

The State of Blues West Coast Style

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know the music. The cats who are successful have been at it a long time."

Cannonball Adderley, the jazz saxophonist, is experimenting all the time. "He always been avant-garde oriented," continues his producer. "The word soul has always been closely associated with his music. He cut an album on Riverside right after he left Miles Davis, and his sound on that album was called soul music."

There are a number of persons who don't know what the blues are who are singing the blues, Axelrod contends. "What's worse is there are guys who don't know the blues who are writing what they feel are blues songs." Axelrod recalls one very successful writing team which once submitted a song to him for Rawls. "It was about living in the street, but it just didn't make it and I said the song is 'white'—it just didn't have any soul. They got very upset and they're well-known songwriters. The song was just too superficial."

Barnum, who has scores of projects going in Hollywood to make him one of the wealthiest musicians in the business, is beginning to think of his recording career. Axelrod plans cutting him as a singer next month. Barnum once had a hit on Imperial called "Rent a Tuxedo." Now he may have to do just that and go outside the recording and TV studio to get with the people.

Axelrod has a feeling that too many of today's young, new singers trying to cut blues just don't have any background in the style or in jazz. Jimmy Rushing sang joyously with Count Basie, Axelrod points out. Jimmy Witherspoon—whom he recorded—used heavy jazz musicians. Paradoxically there are many new blues attemptees who attempt to use improvisational techniques found regularly in jazz in their modern forms of blues playing.

Modern Blues Music

Marshall Chess at Chess-Checker-Cadet is attempting to offer modern blues music. He is leaving a legacy of new sounds by amplifying and adding large band

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SOUL SOUNDS IN THE MASS MARKETPLACE

By SUE C. CLARK

"We Got More Soul!" Dyke and the Blazers' current hit, could well be a theme song for everyone who digs Soul music—because there is definitely more Soul music around than ever.

Mass Exposure

The entrance of Soul music into the white market can be credited mostly to The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and Ray Charles who were the first to tell their audiences which Soul artists they were imitating—which led to the wider recognition of such greats as Chuck Berry, Muddy Waters, Little Richard, Don Covay, etc. Another clue to the interest in Soul music by a large segment of the white audience is the shift in interest in popular music. Ten years ago, when a white teen-ager went to college, he would often get interested in jazz. Today, that interest has shifted to "roots," or blues and Soul music. This, of course, is a logical outgrowth from the hippie culture which focused its attention on the simpler forms of things in life, from flowers to the basic country blues and country and western music.

Soul music is also a music to dance to, and most clubs, whether they be New York's Cheetah, or the neighborhood bar and restaurant in an Indiana town, book groups (white and black) which play Soul music for dancing. Every discotech in the country features records with the Motown Sound, Sly and the Family Stone, Sam and Dave, Wilson Pickett, the late Otis Redding, etc. As psychedelic rock moves farther and farther away from the beat, Soul music moves into this gap.

Sly and the Family Stone seem to be bridging the musical gap between Soul and Rock. Sly deftly incorporates white technology (which that segment of his audience readily identifies with) and Soul rhythms, into a unique hybrid style which is spearheading the trend to eliminate separatism in music, a "togetherness" in music which could be called "Music Power." Why Sly and the Family Stone appeared at the Schaefer



AT THE HARLEM FESTIVAL "Soul Show," left to right, Papa Staples, Mahalia Jackson, Mavis Staples, Tony Lawrence, Rev. Jesse Jackson and Ben Branch (with saxophone)—Photo by Victor Crichton.

Central Park Music Festival (July 28, 1969), he was called back for four encores by 5,000 ecstatic fans, dancing on top of their chairs!

For the purposes of this article, I am restricting the term "Soul music" to all black artists in the r&b and pop idioms, whose background is both blues and gospel music, and who incorporate this influence in their styles. Examples: Blues, the sounds of Motown, Memphis, Muscle Shoals, and such individual artists as James Brown, The Impressions, Jerry Butler, etc. These artists are the basis of r&b sound. It would exclude such black artists as The Fifth Dimension, O. C. Smith, Nancy Wilson, etc. I make this distinction as many fine black artists frequently appear on television, for example, and have a large following in the white market. Other artists, who could be classified as "nitty-gritty" hard Soul sound artists, simply haven't had proper exposure to the white market.

Press

Unfortunately, very little attention is given to Soul music in the national press. Even such "specialty" magazines as Ebony devote very little space to Soul music artists; and it took Look years before they could find a reason for featuring James Brown (though they managed to make it a cover story when they did).

As a result, magazines and newspapers specializing in music are generally the only publications that consistently run news about Soul stars. Such periodicals as: Soul, Soul Sounds, R & B World, Hit Parader, Fusion, Rolling Stone, etc., fill the gap, but the audience is still a limited one.

For the first time Newsweek did a cover story on the Blues, but they ironically placed on the cover the photo of a white artist: Janis Joplin. While Newsweek and Time do feature an occasional piece on Soul artists in their weekly music columns, this is an area where Soul music is generally ignored.

Radio

Radio has been the most open medium for Soul music—and not just Soul radio. Top 40 Radio is certainly more restrictive, but once a Soul artist has a hit, the chances of getting a successive "Pick" are much easier. The proliferation of Soul radio has opened up the market for Soul music, enabling young audiences to discover that their listening is not limited to just Top 40 programming. This is particularly important to kids who love to dance. There are, of course, some stations—not only the Easy Listening Stations—but so-called Underground or Rock stations who program a rather limited amount of Soul music. However, Soul continues to grow into "straight" radio, e.g., WAWA-AM and FM in Milwaukee, Wis.—one of the first FM Soul Stations.

Early Soul hits (then called "r&b") by artists such as The Drifters, The Coasters, The Platters, Sam Cooke, Chuck Berry, Little Willie John, et. al., opened the door for rock and roll. Today's hits by such Soul artists as Wilson Pickett, David Ruffin, Aretha Franklin, Sly and the Family Stone, etc., carry on this tradition. Soul music's universality was sharply focused on a recent American Bandstand (ABC-TV) show. Dick Clark to long-haired blond Los Angeles teen: "What kind of music do you like?" Girl: "Hard rock and Soul music."

Concert and Campus Report

The steady growing interest in Soul music for concerts on college campuses is accompanied by increased booking for Soul artists in the so-called rock palaces. Bill Graham of the Fillmores: East and West, is one of the biggest promoters in presenting Soul music to the white market. Graham was one of the first promoters to present the late Otis Redding to an almost exclusively white audience at the Fillmore Auditorium (December 1966). He books with an eye to exposing those Soul artists he believes deserve wider recognition. An example of this was his first booking of Sam and Dave in the Fillmore East (December 1968). He knew that his white audience wouldn't be aware of Sam and Dave's status as top Soul artists, so he booked Super Session as the "draw," but saved Sam and Dave as the closing act. Mike Bloomfield of Super Session, at the end of his set, increased the expectancy by adding his special preface for Sam and Dave of "You-won't-believe-what-you're-going-to-see-now-they're-the-most-exciting . . . !"

Graham also shrewdly booked Johnny Winter (before his first record came on the market) with B. B. King at the Fillmore East (January 1969), thus increasing the exposure of both artists to a mainly white audience. Another coup of Graham's was presenting a duet with Janis Joplin and Mavis Staples of The Staple Singers when Big Brother and The Holding Company shared Fillmore East billing.

At the Fillmore Auditorium and the Fillmore West, Graham was the first to present many major Soul artists: Sam and Dave (1967), Ike and Tina Turner, The Impressions, among others. He was also the first to present top Blues artists, both white and black, to white rock fans in San Francisco (a good segment of which were among the first to become blues-conscious). Top black Blues artists that he presented were: B. B. King, Albert King, Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker, Jimmy Reed, Magic Sam et. al.

Graham believes that Soul music will continue to penetrate the white market and he intends to book more and more top Soul acts, including return engagements for Ike and Tina Turner, Sly and the Family Stone.

Another area comparable to the college concert market is the growing series of independent concerts and summer festivals, where Soul music has made excellent inroads. New York entrepreneur Ron Delsner has created a unique series in the Schaefer Central Park Music Festival which spotlights jazz, rock, Soul music and folk. Delsner has gained a reputation for presenting artists of the stature of Aretha Franklin, and his concerts in Central Park are the highlights of music in summer in New York. Like Bill Graham, he presented Otis Redding in his festival in (July) 1966. At that time it wasn't standard procedure to have a second concert—only if the first concert sold out. This happened in the case of Otis Redding, though at that time the major percentage of the audience was black.

Schaefer Beer wisely underwrites Delsner's festival which grows in popularity each year, making it good business sense for Schaefer. Although it is a predominantly white audience which attends the series, the exposure for Soul artists is invaluable. As the festival

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