie Tristano* includes "Requiem," a soulful blues for Charlie Parker, and the locomotive "Turkish Mambo," both utilizing multiple piano tracks, and the notorious trio sessions in which Tristano recorded over a rhythm track, adjusting the tape speed to his taste. These experiments reflected frustration with rhythm players, who rarely provided the metronomic pulse he preferred. (Today, he'd likely play over a drum machine.) Live (1956) quartet performances with Lee Konitz make up the second side of *Lennie Tristano*. Like Tristano, Konitz explores the melodic potential of tunes like "You Go To



My Head" smoothly and fluently, but without conspicuous emotion.

The *New Tristano* (1962) is Tristano's masterpiece, with striking solo performances that require the disclaimer: "No use is made of multi-tracking, overdubbing or tape-speeding." Performances like "Scene And Variations" invite comparison to Art Tatum and Bud Powell, two acknowledged influences. Like Powell, Tristano explored melodies with the speed and logic of a Charlie Parker solo, and could spin out complex ideas faster than the listener could assimilate them. Like Powell, he made it sound effortless. "Becoming" and "Deliberation" demonstrate Tristano's capacity for playing his own bass lines, combining the strident left hand with changes in tempo and torrents of well-placed notes. Although additional material from these sessions has surfaced, Rhino's reissue adds no extra tracks or commentary, but reproduces liner notes. Shouldn't they have done more with Lennie Tristano?

Tristano recorded *Note To Note* (1964-'65) during informal duets with bassist Sonny Dallas. He apparently intended to include drums, which were added by Carol Tristano nearly 30 years later. Neither the performance nor the recorded sound matches the high quality of the Atlantic sessions. The pianist doesn't consistently display the speed or intensity managed a few years earlier for *The New Tristano*. With "There Will Always Be You" and "Note To Note," Tristano revisits familiar themes, probing and pushing them in interesting directions. If it's not essential Tristano, *Note To Note* offers enough of Tristano's melodic improvisations to satisfy the faithful.

—Jon Andrews



## Latin Playboys

**LATIN PLAYBOYS**—Slash/Warner Bros. 9 45543-2: *VIVA LA RAZA*; *TEN BELIEVERS*; *CHINESE SURPRISE*; *MIRA!*; *MANIFOLD DE AMOUR*; *NEW ZANDU*; *RUDY'S PARTY*; *8 IF*; *SAME BROWN EARTH*; *LAGOON*; *GONE*; *CRAYON SUN*; *PINK STEPS*; *FOREVER NIGHT SHADE MARY*. (37:34)

**Personnel:** David Hidalgo, guitars, vocals; Louie Pérez, drums, percussion; Mitchell Froom, keyboards; Tchad Blake, bass.

★ ★ ★ ★ 1/2

Even though it's considered the result of "happencence," *Latin Playboys* reflects the best of pop/rock sensibilities. Strange that a statement like that should need to be made, given the notion of the genre's supposed links to spontaneity and "what the hell" attitudes.

Instead of processed music, the Latin Playboys celebrate process, "mistakes" and all. Starting with a four-track tape, the band—with

a core of Los Lobos vets Hidalgo and Pérez—adds lyrics on top of music, layers music on top of music, intersperses strictly Latin elements, and basically has a riot. The notes say the album was produced by the whole group; and yet, Froom and Blake (Elvis Costello, Tom Waits, Richard Thompson, and Suzanne Vega are previous collaborators) appear to have added their distinctive producer and engineering touches, respectively.

The music, all written by Hidalgo and Pérez, includes dandy vocals by more than Hidalgo, but credits aren't listed, so your guess is as good as mine. The ethnic, r&b, blues, rock, and soul elements people associate with Los Lobos are all present here; but, as suggested, with an even greater sense of freedom and space. "Same Brown Earth" captivates with a rolling upbeat against a kind of sinking, funky bass ostinato, cowbell, and the sound of a car horn next to words about "lost sons of Adam cooking up in kitchens, in rooms, in doom grey tent homes of the aged or desperate, of the drunk and forgotten." "Crayon Sun" vocalizing approximates the sound of a bar-band shout while a guitar grooves on more ostinato figures and the song's message of "reaching out for a hand to hold, this is what I am." Overall, pretty down-to-earth stuff to go with great rhythms, typically great Hidalgo lead guitar, and a consistent flair for novel arrangements that turn impressionistic musical sketches into complete songs. And every song is *completely* different.

Reinventing the usual sources, Elvis, Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, maybe some Eno and James Brown, certainly others, the Latin Playboys pull off an album of truly original, creative music. Let's hope it's more than just a passing fancy.

—John Ephland



## Pat Metheny

**ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SILENCE**—Geffen 99998: *PART 1*; *PART 2*; *PART 3*; *PART 4*; *PART 5*. (38:48)

**Personnel:** Metheny, guitars.

★ 1/2

This is an unconscionably bad record. Everything about it smacks of some kind of joke or prank, from the adolescent swagger of its title to its brevity to its slipshod use of overdubs. Maybe it's Metheny flipping the bird at Geffen (à la Lou Reed's *Metal Machine Music*), fulfilling a contractual obligation with a big "fuck you." Or perhaps he's just testing out the limits of his fans' fidelity (for many, the excellent encounter with Ornette Coleman, *Song-X*, al-

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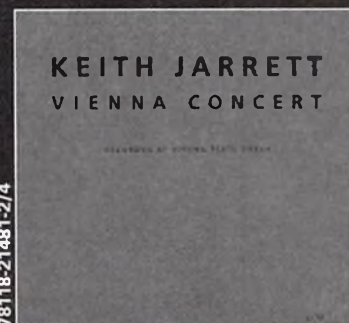
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ready accomplished this). Or—most laughable joke of all—maybe this is really supposed to be the grand musical gesture its press-kit obligingly makes it out to be: A go-for-broke, burn-all-bridges statement of supreme artistic integrity.

Every sucker punch needs a sucker to buy the premise. In this case, Sonic Youth's guitarist Thurston Moore seems to have bought it all the way. Rumor has it that Moore intervened when Geffen threatened to reject *Zero Tolerance*. Fact is, the guitar playing here could actually be his—in its best parts it's got some of the thud-like monomania of vintage-era Sonic Youth. But where Moore claims this as the "new milestone in electronic guitar music," on the whole it sounds less like one step beyond Glenn Branca and more like the theme to *Wayne's World*.

The entire 18 minutes of "Part 1" is filled with a two-electric-guitar overdub of rapid strumming interrupted by machismo power chords and remarkably clumsy lines that have none of the nuanced awkwardness of, say, Sonny Sharrock, Hound Dog Taylor, or Joseph Spence. As "Part 1" clumps to a halt, you'd expect to be relieved of Metheny's embarrassingly stupid dueling-banjoes-in-hyperspace overdub tech-

nique. But no: "Part 2" continues in the same manner, sounding like a kid tinkering with his new four-track (Wow, cool, I can play three guitar parts at the same time!), only in a more melodic vein.

Aside from a little welcome textural variation, courtesy of acoustic guitars on the last track, nothing much changes. The mid-section of "Part 2" and most of "Part 4" contain bogglingly mondo Southern blues-rock guitar clichés, like Lynyrd Skynyrd caught in a hall of mirrors. The more linear playing is particularly sloppy, harmonically meandering, and almost deliberately ugly. I predict that Metheny won't stay committed to this music; he's on a joy ride through the noise slum. For charismatic noise-guitar records of better stock, look elsewhere; there is no dearth of them. Try Japan: K. K. Null, Keiji Haino, and Masayuki Takayanagi have each recorded work that puts *Zero Tolerance* to shame. Null's duet with guitarist Jim O'Rourke, *A New Kind Of Water* (Charnel House), for example, builds white-heat/white-noise bonfires where *Zero Tolerance* can't quite flick its Bic.

*Zero Tolerance* is crude and unworked enough that it sounds like a demo tape on the way to a finished product.

—John Corbett



## TanaReid

**BLUE MOTION**—Evidence 22075-2: *DAY AND NIGHT; CON ALMA; BLUE MOTION; TATA'S DANCE; IT'S THE NIGHTS I LIKE; I CONCENTRATE ON YOU; MEDLEY: SALUTE TO DUKE/DUKE ELLINGTON'S SOUND OF LOVE; WITH A SONG IN MY HEART; AMY MARIE; ELVINESQUE.* (62:24)

**Personnel:** Akira Tana, drums; Rufus Reid, bass; Craig Bailey, alto saxophone, flute; Dan Faulk, tenor, soprano saxophone; Rob Schneiderman, piano; Frank Colon, percussion (2,4).

★★★★

With Tana and Reid as leaders, this band builds from the bottom up. A rhythm-section perspec-

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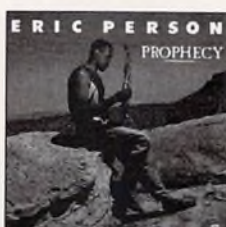
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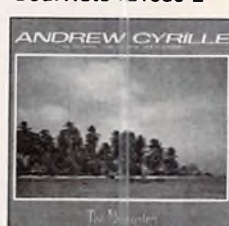
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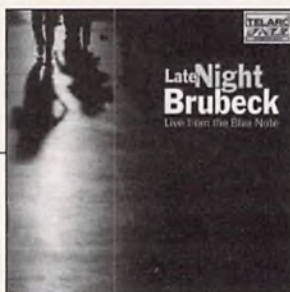
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tive makes the performances structurally sound as well as more rhythmically varied than most. And then, too, Reid's bass occasionally steps into the front line with the horns (Dizzy Gillespie's "Con Alma" and Bailey's "Salute"/Charles Mingus' "Duke Ellington's Sound Of Love") for a different ensemble color. The horns are capable of additional diversity, with solos that suggest Jackie McLean (Bailey's alto on Tana's "Elvinesque"), the tenor Joes, Henderson and Lovano (Faulk on Tana's "Tata's"), and John Handy (Bailey's scooping alto on the medley), among others.

One distinguishing feature is the subtlety with which all this is done. The rhythm section shifts gears seamlessly (e.g., Schneiderman's title tune) while the soloists mine (and mind) the mood of the composition. As soloists, the hornmen are more abstract than the pianist and veteran leaders. The pianist shines on "Tata's" with a dry, crackling sound reminiscent of the late Sonny Clark. As for the rating, the ensemble concept, the contextual solos, and the subtle variety add a star.

—Owen Cordle



## Dave Brubeck

**LATE NIGHT BRUBECK**—Telarc 83345: *THESE FOOLISH THINGS*; *HERE'S THAT RAINY DAY*; *THEME FOR JUNE*; *MEDLEY: SWING BELLS/THE DUKE/THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE/C JAM BLUES/DON'T GET AROUND MUCH ANYMORE*; *WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF ME?*; *KOTO SONG*; *SO WISTFULLY SAD*; *MEAN TO ME*. (69:13)

**Personnel:** Brubeck, piano; Bobby Militello, alto and tenor saxophones, flute; Jack Six, bass; Randy Jones, drums.

★ ★ ★ 1/2

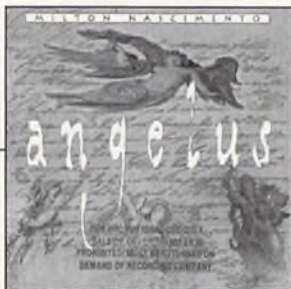
At 73, Dave Brubeck still raises memories of the immense popularity he enjoyed among the brush-cut college crowd in the '50s and early '60s, his piano playing peppered with creative impulses from jazz and the modern European classical tradition. Just recently back in clubs after many years on the concert hall circuit, he responds to the fairly intimate confines of New York's Blue Note with a pleasing program of warhorses and original compositions that was compiled from three evenings of quiet jazz last October.

Clear about where his playing takes him, Brubeck uses courteous formality to capture moods of autumnal lyricism. On "These Foolish Things," he contemplates melody and harmony for a few choruses before yielding to gentle-yet-forthright saxophonist Bobby Militello, whom he soon engages in gracious, orderly pirouettes. Two Brubeck pieces unveiled specially for the Greenwich Village gig,

"So Wistfully Sad" (inspired by Paul Desmond) and "Who Will Take Care Of Me?" are tender and introspective to a fault. The unflappable piano and questing flute on his "Koto Song" suggest a lotus blossom drifting downstream, its course irreversible and somehow heavy-hearted.

Brubeck's fulfillment of the piano's pastoral possibilities isn't the whole story. He acknowledges the blues in his playing on "Mean To Me," briefly allowing grit to replace refinement. His 14-minute salute to Duke Ellington swings naturally, as the "block" chord specialist and associates seem happy to work up a light sweat. And Brubeck's left hand strides in the solo recital, "Theme For June," written by his brother Howard in the mid-'50s. Hitting peaks of inspiration, these are the flashes of liveliness pointing to James P. Johnson and Fats Waller.

—Frank-John Hadley



## Milton Nascimento

**ANGELUS**—Warner Bros. 2-45499-A: *SEIS HORAS DA TARDE*; *ESTRELA DA DE UM MODO GERAL*; ...; *ANGELUS*; *COISAS DE MINAS*; *HELLO GOODBYE*; *SOFRO CALADO*; *CLUB DE ESQUINA No. 2*; *MEU VENENO*; *ONLY A DREAM IN RIO*; *QUALQUER COISA A HAVER COMO O PARAISO*; *VERA CRUZ*; *NOVENA*; *AMOR AMIGO*; *SOFRO CALADO*. (70:03)

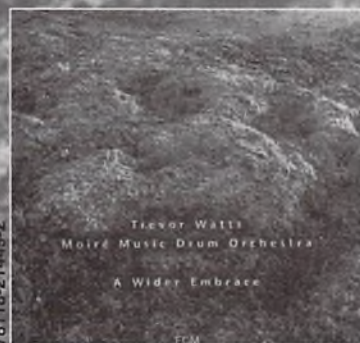
**Personnel:** Nascimento, vocals, acoustic guitar (1,2,5,6,8-14), concertina (1), piano (15); Jon Anderson (2), Leonardo Bretas (4), Peter Gabriel (11), vocals; James Taylor, vocals, guitar (10); Wayne Shorter, soprano saxophone (1,3); Tullio Mourao, piano, keyboards (2-5,8,11); Hugo Fattoruso, accordion (2,5), piano (3,8,11); Herbie Hancock, piano (12-14); Jeff Bova, keyboards (10); Tony Cedras, accordion (10); Joao Baptista (2-5,8,11), Anthony Jackson (10), Ron Carter (12,13), bass; Wilson Lopes, viola caipira (2,5), guitar (3); Flavio Venturini (11), Pat Metheny (12-14), guitar; Robertinho Silva, drums, percussion (2,3,5,7,8,11); Ronaldo Silva (2,3,5,8,11-13), Vanderlai Silva (3,5,8,11), Nana Vasconcelos (4,9,10), percussion; Jack DeJohnette, drums (12,13); Chris Parker, bass drum (10); 20-piece orchestra conducted by Gil Goldstein (1,6).

★ ★ ★ 1/2

Dropped by Columbia, Nascimento has bounced back on Warner Bros. with his most lavish album yet. It's a sumptuously produced, star-studded extravaganza that features, among others, his early Brazilian colleagues Hugo Fattoruso and the songwriting brothers Lo and Marcio Borges, his longtime jazz partners Wayne Shorter and Herbie Hancock, and such latter-day bandwagon jumpers as Peter Gabriel and James Taylor.

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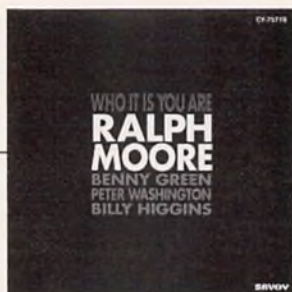
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The results are uneven, with the Brazilians contributing the most overproduced tracks, the jazzers striking some creative sparks, and the rockers adding little more than name recognition. The lush textures and Nascimento's inimitably expressive voice are consistently pleasant and attractive, but the melodies and lyrics are less sharply etched than before, and the rhythms often lean more toward soul than samba.

Gil Goldstein's delicately shaded orchestral chart provides a gorgeous underpinning for Nascimento's opening wordless chant, but their gooey collaboration on the Beatles' "Hello Goodbye" just sounds like symphonic syrup. The idea of a love song to the earth, so fresh when Caetano Veloso introduced it, seems clichéd on "Estrelada," while Shorter's soprano licks are merely perfunctory on "De Um Modo Geral." Hancock and Pat Metheny, solidly supported by Ron Carter and Jack DeJohnette, dig deep into "Vera Cruz" and "Novena"; but Gabriel barely holds up his end of a wordless duet, and Taylor's folk-rock composition presents a sappy, tourist's-eye view of Brazil. The album's save-the-planet theme is generally stifled in sophisticated, almost decadent arrangements, relieved at last by the gentle simplicity of the closing "Sofro Calado," where Nascimento is accompanied only by his own piano.

—Larry Birnbaum



## Ralph Moore

**WHO IT IS YOU ARE**—Savoy Jazz 75778: *SKYLARK*; *RECADO BOSSA NOVA*; *BUT BEAUTIFUL*; *TESTIFYIN'*; *SUNDAY IN NEW YORK*; *YEAH YOU!*; *AFTER YOUR CALL*; *SOME OTHER TIME*; *ESMERALDA*; *DELIGHTFUL DEGGY*; *SINCE I FELL FOR YOU*. (69:32)  
**Personnel:** Moore, tenor saxophone; Benny Green, piano; Peter Washington, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

★★★★

If there is strength in diversity, as multireedist/philosopher Anthony Braxton believes, then tenor saxophonist Ralph Moore is a veritable powerhouse. Even before listening to *Who It Is You Are*, the song titles suggest a variety of forms and rhythms. In the mix are several ballads, a lilting samba, a brooding show tune,

a couple of funky originals, one sanctified soul warmer, and an obligatory blues.

The most pleasant surprise, however, is Moore & crew's spirited treatment of the normally lachrymose "Skylark." Given Moore's swift, darting attack, you might think first of a hummingbird. What stands out—and it is a recurring device—is the unison of Moore and pianist Green on certain passages, their tendency to radically depart and then settle on notes simultaneously. Two things are quickly evident: Moore's chops are formidable and he knows his Trane.

He also knows how to handle Leonard Bernstein's rarely played "Some Other Time" as well as an overworked rhythm & blues staple such as "Since I Fell For You." His mood is probing and introspective on "Some Other Time," while the old blues anthem is embodied with new vim and vigor. Moore's sense of phrasing and harmony, and his ability to summon a full-bottomed vibrato are remarkably showcased on "But Beautiful," where elements of the cadenza are reprised and the melody breathlessly extended. Fascinating, too, is the way the tunes flow together. The careful listener will notice how the closing cluster of notes on "Testifyin'" anticipates the opening bars of "Sunday In New York."

On "Esmeralda" Moore approximates the slashing tempo of "Skylark," setting the stage for some fine ensemble exchanges with bassist Washington and that consummate drummer, Billy Higgins. Throughout the album Higgins is unobtrusively delicate and precise, and on "Recado Bossa Nova" he enriches the beat with his conga/bongo effects.

Moore admits he lifted the title of the album from *Blues People*, by Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones), but the music belongs to him and his worthy cohorts.

—Herb Boyd

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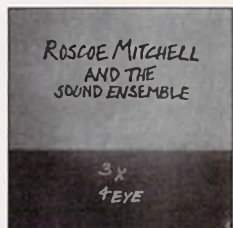
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## Masabumi Kikuchi

**TETHERED MOON**—Evidence 22071-2: *YOU'RE MY EVERYTHING*; *MISTERIOSO*; *SO IN LOVE*; *MON-IKER*; *P.S.*; *MOOR*; *TETHERED MOON*. (57:47)  
**Personnel:** Kikuchi, piano; Gary Peacock, bass; Paul Motian, drums.

★★★ 1/2

Tackling "You're My Everything," pianist Masabumi "Poo" Kikuchi hums, groans, and whinnies from the effort. With a rhythm section of Gary Peacock and Paul Motian, Kikuchi's *Tethered Moon* appears to court the audience for Keith Jarrett's Standards Trio.

Putting aside cosmetic similarities, Kikuchi



can be a very different player from Jarrett. Best known in the U.S. for his keyboard work with Gil Evans, Kikuchi is understated and deliberate, less interested in flow and rhythm than in the spaces between notes. The standards prove to be a false start, with Kikuchi sounding rigid on Monk's "Misterioso" and melodramatic on Cole Porter's "So In Love." The trio hits its stride with three open, interactive Peacock originals. The bassist plays beautifully and with great invention throughout, but his contributions are most evident on these tracks, notably his solo introduction to "Moor." His work is the best reason to hear *Tethered Moon*.

Kikuchi opted for an open, balanced sound mix, and Peacock's bass can be heard more prominently here than with Jarrett's trio. Motian asserts himself on "Moniker," but too often sounds constrained. Two subtle, complex players, Motian and Peacock complement each other well. It's surprising that they've recorded together so infrequently. Kikuchi's title track features his impressionistic piano work in an extended, somewhat static setting.

—Jon Andrews



## Carla Bley

**BIG BAND THEORY**—Watt 25: *ON THE STAGE IN CAGES; BIRDS OF PARADISE; GOODBYE PORKPIE HAT; FRESH IMPRESSION*. (49:21)

**Personnel:** Bley, piano; Alex Balanescu, violin; Lew Soloff, Guy Barker, Claude Deppa, Steve Waterman, trumpets; Gary Valente, Richard Edwards, Annie Whitehead, trombones; Ashley Slater, bass trombone; Roger Jannotta, soprano saxophone, flute; Wolfgang Puschnig, alto saxophone, flute; Andy Sheppard, tenor, soprano saxophones; Pete Hurt, tenor saxophone; Julian Argüelles, baritone saxophone; Karen Mantler, organ; Steve Swallow, bass; Dennis Mackrel, drums.

★ ★ ★

As much as I hate to say it, I think it may be time to declare a moratorium on "Goodbye Porkpie Hat." It's not just that the composition's been played to death, although that's part of it, but also the passage of time has pretty much de-localized its evocativeness. In penning it, Charles Mingus was saying farewell to a giant whose lyricism was well known but scarcely understood; a fate which in the post-fusion age seems to have befallen Mingus as well. So when doubly removed from its context, as the rendition here seems to be, the result comes off a bit like lip-service.

This is not the kind of thing one normally expects from an orchestrator of Carla Bley's distinction. However, "Porkpie Hat"'s lapses may very well indicate why *Big Band Theory*

seems more a soloist's album than a composer/arranger's. Take, for example, "Birds Of Paradise," the 20-minute suite—originally commissioned by the Glasgow Jazz Festival—that serves as the CD's centerpiece. In the past, Bley's knowledge of the last 40 or so years of music has allowed her to swing grooves from calypso to funk, reggae to waltz, with unwavering precision and bite. But so much of "Birds"'s shifting palette is handed over to Alex Balanescu, Lew Soloff, Andy Sheppard, and Gary Valente, that Bley often lets big-voiced fanfares serve as transitional passages. Of course, with featured performers this good—super-hosannas for discovering the remarkable Wolfgang Puschnig—she might be forgiven for trying to coast. This time.

—K. Leander Williams



## Arturo Sandoval

**AND THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**—GRP Classical 75002: *CONCERTO IN D MAJOR (LEOPOLD MOZART); CONCERTO IN E MAJOR (J. N. HUMMEL); TRUMPET CONCERTO (ARUTJUNJAN); CONCERTO FOR TRUMPET & ORCHESTRA (SANDOVAL)*.

**Personnel:** Sandoval, trumpet; London Symphony Orchestra, Luis Haza, conductor.

★ ★ ★

**DANZÓN (DANCE ON)**—GRP 9761: *CONGA; AFRICA; GROOVIN' HIGH; A MIS ABUELOS; TRES PALABRAS; DANCE ON; SUAVITO; CONJUNTO; GUAGUANCO; COCONUT GROVE; CONGA (REVISITED)*.

**Personnel:** Sandoval, trumpet, flugelhorn, piano, percussion, handclaps, scat vocal, synthesizer; Giovanni Hidalgo, Carlos Gomez, Rigo Herrera, Juan Noguera, Orlando Hernandez, percussion; Gloria Estefan (2), Vickie Carr (5), Willie Chirino (7), Rita Quintero, Cheito Quinonez, Bill Cosby, Peter Gonzales, vocals; Kenny Anderson (2-4), Ed Calle (2,4,6,7,10), David Sanchez (10), reeds; Dave Valentin, flute (6,7); Danilo Perez (3,6,10), Felix Gomez (4,7), piano; Richard Eddy, Eddie Rivera (4,7), Sal Cuevas (6), bass; Rene Luis Toledo, guitar (2,4,5).

★ ★ ★ 1/2

Will the real Arturo Sandoval(s) please take the stand? Not only does the great Cuban trumpeter play all those instruments on *Danzón*, he takes on multiple roles: Superbrass (multi-parts overdubbed) choruses as well as impressive Diz-inspired scatting on "Groovin' High," piano chording and horn on "Africa," Romantic Romeo and Havana Hellcat on "Guaguanco," flamenco screech (!) on "A Mis Abuelos," and straight classical (with velvet tone and peerless duende) on the symphonic album. Whew! Not only does Sandoval play beyond the realm of bird or plane, he's plays Superman, too.

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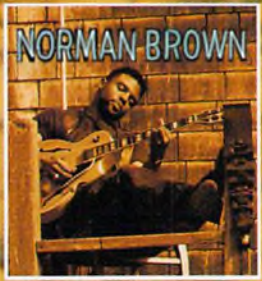


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Though there's Afro-Cuban jazz on *Danzón*, Sandoval's sights seem trained on becoming a universal trumpet hero. He pays roots dues, to be sure, on the opening and closing descargas, the glossy choruses alongside popular Latina singers; the "trad" salsa he gives a juicy spin with Dave Valentin on "Suavito." At nearly every turn, Sandoval's playing—his image—is boldfaced, underlined, bigger than life, slightly overblown. Production values yell "Star!" and not just a great Cuban jazz expatriate. Rare exceptions are especially intimate and effective: Sandoval's Harmon-muted dazzler with glossy combo on a pretty "Conjunto" and (before the histrionics) a genuinely impassioned if low-key solo on the Latin-bop groove of "Coconut Grove," with fellow-feeling pianist Danilo Perez and tenor panther cub David Sanchez. Excitement bubbles everywhere from masterful young *conguero* Giovanni Hidalgo. Yes, there are even mariachi and bullfight trumpet sequences.

It's an impressive double release for the admirable Sandoval. But gee, why can't they just let a guy play his horn? —Fred Bouchard







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## Paolino Dalla Porta

**TALES**—Soul Note 121244-2: *NIGHT BREATH*; *KANDINSKY*; *LULLABY FOR UGO*; *A PLACE TO SING*; *IL PICCOLO PRINCIPE*; *MBIRA*; *TENZIN*; *VOCAL*. (62:58)

**Personnel:** Dalla Porta, acoustic bass; Kenny Wheeler, trumpet, flugelhorn; Stefano Battaglia, piano; Bill Elgart, drums.

★★★★

Outside Italy, bassist Paolino Dalla Porta is not well known. *Tales* provides an impressive introduction with solid, consistent playing and memorable tunes.

*Tales* is credited to all four musicians, with Dalla Porta the leader and principal composer. The most prominent voice, however, belongs to Kenny Wheeler, whose distinctive tone and



phrasing on trumpet and flugelhorn give the session much of its identity. He receives no compositional credit, but Wheeler's imprint is unmistakable and evident on the hummable melodies of "Il Piccolo Principe" and "A Place To Sing." His horn yearns eloquently on "Lullaby For Ugo" and teams with Dalla Porta's insistent bass lines to set the mood for "Night Breath," which recalls the trumpeter's work with Dave Holland. Wheeler's taste for free playing is accommodated by Dalla Porta's "Kandinsky," where the bassist guides and holds together a collective improvisation while shifting tempos. Wheeler doesn't record often, and his fans will want *Tales*.

Dalla Porta impresses with his virtuosity and rich tone as well as his compositional skills. For "Mbira," he plucks and slaps the bass to evoke the sound of the African thumb piano of the same name. His suite "Il Piccolo Principe" derives color from interesting timbral effects, including arco bass and plucked piano strings. His themes are simple and catchy, as articulated on the bass. Pianist Stefano Battaglia comps effectively, and his work sparkles on "Lullaby" and his uptempo feature, "Tenzin." Drummer Bill Elgart nicely contrasts the quartet's laid-back lyricism with chunky, aggressive percussion, where brushes and cymbals might have been expected. Producer Giovanni Bonandirini creates a balanced, democratic environment and a sound reminiscent of Wheeler's ECM recordings. —Jon Andrews



## Dusko Goykovich

**SOUL CONNECTION**—enja 90442: *Soul Connection*; *Ballad For Miles*; *Inga*; *I'll Close My Eyes*; *Blues Time*; *Adriatica*; *NYC*; *Blues Valse*; *Teamwork Song*. (71:04)

**Personnel:** Goykovich, trumpet, flugelhorn; Jimmy Heath, tenor saxophone (1,3,5,6,9); Tommy Flanagan, piano; Eddie Gomez, bass; Mickey Roker, drums.

★★★★

Goykovich has eight compositions on this album; all could become jazz standards. He has nine solos (plus embellished heads on some tunes); all are the work of a responsible melodist. He employs three, sometimes four other musicians; all are veterans who cut to the core of hard-bop.

The style isn't new, but the compositions and improvising are. Goykovich, born in Yugoslavia in 1931, dedicates this album to Miles Davis. "Ballad," "I'll Close My Eyes" (the lone standard), and "Adriatica," all Harmon-muted, establish the connection—a soul connection, not

an umbilical cord. The title tune, a slow jazz waltz, recalls the Cannonball Adderley and Horace Silver quintets of the early (earthy!) '60s, as does "Teamwork Song." Goykovich and Heath prove to be superb editors on these.

Everyone plays tougher on "Blues Time." Gomez, out first, releases a lot of pent-up percussiveness. Flanagan, who charms romantically on most other cuts, attacks. This track reflects more New York melancholia than Balkan melancholia, which otherwise subtly

prevails on the other pieces.

Goykovich works out of Germany now. In 1958, he was part of Marshall Brown's International Youth Band at the Newport Jazz Festival. Later, he studied at Berklee and went on the road with the Maynard Ferguson and Woody Herman big bands. Today, big-band work is the road less traveled. But comparing Goykovich's choice notes to those of a few of today's youthful trumpet stars, it is a road to skillful concision. —Owen Cordle

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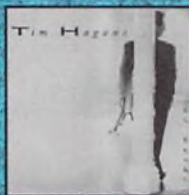
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—Joe Lovano

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## CD REVIEWS



### David Taylor

**PAST TELLS**—New World/CounterCurrents  
80436-2: *FIVE (5) SONGS AVEC BENEDICTION ET  
DIVERTISSEMENT AKA SIDNEY HALL; SHTIK; TAILOR-  
MADE; PAST TELLS (OR ORALS)*. (72:58)

**Personnel:** Taylor, bass trombone, voice; Paul  
Smoker, trumpet, flugelhorn (4); Herb Robertson,  
trumpet, valve trombone (2,4); Marty Ehrlich,  
soprano and tenor saxophones, clarinet (2,4);  
Andy Laster, baritone saxophone, clarinet (2,4);  
Jay Branford, alto, baritone saxophones (4); Mark  
Helias (2,4), Lindsey Horner (3), bass; Phil  
Haynes, drums, percussion (2,4); Gordon Gott-  
lieb, percussion (1,3); Emily Mitchell, harp (1,3);  
Ted Rosenthal, piano, harpsichord (1); Gary  
Schneider, synthesizer (1); Rolf Schulte, Jon  
Kass, violin (1); Louise Schulman, viola (1); Fred  
Sherry, cello (1).

★ ★ ★ 1/2

David Taylor splits his time between the worlds  
of jazz and classical "new music." He's worked  
with Gil Evans, George Gruntz and Carla Bley,  
but he's also developed classical repertoire for  
bass trombone. His ambitious *Past Tells*  
searches for unity through the distinctive,  
highly expressive "voice" of his bass trombone.  
"Five (5) Songs" arranges songs by Charles  
Ives, Duke Ellington, and J.S. Bach into a  
surprisingly coherent suite, "sung" by Taylor on  
trombone.

Composer David Schiff's "Shtik" asserts  
common ground between Charles Mingus and  
Lenny Bruce, with Taylor verbally and musically  
"portraying" Bruce. "Shtik" and Taylor's dark,  
unsettling "Past Tells (Or Orals)" suggest a  
"Fourth Stream" approach, in which a jazz  
ensemble crosses the line into postmodern,  
"non-jazz" compositional processes. *Past Tells*  
challenges as much as it rewards the listener.

To hear Taylor in a more jazz-oriented context,  
investigate his current work with the Manhattan  
New Music Project.  
—Jon Andrews



### Turtle Island String Quartet

**WHO DO WE THINK WE ARE?**—Windham Hill  
Jazz 01934 10146-2: *SEVEN STEPS TO HEAVEN;  
YOU'VE CHANGED; WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?  
JOSEY; GYPSY EYES; MOOSE THE MOOCHE; RUBY  
MY DEAR; BLUES ON THE CORNER; DROMEDARY;  
ECOTOPIA*. (61:39)

**Personnel:** Darol Anger, violin, baritone violin;  
Mark Summer, cello; Danny Seidenberg, viola;  
Tracy Silverman, violin, vocal; Vicki Randle, vocal  
(2); Steve Erquiaga, guitar (4); Scott Morris,  
drums (4,6).

★ ★ ★ ★

### Modern String Quartet

**FOUR BROTHERS**—Mood 6372: *BLUES MARCH;  
SHUFFLE FOR FOUR; FOUR BROTHERS; THAT'S NEW;  
SPINNING WHEEL; DOLPHIN DANCE; THE COST OF  
LIVING; DONNA LEE; GIANT STEPS*. (48:51)

**Personnel:** Jörg Widmoser, violin; Winfried Zren-  
ner, violin; Andreas Hörcht, viola; Jost-H. Hecker,  
cello.

★ ★ ★

Bridging the gap between the modern classi-  
cal world and jazz has its oil & water perils.  
Letting one's hair down to fly free in the breeze  
through vernacular styles too often results in  
the tame execution that typifies soporific or-  
chestral renditions of pop songs. Thankfully,  
ensembles like the Turtle Island String Quartet  
and the Modern String Quartet do succeed—  
primarily on the strengths of their inventive  
arrangements—in not only bridging the genre  
gap but pioneering a refreshing fusion.

TISQ and its restless co-founder/producer/  
violinist Darol Anger self-assuredly title their  
latest release with a rhetorical question: Who  
do they think they are to interpret compositions  
by Miles, Monk, and Bird as well as McCoy  
Tyner and Ralph Towner and then throw them  
into the mix with some originals and string  
versions of tunes by Hendrix and Tower of  
Power? Anger & company proceed with in-  
spired confidence as they superbly bow, tap,  
and pluck their way through rhythmically  
rousing and melodically enticing pieces, the  
bulk of which were arranged by Turtle Island  
co-founder and alumnus David Balakrishnan.

The quartet swings through a catch-you-  
breath take on Davis' "Seven Steps To Heaven"  
and tiptoes into Parker's "Moose The Mooche"  
before launching into spirited tempo surges.

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Germany's Modern String Quartet deliver their border-defying pieces in a more classically straightforward way on *Four Brothers*, produced with restraint by Wolfgang Daune. Not as daring or as eclectic in scope as TISQ's release, MSQ nonetheless gives compelling readings of the Blood, Sweat & Tears tune "Spinning Wheel" (horn-like bowings and an exhilarating stretch of violin call & response) and Bird's "Donna Lee" (whimsical violin swirls above a cello walking bass line). Plus, the quartet renders Benny Golson's "Blues March" with a playful processional flair and Coltrane's "Giant Steps" with emotional conviction. Less satisfying are MSQ's spins on Herbie Hancock's "Dolphin Dance" and Don Grolnick's "The Cost Of Living." In addition to the revampings, the quartet also performs two attractively romantic compositions by member and primary arranger Jörg Widmoser. —*Dan Ouellette*



**A RARE CONNECTION**—Discovery 77007: *STELLA BY STARLIGHT*; *CHICK IT OUT*; *JAMAICAN LOUNGE LIZARDS*; *CITYSCAPE*; *A RARE CONNECTION*; *THE BIG SLIDE*; *JOYOUS DANCE*; *MINNESOTA*; *Miyako: NOBODY ELSE BUT ME*. (55:20)

**Personnel:** Cunliffe, piano, keyboards; Bob Sheppard, saxophones, bass clarinet; Clay Jenkins, trumpet, flugelhorn; Bruce Paulson, trombone; Dave Carpenter, bass; Peter Erskine, drums; Kurt Rasmussen, percussion.

★ ★ ★

A slick mastery from all hands pervades the album. Sheppard's Brecker-ish rides on "The Big Slide" and "Jamaican Lounge Lizards" are indicative. His blues bass clarinet on Cunliffe's Monk-ish "Minnesota" is more humble. The pianist's most sustained mood occurs on Wayne Shorter's "Miyako."  
—Owen Cordle



**SERESTA BRASILEIRA**—Milestone 9212:  
*ROSA; SERENATA DO ADEUS; VALSA SEM NOME;  
PRIMEIRO AMOR; VELHO AMIGO; O QUE TINHA DE  
SER; CHAO DE ESTRELAS; CANCAO DO AMOR  
AUSENTE; REVENDO O PASSADO; VALSA DE EURI-  
DICE. (44:07)*

**Personnel:** Powell, classical guitar.

★★★★

**SOLO**—Chesky 99: *NUM PAGODE EM PLANALTINA*; *PRELUDIO E TOCCATINA*; *A BELA O A FERA*; *VALSEANA*; *TAMOIMOE*; *WHEN THE FIRE BURNS LOW*; *FUOCO (LIBRA SONATINE)*; *JOANA FRANCESCA*; *VRAP*; *PALHACO*; *RUA HARMONIA*; *ESTUDIO #1*; *ASSUM PRETO*; *HOMENAGEM A RADAMES GNATTALLI*; *DRUMA NEGRITA*. (57-35)

**Personnel:** Assad, classical guitar, vocals.

★ ★ ★ 1/2

With his clean, consummate technique and, more importantly, abiding musicality, Powell animates these songs with a kind of emotive power that crosses the line between classical and folk sensibilities—a hallmark of the Brazilian guitar tradition. The intent here is not to overwhelm with virtuosity, but to find a path between twilight-like melancholy and controlled passion.

On her impressive debut album, the young and restless guitarist Assad, like Powell, taps right into that fertile cross-musical terrain where classical, folk, and jazz sonorities meet on Brazilian soil. Assad arrives with a family imprimatur, as the sister of brothers Sergio and Odair Assad, the popular guitar duet. On this 14-track album, Assad purposefully covers a wide gamut of material, from music by Heitor Villa Lobos to that of Ralph Towner, Egberto Gismonti, and brother Sergio. Overall, she gives bright, assured performances to whatever passes through her hands, and, on the few vocal tunes, displays a pleasing enough voice, if secondary to her guitaristic elan.

—Josef Woodard

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## Earth Quavers

by Larry Birnbaum

**W**orld music," a vague marketing category that arbitrarily includes some genres (Celtic, Cajun, calypso) and excludes others (bluegrass, bebop, baroque), is all the rage these days. Western jazz, rock, and even classical artists eagerly collaborate with their counterparts in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, while third-world musicians embrace the latest high-tech gimmicks in hopes of crossing over. Where this trend will lead is problematic. Surely, the earth's incredible diversity of music ought to be shared more widely, but to lump it together under a single rubric is to trivialize the cultures of the majority of people on this planet. In the end, it's all world music—from pygmy yodelers to Michael Jackson—at least until flying saucers land and E.T. sings the blues.

Following the success of its new-age-oriented boxed set *Global Meditation*, the Relaxation Company (now called Ellipsis Arts . . .) has come out with another four-CD compilation, this one entitled *Global Celebration*. Embracing everything from Irish reels to Haitian rara, Balinese gamelans, and Gambian koras, the collection is divided into "Religious Celebrations" (*Dancing With The Gods*) (Ellipsis Arts . . . 3231; 57:32; ★★½), "Cycles Of Nature" (Earth Spirit) (3232; 57:36; ★★½), "Turning Points Of Life" (Passages) (3233; 60:26; ★★★★★), and "Joyous Festivals" (Gatherings) (3234; 57:46; ★★½). If you don't speak Malagasy, Swahili, Azerbaïdjanî, or Hopi, it's hard to tell the disinterment ceremonies from the reburial rituals—or, for that matter, the wedding songs—without the accompanying 32-page booklet. Grouped only by social function, the music of five continents and any number of islands is otherwise jumbled to-



Native American Deer Dance

gether almost indiscriminately—Malians and Moroccans side by side with Lapps and New Guineans, Mongo Santamaria next to Hindu snake charmer Mahendranath.

Along with the American Baptist Choir, the Klezmatics, and New Orleans "Indians" Bo Dollis and Monk Boudreaux, there's folk-based pop, like M'Mah Sylla's Guinean circumcision song "Tiguini-Tiguini," with its jazzy, modern saxophone accompaniment. South Africa's Mahlatini and the Mahotella Queens, Egypt's Ali Hassan Kuban, and Ireland's Matt Molloy leap from the pack, but the overall emphasis is more on the typical than the extraordinary. Ironically, the world-beat trend has already exposed so much African, Caribbean, and Latin American music that some of the most novel sounds are Skandineki's gorgeously harmonized pagan anthem from Latvia, Värtinā's lively rune song from Finland, and I Giullari Di Piazza's agitated tarantella exorcism from Italy.

*Voices Of Forgotten Worlds* (Ellipsis Arts . . .

3252; 62:15/53:50; ★★½) is devoted to "Traditional Music of Indigenous People." Here, the emphasis is strictly folkloric, concentrating on supposedly endangered ethnic cultures like those of the Australian Aborigines, Greenlandic Eskimos, Japanese Ainu, Central American Garifuna, Afghan Pashtuns, Taiwanese Bunun, and New Zealand Maori. The accompanying 96-page book depicts an assortment of colorful natives, but for all the politically correct terminology (Eskimos are really Inuit; Lapps are Saami; Navahos, of course, are Native Americans), the effect is somewhat patronizing. The music, however, has a homespun eloquence and dry charm of its own; without pop sweetening, these spare, plaintive chants and stark rhythms, performed a cappella or with handmade instruments of wood, bone, and leather, convey ancestral memories deeper than anything produced for mass consumption. Among the highlights are the sweet Quechuan panpiping from Bolivia, the boisterous Kanak chorus from New Caledonia, the unearthly polyphony of the Ba-Benjelé Pygmies, and the deep Tuvan "throat singing" from Central Asia, in which a single vocalist, building on a sepulchral groan, uses overtones to sound two or three notes at once.

*Africa In America* (Corazon 1157; 54:23/47:14/55:09; ★★★★★), on the Rounder-distributed Mexican Corazon label, focuses more narrowly on a single phenomenon—the retention of African elements in the music of the Western hemisphere. Nineteen countries are represented, including Haiti, Honduras, Puerto Rico, Peru, Antigua, and Belize. The U.S. is accorded three tracks (by Bunk Johnson, Big Mama Thornton, and Clifton Chenier), the same number as Mexico, despite its minuscule black population; but the largest share of material comes from Cuba, with only one selection from Brazil. There are examples of modern salsa (from the Dominican Republic, oddly enough) and reggae (from Nicaragua), but most of the collection consists of call & response chanting over layers of drums. The variety of forms is nearly overwhelming—*guaguanco*, *bomba*, *salve*, *punta*, *tamborito*, *gwo ka*, *canto winti*, *culo e' puya*, etc.—but what's more remarkable is their general similarity, both to one another and to the traditional music of West Africa. Other tracks, like those of Mexican *son joroch*, Jamaican *mento*, and Cuban *changüi*, illustrate the blending of African and European influences, while a Belizean version of "Walk In Jerusalem," originally recorded nearly a century ago by the Fisk Jubilee Singers, shows the dispersion of American gospel harmonies far beyond their native shores.

*Celebration* (Mapleshade 01632; 71:53; ★★½), by **Brother Ah's World Music Ensemble**, is world music of a different and increasingly common sort—a blending of disparate international ingredients that, in this case, takes in flamenco, gospel, raga, African, and Japanese flavors. Brother Ah, aka Robert Northern, is a jazz french horn player-turned college teacher whose ensemble melds various combinations of musicians and instruments from around the globe. The result is a succession of long, loose, new-agey jams that flutter atmospherically from style to style without penetrating far beneath the surface of any.

DB

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## Top Of The Heap

by Bill Milkowski

A sensitive ballad interpreter with a romantic streak, **Joe Lovano** is also a spirited, free-thinking improviser who loves to work the high wire without a net. He straddles the worlds of bebop and freebop more successfully than any other tenor player around today, and he's not above schmaltz. The guy simply loves to play. He's got eyes for it all and big ears in each context. He is now at a point in his career that his hero Sonny Rollins attained some 30 years ago... as Max Roach used to describe Rollins on the bandstand, "The man whom we believe to be at the top of the heap of modern tenor saxophonists."

While *First Tango In New York* (Musidisc 500472; 48:06; ★★½) features some fine blowing by this '90s saxophone colossus, it is largely a collection of well-worn standards cleverly recast by music coordinator/pianist Andy LaVerne. It swings hard, thanks to the rhythm tandem of drummer Bill Stewart and bassist Steve LaSpina, but swinging on tunes like "You And The Night And The Music," "This Is New," and "My Melancholy Baby" hardly covers the scope of Lovano's musical makeup. His own *Tenor Legacy* (Blue Note 27014; 66:09; ★★½) touches on more territory and runs



Lovano: an abundance of soul

deeper. Plus, he's got the dynamic, young tenor star Joshua Redman to spur him on, challenging as he emulates.

The two take a wild roller-coaster ride on Lovano's Monkish original "Web Of Fire" and trade some fiery eights on the volcanic "Miss Etna." Booker Little's "Rounder's Mood" is classic two-tenor burn in the Jug-Stitt tradition that also highlights bassist Christian McBride's fine

articulation with the bow. A fairly straightforward rendition of "Love Is A Many Splendored Thing" sounds like nostalgia for a bygone era, while "Bread & Wine" pulsates with a freshness that defies category. The importance of Monk and Ornette Coleman to Lovano's music is reiterated in his reworking of Monk's "Introspection" and his Ornette-ish "Blackwell's Message," a paean to late drummer, friend, and collaborator Ed Blackwell. On Billy Frasier's bittersweet ballad "To Her Ladyship," Lovano flows over the full range of his horn with authority and an abundance of soul, while his incurably romantic side surfaces again on a smoky, heartfelt rendition of "Laura."

Lovano teams up with another young tenor hotshot, the gifted but underpublicized Craig Handy, on bassist Ray Drummond's fifth as a leader, *Excursion* (Arabesque 0105; 64:17; ★★★★★). The bassist exercises strong band-leader control, allowing Lovano and Handy to soar within composerly limits, but he really turns them loose on the ominous modal piece "Quads," the turbulent "Blues African," and Monk's "Well, You Needn't," which is reworked with a sly New Orleans second-line twist. The five-part "Excursion Suite," Drummond's *tour de force*, features some intense tenor moments from Lovano in the "Danse de Joie" section. Joe's blustery tone and bold ideas throughout help ignite this ambitious offering. **DB**

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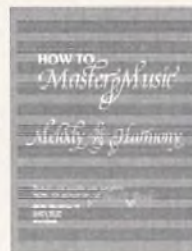
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## Virtue(s) Rewarded

by Kevin Whitehead

**A**mazing: three years ago Joe Henderson was just another underrated tenor giant. Then he signs with a big label, whose publicity machine would strong-arm jazz magazines for coverage even if his Verve albums weren't smashingly good. The result is a double rarity: a master gets acclaimed while still breathing; a public blitz rains on the right guy.

The label where he started out rightly cashes in with *The Blue Note Years* (Blue Note 89287; 66:08/72:50/71:35/67:36: ★★★★★). It surveys 1963 to '69, postscripted by two '80s trio tracks and one from Joe's most recent Blue Note sighting, with Renee Rosnes in 1990. All but 10 of 36 tracks find him as hired gun for 15 leaders, prominent among them trumpeter Kenny Dorham, pianists Duke Pearson and Horace Silver, organist Larry Young, vibist Bobby Hutcherson, and drummer Pele LaRoca. In a sense the set is an overview of Blue Note during that period, with tune titles telling the story: "Blue Bossa," "In 'N Out," "The Kicker," "Caribbean Fire Dance," "8/4 Beat." In a frontline, Joe's broad, brawny tone sounds equally complimentary/complementary to trumpets fat and thin. Soloing on "Blue Bossa" from his debut as leader, he juggles short and long phrases, begins and ends phrases on any beat, contrasts jagged and smooth lines, sweeps and barks. All of it is deftly ordered, balanced rhythmically to hang, whole. In the '60s, every tenor younger than Coleman Hawkins reflected Coltrane; Henderson reckoned with him but never sounds overwhelmed.

Not a bad track here. But the box does present an airbrushed '90s version of the '60s,



The right guy: Henderson with Lee Morgan, 1964

in which experimentation was always cautious and tasteful. A few tracks—Grant Green's long "Idle Moments," Herbie Hancock's "The Prisoner"—hint at a wider tradition, and there are three tracks from Andrew Hill's great early period, but I wish there'd been conceptual room for, say, Hill's "Spectrum," with tandem-scorching Dolphy (bass clarinet) and Henderson solos. The too-big shoebox (the booklet has a complete JH/BN discography), with room for a missing fifth CD, symbolizes that part of the legacy left out.

No '70s-bashing on this page (as if jazz ever had a bad decade), but production-wise, Joe's *Barcelona* (enja 3037; 38:10: ★★) is a mess on several levels. On LP, the half-hour title track—live in Wichita, 1977, with heartland drummer Ed Soph and bassist Wayne Darling—was divided into two parts (with a gap between). Sound was tinny, and the program

was short. The CD, all the same, there are no alternates from Kansas, nor from a duo studio sequel with Darling the next year. What's here is decidedly of its time, similar to Sam Rivers' freebop—the structures are loose and sound spontaneously arrived at, and well-ordered once underway. The rhythm men tend to push Joe out front; he responds with more guttural and agitated playing than usual. It's his brand of energy music, but he's still Henderson, so there's meat as well as heat. Darling is discreet servant again on the stark duos—arpeggiating simple triads, or flamenco-strumming—giving Joe maximum rumination room. It's as close as he got to that '70s staple, the unaccompanied saxophone.

His tone was harder and more brusque then, a hair less so on 1980's MPS/Pausa *Mirror Mirror*, back as *mirrormirror* (Verve 314 519 092; 43:51: ★★½). On "What's New," his '70s self with that biting timbre remains, but there are intimations of a mellowing to come. (More later.) No bonus tracks, but again what's here sounds good. The band: Chick Corea, with that crisp piano attack and eagerness for interplay found in his best work (he wrote two peppy tunes, one a waltz); Ron Carter on rubber bands—oops, sorry, says bass in the credits; Billy Higgins. His ride cymbals are such epicenters of swing one may forget he has a full kit, any part of which could carry a date. His snare accents alone do everything: feed rhythmic ideas to a soloist, without distracting or disrupting. He kicks you along but doesn't tell you where to land. His "Blues For Liebestraum" solo reminds us one formative influence was snare-drum virtuoso Edward Blackwell.

*Humpty Dumpty* (enja 8032; 46:58: ★★½) is his second time guesting with guitarist Akio Sasajima, who's into graceful swing on single strings. (The other collaboration is *Akio*, on Muse.) The rhythm section is Joe's semi-regular pianist Renee Rosnes, and Akio's Chicago cohorts, bassist Kelly Sill and drummer Joel Spencer. Those crisscrossing interconnections help explain why the disc has such a comfortable, family feel (save for one blah fusoid track, with ringers, better left off). That, and Akio's slinky jazz time, which makes it easy for Joe to feel at home.

There's another reason Joe Henderson deserves good things: like many other but not all tenor players, he's blossomed in his mid-50s. (He was born in '37.) On *Warm Valley* (WIN/What's in a Name 001; 66:05: ★★★★★), he sits in with the D.C. rhythm section of pianist Louis Scherr, bassist Tommy Cecil, and drummer Tony Martucci. If you want to know how good Joe can sound, hear "Warm Valley" for his gorgeous tone and resistance of overplaying. It doesn't hurt that the trio sets the leisurely gait beloved by grand masters of the tenor. Joe's on five of eight tracks, unconventionally but sensibly lumped in the middle of the program; it reminds you the trio was around before and after his arrival, and reinforces the casual (in the best sense) nature of the date. A great house trio makes a guest sound inspired without calling attention to themselves. Henderson was lucky to have them, but they were lucky, too. A year after this April '91 date, could these worthies have snagged him at all? By then he was Mr. Big.

DB

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## Early AE(C)

by John Corbett

**H** Hyde Park, south side of Chicago, circa 1966-'69: semi-secret laboratory for the **Art Ensemble** before a transplant to Paris required that they add "cf Chicago" to the marquee. Here, in basements, University of Chicago concert halls, and the odd studio, saxophonist Roscoe Mitchell and his band forged some of the most important music to follow in the wake of the slash-and-burn of free



Exploration the watchword: AE

jazz. In the space cleared by freedom-seekers like John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor, and Albert Ayler, the Art Ensemble was busy tinkering with and re-tooling the tradition, making explicit references to various folk forms, utilizing extended non-energy improvisations, advancing an expanded notion of multi-instrumentalism with tables of "little instruments."

This was well before their stage show would settle into the well-scripted shtick, the festival-fare that the AEC has become. "It's an *institution*," admitted Mitchell, a few years ago. Indeed, it's now an institution bogged down in its own self-image. But things were different then. Exploration was the watchword, and the outstanding five-disc package, *The Art Ensemble 1967/68* (Nessa 2500; 42:09/67:56/72:00/64:15/58:07: ★★★★★½), is the document to prove it. It contains three previously issued LPs: *Numbers 1 & 2*, which was nominally led by trumpeter Lester Bowie (appearing here in its unexpurgated form, where, on vinyl, two pieces were edited together to form "Number 2"), and Mitchell's *Old/Quartet* and *Congliphious*. The last of these sessions, which was recorded at Chess Studios, with Willie Dixon in the house, also resulted in a planned single, with the bright, Ornetish "Carefree" backed with "Tatas-Matoes." Bowie's funky breakdown for James Brown. These are included, along with alternate versions of both. It's fascinating to hear Phillip Wilson, one-time house drummer for Stax, working out the drum part in a rehearsal of "Tatas-Matoes."

Most intriguing, perhaps, are the longer improvisations and solos. Mitchell, Wilson, and bassist Malachi Favors playfully stretch "Oh Susanna" for a half-hour, anticipating the Art Ensemble's folk and pop adaptations of later years. From '67, Mitchell's "Solo" and "Tkhe," Favors' "Tutankhamen," and Bowie's hilarious "Jazz Death?" (which looks ahead to his debate with Marsalis when Wynton was but six),

are all early, surprisingly successful experiments in going it alone on non-traditional solo instruments. On the lengthy, more space-conscious pieces, like "Quintet," which includes drummer Thurman Barker, what is striking is the patience, the tolerance for silence and dead-spots that they maintained. No compulsion to fill everything with sound, there is a Zen-like simplicity to it—little-known fact: reedsman Joseph Jarman collaborated with John Cage around this time.

Nessa's boxed set is gorgeous, and sound is remarkably good considering some recordings were made on cheapo equipment and never meant for release. Only one minor gripe: while there are informative liner notes by label-owner Chuck Nessa and writer/enthusiast Terry Martin, they're tantalizingly brief. Why not more info and description from those who were there? It's a period we know too little about; though, at least in terms of the music itself, this collection fills in a huge number of holes. **DB**

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## 1 Weather Report

"Scarlet Woman" (from *MYSTERIOUS TRAVELLER*, Columbia, 1974) Joe Zawinul, synthesizers; Wayne Shorter, soprano sax; Alphonso Johnson, Miroslav Vitous, bass; Ishmael Wilburn, drums; Dom Um Romao, percussion.

It's Weather Report. There's a lot of space and the bass is real quiet and grooving, and when he comes in it's like a counterline. Then the synths have special sounds, tasteful. No one's overplaying, and you sometimes miss that in modern fusion and where fusion went, which made everyone hate it. This is so beautiful and classic. This is probably off something early, like *Mysterious Traveller*, something I don't know that well because I don't know that song. But it has that mixture and beauty, and that's what I look for in electric music. I just wish that Wayne had played more. 5 stars.

## 2 McCoy Tyner

"Española" (from *SOLILOQUY*, Blue Note, 1991) Tyner, piano.

I can't tell if it's Chick [Corea] or Joanne [Brackeen], but they didn't solo. If it's either of them, I'm surprised that it was so restrained; but there's beauty in restraint, and it's hard to say, without the context of the whole album, what their intent was for this song, which was a beautiful piece. But I wanted more, I wanted to hear the piano player soloing. It didn't do that much for me. 3 stars.

## 3 Geri Allen

"And They Partied" (from *MARDONS*, Blue Note, 1992) Allen, piano; Wallace Roney, trumpet; Tani Tabbal, Pheeroan akLaff, drums; Anthony Cox, Dwayne Dolphin, bass.

[during the performance] It's Herbie. Sounds like Miles, but it's so clear, it doesn't seem like it could be. So it must be Wallace. But Herbie is killing or it could be Chick, but I think it's Herbie or Kenny Kirkland. It's great, though. I really like it. Or it could be a young group of people really going for it, an adventurous thing. I don't buy new records, though, so I would never know. But it's a modern piano player, and I dig him, or her. And I like the improvisation as a group, and I love the trumpet player. He was playing really hip lines. And I like the composition. That gets 5.

[reading the CD booklet] Good. She killed! That was really hip.

ZS: What's the scene like for women in jazz now?

Well, I think the top positions are withheld, like ultimate recognition as a serious force. The press doesn't get behind a

by Zan Stewart

## RACHEL Z

Keyboardist Rachel Z is living her dream. The 31-year-old New York resident whose 1993 self-titled Columbia debut caused quite a stir among musicians, if not the press, is now playing keyboards with idol Wayne Shorter on the reed giant's upcoming album for Elektra. To do this, she's spent the past four months in southern California, where Shorter resides. And while she says it's no fun being away from new husband/manager Ron Hellman, she's thrilled to be involved with the man she calls "one of the musical geniuses of the 20th century."

Z (whose last name is Nicolazzo; "So many people misspelled it I stopped using it") plays synths on *Rachel Z* and with Steps Ahead (with whom she's appeared since 1988), but acoustic music is in her heart. She listens mostly to traditionalists, and albums by Monk, Bill Evans, and Bud Powell made up the bulk of her hotel-room library.

The daughter of an opera singer and an artist, Rachel started piano at seven, played her first jazz gig at 14, and graduated from the New England Con-



servatory of Music in 1985. Then it was back to the Apple and studies with Richie Beirach, Joanne Brackeen, John Hicks, and Fred Hersch.

This is Z's first blindfold. She was given no advance information about the music played.

woman's record, saying, "She's the next innovative player." I don't think that's because we're not as talented as the guys. I think it's hard for a male-dominated press to do it. They disregarded Joanne [Brackeen], and who knows what might have happened to her? We need a woman Coltrane, and it could happen, but not with all the current obstacles.

## 4 Herbie Hancock

"Mimosa" (from *INVENTIONS AND DIMENSIONS*, Blue Note, 1963) Hancock, piano; Paul Chambers, bass; Willie Bobo, drums and timbales; Osvaldo "Chihauhau" Martinez, percussion.

[as the music plays] It's Keith. Did you ever hear him with Art Blakey on *Buttercorn Lady*? I think it's Jack [DeJohnette] and Gary [Peacock]. He has the most fluid piano chops, and his time is so beautiful . . . if it were Keith. But it doesn't sound as full, blown-out Keith. And I don't like the groove [a medium-slow Latin-ish number]. Like, what are they doing down there? The piano player is playing in an incredibly tasteful way; but if I were playing, I'd want the bass and drums to play harder. I like to get hit in the face, a lot. But maybe the previous cut

was burning.

ZS: Shall I take it off?

No, I like it. I just wanted more from the bass and drums. [reads the booklet] I love Herbie. You can't fuck with it because it's Herbie. This was different. It's killing. 5 stars.

## 5 Bud Powell

"Tempus Fugit" (from *JAZZ GIANT*, Verve, 1949) Powell, piano; Ray Brown, bass; Max Roach, drums.

[laughing as she listens] "Tempus Fugit." It's Bud. I played this in a Junior Miss beauty pageant in Morristown, New Jersey, when I was 17. I lost really bad. It was like, "What is that? She shouldn't be doing that. It's unladylike." The baton twirler beat me out. I love Bud. He's a monster piano player. The feeling of that time period, not just the notes, makes that music happen. It's about an adventurous spirit, it's about breaking through, not being part of the status quo. When Wayne talks about it, he says, "We knew it was the new music." Imagine, going to see the "new music" and it was bebop. I really think that if Bud and Bird had synthesizers, they'd be in their MIDI studios, writing symphonies. 5 stars.

DB