

CLASSIC INTERVIEW: NAT KING COLE

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HARP ATTACK
Junior Wells &
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Freddie Hubbard

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'What Is It We Haven't Done Before?'

He's been on and off the scene more times than Batman. With a new album on a new label, not to mention a curious mix of electric and acoustic music, the sax legend comes clean.

By Zan Stewart

Cover photograph of Wayne Shorter by Karen Miller.



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 SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: Send orders and address changes to: DOWN BEAT, P.O. Box 906, Elmhurst, IL 60126-0906. Inquires: U.S.A. 1-800/535-7496; Foreign 1-708/941-2030.
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 POSTMASTER: SEND CHANGE OF ADDRESS TO DOWN BEAT, P.O. BOX 906, Elmhurst, IL 60126-0906. CABLE ADDRESS: DOWN BEAT (on sale September 19, 1995) MAGAZINE PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION.



WVA

What Is It We

After a two-year hiatus from performing, and a nine-year break since he's released an album, Wayne Shorter has surfaced. *High Life* is due out on Verve in mid-October, and an off-and-on eight-month world tour kicks off on Oct. 27 at the San Francisco Jazz Festival.

But did Shorter, arguably one of the most influential jazz musicians of the past 20 years, really go away?

➤ Not if you look at the record stores, where albums on Columbia, Blue Note and other labels by the acclaimed composer and saxophonist still fill CD bins under his name.

➤ Not if you're a Miles Davis fan and have searched out the wealth of CDs that Shorter recorded during his 1964-70 stay with the trumpeter, including the recently issued *The Complete Live At The Plugged Nickel 1965* on Columbia Records.

➤ Not if you look at other recent albums by talented jazz players, among them pianists Joey Calderazzo, Michael Wolff, Kei Akagi, Bill Cunliffe and Cecilia Coleman, singer Madeline Eastman, organist Mel Rhyne, drummer Ralph Peterson, reedists Ira Sullivan, Billy Pierce and Teodross Avery, and bandleader Bob Belden, who have collectively recorded such Shorter compositions as "Tell It Like It Is," "Dance Cadaverous," "Black Nile," "Edda," "Lester Left Town," "Water Babies," "Teru," "Sweet Pea," "Pinochio," "Face On The Barroom Floor" and "Speak No Evil."

➤ Not if you've played a jam session recently, where tunes by Wayne are regularly performed.

Okay, so if he didn't exactly go away, where *did* he go?

Nowhere. The musician with the philosophic bent—who speaks in long, meandering sentences and fragmented thoughts that are, ultimately, surprisingly focused—stayed in his home high in the Hollywood Hills that divide greater Los Angeles from the San Fernando Valley. There he read, watched TV and movies—he owns a very large screen projector-type system—and hung out with his wife, Ana Maria, and their friends. Time well spent, he says.

"I had never had a year off after 30 years of continuous touring. So it was a luxury to not do what you have been doing for a year or two—just sit down and think and read," says the at-once amiable and pensive Shorter, who's plopped comfortably in a chair in his living room. "You know that when you go back [to the work life], you will continue, but you won't be the same. You continue and be as sincere as you can [about what you're doing], and that's it. There's no secret plan. How

WAYNE SHORTER

Haven't Done Before?'

secret can a plan be about disappearing and reappearing?"

About midway through his hiatus, Shorter, 62, started to work on the music that is heard on *High Life*—for which the composer and his chief collaborator, keyboardist Rachel Z, developed a synthesized orchestra. The span of time between the recording in 1986 of *Joy Rider*, his final album for Columbia, and this new beginning seemed natural.

"There wasn't anything really happening [that I wanted to record], and I wasn't really in a hurry to be with a company," he says. "I had been with record companies for 30 years, including Vee Jay, Blue Note and 17 years with Columbia. I had been working so much on tour, then coming home and making a record between tours, and I didn't want to do that anymore. Make a record, go to work, make a record, go to work."

To punctuate his thought, Shorter—a compact man who stands about 5'8" and weighs 160 pounds—gets out of his chair, tightens his mouth and throat and bellows in a grainy, loud voice that's not like his normally open and clear one, "It's time to make a record!"

It was around January 1994 that Shorter was ready. (He had a contract with Elektra, which was cancelled at some point last year, at which time he signed with Verve.) He called Z—whose last name is Nicolazzo and whom he had met at one of his performances at New York's Blue Note jazz club—and began to conceptualize the new recording, which spotlights scintillating Shorter compositions in a variety of moods, from upbeat to tender. It would feature the orchestra providing the background to Shorter's characteristically personal and moving solos on tenor and soprano sax, rather than a standard rhythm section.

Shorter had reams of music to sift through. "There were pages of writing, not so much tunes as compositions. I was blown away by how extremely well-trained he was," says Z in a phone interview from her home in New York. (Shorter earned a B.M. in Music Education in 1955 from New York University, Z attended the New England Conservatory of Music.)

"Wayne had music he had written years ago, and new things, all with these beautiful chords. At the outset, I started playing the music into the computer," says Z, who is also a member of the band Steps Ahead. "I use Performer, the Mac program. He wanted to hear how it all sounded. Together, we came up with a little orchestra facsimile, using my synthesizers and a couple of his. We had samples of real instruments, like oboe, bassoon, strings, plus all my synth sounds, and certain textures and fantasy instruments that I made up. Eventually, we started editing the music that I had loaded into the sequencer. It was,



all told, about 1,000 bars." When you consider that, say, "Speak No Evil" is 40 bars long, this is a lot of music.

Over a period of about a year, Shorter and Z shaped this raw material into the album's nine songs, including a dramatic reworking of the classic "Children Of The Night" (from the Blakey book), and eight other new pieces with titles like "Avenida Do Mundo," "Maya" and "Virgo Rising." Some of these numbers have punchy backbeats, others cruise along under the propulsion of a bossa-rock groove, and there's even the occasional straight-ahead, spang-a-lang pulse.

"I had written streams of ideas and thoughts that gave rise to pictures," Shorter says. "I edited these to see if I could compress the meat of a [musical] story without strangling it. We were able to keep a good amount of atmosphere and breathing space in between these stories, where [the listener] could make up [his] own story."

"Children Of The Night" was initially recorded on Blakey's album *Mosaic*, during Shorter's 1959-63 tenure as musical director for Art's Jazz Messengers. The way it was revamped typified the composer's approach when concocting *High Life*.

"I think of it as a story that's never really finished," Shorter begins. "A musical statement is a bunch of sequences, and if you can tell a story with sequences that don't necessarily follow each other, then you have an eternal loop going on. So why not tell a story with something that once was a tune? That's what Beethoven did—start with a tune [*Shorter sings a short fragment*], a little something that became a chain, and then those chains became the symphony. The closest I can get to a symphony, or that attitude, on these kinds of records is to tell a story by not having an ABA, ABBA form—like some of the tunes, say, 'One By One,' that I wrote with Art Blakey."

Z says Shorter wrote incessantly while they worked together. "He'd hand me a page and ask to hear it. He writes at the piano, and we were working in the same room," that is, Shorter's home studio.

"He would work so hard," Z says. "Some days it would take him all day to get one chord; and it wasn't the chord he was looking for, but a *feeling*. It was hard for me to figure out why he made certain choices."

Like Gil Evans, who used to say he'd sit all day, trying to find a new way to voice a seventh chord, Shorter's efforts were attempts to find completely fresh expressions.

"I was wondering if it's possible to evoke emotions that have never been felt," Shorter recalls of the experience. "It's why I like the [1940] movie *One Million B.C.*, which is about two tribes that meet. There's a scene where a man hasn't heard humming [and is fascinated by it], and another where an apple falls from a tree and hits a kid in the head. Some people from

'92 MONTEREY JAZZ FESTIVAL



"I had never had a year off after 30 years of continuous touring. So it was a luxury to not do what you have been doing for a year or two—just sit down and think and read."

one tribe laugh, and the other tribe is shocked, because they haven't heard laughter. I mean, what is it we haven't done before, out of all the things that we have done as humans?"

One thing Shorter hadn't done was make a record with an orchestra, which would indeed provide him with untested possibilities. Here, the orchestral background gives him an unusual and fresh pad to play off of, along with the powerful beats offered by bassist Marcus Miller, who co-produced the session with Verve's Guy Eckstine, and drummer Will Calhoun. Shorter wanted something different.

"In this instance, I needed another way of having [accompanying] colors move rhythmically other than having a keyboardist do it," says

Shorter. "The way a keyboardist plays will [ultimately] become traditional. That word, to me, means the way in which the majority [of players] does something over a period of time which is too long. And I didn't say how long that time is, just that it's too long."

Finally, in March of this year, Shorter, Z, Calhoun and Miller went into studios in Los Angeles and, in a process that mixed overdubs with live playing, recorded the project.

While Shorter the tenor and soprano saxophonist gets plenty of space and sounds strong on the album, it's Shorter the writer who is really the star. He draws from a world of influences in shaping his works. As a child growing up in Newark, N.J., he used to hear the radio programs his father chose: a regular Sunday diet of country & western music, then Andre Kostelanetz's orchestra on *Music 'A La Mood*. Here, Shorter sings a portion of the show's opening theme, David Rose's "Holiday For Strings."

"When we heard that, we knew it was time to get ready to go to the movies," Shorter says of a treat that nurtured his lifelong love of film and film music.

Later came the big bands: Fletcher Henderson, Duke Ellington, Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw. "Joe [Zawinul, Shorter's co-leader in the jazz-fusion band Weather Report] and I used to say Artie played intelligent," Shorter comments. "He found another way to play."

Then came bebop—via Charlie Parker and Thelonious Monk—and a myriad of classical influences, among these being Stravinsky, Bartok and Richard Strauss.

Shorter has been mixing and matching his influences since he started writing. He recalls writing a sketch for a modern harmony class at NYU, which he later used as part of the introduction to his "Elegant People," recorded by Weather Report on their album *Black Market*.

"The teacher was named Modena Scoville, and she got you into the modern vein and was comfortable there," says Shorter. "She was tough, but her toughness didn't impact us [negatively]. She told me when I had played the piece on the

piano—I was a clarinet performance major and everybody else in the class were like piano and violin majors—'You know, you're mixing styles. It could be beautiful, if you get to know how to do that.' She meant that I had to know those other styles, rather than just go on total style.

"So I like to bring in things, like," and here he gnarls his hands as if he's holding something ungainly, "why not have a crooked little [musical idea] that goes right there, but make that crooked little thing the object of the story?"

Asked what draws him to composing, Shorter gave a reply worthy of deep reflection: "It's like the puzzle, 'Why is there life?' he begins. 'What is life for? It seems like composing—instead of giving you a valuable answer all at once, the answer is supplied in dribbles, these dribbles are you doing life. So that is the answer to why there is life: because you do it. You live it. That's more profound, I think, than any answer like, 'Life is here because blah blah blah.' Then you would have to go to the absolute theorems of the ages."

In his almost 40 years in jazz, Shorter has written many jazz classics, among them "One By One," "Footprints," "Speak No Evil," "Nefertiti," "Beauty And The Beast," "Hammer Head," "Tom Thumb," "Infant Eyes" and "Sanctuary." Many of his finest compositions were recorded during his stints with Blakey and Davis, associations he says were the highlights of his career, a career that also includes three Grammys and over a dozen victories in various **DB** Critics and Readers polls.

In his autobiography written with Quincy Troupe, Davis talked about Shorter the composer, the man he called "the intellectual musical catalyst" of his renowned mid-'60s quintet, which also spotlighted pianist Herbie Hancock, bassist Ron

Carter and drummer Tony Williams.

"Wayne's always been someone who experimented *with* form instead of someone who did it *without* form.... He brought in a kind of curiosity about working with musical rules. If they didn't work, then he broke them, but with a musical sense; he understood that freedom in music was the ability to know the rules in order to bend them to your satisfaction or taste."

Memories of Miles take Shorter to a warm place. "One day he called me and said," and here the saxophonist accurately imitates the trumpeter's scratchy speaking voice, "'Man, that was the best band. We covered a whole lot of ground, didn't we?' I said, 'Hell, yeah,'" Shorter says, he eyes lighting up.

The trumpeter, who died in 1991, was a special inspiration in the making of *High Life*. "His spirit is here throughout, especially when I play the soprano saxophone," says Shorter. "The passages where the harmony slows down are probably the places that Miles would have wanted to play himself. But in the places where there's a lot of harmonic motion, Miles wouldn't want to play there unless he listened a long time and found a melody thing he could play over that, a melody that locked into those changes."

Now that he's back in the swing, Shorter looks forward to performing again. His last tour as a leader was in 1988, when he co-lead a band with Carlos Santana. Then there was the Tribute to Miles Tour in 1992, when former Davis bandmates Hancock, Williams and Carter, joined by trumpeter Wallace Roney, toured the globe for six months. Tossed in were occasional all-star junkets, as Shorter, Hancock, bassist Stanley Clarke and drummer Omar Hakim played Europe in the spring of '92.

Shorter's October engagement in San Francisco kicks off a

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world tour that will go on, with plenty of breaks, until summer 1996. The band is tentatively set to include Z on keyboards, bassist Tracy Wormworth and Calhoun on drums.

While Shorter no doubt anticipates enthusiastic tour turnouts, his main wish may be that people will actually sit down and listen to *High Life*. He sees the recording as one way of tackling head-on the notoriously short attention span exhibited by so many people today, particularly youngsters.

"I'm talking about breaking down this shell, cracking the

model of the instant-gratification thing, which has obviously become a malignancy," he says. "Kids can't sit still in a class for five seconds to see what 2 and 2 is. So how, at age 16, 18, are they going to be able to sit and listen, or look, or just walk by the Guggenheim Museum? This jumping around too fast, looking for the brass ring at every moment, leads to many things, like AIDS and quick divorce. So if they sit still long enough in one place, how will they respond to music that's not what they usually hear, or have heard?" **DB**

EQUIPMENT

Wayne Shorter plays a Selmer Mark VI tenor saxophone with a Ria #10 mouthpiece and Vandoren #3 1/2 reeds. His soprano is a Yamaha, outfitted with an Otto Link #10 mouthpiece. He uses Vandoren #4 reeds. He

occasionally plays overdubs on a Selmer Mark VI alto sax, using an Otto Link mouthpiece with Vandoren #3 1/2 reeds, and on a Yamaha baritone sax, which is equipped with a Yanagisawa mouthpiece with Vandoren #4 reeds.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

HIGH LIFE—Verve 314 529 224
PHANTOM NAVIGATOR—Columbia 40373
NATIVE DANCER—Columbia 46159
MOTO GROSSO FEIO—One Way 521-17373
THE ALL SEEING EYE—Blue Note 29100
SUPER NOVA—Blue Note 84332
BEST OF WAYNE SHORTER—Blue Note 91141
SPEAK NO EVIL—Blue Note 46509
SCHIZOPHRENIA—Blue Note 84297
NIGHT DREAMER—Blue Note 84173
THE SOOTHSAYER—Blue Note 84443
WAYNING MOMENTS—VeeJay 900
WAYNE SHORTER—GNP/Crescendo 2075

with Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter, Tony Williams and Wallace Roney
A TRIBUTE TO MILES—Qwest/Reprise 45059
 with Weather Report
WEATHER REPORT—Columbia 48824
I SING THE BODY ELECTRIC—Columbia 46107
MYSTERIOUS TRAVELLER—Columbia 32494
MR. GONE—Columbia 46869

with Miles Davis
THE COMPLETE LIVE AT THE PLUGGED NICKEL 1965—Columbia 66955
THE COMPLETE PLUGGED NICKEL SESSIONS—Mosaic 10-158

FILLES DE KILIMANJARO—Columbia 46116
SORCERER—Columbia 48954
NEFERTITI—Columbia 46113
E.S.P.—Columbia 46863
BITCHES BREW—Columbia 40577

with Art Blakey
THE COMPLETE BLUE NOTE RECORDINGS OF ART BLAKEY'S 1960 JAZZ MESSENGERS—Mosaic MD6-141
ART BLAKEY AND THE JAZZ MESSENGERS—Impulse! 5886
MOSAIC—Blue Note 46523
FREE FOR ALL—Blue Note 84170
THREE BLIND MICE VOLS. 1&2—Blue Note 84451/84452

CARAVAN—OJC 038-2
NIGHT IN TUNISIA—Blue Note 84049
THE BIG BEAT—Blue Note 84029
 with various others
THE INDIVIDUALISM OF GIL EVANS—Verve 833 804-2
THE GIGOLO—Blue Note 84212 (Lee Morgan)
SEARCH FOR THE NEW LAND—Blue Note 84164 (Lee Morgan)
EXPANSIONS—Blue Note 84338 (McCoy Tyner)
THE SUN DON'T LIE—PRA 60201 (Marcus Miller)
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Freddie Hubbard

When Your

Trumpeter great Freddie Hubbard greets a visitor to his cozy split-level Hollywood Hills home with a friendly handshake that belies the worry in his eyes.

At age 57, after a career that dates back to the glory days of bebop, the growth of Blue Note Records and the emergence of fusion and jazz-rock, Hubbard finds himself unable to play for long stretches, the result of a split lip that became infected when he refused to curtail a series of engagements two years ago.

In sports and in dance, performers often "play through" injuries, attempting to put mind over matter in order to get through an important date. In years past, Hubbard, like other trumpeters, relied on sheer willpower to downplay a bothersome lip or some other impediment. This time, the obstacle proved too great. He's been off the road for 18 months, and it was only with much effort that he managed to complete sessions for his current album, *MMTC* (*Monk, Miles, Trane & Cannon*), his first studio date in 10 years.

Hubbard traces his problem to a series of shows beginning in late 1992, when he flew to Europe on a gig with Slide Hampton's band, alongside fellow trumpeters Roy Hargrove and Jon Faddis. "I started playing high notes with Faddis and got carried away," Hubbard says seriously, sitting at a wooden desk in his office/practice room at home. "High notes aren't my forte. I came back, went to Philly and played with some guys without warming up. That's when my top lip popped. Then I went to New York and played the Blue Note for a week. That's when I should have stopped cold."

But Hubbard didn't stop there. Instead, he went back to Europe for a big band date, and soon after realized his lip had become infected. When he returned to Los Angeles, a doctor performed a biopsy, fearing cancer. "I said to myself, 'Man, I'm going to get a day job. This is terrible,'" Hubbard says, adding also that he was drinking too much and partying with "the rock crowd." In addition, he conceded that he missed several gigs due to these problems.

Cancer was ruled out, but Hubbard was left with upper-lip tissue so sore he was

unable to play with the steely verve and confidence he was famous for. "People looked at me and said, 'Is he doped up? Is he messed up on something?' But it happens to most trumpet players during their career," Hubbard says. "It happened to Louis Armstrong. Miles quit for five years. Eventually, you just say, 'Damn, let me put this thing down and give my chops a rest.' I've always played with a lot of energy—maybe too much. So, I had to change my embouchure by going back to the basics and learning to warm up and play soft. I used to just pick up the trumpet and blow hard. I had to go back, get some books and consult with classical trumpet teachers. I couldn't play a note for a while because it was so tender. It's so frustrating not being able to blow the way I blew."

Actually, for a project that was so difficult to finish, *MMTC* is a sturdy effort. The MusicMasters release includes four Hubbard originals, plus John Coltrane's "Naima," Thelonious Monk's "Off Minor," Miles Davis' "All Blues" and Charles Lloyd's "The Song My Lady Sings." The album features alto saxophonist Vincent Herring and drummer Carl Allen, both of whom were responsible for laying down many of the tracks so Hubbard could record his parts in various sessions over a 10-month period.

"It was the hardest record date I ever made," Hubbard says. "It took a long time to finish. I had to dig really deep, but I think when people hear it, they'll hear the feeling I put into it."

The album is obviously dedicated to four influential artists: Monk, Miles, Coltrane and Cannonball Adderley. "I met Trane at a jam session at Count Basie's in Harlem in 1958," recalls Hubbard. "He said, 'Why don't you come over and let's try and practice a little bit together.' I almost went crazy. I mean, here was a 20-year-old kid practicing with John Coltrane. He helped me out a lot, and we worked several jobs together."

In fact, Hubbard, who estimates he's played on some 300 records overall, recorded several albums with Trane, including *Olé* in '61 and *Ascension* four years later. By the time of that second album with Trane, Hubbard was in the



PAULA ROSS—JAZZ ART

midst of a productive contract with Blue Note, for whom he had recorded his debut as a leader, *Open Sesame*, in 1960. Hubbard has fond memories of the time.

"During that period, man, I was doing two albums a week and playing clubs at night," he says. "There was a lot of energy. It was between Lee Morgan, Kenny Dorham, Donald Byrd, Blue Mitchell, Richard Williams and me in New York at the time trying to maybe get where Dizzy and Miles were at. We were eager beavers, man. Those Blue Note sessions were like school. We'd rehearse three days and take the music home like homework. That's why those sessions sound pretty good today."

"I remember on my first album we did 32 takes of 'All Or Nothing At All.' At the end of the tune each time, me and [drummer] Clifford Jarvis would trade eighths. Thirty-two takes of the entire song—that's the solos, the head, everything. Now, you know I must have been young. I think about that kind of stuff and say, 'No wonder I can't play right anymore.'"

Chops



Are Shot

By Fred Shuster

Much has been made of the so-called rivalry between Hubbard and the late Lee Morgan during those heady New York years. But Hubbard sets the record straight. "Lee was about the only young cat that scared me when he played," he says. "He had so much fire and natural feeling. I had more technique, but he had that feeling. People seemed to like him more than they liked me at the beginning. But we'd follow each other around, buy sports cars and chase the same chicks. It was a different period then. Today, it's all business."

Despite the recent period of inactivity, Hubbard's music has turned up in various

places. For example, his 1970 recording of "Red Clay" was used as the groove beneath the rap outfit A Tribe Called Quest's album cut "Sucka Nigga." And Hubbard's melodically inventive trumpet can be found on rapper/producer Guru's current bop-meets-hip-hop project *Jazzmatazz Volume II: The New Reality*. The trumpet master has also recently completed work on the soundtrack to a film called *The Big Gun*, and there are plans for a series of weekend dates at a small North Hollywood jazz club.

Meanwhile, Hubbard has some tips for young trumpet players. They're lessons he admits to learning the hard way: "Don't

make the mistake I made of not taking care of myself," he says. "Please, keep your chops cool and don't overblow. If you're going to play hard, be sure to warm up. And I'd advise everyone to get some health insurance, because you never know when you'll need it. I used to work all the time. I'd go to Europe for two days, come back and go to Japan, then fly to New York."

But what if a trumpeter truly expresses his or herself by shrieking? "Don't do it," Hubbard replies firmly. "Because when you reach my age, your lip's going to give out. No question. And it can lead to cancer."



"I used to just pick up the trumpet and blow hard. I had to go back.... I couldn't play a note for a while because it was so tender. It's so frustrating not being able to blow the way I blew."

Hubbard remembers his acclaimed stint with the fiery Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, "and I'd get carried away trying to stay right with that momentum. And you shouldn't do that. I used to try and play like Coltrane and solo for 30 or 40 choruses. It all caught up with me. If you play this kind of music, you're going to have problems at some point. That's the thing about jazz: you'll be blowing when maybe you should have stopped 20 years ago. Then, you look up and you've got a big knot on your lip."

Hubbard is encouraged that younger players often use larger mouthpieces than the ones he started on. "These players may not quite have the feeling yet, but they'll last longer. Over the years, I've had blisters, but when you're young, you just blow them away. My mistake was, I

should have taken off longer than just a few months. I went back to playing before the tissue had healed. The result was, I'd get through half a set and just poop out."

He picks up a horn given to him by Donald Byrd and blows some runs that maybe aren't as fast as he would like, but which reflect a warm, newly thoughtful tone. His lip is not vibrating like it once did, Hubbard explains, and he must slowly build the muscles back up to full strength. "I had to change my whole approach and let the air flow," he says. "It's less work. I can play for a while, but not for too long. You never think anything's going to happen. But if I can't work, where's the income going to come from? Luckily, I've made so many albums, I have royalty checks coming in. But it's not enough to live on."

Hubbard says he'd like to teach while

his lip tissue heals. A book of his transcriptions is due out soon and he believes he can impart some valuable information to developing musicians. "Your own personal style on any musical instrument comes in time," he states. "I used to try and play like Miles, and Miles caught me copying him one night at Birdland. He said, 'Hey man, why don't you play some of your own stuff.' So, I finally did, because I had copied all his solos."

The trumpeter advises young players that after they copy and transcribe solos and practice them to "go off and really search inside and try and get something of your own. Because if you don't have your own sound, you'll be forgotten. Jazz isn't like pop, where you can sell millions of records with a hit. Your spirit and soul aren't important in pop music.

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But jazz is like classical music. If people like you, they'll remember and you'll last forever."

Hubbard, who was raised in Indianapolis and played his first sessions there with the Montgomery Brothers, moved to New York in the late '50s. In the '70s, he left for Los Angeles at the prompting of Quincy Jones. "It's a different groove out there," says Hubbard, who lives with Brigitte, his wife of 23 years. "People are more relaxed, and they're not so concerned about going down to some basement to hear music. You get a chance to experiment. Jazz has changed. The old days will never come back. We used to have jam sessions after the gigs, play till 4 in the morning and then go someplace and blow some more. That's not the way it is now. You have to wake up early and go to the studio."

Hubbard said his own favorite work is on Oliver Nelson's 1961 date *Blues And The Abstract Truth*. He won a Grammy Award in 1972 for *First Light* on CTI. "Young players today only get the exposure to the greats like Miles, Trane and Monk through records," he said. They've had no experience with the real essence of those guys—the way they held their instruments, the way they acted, what really caused this music. Most of the cats trying to play

hardcore contemporary jazz don't have their own style. Or, there are some people like Wynton [Marsalis] who play the horn, but don't play no hip jazz. They're just into playing the instrument good. They're not creating ideas."

Still, Hubbard has words of praise for younger players like Vincent Herring, who "reminds me a lot of Cannonball. He's got that cheerful type of feeling in his

playing. He's one of the few young cats on the scene today that has his own voice. A lot of the kids are just copying what we did in the '50s and '60s, so there are very few guys I see today who will be considered innovators."

Asked if he had any last words for *Down Beat*, Hubbard is quick to respond: "Tell 'em the Hub's coming back. Give me another six months and I'll be ready!" **DB**

EQUIPMENT

Freddie Hubbard plays a Calicchio trumpet made in Los Angeles, with mouthpieces custom-made by the company. He also plays a flugelhorn by Elkorn, Wis.-based Getzen.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

- | | |
|--|---|
| <i>MMTC (MONK, MILES, TRANE & CANNONBALL)—</i>
MusicMasters 65132 | <i>BREAKING POINT—</i> Blue Note 84172 |
| <i>LIVE AT FAT TUESDAY'S—</i> MusicMasters 65075 | <i>HUB-TONES—</i> Blue Note 84115 |
| <i>BOLIVIA—</i> MusicMasters 5063 | <i>THE ARTISTRY OF—</i> Impulse!/MCA 33111 |
| <i>FACE TO FACE—</i> Pablo 2310-876 | <i>HUB CAP—</i> Blue Note 84073 |
| <i>HIGH ENERGY—</i> Blue Note 80478 | <i>OPEN SESAME—</i> Blue Note 84040 |
| <i>BACKLASH—</i> Atlantic 90466 | with various others |
| <i>THE FREDDIE HUBBARD AND WOODY SHAW</i> | <i>BLUES AND THE ABSTRACT TRUTH—</i> Impulse!/GRP |
| <i>SESSIONS—</i> Blue Note 32747 | 9335 (Oliver Nelson) |
| <i>BORN TO BE BLUE—</i> Fantasy/OJC 734 | <i>OLE—</i> Atlantic 1373 (John Coltrane) |
| <i>LIFE-FLIGHT—</i> Blue Note 85139 | <i>THE MAJOR WORKS OF JOHN COLTRANE—</i> |
| <i>LIVE AT NORTH SEA JAZZ FESTIVAL—</i> Pablo 2620-113 | Impulse!/GRP 113 (John Coltrane) |
| <i>MINOR MISHAP—</i> Black Lion 760122 | <i>FREE JAZZ—</i> Atlantic 1368 (Ornette Coleman) |
| <i>SKY DIVE—</i> CTI/CBS 44171 | <i>JAZZ MESSENGERS—</i> Impulse!/MCA 33103 (Art Blakey) |
| <i>FIRST LIGHT—</i> CTI/CBS 40687 | <i>COMPONENTS—</i> Blue Note 29027 (Bobby Hutcherson) |
| <i>RED CLAY—</i> CTI/CBS 40809 | <i>BLUESNIK—</i> Blue Note 84067 (Jackie McLean) |
| <i>THE NIGHT OF THE COOKERS—</i> Blue Note 28882 | <i>MAIDEN VOYAGE—</i> Blue Note 46339 (Herbie Hancock) |
| | <i>EMPYREAN ISLES—</i> Blue Note 84175 (Herbie Hancock) |

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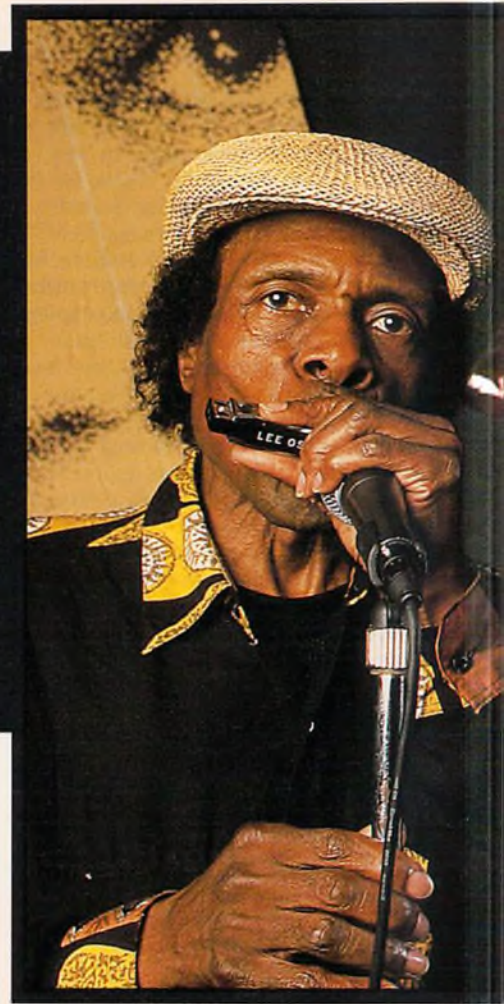


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Harp *to* Harp



By Dave Helland

Junior Wells and Sugar Blue, two of Chicago's finest blues harpists, have made a tradition of breaking tradition. Both are known as progressives in the blues world, with a history of blending the down-home Delta genre with elements of funk, r&b, jazz, country & western and rock & roll.

Of the two, Wells, 60, plays with a dirtier, more distorted sound, the kind that has defined blues harp playing for the past 40 years. His reputation has grown since the '50s, when, after a stint playing with the Aces, Muddy Waters hired him to replace harpist Little Walter. In the '60s, a series of records with guitarist Buddy Guy and tours with the Rolling Stones brought him to the attention of white blues fans throughout the United States and Europe.

That's when James Whiting, growing up in Harlem, discovered the blues. His career as Sugar Blue began in the streets, playing for spare change. After recording with Victoria Spivey and Johnny Shines, Blue moved to Paris in 1977, where he played in the Metro stations and met up with Mick Jagger. He toured with the Rolling Stones for five years, then moved to Chicago and joined Willie Dixon's Chicago Blues All-Stars. Possessing a great ear for chord changes, Blue has played in jazz circles as well. Now, at age 45, he's become one of the blues scene's smokin'-est harmonicists, revered for his lightning-fast licks and clean, fluid sound.

Recent releases from each—Wells' *Everybody's Gettin' Some* and Blue's *In*

Your Eyes—show that both artists (who also sing) continue to test the limits of what is the blues. We sat down with them at Rosa's, one of Chicago's premier blues clubs, for an often-heated discussion about the blues, its audiences and its errant offspring, rock & roll.

DAVE HELLAND: *You both make it look so simple. Is the harmonica an easy instrument to learn how to play?*

JUNIOR WELLS: It's not that easy if you don't have that little thing in you, a confidence that you can play. It's not going to say anything by itself, you got to put it out there from the bottom of your heart and make it sing. So much you can learn, you never get through learning about it. No instrument will you ever get through learning about it. You can always create something new on it.

SUGAR BLUE: Amen to that.

DH: *Is it hard to find good material to record?*

SB: Really, if you want to write a blues song all you have to do is turn on the television and dial in C-Span, if you want the blues.

DH: *Did the blues pick you, or did you pick the blues?*

JW: I picked the blues.

SB: I was born with them suckers. I had to run around and find them, but I was born with them.

JW: I had not heard the blues, really, till I heard the original Sonny Boy [Williamson], John Lee, playing the harmonica. When I heard that, that's when I decided that's what I wanted to do.

SB: See, I grew up in Harlem, and in New

York City there was a much stronger jazz scene. My mother was a singer and a dancer at the Apollo Theater many years ago. I had never really heard the blues except for Lester Young, big-band kind of blues. [When] I heard Muddy Waters with Little Walter, I realized that's it, that's what I want to do with the rest of my life, which is why I decided to live in Chicago. Junior is here. At the time, Carey Bell was here, Big Walter was here, Easy Baby, Billy Boy Arnold. If there is a school of the blues, it is Chicago. It's with the innovators that you learn about the music.

DH: *Forty years ago, Junior, was there a big difference between what the musicians thought was blues and what was early rock & roll?*

JW: I can play the blues right now, pick up the tempo on it and they're gonna call it rock & roll. When I came out with *Better Off With The Blues* ['93], [people] said I was selling out the blues, like they said about Buddy Guy and B.B. King. If I'm sitting down in a chair blowing the harmonica and a guy's over there playing the guitar and that's the blues, that's Delta. But that's not the only way the blues is supposed to be played. People say you're not supposed to have horns in it,



“I can’t just stop doing what I feel in my whole soul and body...and do what you want me to do. ’Cause if I do that, then you can say I’m selling out the blues.” — Junior Wells

but that’s not my style of playing the blues.

SB: It’s got a lot to do with the paint job, too. Remember “Hound Dog”? When Big Mama Thornton did it, it was the blues. When Elvis Presley did it, it’s rock & roll. Let’s face it: when you talk about rhythm & blues, when you talk about jazz, when you talk about rock, you’re talking about the blues, you’re talking about black American music. Okay, when it gets down to anything else, it’s about the paint job and it’s about the money—who gets it, who don’t—and that’s all it is.

DH: Junior, has that changed over the 40 years that you’ve been recording? That black people play the blues and white people become rich playing rock & roll? That the producers make all the money and the musicians get a handshake and a little check?

JW: The producer is always going to make a lot of money if it’s left to him. See, years ago, black musicians didn’t know anything about BMI or ASCAP, and so people like Leonard Chess and Willie Dixon and all them was helping to steal a tune because you didn’t know how to put it in BMI and ASCAP. Like when Muddy made “Just Make Love To Me” [Junior tells a detailed story about how the Aces’ untitled theme

song was released as Little Walter’s “Juke” on the flipside]. Wasn’t nothing we could do about it because we didn’t have any rights to it.

SB: Has things changed in the last 40 years? Yes, they’ve gotten worse in my opinion.

DH: Aren’t you more sophisticated now with your business than...

SB: When I met Junior, Muddy and them cats, they immediately said, “If you write something, make sure that you copyright it, don’t trust nobody.” But, I mean, now I know a little bit better than they did because I learned from their mistakes. But the attitude of the people that perpetuate this kind of nonsense is still the same.

DH: Bleeding hearts don’t run record companies.

SB: They love you till they get the money in their pocket, then they’re hard-core fanatics. Hey, man, there are so many people who didn’t get paid their money, and everybody knew it, and everybody knows it, but nobody is going to do anything about it. So you tell me, has it changed?

DH: What about the Rhythm & Blues Foundation...too little too late?

SB: Excuse me? I cooked the cake; you steal the motherfucker and 10 years later you give me some crumbs—oh, thank you very much. Can you imagine if all the money that had been generated by black music went into the black community? We’d have a very goddamn different world today as far as the music industry is concerned.

DH: If it wasn’t for white college students, would you guys have careers?

JW: If it don’t be for the ’60s when they started with the hippie thing, no. Because the other people, I don’t think they were getting into it right then. As I was saying a few minutes ago, the tunes that the Rolling Stones did on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, they did the Howlin’ Wolf, they did Muddy Waters and they was calling them rock & roll. Did [Sullivan] ever put Muddy Waters or the Howlin’ Wolf on his show? No, because they was playing blues. But the Rolling Stones was on there singing it and it was rock & roll. So some things like that speak for their selves. I’m not saying—because I don’t have a prejudiced bone in my body—but it just shows the way people think about a thing.

SB: That Americans would rather listen to a white English rock group playing indigenous American music, I think that speaks very badly of American mores, of their social, racial and economic values, but that is America.

DH: But isn’t your audience white people? Mainly young white people?

JW: The biggest majority, of course; but the average young black of today doesn’t want to hear the blues.

DH: Does that bother you?

JW: No, that doesn't bother me.

SB: They haven't had the opportunity to hear any blues.

JW: No, they haven't got the opportunity to hear it in the first place. For what they get out of it, they call it Mr. Charlie's music, Uncle Tom's music or something like that. I don't call it that 'cause I was raised up with it and I know better. But they don't know any better.

DH: Blue, to get back to something you said—at least groups like the Stones, the Animals or Cream introduced the blues to white Americans, and some of those white Americans went out to buy a Muddy Waters or Howlin' Wolf record.

SB: This is indigenous American music—it grew up here. Why is it that people couldn't listen to it by the people who created it? It's because they were black. They can listen to [the blues] from Elvis, they could listen to that from Mick Jagger, but they couldn't listen to that from the people who wrote it. What's wrong with it is the fact you had to hear it as a fucking pale echo of what it really is. That's what wrong. That's what's been wrong and that's what's still wrong in this country. And people try every way that they can to make it right, but it never will be right, any more than slavery was right. People are too busy trying to dodge their responsibilities and recreate them in an image that they can appreciate, understand, and it doesn't bother them. They need to be bothered. There is something wrong. It is not only eating the art, it is eating the heart out of America.

JW: You got one man that I know, I give up a lot credit to some of the rock & roll people. People like Eric Clapton. He tells the truth about what's what and who's who and where it's coming from. Everybody says he's a rock & roll man. Clapton is a rhythm & blues man, but they say it's rock & roll. When Elvis Presley came out, he was doing "Train I Ride," and they called it rock & roll. When Junior



Junior Wells (left) and Sugar Blue discuss the blues at Rosa's in Chicago.

"One of the things I always liked about the blues was it was talking about the truth, which you got to deal with, which you got to live with every damn day."

—Sugar Blue

fuckin' play it.

JW: I don't say I agree, but I'll say one thing. I'm a blues artist and that's what I play, rhythm & blues. And I don't knock any creed or color that plays any kind of music they want to play. I feel that they're qualified to play it; they have a right to play what they want. I'm

Parker did ["Train I Ride"], it was blues. But you couldn't hear Junior Parker play it on no radio.

SB: And why? Racism, you know it. You know it. It hasn't changed. If anything, if you look at the laws being passed right now in Congress, it's getting worse. Good god. One of the things I always liked about the blues was it was talking about the truth, which you got to deal with, which you got to live with every damn day. Till people stop jivin' and shuckin', we're going to be at odds with each other. You got people blowing up federal institutions. Why? Because they are at odds with each other.

DH: Where does authenticity in music come from?

SB: I figure like this: If you want to eat Chinese food, you go to a Chinese restaurant and you look in the kitchen to make sure there's a Chinese chef back there. Now if you find an Italian back there cookin', you don't really think that's goddamn Chinese food, do you? Hell, no.

DH: To continue with your analogy, if you personally like Chinese food and want to learn how to cook it in your home...

SB: You're never gonna cook it like a Chinese. So if you want the authentic thing, you go to the people that make it. I appreciate people lovin' the music, trying to imitate the music, but that's what it is. Here's the authenticity right here [slapping his bare arm]. It's about what this [the color of my skin] makes me have to live in this world. The experience of that lifestyle permeates this music; and I'm sorry, if you have not lived it, you cannot

doing some country & western tunes on some of my new CDs, too. I'm doing it because I like the music; I'm doing it because it's saying something to me. But just to say that nobody else has the right to do this particular music, I'm not gonna say that, that's not my shot. I don't care who does it. If you can do it, do it. If you're qualified to do it, do it. This is me.

DH: What accounts for the popularity of this distinctly American music all over the world?

SB: They know what's good.

JW: There's a whole lot of people who don't understand what you be saying, but everybody understands the beat of the music. In 1966, when I first went to Germany, people started to boo me for moving around on stage. I was supposed to do just like Sleepy John Estes and them was doing on stage, sitting down on a chair playing and singing. When I came back to Germany [during the same tour], in the same places that I got booed, everyone started getting into it, too. I got everybody to stand up and start to clapping their hands, and then I knew what I had in my whole soul and body was true, how I felt, and I knew other people could see it, too. A lot of people tell me because I got horns in the band I'm not playing the blues anymore. I'm not playing just Delta-type blues, I'm playing rhythm & blues, and that's what I want to play, and that's what I'm doing to keep on playing. I can't just stop doing what I feel in my whole soul and body and come back and do what you want me to do. 'Cause if I do that, then you can say I'm selling out the blues.

DB

EQUIPMENT

Sugar Blue wears a leather bandolier that holds 12 Hohner harps—one in each key—across his chest, plus a pouch on his right side with 12- and 16-hole chromatics. "I don't use a traditional harp sound," explains Blue. "I don't like a lot of buzz and overload, because I want a clear sound." He uses a Shure SM 58 wireless vocal mic because it's sturdy, although sometimes he uses a Green Bullet CB mic because of its very wide face. He endorses both Hohner harps and Shure mics. Blue's amp is an early '70s Mesa Boogie that Keith Richards gave him after the Stones' "Miss You" recording sessions. He uses a Reflex preamp "basically as a very fancy reverb system."

Junior Wells uses Lee Oskar harmonicas and whatever mics, amps and PA system the gig provides.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Junior Wells

EVERYBODY'S GETTIN' SOME—Telarc 83360
BETTER OFF WITH THE BLUES—Telarc 83354
PLEADING THE BLUES—Evidence 26035
(with Buddy Guy)
ON TAP—Delmark 635
HOODOO MAN BLUES—Delmark 612 (Buddy Guy)
COMING AT YOU—Vanguard 79262 (Buddy Guy)
IT'S MY LIFE, BABY—Vanguard 73120
BLUES HIT BIG TOWN—Delmark 640 (Muddy Waters)
A NIGHT IN SAN FRANCISCO—Polydor 314 521 290
(Van Morrison)
TEACHES (MISSISSIPPI SAXOPHONE) BLUES HARMONICA—Hot Licks Video VHW 172

Sugar Blue

IN YOUR EYES—Alligator 4831
BLUE BLAZES—Alligator 4819
FROM PARIS TO CHICAGO—EPM 15756
with various others
THE BOOTLEG SERIES—Columbia 3-47382
(Bob Dylan)
HIDDEN CHARMS—Capitol 90595 (Willie Dixon)
TATTOO YOU—Virgin 39502 (Rolling Stones)
EMOTIONAL RESCUE—Virgin 39501 (Rolling Stones)
SOME GIRLS—Virgin 39505 (Rolling Stones)
TOO WET TO PLOW—Tomato 71292 (Johnny Shines)
MUSIC IS MY BUSINESS—Tomato 71293
(Roosevelt Sykes)

Bill Stewart

Nobody's Clone

By Larry Birnbaum

Bill Stewart works the open-ended, inside-out territory between hard-bop and free-jazz, sneaking up on a rhythm like a cat stalking a mouse. He lays the beat between the cracks, just far enough off center to give his music a slightly spooky edge. His playing stays crisp without turning stiff—subtle and delicate, yet firm and forceful. In pugilistic terms, he's a boxer rather than a slugger, throwing hard shots now and then but mostly keeping his power in check, content to jab and put together tricky combinations. He shifts accents from bar to bar, seldom playing two successive measures alike. Even at his freest, he maintains a taut sense of structure, defining the music as well as the tempo.

Like his music, Stewart is cool and reserved, his modesty veiling a scrappy singularity that's bold but never flashy. "It's hard for me to evaluate whether I have an individual style or not," says the drummer, who turns 29 on Oct. 18. "I'm always looking for new things, musically, but I don't consider myself part of a certain contingent. I don't want to draw any boundaries for myself as far as I'm a young lion, or I'm a Knitting Factory type."

Hard to pigeonhole, Stewart has been most closely associated with guitarist John Scofield, whose band he recently left after nearly five years, and saxophonist Joe Lovano, who's featured along with trumpeter Eddie Henderson, pianist Bill Carrothers and bassist Larry Grenadier on Stewart's new album, *Snide Remarks*.

"Bill Stewart is very special," says Scofield. "You can tell when he sits at the piano that he understands anything that the melody players play."

Lovano concurs. "Bill, for me, is one of the most creative young drummers out there," he says. "He plays with a complete scope of the history of jazz, not just drumming. Bill is influenced by not only all the players on the different instruments, but by band concepts that stem from the Jazz Messengers and the Miles Davis groups. He was always inspired by drummers and musicians who played with that certain concept of dialog, and he developed his own way of playing,



which is a really sophisticated concept about improvising. He plays with a beautiful sense of dynamics, and the way he tunes his drums and the sound of his cymbals are really melodic. He's a melody player within the concept of rhythm."

Snide Remarks is Stewart's second solo outing (the first, *Think Before You Think*, featuring Lovano, bassist Dave Holland and pianist Marc Copland, was released on the Japanese label Jazz City in 1990 and enjoyed only limited U.S. distribution). All nine of the album's intense, angular tunes were composed by Stewart, displaying influences ranging from Miles Davis and Wayne Shorter to Bela Bartok and Olivier Messiaen. "Those are some of my favorite writers," he says, "but I certainly don't go out of my way to imitate anybody's style. I set up the music so it would be very spontaneous, and that way everybody could just play from their experience. And

since all the people on my album are players who can go in a lot of different directions, the music went in a lot of different directions."

While the album's tone is consistently airy and acerbic, the mood varies from the Monk-ish bop of the title track to the brooding solemnity of "4:30 A.M." to the playful free improvisation of "Mayberry" (the last so titled because of its resemblance to the old *Andy Griffith Show* theme). "I tried to get somewhat of a collective sound," says Stewart. "Bill Carrothers really has his own direction, and that's why I wanted him for my music. And Joe Lovano is someone who's forged his own recognizable sound. The way Eddie and Joe played some of the melodies surprised me. They would lay back on certain figures, and they would do it together. I didn't know why that happened, but they just naturally did it.

That was nice; it made it easier for me as a leader. I was happy that, overall, everyone played well together and really sounded like a band, even though we're not a band."

Stewart's approach to percussion is distinctive but unrestricted. Since his arrival in New York City half a dozen years ago, he's worked with stylists as diverse as funksters Maceo Parker and Fred Wesley, beboppers James Moody and Lee Konitz,

and postmodernists Marty Ehrlich and Dave Douglas. "I like to swing out and play straightahead 4/4 time," he says, "but that's only part of what I do. I'm influenced by a lot of different things. I listen to a lot of classical music, and I listen to African drumming. I just try to be very open and to somehow bring these different things into my playing."

Stewart's eclectic tastes and deep jazz feel are all the more remarkable since he was born and raised in Des Moines, Iowa, where music other than pop, rock and

country was in short supply. "There weren't a lot of jazz bands that came through Iowa," he notes. Fortunately, he had musical parents with a decent record collection. "I listened to a lot of jazz, but I also listened to some r&b and funk—Aretha Franklin, James Brown, Ray Charles and stuff like that." At age seven he acquired his first drum kit, modeling himself after his early idol, Bernard Purdie. "When I was a kid, I was very into Bernard," he says. "I still think he's great. I was into him and Grady Tate when I was very young, and then later I got into people like Elvin Jones, Jack DeJohnette, Tony Williams and Philly Joe Jones."

Self-taught on drums, Stewart also took piano lessons, gradually adapting his reading skills to the drum set. He played in his high school jazz band, and in a top-40 cover band his senior year. After graduation he enrolled at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, where he played in the jazz band, marching band and orchestra, taking a brief stab at classical percussion. "I remember playing the timpani part of the Poulenc organ concerto in concert and hitting all the wrong notes," he says. "I was pretty terrible, so I got out of that right away. I decided, I don't think this is the direction I should be going."

After one year he transferred to William Paterson College in Wayne, N.J., where he studied with Dave Samuels, Harold Mabern, Rufus Reid, Eliot Zigmund and Horace Arnold. "That's where I met Joe Lovano," says Stewart. "He was teaching there, but I didn't actually study with him."

"For my first year and a half at Paterson, I didn't have a car, so there was no way for me to do gigs. But once I got a car, I could drive into New York with the drums and drive back."

While still in school, Stewart recorded an album with saxophonist Scott Kretzer and a couple more with pianist Armen Donelian. He graduated in the spring of '88 and a year later moved to Brooklyn, where he lives now. "I did various kinds of jobs for low money, whatever I could get," he remembers. "I started going to jam sessions, and people would hear me and ask me to do a gig with them. It was a very gradual process of people recommending me to different people, and it started happening."

He was working with organist Larry Goldings' trio at Augie's in uptown Manhattan when Maceo Parker walked in. "We were playing blues-influenced organ-trio jazz, and Maceo really dug the group," Stewart says. "He liked my playing, and he just asked me if I would be able to do this record date. So two days later I made the rehearsal, and we did *Roots Revisited*. I hadn't played in that style for many years, but it still felt natural to me. It was fun. You have to be really solid to play that

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kind of thing, and you have to groove, because that's all that music is about."

During the same period, Stewart was working with Marc Copland, Richie Beirach, Ron McLure, James Moody and Lee Konitz. "I first met Lee when I was at the University of Northern Iowa," he says, "because he came there as a guest artist. And he was also a guest artist at Paterson. We did some gigs at the West End Gate where Lee just wanted to play free for the whole set and not discuss anything and not pick any tunes. He just wanted to get up and play for one hour and 15 minutes and get off the stand, which is what we did. It was hard, and it was a learning experience, but it was a challenge that I was enthusiastic about."

Stewart had been a sideman with Lovano (in groups led by Copland and vibist Gust Tsilis) and had already played a rehearsal session with Scofield by the time he recorded on Lovano's album *Landmarks*, which Scofield co-produced. In the fall of 1990 Scofield asked Stewart to join his group, which also included Lovano. "The first record I did with John was *Meant To Be*, and then we did tours—Japan, Europe, Australia, you name it—and more records," says Stewart.

"It was a lot of work, and the music was always on a high level. I think I already had a lot of the elements of my style when I started with John, but I was able to further develop them and really refine that."

Like his style, Stewart's vision of the future is flexible. "John and I are going to play some more, but as far as being in his regular band, I've left it," he says. "I'm just freelancing around New York right now, so I don't have any big plans. I'm still working with the Larry Goldings Trio sometimes, and I did some things

recently with Marc Copland, with Gary Peacock on bass. I'm just doing different things with different people, and that's a bit of a change for me, because for several years I'd been with John, and John works a lot. It hasn't been long since I left his band, so I'm going to see what happens. If somebody who plays real straightahead called me for a gig, I'd probably be into that, too. But I really enjoy playing different music and I enjoy spontaneous things. I prefer the kind of music that has something different every night." **DB**

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SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

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MEANT TO BE—Blue Note 95479
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I CAN SEE YOUR HOUSE FROM HERE—Blue Note 27765
 with various others
LANDMARKS—Blue Note 96108 (Joe Lovano)
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THE INTIMACY OF THE BLUES—Verve 511069
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MO' ROOTS—Verve 511068 (Maceo Parker)
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ALL BLUES AT NIGHT—Jazz City 660-53-026
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US Cities	1995
Boston, MA	Dec. 8
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Los Angeles, CA	Dec. 12, 13
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Atlanta, GA	Dec. 17
International Cities	1995-96
Kobe, Japan	Aug., 1995
Tokyo, Japan	Aug., 1995
Barcelona, Spain	Oct., 1995
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Nat Cole: Eye On Commercial Success

By John Tynan

The following "Classic Interview" with Nat "King" Cole is an edited version of a two-part piece that originally ran in our May 2 and May 16, 1957 issues.

From the very outset, Nat Cole had his eye trained on commercial success. Outstanding jazz pianist though he was (and is), he well knew the jazz road is seldom paved with gold. As he sees it, the climb to success is a simple formula: (1) know where you want to go and (2) make up your mind to get there.

For Nathaniel Coles the ascension began at age 17 when he organized a 14-piece band, taken from the student bodies of Wendell Phillips and DuSable high schools in Chicago, that worked around town for \$2 and \$3 a night.

The idea of being a bandleader appealed strongly to Nat. For his idol he had Earl "Fatha" Hines, whose orchestra regularly worked around Chicago on those days. Heading a band patterned on the Hines aggregation, Nat joined the revue *Shuffle Along* and stayed with the show until it broke up in Los Angeles in 1937. He remained in L.A., working solo jobs around town and making the sessions with local musicians.

"Actually, the way we got together to form the trio was the most casual thing in the world," says Nat. "When I was playing around town, I ran into Oscar Moore and then Wesley Prince. Seemed like a good idea to get a group together.

"First place we worked was the Swanee Inn. We called ourselves King Cole and His Swingers, and I guess we went over all right. That was in 1937."

From the Swanee, the next important location was the 331 club on Eighth Street, and it was there in 1942-43 that the King Cole trio began to make its mark. "The 331 became *the* place to go," Cole recalls. "We used to get quite a lot of movie stars there. It was just a small room and the

place was always jammed.

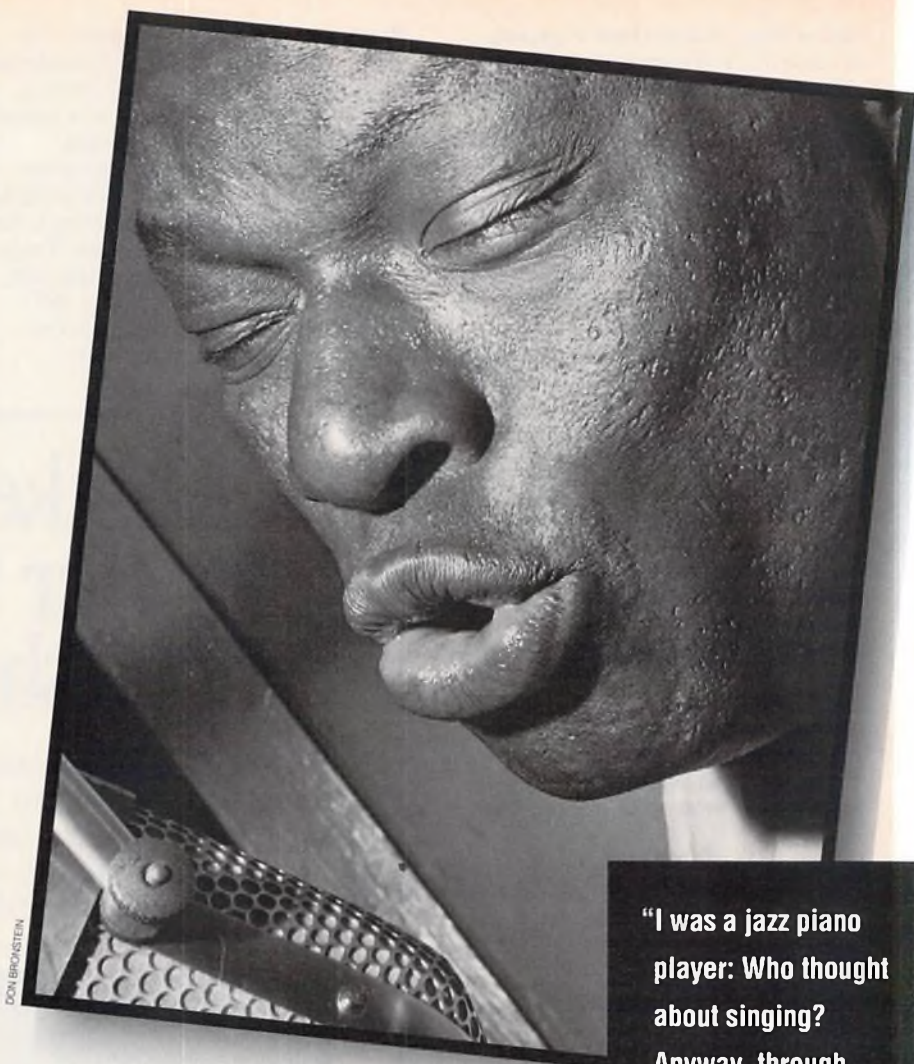
"One night at the 331," Nat continues, "in late 1943 it was, Johnny Mercer and Glenn Wallichs came in and told me they were forming a record company, Capitol Records. They asked if I'd be interested in recording for them. Well, that sounded groovy to me. Of course we had been with Decca, but I wasn't too happy there—so I decided to go in with Mercer and Wallichs and just see what happened."

What happened is, of course, history. One of the first tunes recorded by the Cole three was a novelty thing written by Nat when the trio was filling an engagement in Omaha, Neb., earlier that year. It was called "Straighten Up And Fly Right" and, when Capitol released the disc in 1944, became an immediate hit.

Dwelling on this period, Nat reminds, "You must remember, though, that when the trio joined Capitol, we'd been together seven years. Why, I had a jazz repertoire from here downtown. Matter of fact, when our first album was released, it was just the repertoire we'd been playing for years. The simple fact

was we had a foundation. We were ready. The desire was there, all right—but more important, the material was there, too. Here's what I'd like to say to jazz groups who want recording contracts today: Don't go in cold; have a repertoire to offer. In spite of the fact that the record business is riding the crest, it's still not enough just to go into a studio and play the first thing the a&r man suggests."

With the success of "Straighten Up And Fly Right" the King Cole trio was in the big time. Cole reflects, "You have no idea how much satisfaction I got from the acceptance of the trio, because we opened the way for countless other small groups, units that before were strictly for cocktail lounges." Cole's break into the major league coincided with his signing a managerial contract with Carlos Gastel, thus beginning an association beneficial and lasting.



DON BRONSTEIN

"I was a jazz piano player: Who thought about singing? Anyway, through the years I guess it developed into something."

Clearly the way Nat wanted his career to work out was along a path divergent from that of the average jazz musician. He had pop potential and knew it. For one thing, he discovered he could sing. The stories of the first time he sang in a club differ, and, at this point, Nat is pragmatically reticent in discussing that initial try with the vocal chords. For the record, however, he's willing to stick with the story of the drunken customer who insisted he sing, else the owner would hear about it.

"In those days," smiles Nat, "I really didn't think about singing. Oh, I had a conception of it, but my main interest was in playing piano. I was a jazz piano player: Who thought of singing? Anyway, through the years I guess it developed into something....Believe me, at first I hadn't anticipated singing at all."

As a jazz piano player, Nat confesses he owes much to the musical influence of Earl Hines. "It was his driving force that appealed to me. I first heard Hines in Chicago when I was a kid. He was regarded as the Louis Armstrong of piano players. His was a new, revolutionary kind of playing because he broke away from the Eastern style. He broke that barrier, the barrier of what we called 'stride piano,' where the left hand kept up a steady striding pattern. Of course, I was just a kid and coming up, but I latched onto that new Hines style. Guess I still show the influence today."

Today, Nat Cole the piano player is almost completely overshadowed by Nat Cole the popular vocalist. But, as anyone who has caught his recent night club appearances will testify, he can and still does take care of business at the piano. His Capitol piano albums, *Penthouse Serenade* and *After Midnight*, also bear witness to the fact that his is a major, albeit voluntarily muted, jazz voice. Because at heart he is still a jazzman, stressing the pop singing for the dollar market, there are moments during Nat Cole's night club act when one is reminded with a hard jolt that here is one of the greatest. Fortunately he has reached the point where once in a while he can record an album not completely given over to Tin Pan Alley.

"This one is going very well," Nat says of *After Midnight*, "probably because of my commercial associations. It may have bridged the commercial gap." So, though *After Midnight* may be counted a "kicks" album, Nat as always is conscious of the music world of commerce and his place in it.

Nat is a great believer in cycles of public taste. "Y'know," he says, "back-room talk in the trade dwells very much on the question: Who could have made it at a given time? Take [Elvis] Presley, for example. At another time he wouldn't

have got a hearing. 'Just another hillbilly singer,' people would have said and switched to another station. Youngsters create the demand for a certain style of music and singer. They dictate the music that's to be played, and the record companies are constantly aiming at that particular element. It's Presley... [Fats] Domino... [Pat] Boone, and so on. Right now it's [Harry] Belafonte. Now he's the man in the house."

Pursuing the cycle theory, Nat ponders, "Suppose Frank Sinatra, Perry Como and myself were coming

up today....How many *contemporary* kids would give us the kind of hearing that first was responsible for our rise? But what makes kids wonderful is that they're so unpredictable: Only the other day my daughter Cookie and I were driving along with the car radio on. One of the tunes from my new album was playing and she suddenly said to me, 'Daddy, y'know, that new album of yours is *very* big in school.' [She's in junior high.] I told her that made me feel good....But I couldn't help wondering what had happened to Presley."

DB

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At The Repertory Vanguard

In the 1940s and '50s, when composer and educator Bill Russo was writing music for Stan Kenton and regular columns for *Down Beat*, jazz was still dance music to most of the public: "But not to us," Russo recalls, referring to the jazz cognoscenti of the day. "We were snotty. I went to school with Lee Konitz and studied with Lennie Tristano. We came at jazz from a high-art perspective." Speaking from experience, he adds, "It took me a long time to realize that a jazz musician could play a dance without disgracing himself."

Today, the 67-year-old Russo not only plays dances. As director of the Contemporary American Music program for 30 years at Columbia College in Chicago, he now spends much of his time reclaiming such music from recordings, restoring it to score sheets and performing it with the 19-piece Chicago Jazz Ensemble, an aggregate he formed in 1991 that's joined the Lincoln Center Orchestra and the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra under Gunther Schuller and David Baker as a leader in jazz's repertory wing. Moreover, the Chicago Jazz Ensemble plays new music, much written by its leader.

The notion of jazz as a repertory music is still defining its purposes and its limits. No one, for example, doubts its value in performing early big band jazz. But to what extent does the repertory principal apply to small-group or vocal jazz? "I wish I could give you an easy answer," Russo says, "but I really haven't worked out a position on that. We do 'Going To Chicago,' based on the 1939 Basie octet record. A woman sings it and we play the original solos.

"We're starting to do 'Jive At Five' and some of the Ellington small-group pieces, too. In those cases, I think it's necessary to be true to the solos, otherwise all you have is unfamiliar musicians playing 'Jive At Five.' It's perhaps less necessary to stick with solos with the larger compositions because you have the score to give the piece identity. In the case of the Kenton music we've done, none of the original solos are that astounding, so we let the musicians do what they want.

"It's important, though, that the soloist pay attention to the piece and not start showboating," Russo states firmly. "I advise that a musician try to take something out of the piece when he solos,



Bill Russo

rather than be stylistically true to himself. When a soloist stands up in the middle of a Fletcher Henderson composition, he is serving someone else's vision, not his own. He must try to forget everything he knows about Parker and Coltrane. This is a lot to ask. He wants to express himself in his own way. Repertory jazz asks the performer to be as self-effacing as a classical player would be."

Russo finds younger players as amenable to this peculiar discipline as older musicians who may have played the music originally. "It's the in-between players in their late 30s through their 50s that are the most unresponsive," he insists.

"Something happened to jazz in the late '60s. Stage bands bred a generation that thought that jazz was loud, fast and high. Soloists chose post-bebop improvising models that almost nobody wanted to listen to. Wynton Marsalis may be a pain in the ass to some, but he's changed the nature of jazz by presenting jazz that is meant to be liked."

Perhaps surprisingly, Russo finds much that is salvageable from the free-jazz era. "The AACM [Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians] introduced theater, color, lighting and costumes into the music. The presentation was so wonderful. It reached out and

helped make the music more interesting. They opened some doors. [Composer/reedist] Henry Threadgill at his best, for example, is very warm, rich and interesting."

Russo believes the repertory vanguard has only just begun. Many figures are still waiting to be discovered. "The work of Jimmy Giuffrè, certainly," he says. "And Pete Rugolo, Artie Shaw, Eddie Sauter. It would seem white composers and arrangers are suffering the most neglect. The Lincoln Center band would rather play a stupid arrangement of a Sonny Rollins song than a Giuffrè composition. Makes no sense."

Yet, none of this negates the larger good. "Duke Ellington has been made understandable for the first time in years," says Russo. "People get something out of live music they can't get from a record. Musicologists like Gunther and others are building a library of great music that can actually be played. The Smithsonian now puts out scholarly editions of these scores. This, I think, will be the greatest legacy of the repertory movement—a vast catalog of readily performable jazz masterpieces that might otherwise have been lost, save for records. Never before have young musicians had such an opportunity to broaden their perspectives on jazz."

—John McDonough



Memphis Horns saxist Andrew Love

Supercharging Rhythm & Blues

Several hundred gold records give ample proof of their great value to pop music over the past three decades. "Living legends" is a tag they wear proudly. But there's just no easy way of explaining how the playing of tenor saxophonist Andrew Love and trumpeter/trombonist Wayne Jackson—the Memphis Horns, possibly the busiest horn section ever—has spontaneously supercharged the well-known r&b of, for starters, Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, Ray Charles, Sam & Dave, Elvis Presley, Robert Cray, Al Green and Joe Cocker.

Love, a polite man unaffected by prolonged exposure to the glitzy pop scene, has given thought over the years to what makes those horn licks so appealing. He points to the beginning of his happy partnership with Jackson in 1964, when he was playing in Memphis' Hi Records studio band and the great drummer Al Jackson recommended him for a steady gig across town at Stax Records. "I got over there, and Wayne and I played together," he said. "There was something about the sound of our horns that blended real well together, the pitch, the way we played. It just sounded unique, and people noticed it. We said, 'Hey, we better keep this thing together! This is gonna be alright!'"

Jackson, equally gracious in conversation, credits the ageless vibrancy of their sound to the special manner in which they've always operated. Using the pair's new feature album *The Memphis Horns* (Telarc 83344) by way of example, he says, "We did the horn arrangements for this record exactly like we do for

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Memphis Horns brassman Wayne Jackson

other artists in the recording studio. We just walk in cold, listen to the song and begin to build the horn tracks out of our heads." They run the tape of the rhythm section from the top and stop it wherever they feel the horns belong, and then record their ideas on the spot before continuing on in a similar fashion through the rest of the song. The sterling sessionmen ultimately stack two tracks of tenor and trumpet on a single trombone track for a total of *five* horns.

Love and Jackson, whose dream of opening their own club in (where else?) Memphis will come true next year, were reunited on *The Memphis Horns* with prominent r&b folks they've known from past studio or road work—Etta James, William Bell, Mavis Staples, Leon Russell, Robert Cray, Bobby Womack, Stax keyboard specialist Isaac Hayes and Hi guitar master Teenie Hodges. Jackson cites the presence of Womack as one of several high spots in the making of the album. "He walked in the studio, took his guitar from its case and began to play his rhythm and sing the song he wanted to do, Sam Cooke's 'Somebody Have Mercy.' He went over and sang the bass part to Dywane Thomas, and he went over and showed Steve Potts what he wanted on drums. It was just like Otis Redding used to do. Bobby never stopped thumping that guitar and singing till he walked into the vocal booth. By that time, the band knew the song, and we closed the door in the vocal booth and ran the machines until we got the take."

The Memphis Horns also revisit other classic material like Bell's "You Don't Miss Your Water" and Redding's "I've Been Loving You Too Long" without getting bogged down in nostalgia. "It felt like a '60s recording session," says Jackson, with enthusiasm dripping onto his lazy Southern drawl. "We knew the horn lines because we had done them originally. But we didn't let that get in the way of getting creative. We changed them up."

—Frank-John Hadley

Baritone In The Wings

Nature abhors a vacuum, as the old saying goes, which means in the case of male jazz singers, the next generation of deep-voiced crooners should be waiting in the wings. "The new crew is coming,"

agrees Dennis Rowland, whose impressive debut disc, *Rhyme, Rhythm & Reason* (Concord Jazz 4650), positions him along with such other talented up-and-comers as Kurt Elling and Kevin Mahogany as the voices of the future.

Judging from the rousing blues and lush ballads he delivers on his premiere, Rowland is off to an auspicious start. In addition to covering such tunes from the Count Basie repertoire as "I'm Just A Lucky So And So" (with former Basie trumpeter Snooky Young guesting) and



Dennis Rowland

"I'm Afraid The Masquerade Is Over," Rowland gives an emotive baritone reading of "You're Blasé" and a deeply moving rendition of the Stevie Wonder tune "All In Love Is Fair." The singer also covers two tunes not usually associated with male vocalese: He opens the album with a buoyant swing through the Joe Sample composition "When It All Comes Down" (once recorded by Ernestine Anderson) and later launches into the gem of the bunch, the Ida Cox classic blues cooker "Wild Women (Don't Have The Blues)," which features Sample sitting in for a rollicking piano solo.

Rowland, who cites Joe Williams, Billy Eckstine and Lou Rawls as influences, received his jazz apprenticeship with the Count Basie Orchestra from 1977 to 1984, during which time he met and performed with dozens of jazz greats. "I had a chance to walk with the gods," he says. "I'll never forget my first set with Basie. I was prepared for the music, but not for the intensity of the sound. It felt like a tornado behind me when I sang."

After his Basie stint, which included an appearance on the big band's 1980 Grammy-winning album *On The Road* (Pablo Today), recorded live at the Montreux Jazz Festival, Rowland toured with Grover Washington Jr. and played gigs with the Ray Anthony Orchestra. In recent years, he's been performing in his adopted home of Phoenix as well as in Los Angeles, where he hooked up with fellow Basie alum and current Frank Sinatra drummer Gregg Field (see "Tradin' Fours" June '95), who produced *Rhyme, Rhythm & Reason*.

"Gregg and I had always wanted to do a record together," says Rowland, as he sits in the lobby of the Concord Hilton, shortly before performing at a tribute concert for the late Carl Jefferson (see page 10), founder of the Concord label. "From the time he was a kid, Gregg had known Carl, so we shopped our demo to him. He signed me right away because he recognized the need for new male jazz vocalists."

—Dan Ouellette

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Czechs & Balances

Rudy Linka says that even if he wound up completely naked standing on the streets of New York City, he'd still be the happiest guitarist on earth.

Born in Czechoslovakia, Linka was 20 when he first set foot in the free world. Traveling in 1980 on a four-day visa to visit Germany with his conservatory, he skipped off to Sweden and, with a little help from bassist Red Mitchell, ended up at Boston's Berklee College of Music in 1985. Now, five albums and countless gigs later, he feels like he's living a dream.

"Somehow I just feel that nothing really bad can happen to me," Linka says, his Eastern European accent still intact. "I think it has something to do with the fact that I was raised in a communist country, and they keep you so low in expectations."

Linka's satisfaction with life in America comes through in his music. Playing three gigs in Chicago during a recent tour of the Midwest, he demonstrated confidence, clarity and a near-perfect balance of tasty "in-ness" and twisty "out-ness," like Jim Hall meets John Scofield. His most recent album, *Czech It Out* (enja 9001)—with fellow Czech George Mraz on bass and "Smitty" Smith on drums—reveals an inner peace that seems to stem from a command of all essential styles.

"I'm fascinated by folk music more and more," says Linka, who's taken notice of the local street musicians playing violins, basses and cymbals during visits to his homeland. "I go back and I say, these guys really know how to *swing*. It has the same kind of energy and upbeats."

Linka mostly plays and records his own penning. (An exception would be 1993's *Mostly Standards*, with John Abercrombie, Gil Goldstein and Mike Formanek.) "I write all the time, so I don't have to sit down and write a whole album," he says. Expect plenty of new material on an enja release next year.

—Ed Enright

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Sonny Rollins

Sonny Rollins & Co. 1964
 Bluebird 66530

★★★★½

During his relatively brief, fruitful period under contract with RCA Victor from 1962 to 1964, Sonny Rollins recorded some of his most explorative, open music. He returned from a self-imposed hiatus to make the critically lauded *The Bridge*, then recorded with fellow tenor titan Coleman Hawkins, with various quartets featuring guitarist Jim Hall and with cornetist Don Cherry and drummer Billy Higgins (a heavily bootlegged quartet whose RCA LP was originally issued as *Our Man In Jazz*, reissued on CD as *On The Outside*). In '64, he worked with a patchwork of different players, including Hall and Herbie Hancock.

The material on *Sonny Rollins & Co. 1964*, all of which was at one time issued on vinyl (and includes six numbers previously unissued in the U.S.), consists of the LP *The Standard Sonny Rollins*, plus alternate takes of material already available on several Bluebird CDs. Taken as a whole, it is a beautifully recorded (great remastering!) snapshot that catches a mercurial artist midstream. And it's a logical compilation, pulling together the tail end of his RCA years, and showing some of the experimental extremes he was involved in just as free-jazz was getting fully underway. Despite the reputation Rollins' outings with Cherry have as his most outré, his '64 sessions are also full of forward-looking music, all made under the mainstream cloak of standards and bop classics.

Compare, for instance, Rollins' stunning tone on John Lewis' "Django" with Albert Ayler's ballad recordings from the same period: similar wavering vibrato and deeply personal, plaintive tone verging on pathos. At the end of the take, Rollins lingers on a single note for a harrowing 25 seconds, gingerly toying with its intonation and articulation.

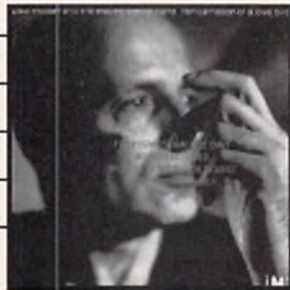
On "Afternoon In Paris," after Hancock takes a short, bright solo, Rollins returns to end the song with a startlingly ingenious "Peter And The Wolf" quote. The 16 minutes of Bird's "Now's The Time" feature the type of epic solo Rollins forged in conjunction with Cherry: fragmented, with lengthy spaces of

silence, percussive pops and lingering lines, it has an angularity and abstractness that foreshadow Anthony Braxton. Rollins even manages to make a blues version of the well-known song "Winter Wonderland" well worth listening to. A lean trio with Cranshaw and Roker swings out on a calypsofied "Night And Day" and a quick, quite astounding burst of "Three Little Words" (both tunes unfortunately fade out), while Hall effectively smoothes out the sharpest corners with the same rhythm section on "My Ship," "Love Letters" and "Long Ago And Far Away."

This release tells the story of an unjustly marginalized year in the career of a giant tenor. —John Corbett

Sonny Rollins & Co. 1964—*Django: Afternoon In Paris: Now's The Time: Four: Blue 'N' Boogie: Night And Day: Three Little Words: My Ship: Love Letters: Long Ago And Far Away: Winter Wonderland: When You Wish Upon A Star: Autumn Nocturne: (65:35)*

Personnel—Rollins, tenor saxophone; Herbie Hancock, piano (1-3, 11, 12); Ron Carter (1-3), Bob Cranshaw (4-13), bass; Roy McGurdy (1-5), Mickey Roker (6-13), drums; Jim Hall, guitar (8-10).



Paul Motian

Reincarnation Of A Love Bird
 jMT 697 124 060

★★★

Reincarnation, Motian's second Electric Bebop Band recording, is more than a Mingus tribute album. You might say it's a tribute to bebop composer/players and Motian's first music. This time out, he brings a septet instead of a quintet, featuring a two-guitar, two-saxophone front line.

On tunes like "Half-Nelson" and "2 Bass Hit," a bouncy, swinging uptempo conviviality permeates, with members trading off and overlapping solos, on the choruses sounding like a little big band. Mingus' "Love Bird" and Monk's "Ask Me Now" (misspelled as "Ask Me How") are played at a relaxed gait. Whatever the tempo, Motian's impeccably limber, swish-and-sway stylings are augmented nicely by percussionist Don Alias. Also noteworthy is the reunion of electric bassist Steve Swallow with Motian. Swallow folding into the generally straightahead grooves with aplomb.

The fine sax work of both Chris Potter and

Chris Cheek recalls the sounds of former Motian bandmate (and sometime-colleague) Joe Lovano. Likewise, the tasteful playing of guitarist Wolfgang Muthspiel especially conjures images of Bill Frisell. (Guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel is the only Electric Bebop Band holdover.) And similar to Motian's previous outings doing standards with Lovano and Frisell, this band gives us fairly conventional readings of, say, Gillespie's "Be-Bop," Parker's "Ornithology," Monk's "Skippy" and "Round Midnight." You always know where you are on these bebop classics, as arrangements and solos stay close to home.

Unfortunately, Motian's group concept sounds dated, despite the presence of two electric guitars. It's as if he's literally "going through the changes" with this music. Forgoing his hallmark use of space, Motian navigates his septet through the material only to leave the impression that everyone's pinned down, good solos notwithstanding. Receiving little or no development, these bebop warhorses are treated with too much reverence. There are exceptions, and they all occur with the un-boppish originals: Motian's opening and closing "Split Decision" and especially Muthspiel's lovely "Waseenonet," where the soft-focus, slightly fractured melodies blend favorably with the players' perceived tendencies toward reinvention. Their quizzical place in this program points to the band's potential. In the end, however, *Reincarnation* sounds like relash. —John Ephland

Reincarnation Of A Love Bird—*Split Decision: Half-Nelson: Ask Me How [sic]: Reincarnation Of A Love Bird: Skippy: 2 Bass Hit: Waseenonet: Ornithology: Round Midnight: Be-Bop: Split Decision. (53:55)*

Personnel—Motian, drums; Don Alias, percussion; Steve Swallow, bass; Kurt Rosenwinkel, Wolfgang Muthspiel, guitar; Chris Potter, alto and tenor saxophones; Chris Cheek, tenor saxophone.



Oscar Peterson

The More I See You
 Telarc 83370

★★★★

Here is a blue-chip summit of jazz blue-bloods playing a few standards and, of course, the blues. Oscar Peterson, Benny Carter, Ray Brown and the ever-present Clark

Terry are all known and settled quantities in music. Placing them together, in a tradition initiated by Norman Granz and carried on these days by Telarc, produces an affable lesson in the lively art of conversation, not confrontation. Now all Telarc needs is an Illinois Jaquet-Flip Phillips date with Oscar. (I'm serious, folks.)

Peterson proves himself supremely remarkable in this performance, his first serious jazz date since a May 1993 stroke. Now virtually deprived of the use of his left hand, he has done more than simply camouflage the handicap. He has made it beside the point. Like most postwar players, Peterson's style has been defined by his right hand. So the absence of bass counterpoint and comping, which guitarist Lorne Lofsky discreetly fills in, are not seriously missed, save for the occasional cluster or run left unpunctuated. Nor are such patented flourishes of virtuosity as left-right unison lines.

Carter and Terry provide a gentle front line, and solo with a laid-back insouciance. Carter's lines are especially terse and economical, with a heavy use of quarter notes between the flowing phraseology. Terry, who happily does not sing here, is his usual playful self.

There is relatively little ensemble cohabitation here. "In A Mellow Tone" offers a few Carter-concocted chords, and "For All We Know" has some deliciously simmering collective improvisation at the end that unfortunately gets faded before finding a riff around which to unite. But this unpretentious CD is, above all, reassuring evidence that some of jazz's most treasured careers are still intact and safe.

—John McDonough

The More I See You--In A Mellow Tone; Gee Baby, Ain't I Good To You; On The Trail, When My Dream Boat Comes Home; Ron's Blues; For All We Know; Blues For Lisa; Squatty Roo; The More I See You. (63:07)

Personnel--Peterson, piano; Clark Terry, trumpet;flugelhorn; Benny Carter, alto saxophone; Ray Brown, bass; Lorne Lofsky, guitar; Lewis Nash, drums.



Steve Williamson

Journey To Truth
Verve Forecast 314 526 425

★★★½

The attempt to wed highly personal saxophonics—improvisation of an earnestness inspired by Coltrane's '60s spiritual imperative—to the rhythms, formats and gambits of current black pop continues in this second album by a 30-ish British veteran (15 years professional) of West Indian extraction. A tenor and soprano saxist with compelling tone, super speed and uncompromising vision, Williamson produced, composed and arranged almost everything here: three suites of related tracks in which his dark horns obliquely dominate soul vocals, alternately diffuse and regular percussion, out-of-sync keyboards, ostinato bass lines, and exhortatory raps that seem to exist as much for textural variety as for textual import. The results are uneven, and when successful still problematic—yet Williamson's effort in its totality is admirable.

It's hard to feel his ululations starting the album ("Meditations," reprised of "Affirmation") are earned; neither are they the most egregious of sounds Williamson needs to express in order to shed and move beyond.

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SONNY ROLLINS

Sonny Rollins & Co. 1964

★★★½

★★★★½

★★★★

★★★★½

PAUL MOTIAN

Reincarnation Of A Love Bird

★★★★½

★★★

★★★½

★★★

OSCAR PETERSON

The More I See You

★★★★

★★★★

★★½

★★★½

STEVE WILLIAMSON

Journey To Truth

★★★

★★★½

★★★½

★★★½

The title song, sung by Jhelisa Anderson, has near-gospel fervor, and the saxist's obligatto offsets her well. Similarly, drummer B.R.O. the R?'s elusive non-pattern creates dynamic tension posed against (but also *with*) Williamson's vertical exploration on "Oh, Africa!" and elsewhere.

Andy Bey's "Celestial Blues" maintains the same pop ache with a more pedestrian beat, so the cheesy organ intro and Williamson's (!) squawk-box vocal on "Who Dares" are initially refreshing. As the band's *music* actually

coheres halfway through this track, one must suggest the "long, long, long journey to truth" can be considerably shortened by programming the CD player directly to track 6—though more profane declamation, dull time-keeping and questionable sound effects follow, distracting from the fascinating riffs Williamson carves on the rest of "The Pffat Factor." On "Antigua" the saxist—who, despite an extensive cast, is the only featured soloist—proposes another, sparer style, his notes gaining their full weight amid rich reverb; this

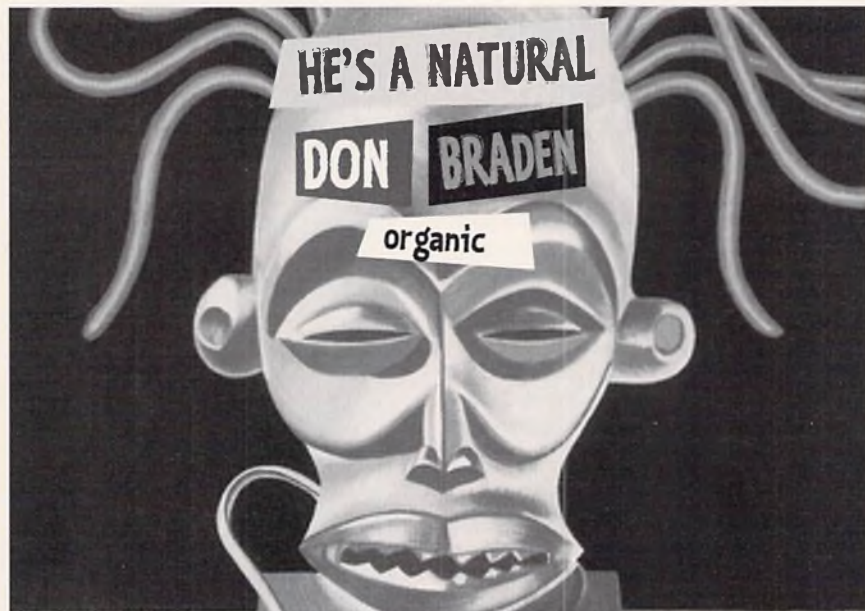
leads directly to the program's final suite, "Life Fuss."

The harmonic limitations of the song as written will disqualify this music from some listener's definition of "jazz"—the sense of adventure with which the leader employs echo on his soprano as well as the expansiveness, abstraction and interweave of his diverse themes will entice other listeners. The most definitive thing I can say about *Journey To Truth* is that it's still intriguing after many listenings—proof there's *something* here more distinctive and challenging than in the bulk of recordings in current release.

—Howard Mandel

Journey To Truth—The Journey... Meditation; Journey To Truth, Oh Africa Africa Africa!; Affirmation: Celestial Blues; The Pffat Factor...Part I Who Dares; Part II They Don't Wanna Hear It!; Part III Rough; Pffat Time; Antigua; That Fuss...How Ya Livin?; Blakk Planets; Evol Lover. (71:00)

Personnel—Williamson, tenor, alto and soprano saxophones, EWI, piano, organ licks, keyboards, bells, programming; Sola Akingbola, djembe drums, percussion; Anthony Tidd, piano, organ, B.R.O. the R? (Akmir Khalib Thompson), Pete Lewinson, drums; Henri Jelani DeToe, guitar; Marc Cyril, Michael Mondesir, Hubb (Leonard Hubbard), bass; Jason Rebello, Rhodes; Black Thought (Tario Trotter), rap; Jhelisa Anderson, Noel McKoy, Pamela Anderson, vocals; Dennis Rollins, trombone.

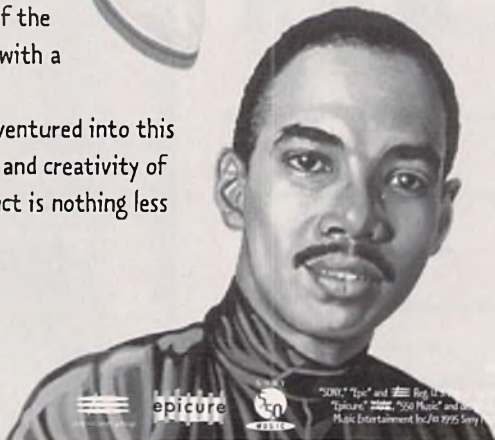


Listen in as Don Braden and friends ("Captain" Jack McDuff, David "Fathead" Newman, Larry Goldings, Winard Harper, Russell Malone, Leon Parker, Tom Harrell and Cecil Brooks III) take the classic organ/tenor genre of the 50's and 60's and infuse it with a new attitude for the 90's.

No other young artist has ventured into this area, and led by the energy and creativity of Don Braden, the final product is nothing less than inspiring.

"...heat and intelligence and authority."

—Lloyd Sachs, *Chicago Sun Times*



Produced by Joel Dorn for The Masked Announcer. Jack McDuff appears courtesy of Concord Jazz, Inc. Larry Goldings appears courtesy of Warner Bros. Records. Cecil Brooks III appears courtesy of Muse Records. Davis Newman appears courtesy of Kalamati Records.



Terence Blanchard

Romantic Defiance
Columbia 67042

★★★★

Anyone who underestimates Terence Blanchard is a fool. Solo for solo, the trumpeter is more reliable with his thrills than most of the day's young hornsmen, including the esteemed Roy Hargrove. Structurally, his writing is just shy of the eloquence found in the pen of labelmate and New Orleans homeboy Wynton Marsalis. Leading one of the era's most fascinating bands, Blanchard urges himself and his mates to adhere to an oft-puzzling jazz precept regarding composition and improvisation: build yourself a multi-roomed house, but never resist the impulse to fly the coop.

Best of all, he knows how to program a persuasive record. *Romantic Defiance* is as carefully crafted as the stormy and rhapsodic *Malcolm X Jazz Suite* (as emotionally charged, too); thankfully, it's less earnest than his last

date, a genuflection to Billie Holiday. Intent, usually heard in the form of sober control, is natural in his playing. That focus spills over, assuring little or no coasting by Blanchard's group. Variation and modification are rules of thumb; phrases are ceaselessly chopped, stretched, pampered or hung out to dry. Like Kenny Garrett's elliptical tenor musings on some cuts, the leader's horn lines are loaded with nuance. Sometimes muted, sometimes italicized, his interpretation of blues forms is deep. Contrast "The Premise" and "Unconditional" to hear the different characters of his Harmonized tones.

Perhaps the most apt hallmark of Blanchard's emotional range presents itself as he articulates the oxymoron of the title track. Introspection may be balladry's purpose, but the trumpeter is able to offer his soliloquy while laying some declamation on us. He's been working with long lines of late (one recent New York gig was mesmerizing due to his ability to connect protracted phrases). Speaking of the title, if this was a pop record, you'd probably think it was about a breakup. All the bruises and bon mots that go with a relationship in crisis are effectively echoed by Blanchard's contagious passion. —*Jim Macnie*

Romantic Defiance—*The Premise; Unconditional; Betrayal Of My Soul; Divine Order; Romantic Defiance; Focus; Romantic Processional; Morning After Celebration.* (52:02)

Personnel—Blanchard, trumpet; Kenny Garrett, tenor saxophone (1, 5, 8); Edward Simon, piano; Chris Thomas, bass; Troy Davis, drums.



Joey Calderazzo

Secrets

AudioQuest 1036

★★★★½

Secrets belongs to a small, specialized jazz genre: the piano trio minimally augmented by horn and string ensemble. The best-known precedent is probably Herbie Hancock's *Speak Like A Child*, from 1968. When executed with intelligence and creativity, this format opens up intriguing possibilities. The piano retains all of its freedom and solo space, while the ensemble expands the palette of color and texture.

On *Secrets*, Bob Belden's arrangements frame the trio with elegant openings and clos-

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ings, and also create subtle shadings and transitions within the body of each song. The horns and strings never solo; instead, they provide a formal counterbalance for Calderazzo, whom Belden describes as "a real burner... with a scorched earth policy."

"Aurora" is a graceful Calderazzo line stated by five horns. You hear echoes of Gil Evans in Belden's burnished, complex voicings. Calderazzo's solo is a long, gathering, exhilarating series of unexpected note choices, spontaneous tangents and fresh resolutions. A vast density of ideas is fully shaped on the fly.

Calderazzo is not only a burner, he is a thinker. A fast thinker. "Scriabin" is a stately jazz etude by Vince Mendoza in which the ensemble dignified and sad, moves Calderazzo to pristine lyrical clarity. "Filles De Kilimanjaro" is a cover of a Miles Davis theme that inexplicably, almost no one ever covers. The delicately poised ensemble, with Fareed Haque's guitar hovering and beating like hummingbird wings, finds the song's self-contained mystery while Calderazzo sprays implications of melody.

As a special application of the art of arrang-

ing, *Secrets* is an album for you permanent collection. As individual virtuosity, it places Calderazzo with the most promising piano voices of the new generation, such as Cyrus Chestnut and Gonzalo Rubalcaba and Geoff Keezer. Its musical satisfactions are enhanced by the exceptional production values which are typical of the AudioQuest label. The liner photos are worth having; the notes are informative; the audio quality crystalline.

—Thomas Conrad

Secrets—*Secrets; No One Knows I'm Here; Aurora; Scriabin; Echoes; Filles De Kilimanjaro; Last Visit Home; ATM.* (46:48)

Personnel—Calderazzo, piano; James Genus, bass; Clarence Penn, drums; Tim Hagans, trumpet (3, 5), flugelhorn (1, 7); John Clark, french horn (1, 3, 5); Earl McIntyre, bass trombone (1, 3), tuba (5); Tim Ries, flute (1, 3, 7), soprano saxophone (5); Charlie Pillow, tenor saxophone (1, 3, 7), english horn (4, 6), bass clarinet (5); Fareed Haque, guitar (4, 6); Tomas Ulrich, cello (4, 6); Bob Belden, arrangements.

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Lester Bowie's Brass Fantasy

The Fire This Time
In + Out 7019-2

★★★★½

Lester Bowie may not be as irreverent and funny with *Brass Fantasy* as he ordinarily is with the Art Ensemble of Chicago, but the intrepid trumpeter/bandleader is no less lowdown and bluesy. Those tight, well-squeezed notes and bright rips of sound that characterize his performances are immediately evident on "For Louis," composed by the late drummer Phillip Wilson, to whom *The Fire This Time* is dedicated. On this tour de force, Bowie is at his brassy best.

As for the group, it would probably be better named if it were called the Brass Fancy, because they dabble in a variety of musical genres, covering tunes made famous by the Platters, Michael Jackson, Jimmie Lunceford, Billie Holiday and Raheem Roland Kirk. Among Bowie's most willing conspirators in this venture are trombonist Frank Lacy and percussionist Famoudou Don Moya, an Art Ensemble member who is familiar with Bowie's brilliant quirkiness. Lacy, on the other hand, is a quick read and has a wide-open style with a funky edge that makes it easy for him to

extend whatever twist and turbulence Bowie has in mind.

It is exceedingly pleasurable to listen to a band loaded with confidence and capable of shifting easily from mood to mood. On "Night Time (Is The Right Time)" the occasion is festive. By contrast, "Strange Fruit" unravels in a dirge-like manner as if the band were on its way to a traditional New Orleans funeral. But these polarities are neatly meshed on Luceford's "Siesta For The Fiesta." Overall, *The Fire This Time* is a five-albumer, packed with red-hot moments. —Herb Boyd

The Fire This Time—*Night Time (Is The Right Time)*; *For Louis*; *Journey Towards Freedom*; *Remember The Time*; *Strange Fruit*; *Siesta For The Fiesta*; *Night Life*; *Black Or White*; *Three For The Festival*; *The Great Pretender*. (74:30)

Personnel—Bowie, E.J. Allen, Gerald Brazel, Tony Barrero, trumpet; Vincent Chancey, french horn; Frank Lacy, Louis Bonilla, trombone; Bob Stewart, tuba; Vinnie Johnson, drums; Famoudou Don Moye, percussion.



McCoy Tyner

Infinity

Impulse! 171

★★★½

In his liner-note thank-yous, the powerhouse pianist mentions how things go "in cycles." As the first artist to release a new session on the GRP-revitalized Impulse! label, Tyner's back to the place where he not only raised a lot of sand with his old boss, John Coltrane, but ably crafted a record or two on his own that proved his genteel side wasn't just an aberration (remember being caressed by *Nights Of Ballads & Blues* for the first time?). *Infinity* is set up to assure that his dominant style of modal mania isn't heard as his only forte. Though the overriding vibe is that of Trane's conflation of fervor and grace, other revealing moves are made. Tyner's a wiz at shooting phrase after inventive phrase into a variety of forms.

McCoy's made two big band records and at least one solo date over the last few years, but his steady working unit is a trio (one reason *Infinity* boasts such a pliable coherence: bassist Avery Sharpe and drummer Aaron Scott are on board). Anyone who has caught a gig or two realizes that the threesome sounds more like a quintet. That trademark immensi-

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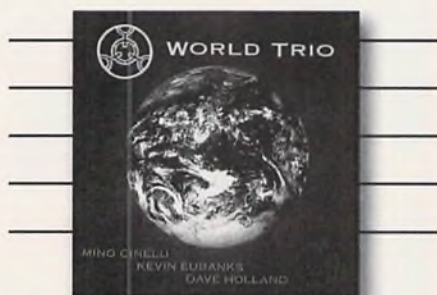
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ty, the "15-finger style" one pal calls it, hasn't flagged much since he roared with Trane. Here, Michael Brecker ardently keeps pace with the pianist. It's the tenor player's most zealous outing in a while. "I Mean You" finds him flitting through Monk's nooks and crannies, purposely bumping into corners for thrills. On "Impressions," he does a resounding Paul Revere ride. The message is one of fierce pride in the collective virtuosity at play. Tyner propels him, but downshifts to essay a pair of solos, "Good Morning, Heartache" and "Blue Stride." The latter suggests that playing against type can have its advantages—without Trane's spirit around, a neglected persona emerges.

The pianist's gleeful boogie—like most of *Infinity's* components—has a way of being daring and discrete. —*Jim Macnie*

Infinity—*Fling High; I Mean You; Where Is Love; Changes; Blue Stride; Happy Days; Impressions; Mellow Minor; Good Morning, Heartache.*

Personnel—Tyner, piano; Michael Brecker, tenor saxophone; Avery Sharpe, bass; Aaron Scott, drums; Valtino Anastacio, congas, percussion (1, 6).



Cinelu/Eubanks/ Holland

World Trio
Intuition 2152

★★★½

This all-original program of acoustic "world music" is the result of leader Kevin Eubanks' desire to attract the listener with finesse rather than volume. The exciting moments stem from a kind of telepathic intimacy and delicacy that do indeed draw you in. That's not to say there isn't any fun heard on *World Trio*. French percussionist Mino Cinelu, American guitarist Eubanks and English bassist Dave Holland all imbibe in some hefty jamming on the bouncy numbers, which account for about half the tunes played.

Eubanks has worked with Cinelu and Holland separately, while Holland is heard for the first time here with Cinelu. The chemistry between them is most attractive on the slower pieces, where driving rhythms and top-heavy arrangements are less a factor and the trio has more room to experiment with sound. "Over There" is a good example of group synergy,

where solos, a relaxed tempo and the rich textures of the acoustic instruments blend in a sensual, otherworldly mix. The slightly sweet "Dr Do-Right," in a medium-tempo groove, has the most lyrical, memorable lines, while "Blue Jean" serves to be the romantic gem of the bunch. On upbeat songs like "The Palantir" and "The Whirling Dervish," however, the band sounds more forced, at times almost fumbling, with Eubanks especially not sure where to go with all those 16th notes. An exception: the bright, punchy 7/4-sprint through "Seven Rings." Overall, the writing seems to be more a launching pad for jamming with a percussive trio, little riffs tethering solos by all three. And while Eubanks' guitar work generates heat here and there, with Cinelu's various percussion (mridangam, congas, tablas, etc.) adding as much color as anything else, it's Holland's bass that comes across as the dominant sound in this otherwise clear and well-balanced production.

The precedents for great music are there. One thinks of the current edition of Oregon (now a trio) and John McLaughlin's '70s Shakti band. And Holland's playing reminds of music he made with the late Oregon percussionist Collin Walcott. Eubanks' tender, poignant "Eulogy" suggests the band is capable of more than just a curious, virtuosic blend of funk and finesse. Indeed, the seeds for stronger writing, combined with more mesmerizing vamps, are here. —*John Ephland*

World Trio—*The Palantir; The Whirling Dervish; Over There; Will 'O The Wisp; Dr Do-Right; The Arch Image; Blue Jean; Seven Rings; Eulogy.* (53:18)

Personnel—Mino Cinelu, percussion; Kevin Eubanks, acoustic guitars; Dave Holland, bass.



Bley/Swallow/ Sheppard

Songs With Legs
Watt /26

★★★★

Carla Bley and Steve Swallow, a performing duo the past eight years but known to each other since the early 1960s, make low-heat, minimalist jazz that doubles as poetry. This "live"-in-Europe album finds the two friends and English saxophonist/Bley Big Band member Andy Shep-

pard sustaining poignant lyricism on a durable Monk composition and with five long-lasting Bley songs that she's arranged for trio after having had them handled (and recorded) in the past by her six- or 10-piece outfits.

Bley's uncommon ability as a writer is shown to fine result in the contrapuntal themes that dignify "The Lord Is Listenin' To Ya, Hallelujah!" where tenorman Sheppard sounds the praises of life before Swallow offers a quiet bass prayer and pianist Bley follows with her own hushed invocation; "Crazy With

You," which has the threesome wrapping their playing in an inexcitable joyfulness; "Real Life Hits," sort of a fey Monkish blues highlighted by Swallow's bass tour de force; and the dashingly dizzy "Wrong Key Donkey." Bley claims "Chicken"—the only one of these well-travelled tunes not recorded before—comes from transcribing the clucks of two barnyard fowls; all through the number, Swallow maintains an urgency in his patterns that brings to mind a you-know-what with its head cut off.

All the songs, not to forget an astute and loving treatment of "Misterioso," evidence how well the trio's imagination goes together with a refined sense of self-control and straightforward technique. You can almost hear Bley, Swallow and Sheppard smile through their playing.
—Frank-John Hadley

Songs With Legs—*Real Life Hits: The Lord Is Listenin' To Ya, Hallelujah!; Chicken; Misterioso; Wrong Key Donkey; Crazy With You.* (54:19)
Personnel—Carla Bley, piano; Steve Swallow, electric bass; Andy Sheppard, tenor (2-4, 6) and soprano (1, 5) saxophones.

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Kenny Drew, Jr.

At Maybeck
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★★★★½

Portraits Of Charles Mingus & Thelonious Monk

Claves Jazz 50-1194

★★★★

These two recent releases by Kenny Drew, Jr. offer opportunities to hear the pianist in a trio context or alone. The solo performance at the Maybeck Recital Hall could have been a moment to expose all of Drew's weaknesses, but he used the occasion to showcase his skill at dissecting tunes, recasting them with a fresh, new appeal.

A Thelonious Monk composition is often fractured and crooked enough; however, Drew invests "Well You Needn't" with even more density and complexity, and this is done without losing any of the standard's basic mood and charm. Drew's remarkable facility allows him to simultaneously reconfigure a phrase melodically and harmonically. Where Monk might have slowly teased a fragment, Drew puts the pedal to the floor; where Monk tosses off a rippling arpeggio, Drew chops the run to discrete pieces and adorns it in new chordal garb. He displays a similar penchant on "Ugly Beauty," another Monk masterpiece. Like the oxymoronic title, Drew's interpretation is a compelling, shifting mixture of melodic dissonance. Interesting, too, is his way of letting his left hand take the lead while he comps with his right.

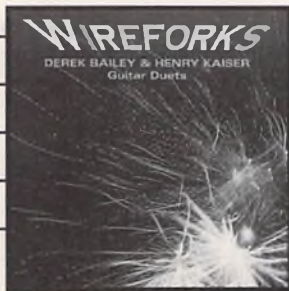
The rhythmic freedom so apparent on the solo recording is minimized on the trio date. Drew seems more concerned with the control of tempo and the exchange of ideas with his cohorts. Even so, he finds ample room to apply his own singular flights, especially on "Ruby My Dear." His delicate attention to details is not lost on bassist Seaton's tender but substantial touch. And these colors and textures are further embellished by "Smitty" Smith's almost mallet-like punctuation.

Monk's challenging "Trinkle-Tinkle" is putty in the trio's hands. Each of them is alternately ferocious (unlike the group's relatively tame treatment of the Mingus selections), making the composition stretch and bend to his needs. The swing here is exhilarating. Not until the final tune, "Skippy," is your equilibrium restored—and then the roller-coaster ride resumes.

—Herb Boyd

At Maybeck—*Stella By Starlight; Peace; After You; Ugly Beauty; Well You Needn't; Coral Sea; Images; Straight No Chaser; Waitin' For My Dearie; Autumn Leaves.* (60:20)
Personnel—Drew, piano.

Portraits Of Charles Mingus & Thelonious Monk—*Work; Ruby My Dear; Peggy's Blue Skylight; Light Blue; Trinkle-Tinkle; Nobody Knows (The Bradley I Know); Farewell Farwell; Eclipse; Weird Nightmare; Skippy.* (60:28)
Personnel—Drew, piano; Marvin "Smitty" Smith, drums; Lynn Seaton, bass.



Derek Bailey/ Henry Kaiser

Wireforks
Shanachie 5011

★★★★

David Torn
Tripping Over God
CMP 1007

★★★½

There are now more approaches to extended guitar music than you can shake a pick at. These two very different outings range from freely improvised string duos, through electronics, to solo overdubbed sedimentary groove-rock layering.

Wireforks is the first record of guitar duets

that British free-music pioneer Derek Bailey has ever made, prodded by first-generation post-Bailey-ite Henry Kaiser. Gorgeously recorded, it's chock full of the kind of brilliant timbral investigations that Bailey has been picking at for the last three decades: combinations of ringing harmonics, scrapes, open strings and machete clusters. For newcomers to Bailey, "Flair" is a solo spot full of his characteristic sound on Gibson electric; "Flare" is a Beefheart-felt Kaiser solo on six-string bass. In duet, Kaiser often uses a tenor acoustic, which

sounds great, rather folksy, against Bailey's crafty, craggy counterplay; in the main, the American leaves his wackier electronics aside, using them sparingly on "Hanabi" and "Ring Starmines" to twist and braid slithery tones. On the whole, there's a lightness (maybe California-influenced?) about the proceedings that is unusual in the Bailey oeuvre.

David Torn's *Tripping Over God* builds cuts from the ground up, layering and looping percussion, drums, noise clouds, vocals and lots of guitar. From the first moments of "Pasha,"

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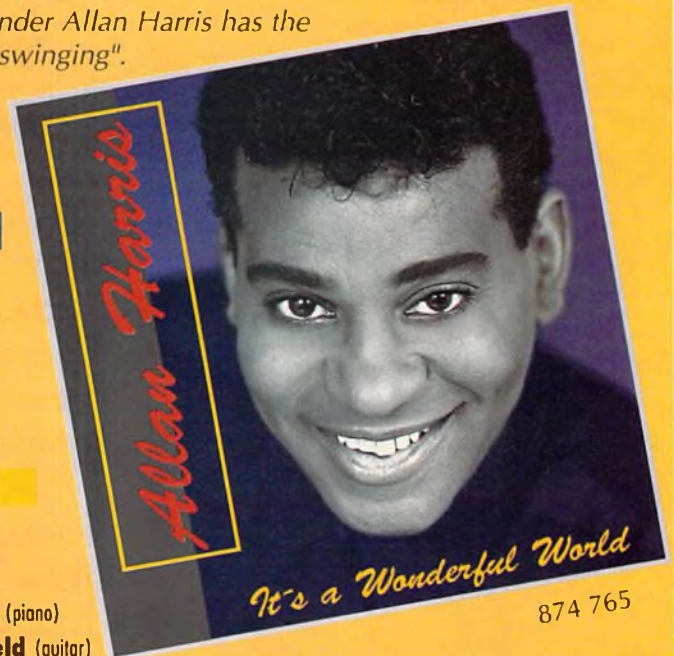
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Claudio Roditi (trumpet & flugelhorn)

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the spirit of Hendrix is in the house—an over-driven, distorted, compressed tone and deftly manipulated feedback occupies center stage much of the time, as on “Seven Door #3,” “How Could I” or the super, metal-tinged “Bust My Ass For Thinking.” “Dr. 8” might remind you of Bill Frisell or even one of Kaiser’s knob-turning solos. There’s a Middle Eastern sensibility in the disc’s hand percussion, as well as the acoustic-guitar intro to the title cut, which soon dives headlong into a rock beat and distorted vocals. With its luminous detail work,

Tripping Over God only falls down in a few places, like “Thought Of Many Georges,” where its rock pomp makes it top-heavy.

—John Corbett

Wireorks—Quick Match; Flights; Red Flash; Silver Tails; Chrysanthemums; Hanabi; Flair; Flare; Ring Starmines; Dark Fire; Snake In The Grass; Battle In The Clouds; Safe And Sane. (73:48)

Personnel—Bailey, guitar; Kaiser, guitar, baritone guitar (1, 3, 10, 12); 12-string guitar (4); six-string bass (8).

Tripping Over God—Pasha; Seven Door #3; The Entire Wish Spent Timing; Trip Over God; Dr. 8; The Bird You

Sang; Acosay Phodei Mojo; Bust My Ass For Thinking; Shofar; Rollin’ & Tumblin’; How Could I; What Was Once...; Thought Of Many Georges; And Well I Found No Bottom. (62:49)

Personnel—Torn, guitars, samplers, voice, harmonica, bass, flute, drum programs; Elijah Torn, bass (9).



Jon Hendricks

Boppin' At The Blue Note

Telarc 83320

★★★½

A front line of top instrumental soloists in fine form infuses the Jon Hendricks family with enough added interest to hoist this live CD comfortably above the average mark.

The trick of implanting lyrics into famous instrumental arrangements and improvised solos is one that, for me, after a brief “wow, gee-whiz” flush at the requisite articulation and technique, quickly shrinks to an amusing novelty act. Even in the hands of talents such as these, the fact remains that the jazz solo, with its intricate passageways of triplets and grace notes, is essentially abstract, too free and unfettered to have to conform to the formal rigors of words, grammar and rhyme schemes.

That cautionary point said, though, Hendricks remains a master of his niche. Since he emerged in the mid-'50s, he has taken to Basie with a special elan in the same way the Mills Brothers—the great vocal quartet from which Hendricks is descended a generation removed—once did with pre-swing bands. The best example here is “It’s Sand, Man,” a short Ed Lewis original from the 1942 Basie book with Hendricks lyrics. The blend of voices and bubbling harmonic verve which the singers bring to the material gives the performance dimension and body. “One O’Clock Jump” is opened up to the guest soloists, including trumpeter Lou Soloff, uncredited in the personnel list. As voices imitating the Basie band, Hendricks & co. do an amazing job.

Less successful, it seems, are “Contemporary Blues” and “Do You Call That A Buddy.” Hendricks’ sophisticated style is about as far removed from traditional blues like these as Roy Rogers is from the Old West. He and his colleagues are best scatting on bop changes. “Everybody’s Boppin’” is a magnum-opus vocal jam that comes apart at the seams briefly as too many scatters (including Wynton Marsalis)

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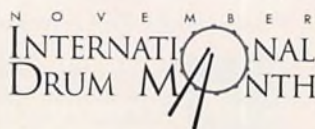
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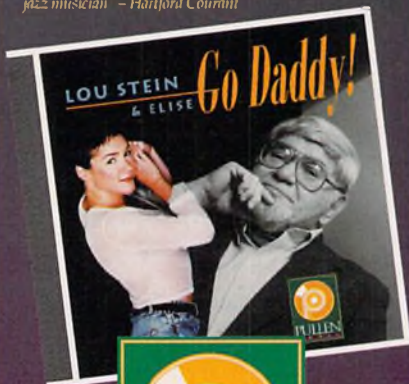
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crowd the mic. It was no doubt a delight in person, but does not translate to CD.

The solo work of Marsalis (in very good form), Benny Golson, Red Holloway and Al Grey translate very well indeed, though. And together, they make a tight little support ensemble that gives the music more than a couple of kicks. —*John McDonough*

Boppin' At The Blue Note—*Get Me To The Church On Time; Do You Call That A Buddy?; Good Ol' Lady; Contemporary Blues; Everybody's Boppin'; Almost Like Being In Love; Roll 'em Pete; It's Sand, Man; Since I Fell For You; Shiny Stockings; One O'Clock Jump.* (61:25)
Personnel—Hendricks, Judith Hendricks, Michele Hendricks, Aria Henricks, Kevin Burke, vocal; Lew Soloff (II), Wynton Marsalis, trumpet; Al Grey, trombone; Benny Golson, alto saxophone; Red Holloway, tenor saxophone; Renato Chico, piano; Mark Elf, guitar; Ugonna Okegwo, bass; Andy Watson, drums.



Richie Cole w/Brass

Kush
Heads Up 3032

★★★½

Richie Cole has always been equal parts bebop crusader and showman, ready to inject exaggerated drama and humor into the jazz style of Bird and Dizzy at a moment's notice. In the studio now as a Heads Up recording artist, however, he's toned down the "alto madness," the shenanigans, and given us a stronger sense of his emotional authenticity. Here, then, following the suggestion of arranger/conductor Bob Belden to essay songs identified with the late, great trumpeter (and jester), Cole spills out his passion convincingly as his creative motor runs on a full tank.

Cole plays with sureness and control, evincing tender feeling on the lovely ballad "I Waited For You," achieving modest levels of excitement on the flagwaver "Manteca" and throwing down the gauntlet to guest altoist Paquito D'Rivera on the tone poem "Kush." Cole's most memorable feature turn comes on the one selection not belonging to the Gillespie canon, "You Go To My Head," where his lucid ideas conjure a mix of genuine romanticism and wonderment. Not to say Cole doesn't sometimes assume the role of entertainer—note, for instance, his foghorn blat when bidding adieu to "Be-Bop."

Belden, no stranger to the highest rungs of

the "Arranger" category in the DB polls, contributes mightily to the success of the session. On almost half the program, i.e., the big ensemble performances rather than the combo numbers, he utilizes the natural power and colors of as many as eight brass players without imposing any constraints on Cole, not to mention any of the other soloists. (Longtime Cole sidekicks Vic Juris on guitar and Jack Walrath on trumpet are among those acquitting themselves well.) With Ray Mantilla supplying the Afro-Cuban rhythmic spicing and everyone at all times in a swinging frame of mind, messers. Cole and Belden have made an above-average tribute record. —*Frank-John Hadley*

Kush: The Music Of Dizzy Gillespie—*Be-Bop; You Go To My Head; Birk's Works; I Waited For You; Kush; Salt Peanuts; Con Alma; A Night In Tunisia; This Is The Way; Manteca.* (56:42)

Personnel—Cole, alto saxophone; Paquito D'Rivera, alto saxophone (5), clarinet (6); Roger Ingram, Tony Kadleck, Alan Rubin, Jack Walrath, trumpet; John Clark, french horn; Sam Burtis, trombone; Douglas Purviance, bass trombone; Earl McIntyre, bass trombone, tuba (2, 7); Vic Juris, Fareded Haque (7, 9), guitars; Kevin Hays, piano; Peter Washington, bass; Carl Allen, drums; Ray Mantilla, percussion (1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10).



Claudio Roditi

Free Wheelin'
Reservoir 136

★★★★½

Trumpeter Claudio Roditi and crew are out of the chore shouting on *Free Wheelin'*, a recording dedicated to Lee Morgan, who would have relished the band's verve and rhythmic fire. From Roditi's first biting note the procession swings decisively uphill and upbeat, and they bring a distinctive flair to Morgan's compositions, including a blistering take on "Speedball."

On Morgan's signature tune "The Sidewinder," Roditi reprises the original while maintaining his own warm, impressionistic tone. He does not possess Morgan's take-no-prisoners attack, but his style is no less commanding and intense. With his quick articulation on baritone saxophone, Nick Brignola complements Roditi's clean and precise staccato commentary. They revisit some of the ground they covered on Brignola's recent release *Like Old Times* (see "CD Reviews" March '95). "The Joker" is a hard-bop staple

and just right for tenor saxist Andres Boiarsky's zesty approach. And his aplomb is matched by bassist Buster Williams' vigorous sprints. As always, Williams brings a singing quality to each note, making them vibrate with unusual duration. In short, he knows how to pick his moments.

"Ceora" has been the ballad of choice for many musicians, and this tight ensemble gives the pretty melody an even lovelier treatment. Roditi, a native of Brazil, seems perfectly content with the samba lilt, and a beguiling warmth exudes from his flugelhorn. Pianist Mark Soskin weaves a web of lush chords that sweetens the song and sets up a most contagious swing. Add to this Chip White's subtle changes of the beat and you have the ultimate in interplay and spontaneity. There is more of the same on "A Night In Tunisia" (the only tune not composed by Morgan), but the band turns the heat up a notch. A Tunisian night has never been brighter.

Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but that's not the case for Roditi, who is intent on making his own statement rather than retracing Morgan's lofty flights. And most of the time, that statement is so deep and in the pocket that you'll be glad you dug into yours. —Herb Boyd

Free Wheelin': *The Music Of Lee Morgan—Free Wheelin'; Trapped; The Sidewinder, Our Man Higgins; The Joker; Ceora; Speedball; Yes I Can, No You Can't Peyota; A Night In Tunisia (78:46)*

Personnel—Roditi, trumpet, flugelhorn (6); Andres Boiarsky, tenor saxophone, soprano saxophone (10); Nick Brignola, baritone saxophone (3, 4), soprano saxophone (10); Mark Soskin, piano; Buster Williams, bass; Chip White, drums.



Django Bates

Summer Fruits (And Unrest)

jMT 697 124 052

★★★★

English keyboardist, composer and occasional tenor-horn player Django Bates is best known for his work with the ensemble Loose Tubes and the quartet First House. On most of *Summer Fruits (And Unrest)* he deploys a precision, 19-piece big-band—better described, at times, as a small orchestra—aptly named Delightful Precipice. Four tracks ("Food For Plankton," "Three Architects Called Gabrielle," "Hyphen-" and "Little

Petherick") pare the group down to Bates' quartet Human Chain.

Without making too much hoo-ha about it, Bates touches on a staggering number of resources through the course of the record. Allusions include marching-band and circus-brass musics (Willem Breuker and Henry Threadgill might flash by), a panoply of jazz genres, African pop, rock, funk and classical chamber music. Listen to the New Orleans touches on "Nights At The Circus," which takes its title and inspiration from a wonderful novel by Angela Carter. An older piece, "Sād Afrika," opens and closes with a beautifully voiced

anthem, while in his solo Steve Buckley recalls expatriate Dudu Pukwana with tart alto tone. A curious, quiet keyboard burble underneath "Little Petherick," the disc's sweetest cut, as if Bernie Worrell was secretly hidden somewhere below. Bates is all out-front on "Three Architects," though, funking it up with a fusion keyboard solo straight out of the '70s.

The glue that holds it all together is Bates' compositional vision. He arranges the jigsaw pieces with the glee of a child, but with the skill and control of an elder. Titles like "Tightrope" (a jet-propelled starter) and "Nights At The Circus" clue the listener in to

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the balancing act in store; just when "Queen Of Puddings" seems about to fall out of its corny waltz beat, for instance, it suddenly bounces back.

Summer Fruits is full of illusions, thrills, sideshows and main events, and Bates is a highly accomplished ringmaster.

—John Corbett

Summer Fruits (And Unrest)—*Tightrope; Armchair March; Food For Plankton (In Detail); Sad Afrika; Three Architects Called Gabrielle: Just What I Expected; Queen Of Puddings; Hypen-; Nights At The Circus; Discovering Metal; Little Petherick; March Hare Dance.* (57:24)

Personnel—Bates, piano, keyboards, E-Flat peck horn; Eddie Parker, flutes; Sarah Homer, clarinet, bass clarinet; Iain Ballamy, Steve Buckley, soprano and alto saxophones; Mark Lockheart, tenor saxophone; Barak Schmoor, tenor saxophone, piccolo flute (2), bass saxophone (8); Julian Argüelles, baritone saxophone; Sid Gauld, Chris Batchelor, trumpets; Dave Laurence, French horn; Roland Bates, trombone; Richard Henry, bass trombone; Sarah Waterhouse, tuba; Steve Watts, acoustic bass; Mike Mondesir, electric bass; Stuart Hall, electric guitar, violin, lap steel, banjo; Martin France, drums; Thebe Lipere, percussion.



Cedar Walton

Ironclad
Monarch 1005

★★★★

My Funny Valentine

Evidence 22120

★★★

Cedar Walton delivers two accomplished trio sets with this pair of CDs. *Ironclad* was recorded for a radio broadcast in 1989 at Yoshi's Nightspot in Oakland and features David Williams on bass. *My Funny Valentine* is a reissue of a 1991 CD recorded at Sweet Basil, but only briefly available. Ron Carter is the bassist, but it's still essentially the same trio playing the same neatly structured routines.

Ironclad emphasizes Walton's own pieces, four to three. The title track is the magnum opus, a 14-minute journey through minor keys, varying dynamics and repeated figures that become like mantras. It intends to create a mood, and it succeeds. The other pieces are somewhat less ambitious but contain enough

ingenuity and cleverness to keep the ears alert. And there's always the occasional quote ("That's A Plenty," "If I Were A Bell") to gently jog the wayward listener. Familiar tunes like "My Old Flame" and "Over The Rainbow" are probed and extended intelligently, while "Fiesta Espanol" and "Bremond's Blues" get the full benefit of Walton's well-honed capacity for sheer swing.

The Sweet Basil set, in which early on you can almost follow some of the table conversations going on near Carter when he solos, is all standards and takes its time a bit more than it should. "My Funny Valentine" wanders on for more than 15 minutes, much of it taken up with his bass work. "Just In Time" swings straight as an arrow, with Carter doing a strong walking bass turn. "Memories Of You" is unexpectedly brisk, with an inventive introduction and some nice slants on the tune. Billy Higgins takes a surprisingly musical solo with brushes. But the center of this trio is Walton, whose playing rarely lacks for taste, swing or invention.

—John McDonough

Ironclad—*Bremond's Blues; My Old Flame; N.P.S.; Fiesta Espanol; Over The Rainbow; On The Trail; Ironclad.* (61:48)

Personnel—Walton, piano; David Williams, bass; Billy Higgins, drums.

My Funny Valentine—*My Funny Valentine; Just in Time; Detour Ahead; Memories Of You; Round Midnight.* (51:43)

Personnel—Walton, piano; Ron Carter, bass; Higgins, drums.



Paul van Kemenade

Mo's Mood
A-Records 73011

★★★½

Until recently, Paul van Kemenade's music was scarcely heard in the U.S., available through recorded work with Alexander von Schlippenbach and the Berlin Contemporary Jazz Orchestra (on ECM), or his own Podium Trio's collaboration with Jamaaladeen Tacuma (on Timeless). Quirky and unpredictable, the live recording *Mo's Mood* is, effectively, the Dutch saxophonist's debut as a leader. He impresses right away with a forceful, pleading tone on the alto horn and a broad stylistic range, embracing delicate moods as well as raucous freedom.

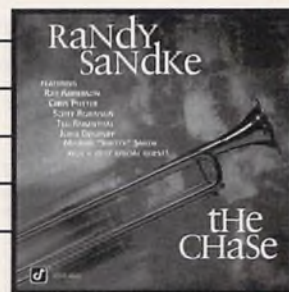
Van Kemenade writes episodic and thor-

oughly eccentric compositions. "Mo's Mood" initially suggests a lush, romantic reading of "My Funny Valentine," but metamorphoses over 20 minutes, culminating in a free-style coda, with van Kemenade's high-energy alto work recalling Jimmy Lyons. "Stranger Than Paranoia" opens with a searching alto solo and evolves into a halting, introspective tone poem that would sound at home in an ECM production. Aside from guest Toon de Gouw's fine, incisive trumpet solos, the soloists are rarely on a par with van Kemenade. "Twee Stranden" hints at the influences of Ornette Coleman and the Art Ensemble of Chicago, while tunes like "Silenzio" and "Mo's Mood" keep the listener off-balance with odd melodic transitions and inexplicable interruptions. You occasionally wonder if you've missed the point, the joke, or both.

—Jon Andrews

Mo's Mood—*Mo's Mood; Stranger Than Paranoia; Weird; Silenzio; Enchante; Twee Stranden.* (70:53)

Personnel—van Kemenade, alto saxophone; Hans Sparla, trombone; Jeroen van Vliet, piano; Eric van der Westen, bass; Pieter Bast, drums; Toon de Gouw, trumpet (3-5); Paul de Leest, tenor saxophone (3, 4)



Randy Sandke

The Chase
Concord Jazz 4642

★★★½

What is interesting about *The Chase* is how trumpeter Randy Sandke applies a contemporary perspective to the language of classic jazz. Sandke has played with Benny Goodman, Buck Clayton and Bob Wilber. His first two albums on Concord typecast him as an erudite neo-nostalgist. With *The Chase*, his third, he allows himself some modernist liberties (e.g., the abstracted arrangement of "Lullaby Of Broadway") and brings in heavy hitters of the new generation (Ray Anderson, Michael Brecker, Chris Potter and "Smitty" Smith). The counterpoise between antiquarian flourishes and '90s-style infections creates fresh effects.

The most compelling soloists are Ray Anderson and Chris Potter. Anderson is feeling even more impish than usual (hear the bestial gasps that open "Ill Wind"). Chris Potter is a young player of promise who sounds brilliant and different on each successive recording. As for the leader, one of the primary pleasures of

The Chase is the luxuriant, brassy richness of his trumpet sound, which is vividly rendered here by engineer David Baker. Only hardened cynics could be unaffected by the sheer prettiness of Sandke's concise commentaries on the melodies of "The Folks Who Live On the Hill" and "So In Love."

Ultimately, though, Sandke's art fails to stir emotions deeper than those that respond to such values as orderliness, discipline and symmetry. Even when it pushes its narrow envelope, this music sounds self-conscious and tightly controlled. Perhaps the withering spiritual dynamics of life in the very late 20th century make music this sweetly unambiguous no longer viable, however competent and sincere.

—Thomas Conrad

The Chase—Lullaby Of Broadway; Jordu; Ill Wind; Booker; The Chase; The Folks Who Live On The Hill; Primordial Blooze; Oh Miss Hannah; Hyde Park; So In Love; Randy's Rolls Royce. (60:50)

Personnel—Sandke, trumpet, flugelhorn; Ray Anderson, trombone; Chris Potter, alto, soprano and tenor saxophones; Michael Brecker (1, 4, 9), Scott Robinson (3, 6, 7, 10, 11), tenor saxophone; Ted Rosenthal, piano; John Goldsby, bass; Marvin "Smitty" Smith, drums.



TanaReid

Looking Forward
Evidence 22114

★★★★

Not every bandleader wants the glare of the spotlight. In the case of TanaReid, make that every pair of leaders. When percussionist/drummer Akira Tana and bassist Rufus Reid sat down to record their fourth album as TanaReid on the Evidence label, their egos took a back seat to the quest for a tight ensemble. They got it. This quintet achieves an impressive cohesiveness no matter what style of material they tackle.

The horn line features not one but two saxophone players and guest trumpeter Tom Harrell, who takes the role of the confident veteran. Compared with the surefooted way that Harrell handles changes (check out the sleek lines on his own "Bell") it almost seems unfair to point out that Craig Bailey on alto saxophone and Mark Turner on tenor and soprano saxophones sometime sound a little unformed; although Bailey's flute solos are quite lovely. Harrell raises the bar, and they work hard to

reach his level.

Looking Forward is a nice mix of originals by Tana, Reid and Bailey, along with some standards like Dave Brubeck's "The Duke," given a cool and breezy interpretation. Throughout, the group hangs tight as an ensemble effort. Listen to the Kenny Barron tune "The Third Eye," where a solid rhythm section holds together the adventurous solos. Tana is a quiet presence, and Reid tends to do his thing from even further back, laying down a springy harmonic outline. Along with pianist John Stetch, they set a laid-back, after-hours mood on

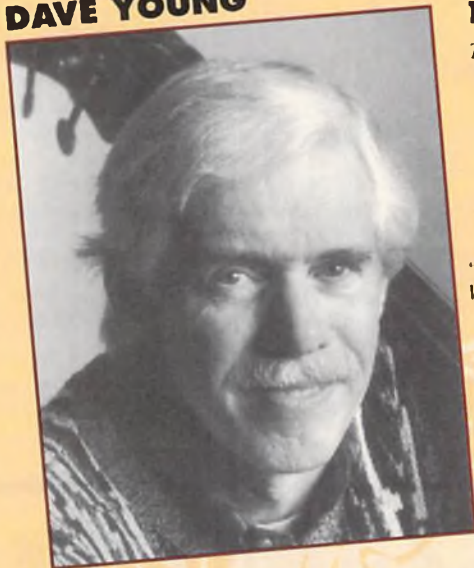
Reid's "Reminiscing." From the more ethereal pieces like Charles Licata's "Gold Minor" to tunes like Tana's "Looking Forward" (featuring smoking solos by Tana), where improvisation comes to the fore, these players sound unified.

—Elaine Guregian

Looking Forward—Billy; Gold Minor; The Duke; Skyline; Falling In Love; Bell; The Third Eye; Reminiscing; Love Dreams; Looking Forward. (58:13)

Personnel—Akira Tana, drums, percussion; Rufus Reid, bass; John Stetch, piano; Mark Turner, tenor and soprano saxophones; Craig Bailey, alto saxophone, flute, alto flute; Tom Harrell, trumpet and flugelhorn (1, 3, 6, 8).

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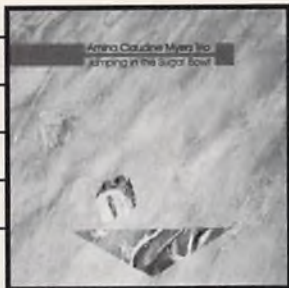
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Amina Claudine Myers

Jumping In The Sugar Bowl
Digital Stereo 8002

★★★★

Except for an occasional sonic burst of crystalline energy, Amina Claudine Myers appears more interested in exposing other facets of her versatility on her latest release *Jumping In The Sugar Bowl*. Based on a game from Myers' childhood, the title tune boils down to a series of rapid exchanges between the pianist and her percussionist Reggie Nicholson. Their timing is so precise that

notes are inseparably joined. Myers' speed has always been her mainstay, and Nicholson matches her beat for beat. Bassist Thomas Palmer stays clear of the race, saving his melodic sprints for "Cecil B."

The Cecil B being lauded is not DeMille, but the famed bassist McBee—and Palmer is more than adequate invoking his remarkable prowess. After a loping bass line that bears a familiar throb—could it be a lick from "The Sidewinder"?—there's a dramatic shift, and Palmer sets a torrid pace. The trio quickly settles into a breathless run, and then stops on a dime, returning to the opening motif. On "Another Day" Myers' voice is the item, and she is smart enough not to try for anything fancy. As if heeding the request of old Joe Friday, Myers sticks to the facts, and the facts—the lyrics—are deftly delivered.

What is most enjoyable about this recording is the length of the tunes; each of them is at least six minutes long, which allows a mood or idea to be fully explored. And Myers, Nicholson and Palmer compose a musical firm that knows exactly what it's doing, whether in or out of the Sugar Bowl. —Herb Boyd

Jumping In The Sugar Bowl—*Jumping In The Sugar Bowl*; *Another Day*; *Cecil B*; *Guten Morgen*; *Mind Chambers*; *Cameloupe*. (47:04)

Personnel—Myers, piano, voice, organ; Reggie Nicholson, percussion, voice; Thomas Palmer, acoustic and electric basses.



Lenny White

Present Tense
Hip Hop 8004

★★★

As underscored in the liner notes of this his first solo release in 13 years, there's drummer Lenny White in the past tense (eg, *Bitches Brew*, the group Return To Forever) and Lenny White in the present tense (this funk-charged, synthesizer-glazed collection of fusion).

White has invited lots of guests who play significant roles in taking the album to higher ground. Some stick around for only a short spell: Mulgrew Miller sits in long enough to take a fine piano break on the melancholic ballad "And Then You'll Know," and Stanley Clarke shows up to save the otherwise bland "Dark" with his flutter-and-sting tenor-bass excursion. Other VIP visitors like Kenny Garrett, Chick Corea and John Scofield hitch on the longer rides. They're especially potent when they team together on the monster tune of the bunch, "Wolfsbane," a steamy cauldron of funk-ed-up fusion that White pounds and bashes his stamp of approval on at the end.

Disappointments include concessions to the urban-pop music crowd ("Who Do You Love" and Sting's "Tea In The Sahara") and the contemporary-jazz offering "Two Weeks In Another Town." On the flip side, Corea earns the MVP award for his keyboard contributions, including his spirited jaunt with Scofield on the playful finale, "Caprice." —Dan Ouellette

Present Tense—*Thick*; *East St. Louis*; *Who You Love*; *Door #3*; *Sweet Tooth*; *Wolfsbane*; *Tea In The Sahara*; *Dark*; *And Then You'll Know*; *By Any Means Necessary*; *Two Weeks In Another Town*; *The Shadow Of Lo*; *Caprice*. (72:25)

Personnel—White, drums, percussion, sound programming, keyboards (7, 8, 10, 11); Chick Corea, acoustic piano, Fender Rhodes, organ, synthesizers (4-7, 13); Mulgrew Miller, piano (9); Bernard Wright, keyboards, piano, Fender Rhodes, organ, synthesizer (1-3, 6, 9, 10); Jon Dryden (5); Gil Goldstein (7, 13); Pete Levin (9, 11); George Whitty (11); Adam Holtzman (12), synthesizer; Michael Brecker (1, 9, 11); Antoine Roney (2); Rick Margilza (8), tenor saxophone; Danny Walsh, tenor and alto saxophones (10, 12); Kenny Garrett, alto and soprano saxophones (4, 6); John Scofield (5, 6, 13); Dean Brown (1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 12); Tony Purrone (6, 8), guitar; Marcus Miller (1, 3, 11); Charles Fambrough (2); Victor Bailey (5, 6, 13); James Genus (9, 12), bass; Stanley Clarke, tenor bass (8); Michal Urbaniak, violin (3); Michael "Patches" Stewart, trumpet, flugelhorn (2); Muckhead, rap (2); various vocalists, including Chaka Khan (3), Mark Ledford (3, 10), Nicki Richards (7), Jean McClain (10).

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The TRUE STORY by David L. Burge

IT ALL STARTED in ninth grade as a sort of teenage rivalry.

I would slave at the piano for five hours daily. Linda didn't practice anywhere near that amount. But somehow she always seemed to have an edge which made her the star performer of our school. It was frustrating.

What does she have that I don't? I would wonder.

Linda's best friend, Sheryl, sensed my growing competition. One day she bragged on and on about Linda, adding more fuel to my fire. "You could never be as good as Linda," she taunted me. "Linda's got Perfect Pitch."

"What's Perfect Pitch?" I asked.

Sheryl gloated over a few of Linda's uncannily musical abilities: how she could name any tone or chord—just by ear; how she could sing any pitch she wanted—from mere memory; and how she could even play songs after only listening to them on the radio!

My heart sank. Her fantastic EAR is the key to her success I thought. How could I ever hope to compete with her?

But later I doubted Sheryl's story. How could anyone possibly know F# or Bb just by listening? An ear like that would give someone a mastery of the entire musical language!

It bothered me. Did Linda really have Perfect Pitch? I finally got up the nerve and point-blank asked Linda if the rumors were true.

"Yes," she nodded to me aloofly.

But Perfect Pitch was too good to believe. I rudely pressed, "Can I test you sometime?"

"OK," she replied cheerfully.

I couldn't wait to call her bluff...

My plan was ingeniously simple: I picked a moment when Linda least suspected it. Then I boldly challenged her to name tones for me—by ear.

I made sure she had not been playing any music. I made her stand so she could not see the piano keyboard. I made certain other classmates could not help her. I set everything up so I could expose Linda's Perfect Pitch claims as a ridiculous joke.

Nervously I plotted my testing strategy. Linda appeared serene.

With silent apprehension I selected a tone to play. (She'll never guess F#!)

I had barely touched the key. "F#," she said. I was astonished.

I quickly played another tone. She didn't even stop to think. Instantly she announced the correct pitch.

Frantically, I played more and more tones, here and there on the keyboard, but each time she would somehow know the pitch—without effort. She was SO amazing—she could identify tones as easily as colors!

"Sing an Eb," I demanded, determined to mess her up.

With barely a pause she sang the proper pitch. I had her sing tone after tone. But as I checked her on the keyboard, I found that she sang each note perfectly on pitch.

I was totally boggled. "How in the world do you do it?" I blurted.

"I don't know," she sighed. And to my dismay, that was all I could get out of her!

The dazzle of Perfect Pitch hit me hard. My head was dizzy with disbelief, yet from that moment on I knew Perfect Pitch is real.



I couldn't figure it out...

"How does she DO it?" I kept asking myself. On the other hand, why doesn't everyone know musical tones by ear?

Then it dawned on me that most musicians can't tell C from Cb, or A major from F major—like artists who brush painting after painting without ever knowing green from turquoise. It all seemed so odd and contradictory. I found myself even more mystified than before.

Humiliated and puzzled, I went home to work on this problem. At age 14, this was a hard nut to crack.

You can be sure I tried it myself. I would sweet-talk my three brothers and two sisters into playing tones for me, then guess each pitch by ear. My many attempts were dismal failures.

So I tried playing the tones over and over in order to memorize them. I tried to feel the "highness" or "lowness" of each pitch. I tried day after day to learn and absorb those elusive tones. But nothing worked. I simply could not recognize the pitches by ear.

After weeks in vain, I finally gave up. Linda's gift was indeed extraordinary. But for me, it was out of reach.

Then it happened...

It was like a miracle. A twist of fate. Like finding the lost Holy Grail.

Once I had stopped straining my ear, I started to listen NATURALLY. Then the incredible secret to Perfect Pitch jumped right into my lap.

I began to notice faint "colors" within the tones. Not visual colors, but colors of pitch, colors of sound. They had always been there. But this was the first time I had ever "let go"—and listened—to discover these subtle differences within the musical tones.

Soon I too could recognize the tones by ear! It was simple. I could hear how F# sounds one way, while Bb has a different pitch color sound—sort of like "listening" to red and blue!

The realization hit me: THIS IS PERFECT PITCH! This is how Bach, Beethoven and Mozart could mentally envision their masterpieces—and name tones, chords and keys all by ear—by tuning in to these subtle "pitch colors" within the tones.

It was almost childish—I felt sure that anyone could unlock their own Perfect Pitch by learning this simple secret of "color hearing."

Excitedly I told my best friend Ann (a flutist) that she could have Perfect Pitch too. She laughed at me.

"You have to be born with Perfect Pitch," she asserted.

"You just don't understand how easy Perfect Pitch is," I explained.

I showed her how to listen. Timidly, she confessed that she too could hear the pitch colors. From this discovery, it wasn't long before Ann had also acquired Perfect Pitch! We became instant school celebrities. Classmates loved to test our abilities, leaving everyone awed and amazed by the power of our virtuoso ears.

Way back then I did not know the impact I would have when years later I explained my discovery to college music professors. I was surprised that many of them laughed at me at first. You may have guessed it—they told me, "One must be born with Perfect Pitch." Yet once I revealed the simple secret to Perfect Pitch—and they heard for themselves—you'd be surprised at how fast they would change their tune!

As I continued my own music studies, my Perfect Pitch ear allowed me to progress far faster than I ever thought possible. I even skipped over two required college courses. Perfect Pitch made everything much easier—performing, composing, arranging, sight-reading, transposing, improvising—and it enhanced my enjoyment of music as well! I learned that music is definitely a HEARING art.

And as for Linda?

Oh yes—time eventually found me at the end of my senior year of high school, with my final chance to outdo Linda. Our local university sponsored a music festival each spring. I went all out for it. Guess what? I scored an A+ in the most advanced performance category. Linda only got an A.

Sweet victory was music to my ears—mine at last!

THESE DAYS, thousands of musicians and two university studies have already proven my Perfect Pitch method. Now I'd like to show YOU how to experience your own Perfect Pitch!

I hope you won't laugh as you picture yourself with various Perfect Pitch skills—like naming tones and chords by ear with laser-like accuracy! I think you will be surprised at just how simple Perfect Pitch really is—and how very valuable.

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JAZZ

Campus Jazz

by John McDonough

It seems as if a sense of history has hit the campus in recent years, with a number of bands dipping into all the literature of jazz. The following CDs reflect this trend.

University of North Texas One O'Clock Lab Band: *Live In Portugal* (North Texas Jazz 9302; 50:28: ★★★★★½) As this band covers the gamut of jazz history, one notices that however hard it may be for a musician to play above his line of technical parity, it's even tougher to play below it. The doo-wacka-doo attack of early jazz, like early fugues, has an academic formality that's hard to approach naturally. One O'Clock is more effective in its readings of Ellington, Basie and Gil Evans with tunes like "Concerto For Cootie," "9:20 Special" and "Jeru." Music education is remiss in not doing more of this material, so a star to director Neal Slater for daring to be different.

North Texas State: *One O'Clock Standard Time, Remembering Gene Hall* (North Texas Jazz 9402; 49:30: ★★★) History of another kind is the business of this tribute to Gene Hall, founder of the Texas jazz program in 1947. Jazz then was still dance music, and so is the music here, all arranged by student and faculty of the school, past and present, and played with professionalism, good feeling and fine solo turns. Highlights include "Out Of Nowhere," "Take The 'A' Train" and "A Fine Romance."

Western Illinois University Jazz Studio Orchestra: *The Third Degree* (Sea Breeze 4511; 69:28: ★★★★★) This one starts off with a churning blast on an obscure Ellington piece from Newport 1958 called "Feet Bone." The band later takes on the more famous "Harlem Air Shaft" with astounding brio and really makes it shake. Other material is equally rewarding. Former Woody Herman trombonist John Fedchock is principal guest soloist under Dale Hopper.

DePaul University Jazz Ensemble I: *Big Band Basie* (Reference 63; 58:58: ★★★★★) Here is a typical late-Basie set, with Clark Terry and Frank Wess sitting in as guest soloists on six of the 14 pieces. Forget this is a university band; it makes no difference. Any fan of the Basie New Testament years will find this a great pleasure, hearing such numbers as "Swinging The Blues" and "One O'Clock Jump." Moreover, the sound has an astonishing concert-hall realism and presence. Conductor Bob Lark has molded his ensemble well.

Fullerton College Jazz Band: *Main-*



Swinging the blues: Clark Terry

stream (Fullerton Music Department 9012; 58:42: ★★★★★½) This album gathers several selections each from Fullerton's 1990, '91 and '92 bands, all under Jim Linahon. Don Rader (trumpet) and Rich Matteson (euphonium) appear in performances of their own arrangements. Most of the pieces are classic American songbook material played with the command of a good studio band. "Altitude" is clearly a chart of "Scraple From The Apple" with arranger Matt Catingub shoplifting composer credit.

University of Kentucky Jazz Ensemble: *1990-1995* (University of Kentucky; 80:52: ★★★★★½) Nicely chosen and neatly performed is this UK collection made over five years and conducted by Miles Osland. How many times do we get a new interpretation of Ellington's main title to *Anatomy Of A Murder* or, from his *Far East Suite*, "Isfahan"? John Richardson has Johnny Hodges' alto down well, and Brian Murray sustains Bob Mintzer's "Art Of The Big Band" with considerable drive. A sharp band.

Cal State Hayward Jazz Ensemble: *These Times* (Cal State; 67:18: ★★★) Another piece of the *Far East Suite*, "Ad Lib On Nippon," is the centerpiece of this CD, conducted by Dave Eshelman, who contributes one composition. Eshelman favors voicings of cool lyricism and unexpected tempo shifts. The result is a focus on colorations and blends over drive. The musicians perform to a high standard.

CalArts Jazz: *1995* (Capitol 79591; 60:55: ★★★) The CalArts ensemble is both a performance and composition lab band. Eleven originals are heard by groups of various sizes, none more than 10 or less than three. One holds one's breath over anything from this mecca of the avante garde, with real music for real ears coming from 1995. Challenging and mostly accessible.

Western Michigan University Jazz Orchestra: *Sprightly Overdue* (Sea Breeze

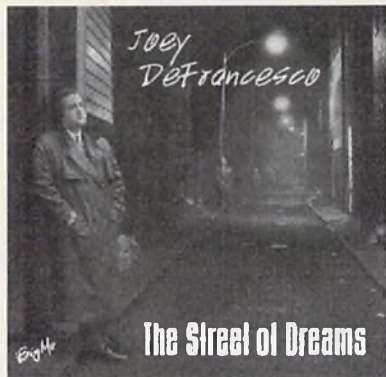
4510; 74:22: ★★★) Director Trent Kynaston has mixed standards with some student originals, though the latter are all small-group pieces. The full band gets five numbers, all apparently stock arrangements ("Giant Steps," "Just Friends," etc.) and played with precision and enthusiasm, "Caravan" being the best. A second CD from Western Michigan called *Blue Harts* (60:30: ★★★★★) features the Western Jazz Quartet, a resident faculty group with pianist Stephen Degree and drummer Billy Hart in which Kynaston spreads out on eight originals with some very fine tenor work. Support from two rhythm sections is equally good.

Northern Arizona Jazz Ensemble: *Herd- ing Cats* (Sea Breeze 4508; 57:34: ★★★) Nine bright charts get a solid, well-drilled stage-band treatment by the NAU band under Peter Vivona. Arrangers Bob Florence, Billy Byers and others provide a standard series of obstacle courses, and Vivona's men navigate them with relative aplomb. There is hard-swinging playing, especially on Byers' "Doodle Oodle," featuring tenors Colin Mason and Kenson Nishino.

University of Northern Iowa: *Field Of Play* (University of Iowa; 53:30: ★★★) That director Robert Walshut has finagled his reeds into a beautifully, wonderfully cohesive choir of a reed section is striking from the first piece, "Black Nile." Sadly, about half the repertoire wanders far afield into a grabbag of Latin and whatever else that includes some underwhelming Ellington. Later, the band recovers its stride on Horace Silver's "Opus de Funk."

University of South Florida: *Suncoast '94* (Sea Breeze 4512; 64:59: ★★★★★½) Two groups are showcased here: a full big band under Chuck Owen, and a sextet directed by Jack Wilkins. Both are crack units and give the material a strong contemporary feel, circa '60s and '70s. Note that "Quietude" and "Second Thoughts" are mistakenly reversed in the booklet listing.

DB



Joey DeFrancesco The Street of Dreams

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BEYOND

West By Southwest

by Jon Andrews

In the Southwest, Native American and other cultures collide, blend and recombine. The resulting music isn't strictly traditional. The contemporary Southwestern sound seeks harmony, with wood flutes and traditional drums on the one hand, guitars and keyboards on the other.

R. Carlos Nakai, William Eaton & Will Clipman: *Feather, Stone & Light* (Canyon 7011; 71:39:★★★★) The most prominent and prolific voice on Native American flute, Nakai draws on the traditional themes and instrumentation of his Navajo-Ute heritage, achieving remarkably expressive results from the cedar flute. *Feather, Stone & Light* continues the progression of Nakai's music from haunting solo works to collaborations that extend Nakai's worldview, finding affinities in different genres. Guitarist Eaton and percussionist Clipman add range and variety to tracks like "Three Worlds" and "Where Giants Walk," using eclectic instruments, including balafon, djembe and Eaton's lyraharp and harp guitars. Egalitarian as the trio may be, the focus comes from Nakai's searching flute work and the sense of stillness it evokes.

William Eaton: *Where Rivers Meet* (Canyon 7012; 69:37:★★★★) Half luthier, half mad scientist, Eaton crafts improbable instruments like the 18-string harp guitar and multifunctional lyraharp guitar. The sound of mutant strings adds to the distinctiveness of Eaton's playing, at times stinging, at times gentle and pastoral. Working with his own ensemble, including flute and violin along with Will Clipman's percussion, Eaton allows a wide range of influences to filter into compositions like "A Bazaar Of Subtle Desires" and "If Lizards Dream." The results suggest a kinship with the pan-global tradition of the Paul Winter Consort and Oregon.

Ben Tavera King & Eric Casillas: *Hunting Magic* (Talking Taco 122D; 40:23:★★★½) First as a guitarist, and now on flutes as well, King has long explored the blending of Native American music with Latino guitar. In this collaboration with percussionist Casillas, King's flute leads throughout giving a clear, pure voice to memorable melodies like "Spirit Rock" and "Thunder Magic." The guitar plays a secondary role, embellishing the melodies and complementing the drums. Casillas contributes his fusion of Native American and Afro-Cuban percussion styles most prominently on "Mask Of The Elders."

Brian Keane: *The Way West* (Shanachie 6013; 55:07/62:28:★★★★) Guitarist Keane's soundtrack to Ric Burns' documen-



R. Carlos Nakai: affinities in different genres

tary provides a broad, formidable overview of Southwestern themes. *The Way West* chronicles the expansion of Westward settlement from 1845 to 1893, and the prevalent mood is one of tragedy. Along with composing and playing on many of the 44 tracks, Keane enlists contributions from flutist Douglas Spotted Eagle, fiddler Kenny Kosak and synthesist Steve Roach. As the perspective shifts between encroaching settlers and displaced Native Americans, we hear cowboy tunes alongside Lakota chants, linked by elegiac instrumentals.

Steve Roach, Michael Stearns & Ron Sunsinger: *Kiva* (Hearts of Space 11056; 67:07:★★★★) The title refers to a ceremonial chamber, a sacred place for Native Americans. By tapping into the mystical aspects of traditional ceremonies, Roach, Stearns and Sunsinger have created a unique, imaginative fusion of ancient sounds with state-of-the-art production and technology. The four major pieces that make up *Kiva* are linked by a vision quest. By mixing (authorized) tapes of ceremonies, including a peyote ritual and a Sundance, with their own charts, percussion and electronics, Roach et al., create an impressionistic journey, passing from the actual ceremonies to altered, dream-like states. The results are challenging and radically different from previous fusions of Native American music.

Ottmar Liebert & Luna Negra: *Viva!* (Epic 66455; 63:45:★★★½) Flamenco music has found a home in the Southwest, as has German guitarist Liebert. *Viva!* captures a 1994 performance of Luna Negra's "noveau flamenco." Liebert's updated conception of flamenco is spacious and often contemplative, its passions less overt than in the hot-blooded traditional form. Liebert prefers to emphasize the melodies and intricate flourishes of flamenco. "Snakecharmer" and "Barcelona Nights" should appeal to listeners who enjoyed the flamenco-inspired music of artists like Al Di Meola or Paco de Lucia. **BB**

REISSUES

Delmark Delicacies

by Jon Andrews

The Delmark label continues its reissue campaign with a wide-ranging series of releases that embrace extra-terrestrials, free players and moldy figs, with the Chicago scene the principal nexus.

Sun Ra and the Arkestra: *Sound Of Joy* (Delmark 414; 47:42; ★★★★★½) In 1957, Ra occupied a low orbit around the planet, not completely free of the gravitational pull of conventional jazz. *Sound Of Joy*, recorded for Transition as a follow-up to *Sun Song*, isn't revolutionary so much as subversive. On "Paradise" and "Overtones Of China" he coaxes sounds from his electric piano that anticipate the early '70s.

Here are the earliest recordings of infectious tunes like "El Is The Sound Of Joy" and "Reflections In Blue," which linked Ra's floor-show past to his wonderfully strange future. Tenorist John Gilmore is aboard this flight, but the featured horn soloist is Pat Patrick on alto as well as baritone saxophones. Patrick and Charles Davis combine for a two-bari-



Art Hodes: shamelessly anachronistic

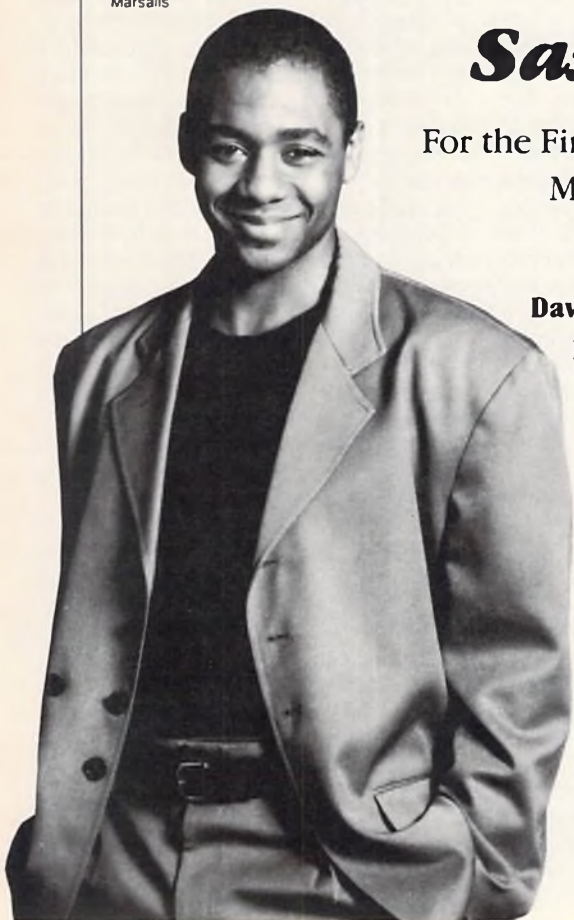
tone attack ("Two Tones" and "Ankh") in surprisingly tight horn arrangements. Two bonus tracks feature Clyde Williams' forgettable vocals.

Joseph Jarman/Anthony Braxton: *Together Alone* (Delmark 428; 42:59; ★★★) Think of Jarman and Braxton in 1971, and you might expect a wild, free blowing session. Instead, *Together Alone* is a disciplined, thoughtful work that experiments with a variety of reeds. Jarman contributes "Together Alone," an almost serene, slowly

diverging alto sax duet, and "Dawn Dance One," where Braxton's tentative piano distracts from a strong, searching performance by Jarman on flute. *Together Alone* whetted my appetite to revisit Jarman's projects outside the Art Ensemble of Chicago. Braxton's most interesting piece is "SBN-A-1-66K," an intriguingly slow, but ultimately static, composition for contrabass clarinet, soprano sax and bells.

Art Hodes: *Hodes' Art* (Delmark 213; 40:29; ★★★★★) During an eight-decade career as pianist and journalist (a one-time DB contributor), Hodes was gleefully unchanged by "modern jazz." These sessions, from 1968 and 1972, are shamelessly anachronistic, loaded with rollicking blues and pre-bop oldies like Louis Armstrong's "Struttin' With Some Barbecue." Hodes' athletic, vigorous piano work is aided by New Orleans bassist Pops Foster and clarinetist Raymond Burke on half of the tracks. Hodes continued to record into the '90s, but with relatively few of his recordings in print, *Hodes' Art* is a fine introduction. His lesson is clear: respect for tradition need not preclude having fun. **DB**

Branford Marsalis



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BLINDFOLD TEST

OCTOBER 1995

Charles Brown

by Dan Ouellette

The "Blindfold Test" is a listening test that challenges the featured artist to identify the musicians who performed on selected recordings. The artist is then asked to rate each tune using a 5-star system. No information about the recordings is given to the artist prior to the test.

Born in Texas in 1922, Charles Brown was not only trained in classical piano as a youngster but also listened to and learned from such jazz and blues pianists as Art Tatum, Albert Ammons and Jay McShann. Moving to California in the early '40s, Brown joined up with guitarist Johnny Moore in the seminal r&b trio The Three Blazers, which became the top "race" band of the time thanks to Brown's classic "Driftin' Blues" released in 1945 on Aladdin.

Brown began his solo career in 1948, chalking up several hits that influenced numerous r&b and pop artists. However, like many of his r&b contemporaries, he didn't survive the rise of rock & roll. He went into semi-retirement until 1989 when Bonnie Raitt enlisted him as the opening act for her tour and Rounder Records launched its Bullseye Blues label with his comeback album, *All My Life* ('90). He recorded two more well-received discs plus an r&b Christmas album for Bullseye before releasing his superb Verve debut, *These Blues* ('94), featuring tenor saxophonist Clifford Solomon, guitarist Danny Caron, bassist Ruth Davies and drummer Gaylord Birch (see "CD Reviews" June '95). His Verve followup is already in the can and is scheduled for release early next year. Meanwhile, Dr. John pays tribute to Brown on his latest disc, the big-band bash *Afterglow*, and Raitt enlisted Brown for touring duty once again this past summer.

This was Brown's first Blindfold Test. It was administered in the living room of his modest apartment in a senior housing complex in Berkeley, Calif.

Count Basie

"Shine On, Harvest Moon" (from *Brand New Wagon, Bluebird, 1990/rec. 1947*) Basie, piano; Waller Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums.

That sounds like a young Count Basie to me. I have to give him 5 stars because he has his own style from way back. He's got the genuine article. He knows his craft so well. It's not how much he plays, but the way he plays. He's got a real relaxed style, and he uses his right hand a lot. Whenever he wanted to put something over the best, he'd use his right hand. Plus, I love those little plinks to his playing that you can hear on this tune. This number sounds like "Cry For You," but it's not. Can we start it over again? [hums along with the melody] Of course, it's "Shine On, Harvest Moon."

Dr. John

"Since I Fell For You" (from *Goin' Back To New Orleans, Warner Bros., 1992*) Dr. John, piano, guitar, vocals; Chris Severin, bass; Freddy Staehle, drums; others.

I know who that is by the New Orleans touch he gives the piano. That's Dr. John. I'd give him a grade of 4 stars. He's got his stuff together. I love his playing, and I give him credit for holding on to his own style even though he uses little tricks from other people. I can even recognize some tricks he's got from me. But it's Dr. John's style. I also like the way he sings with that Creole touch and combination Southern and French accent. When he was just a young guy, he played guitar on songs I recorded for Ace Records. He loves Charles Brown. He called me the other day and wants to record some of my tunes. He said the numbers I sing fit him to a tee.



Ray Charles

"The Midnight Hour" (from *Blues+Jazz, Atlantic/Rhino, 1994/rec. 1952*) Charles, piano, vocals; other personnel unknown.

[laughs immediately] That's early Ray Charles. I hear him trying to sound like Charles Brown. He said in his book *Brother Ray* that he wanted to sound like Nat Cole and me so that he could make some money, too. He even used Johnny Moore, the guitar player I worked with for so many years, on some of his records so he could get the same sound. Yeah, this is really good. We'll have to give him 5 stars for being able to understand so well what others did before developing his own style. Of course, he had to find the Ray Charles style because he realized there wasn't any money to be made playing like me or Nat Cole.

Jimmy Dorsey & His Orchestra

"Green Eyes" (from *Swing Time! The Fabulous Big Band Era 1925-1955, Columbia, 1993/rec. 1941*) Dorsey, clarinet, alto saxophone; Bob Eberle, Helen O'Connell, vocals; others.

Now this is my favorite. I grew up with it during World War II. It's Bob Eberle and Helen O'Connell singing with Jimmy Dorsey. Eberle was good and Dorsey played the sweetest alto sax, but I was crazy about Helen O'Connell. When she sang, you understood every word. You got the love in her voice. This is very beautiful and deserves 5 stars because Helen O'Connell was someone who influenced my singing. I picked up tricks from her, like that slurring in her voice. Even though I don't sound like Helen O'Connell, some of her singing wiped off on me. It suited me. I've always felt that it was important for a man to pattern his vocals after a lady singer's style because you never have to worry about people saying you sound like her.

Misha Mengelberg Trio

"Rollo III" (from *Who's Bridge, Disk Union, 1994*) Mengelberg, piano; Brad Jones, bass; Joey Baron, drums.

I'd be a loser on this one. But if I was judging it, I'd say here's a person playing great chord structures and working at mastering his own style. I like it, 5 stars. Is he still living? I don't know who this is, but he sure handles those chords. Plus, I like the way he plays the melody. He's doing all these tricks from different eras, but still comes back to the melody. He has a beautiful style. He doesn't play like anyone I know, but I'd recognize his playing anywhere. If I listened to his records, I'd know him forever. **DB**