

Coda

THE JAZZ MAGAZINE * ISSUE NUMBER 171 (1980) * \$1.50

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ARCHIE SHEPP
photograph by Bill Smith



* 60 HUDSON STREET * NEW YORK CITY * NY 10013 * USA

ARTHUR BLYTHE — Metamorphosis (India Navigation IN 1038) — More music from the in-concert sessions that produced Arthur Blythe's acclaimed India Navigation record, "The Grip". The first side is a duet between Blythe's alto saxophone and the cello of Abdul Wadud. The second side features the sextet from "The Grip" with Blythe, Wadud, Ahmed Abdullah (trumpet), Bob Stewart (tuba), Steve Reid (drums) & Muhamad Abdullah (percus.).

HAMIET BLUIETT QUARTET — S O S (India Navigation IN 1039) — Recorded in concert at Axis In Soho, NYC in 1977. Hamiet Bluiett, baritone saxophone — with Don Pullen, piano — Fred Hopkins, bass — Famoudou Don Moye, sun percussion.

JAY HOGGARD — Solo Vibraphone (India Navigation IN 1040) — The first record of the young artist who has recorded with Chico Freeman and Anthony Davis. Recorded in concert at the Public Theatre, NYC, November 18, 1978.

ANTHONY DAVIS JAMES NEWTON QUARTET — Hidden Voices (India Navigation IN 1041) — With special guest George Lewis on trombone — The quartet is Anthony Davis, piano — James Newton, flute — Rick Rozie, bass — Pheeroan Ak Laff, drums.

CECIL McBEE — Alternate Spaces (India Navigation IN 1043) — An album of compositions by Cecil McBee, played by the composer on bass, with Don Pullen, piano — Chico Freeman, tenor and soprano saxophones and flute — Joe Gardner, trumpet — Allen Nelson, drums — Don Moye, perc.

DAVID MURRAY — Live Volume 2 (India Navigation IN 1044) — The second release from the New Year's Eve sessions live at the Lower Manhattan Ocean Club December 31, 1977. David Murray, tenor saxophone with Lester Bowie, trumpet, Fred Hopkins, bass and Phillip Wilson, drums.

CHICO FREEMAN — Spirit Sensitive (India Navigation IN 1045) — Chico Freeman, today's young giant of the tenor saxophone, takes a deep bow to his jazz roots. With Cecil McBee, John Hicks, Billy Hart and Don Moye, in a selection of ballads. *Autumn In New York* * *Peace* * *A Child Is Born* * *It Never Entered My Mind* * *Close To You Alone* * *Don't Get Around Much Anymore* *

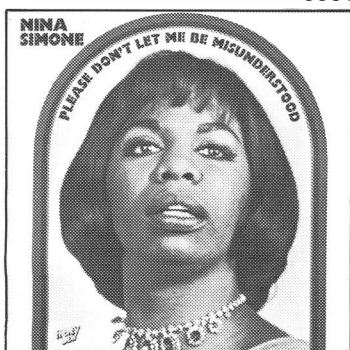
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photograph of David Murray by Bill Smith

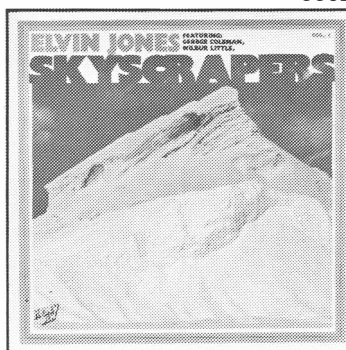


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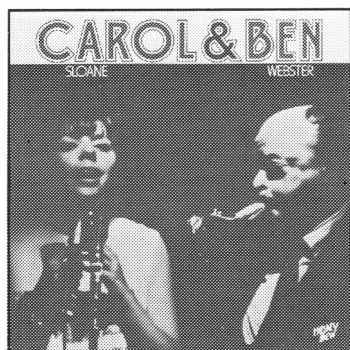
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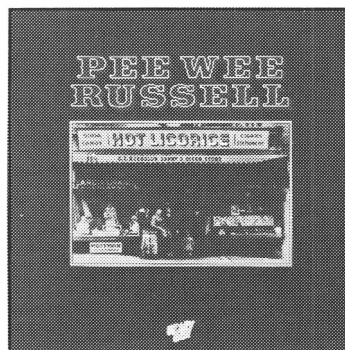
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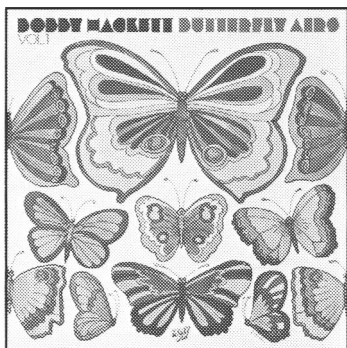
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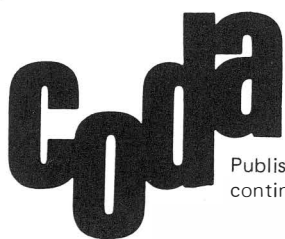
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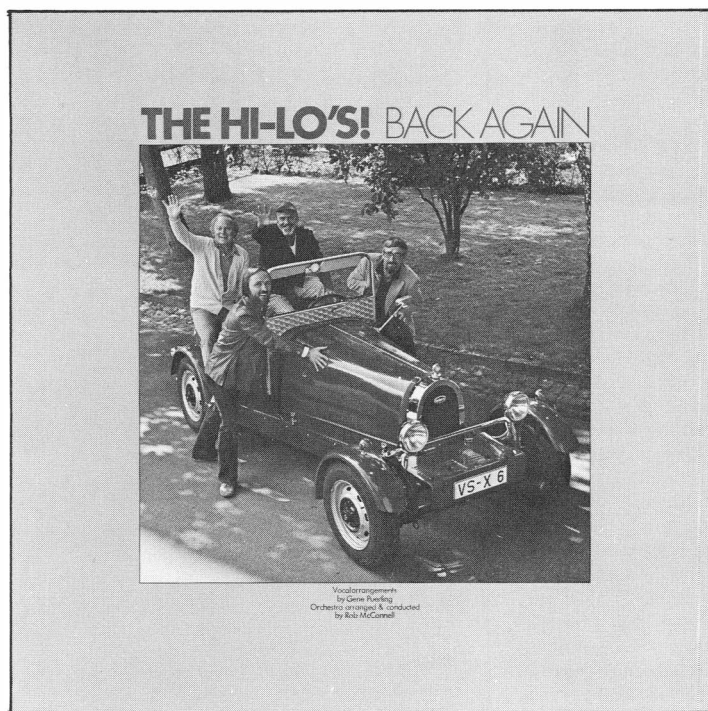
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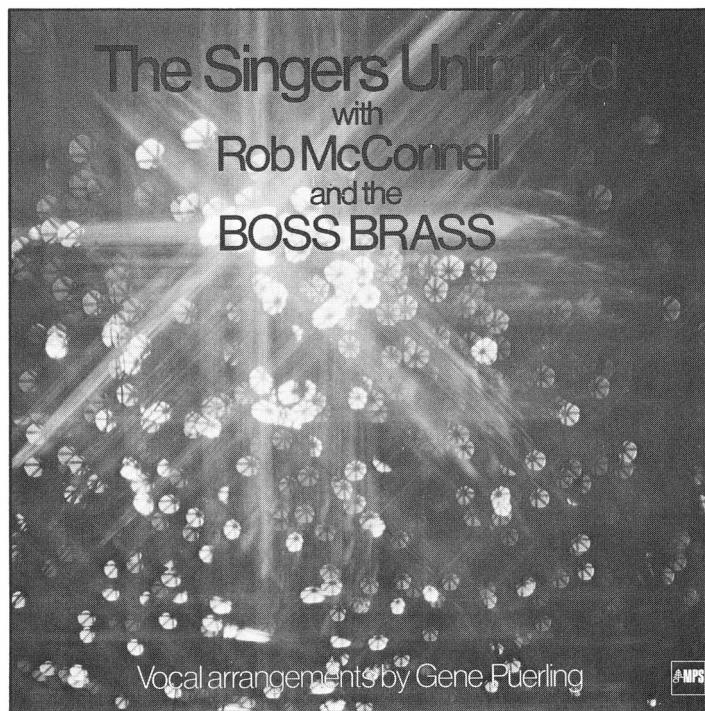


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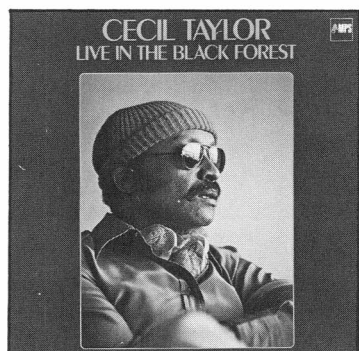
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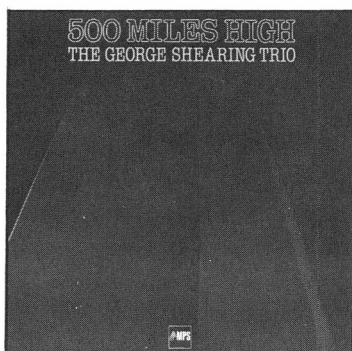
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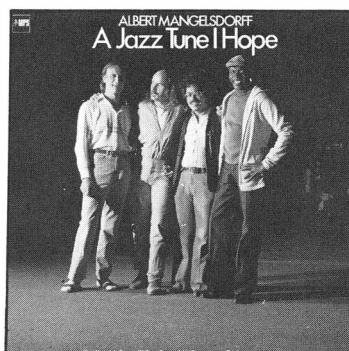
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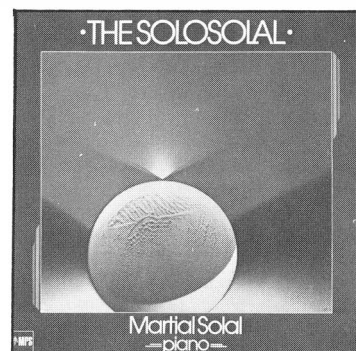
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Archie Shepp

I've never particularly embraced the term "avant garde" largely because I feel that the totality of the African/American musical experience is, if we look at it in a historical sense, an "avant garde" experience. I consider Louis Armstrong one of the first of the avant garde. Really, I consider Jelly Roll Morton, Sidney Bechet, or Scott Joplin equally avant garde, because certainly for the time they lived in they were musical revolutionaries. They were breaking new ground. Before Armstrong and Joplin and people like that started to play melodies with flat nines, and ninth and thirteenth chords, these weren't really used in American popular music at all. The rhythmic innovations of ragtime music, syncopation, the use of two against three patterns in the right and left hands, these were all quite revolutionary when we think of it. In a sense we should, I think, consider the evolution of any artistic form as a cumulative thing. We can't just think of something as having culminated in a Braxton or an Archie Shepp, but as the result of the contribution of many, many people. Had it not been for a Charlie Parker or a John Coltrane, it would not have been possible, in my estimation, for a Cecil Taylor or an Ornette Coleman. So the term "avant garde" becomes meaningless unless we consider it in a truly historical sense. In the sense of the total contribution of all the people who have participated in this idiom.

I feel that improvisation has many ramifications. We can look at it in terms of Western symphonic music: Bach and Mozart and those people used to improvise. They had contests in which they competed with each other improvising in *that* context. I teach school and I get a lot of youngsters who are novices and they've heard about my reputation as a so-called "jazz" musician. So they come in with violins and guitars and whatever and they say, "I want to learn how to improvise". To them, improvising means just playing whatever comes into your mind. Well, that's another kind of improvisation. I consider that valid in certain contexts, but I think that when we're talking about improvisation in *this* idiom, in the idiom of black music, so-called "jazz" music, there are an enormous set of rules that can be applied. These rules are not applied in such a limited sense as you encounter them in Western classical music, I feel. For example, parallel fifths and all these kinds of things. You're not hampered by that if you study Ellington and Joplin. Well, not so much Joplin because he is a model of voice leading and counterpoint, but if you study the work of Ellington you encounter a true musical revolutionary. He shows you how to

make parallel fifths work. In fact, if we look at the whole schemata of black music (I teach at a university now so I'm very close to the music department and all this), in fact when we look at contemporary music as it's written today, the black musician, the black composer and arranger has just about re-written the book. In fact just about all the rules they tell you you shouldn't break in classical music have been broken in black music and shown, not only that they can be broken, but that they work!

It's like what you were saying earlier about playing the saxophone. You have a European concert approach which in a sense is much more limiting than the way the black performer approaches the saxophone. His embouchure: whereas the Western classical performer tends to push the embouchure in and the lip against the teeth, the black performer tends to push the embouchure out and rest the mouthpiece more on the lip itself using the muscles of the sides of the mouth, the buccinator muscles, to create a sound. So time and again we see where the black instrumentalist, the black composer relies on his resources. His original African genius, the African musical genius, to completely re-write the rules of Western musical theory. So I think hopefully if I'm representative of an avant garde, it's in *that* sense, in the sense that I continue what I feel is a fundamentally African tradition.

I think the listener should enjoy the music that he's listening to. That may seem ironic because of my reputation, and in fact people have walked out of many concerts of mine. Just as many people have stayed, many people have walked out. So they might have walked out with the opinion that I was not playing music for them. Of course this is not the case, any more than, when Stravinsky premiered *The Rites Of Spring* in Paris, he intended to insult the French audience. This was certainly not his intention, rather as we see today it was a matter of the time and peoples' tastes at that time.

First of all the primary duty of the composer, performer, the artist, whatever is to try to communicate with the audience. By that I don't mean he should play down to the tastes of the audience or that he should put the audience on. I think he should be honest. This is why I accept the fact that people may walk out on me, but my fundamental motive is of course to give them music they can enjoy. If they reject it, of course, there is nothing I can do because that's my statement, but that I think is the primary duty of the artist. After that I think it is to be true to his self. To know your own self.

BERNARD STEPIEN: Do you consider yourself an entertainer?

ARCHIE SHEPP: No, I mean that's why I phrased my statement that way. I see nothing inherently wrong with being an entertainer. The only thing wrong with that is that most people don't really honestly admit to themselves the difference between being an entertainer and being a person who is in a sense an artist. By "artist" I don't mean anything that is elitist or exclusive, but merely a person who strives for poetry in his language, who strives to formalize an essentially prosaic message. That person I think would have to be called something a little different from an entertainer. Obviously the primary duty of an entertainer is to entertain. So he thinks first

and foremost of making the audience happy. And in fact the other thing about being honest to himself doesn't have to enter into it at all. But I think when we enter into the realm of true folk music - which I think is the basis of so-called art music - then the performer has a duty to himself to be honest to self as well as to the people he is performing for. There we are out of the area of pure entertainment. Entertainment, I feel, is a commercial medium. It's disco, it's rock, whatever - it doesn't mean that it's bad, it just means that its motives, its motif is essentially money. I play a music I've never gotten rich from monetarily, in fact as I pointed out before this is only my first time in Canada in four years, and before that it was ten years since I had been here.

Obviously I've never pandered my work to commercial tastes. I've never striven simply to make money or to be accepted. I *have* tried to tell a story and to present a message to people who would listen. So the audience on the one hand has its rights; certainly they have a right to be entertained I think by any performer, by any artist, be he Art Tatum or Heifetz or whoever. Ultimately his gift makes him entertain that audience. It makes people happy if we call that entertaining. On the other hand he's not an "entertainer" in the sense that that is not his primary aim, to simply make people laugh or be happy, but to evoke the truth. So the audience at the same time it has a right to be entertained, it has an obligation to listen to the truth.

Bernard: So basically you're telling us that if there is an entertaining part of it, there is also a functional part of it.

Archie: Yes. If we really consult the background of so-called "jazz" music, of African-American music in the United States we would find that its roots are primarily African, although as a student in my class put it very eloquently, the black songsmith reworked, altered his materials in the New World. Whether it be in the form of calypso or meringue in the Caribbean or whatever, wherever we find it. Or even the religions, the Shango and so on that have resulted in Brazil, Lukumi in Cuba, religions themselves have somewhat overhauled the original Yoruba and Fon religions of Dahomey and Nigeria respectively as we find them in the New World. And so in the United States likewise we have an overhauling, a changing, a reworking of the original African polymetric materials, although certain things do survive in very strong forms. The use of functional songs, as you pointed out, the so-called "work song", the use of certain song-types, the song of allusion which is the parent form of the blues. The use of the blues scale and ultimately the varied use of the call-and-response; antiphonal forms, all of these are fundamentally African. They surface in the orchestral works of Ellington and Henderson.

Particularly I find the work song a constant referential source for today's players. For example the field holler is very evident in the work of John Coltrane. The field cry, the cry he often gives when he plays very high on the horn. I think this is really suggestive of the earliest cries that were made by workers in the field. Even during the time of slavery, and of course they go back to Africa itself where they have documented all types of work songs; group work songs and individual work songs among African performers. So particularly the work song or the so-called "functional" song has I

INTERVIEW NUMBER ONE

bernard stepien

think played a very strong part in the quality of today's music. We don't have, for example, a song form which is designed to make work go faster or which is timed to doing certain types of work such as corn husking songs and wood chopping songs, or some of the songs of the railroads, or the rowing songs that were typical of the black man in slavery, and before in Africa, where they developed a whole body of work songs. But I think that many of the techniques mingled with other elements. Because that cry could equally be influenced by the Islamic chant, the Islamic prayer to Allah. Since many of the black musicians who were playing during the forties, including John Coltrane, came somewhat under the influence of Islam, although they may not have adopted Islam. Also they began to explore some of the so-called "Arabic" music. We're often accustomed to thinking of Arabic music as essentially Middle Eastern. I don't necessarily, I think it's a North African music, and if we really look at its roots it has been fundamentally changed by the black Moslems in Africa, who it seems to me, being something a little different, particularly rhythmically, to the traditional Arabic song form.

And so the black man in the United States, when he came into contact with Islam, began to treat it from his own ethnic — as is customary for black people when they deal with music — they began to treat it from the point of view of their own experience. I hear in the music of John Coltrane a mingling of field cry, the cry of Islam, the "bakai" as Cal Massey calls it in his song *Bakai*, which means cry. Perhaps if we look back far enough the man who sang the field holler as a slave might have been a Moslem in another life in Africa before he was enslaved. So perhaps the purpose I'm addressing myself to now is black music being a form which, like the Hindu religion, can absorb many other forms without itself being fundamentally changed.

Bernard: To come back to the functional aspect of music: would you ever consider playing in, let's say, a factory where people were working to replace the work song which has been forgotten today?

Archie: Obviously these kinds of things are possible — however I think a lot of today's popular music fits into that context much more readily. Largely because it is rhythmic in a repetitive sense — which I'm not using pejoratively or negatively. Much of today's popular song has strong elements of blues, and constant, steady rhythms which lend themselves to more functional types of experiences, to work and so on. Obviously because the blues itself stems in part from the work song. Much of today's so-called "rock" music could probably be used in the context of work song, which partly explains its popularity in that it reduces many of the complex elements of black music that we find in so-called "jazz" to really very fundamental, elemental characteristics. To the beat, and to essentially a kind of blues motif which we hear over and over again in almost every song no matter how they dress it up. This could provide the basis of a functional music. Music that could be played in factories. It doesn't always have to talk about popcorn or tell people to get up and dance, it could really give people strong, terse political messages. It could be used that way far better than Beethoven or Bach, which I heard in the Soviet Union blasted over loudspeakers. You could hear Bach, Beethoven and Mozart everywhere,



to uplift the culture of the workers, but I think we could do the same thing with blues music in a much more relevant way.

But I don't think my music necessarily has to serve that purpose, because I think black music itself is vast enough as a form. That's why I'm suggesting we could begin to use other forms to deal with that. I think one of the advantages of a music like mine is that it has some traditional African qualities — that is, that it has a potential to be a kind of ritualistic music, something that is rapidly disappearing among the New World negroes. They have no concept of ritual outside of Christian music. They have no concept of a ritual music which would be indigenous to their own experience, one which might entail some of their own original religious elements, but on a conscious level. When I say that, I mean a black person prays today in a church, and he shouts, but he doesn't realize, perhaps, on a conscious level that he does the same thing when he worships Domballa or Ogun. Basically it's the same emotive experience that distinguishes him from his white Christian brother. But if we could begin to internalize those ritual elements, if we could begin to create another form — I think that's ultimately the purpose of the kind of music I play.

It's a long story but, in the forties, according to Brother Max Roach, the reason for the development of so-called "bebop" music was the fact that during the war the government

placed a cabaret tax on clubs which had dancing. Which made it prohibitive for all the big bands, which usually had singers, to come into these places, because the club owner had to pay the cabaret tax which made him pay more money both to the band and to the government. So it forced the club owners at this time to begin to hire small groups. It discouraged dancers from coming, because these bands didn't have singers. This was during the swing period, the heyday of people like Billie Holiday and the great bands, Basie's band and so on. But the bands went out, with the Depression, and then again with the war, and then this cabaret tax, so as a result club owners had to get these small groups like Charlie Parker, the group at Minton's, Kenny Clarke and Thelonious Monk and so on. They hired small bands, but one of the things that this did was it created a milieu in which the black audience — it was primarily black people who heard this music because it was being played uptown in New York — the black audience would come but they could not dance in the real African community participatory sense, they had to sit and listen. For the first time you had the beginnings of a music in the New World, for the black man, which in a sense was a ritual music. In the Western sense we would call it an art music. The African would perhaps call it a ritual music. Because this music was not designed for dance. It was designed primarily for

listening. Charlie Parker's music creates a dance feeling; it has all the rhythms, it carries the African percussive sound in the way he plays the horn, but you don't get up and dance to it, you listen to it. Basically that's what it was. Of course in Philadelphia we danced to it, eventually we began to create dances because that's the nature, again, of the African experience. But you see that's what I think has been lost today. That ritual element is being weaned out, because of a society and an establishment which seeks to destroy anything but conformity. That's why all rock and roll music sounds alike; essentially it is meant to regularize our experience. I think the so-called "jazz" experience, the black classical music experience is a maverick experience today. It has become a threat to established musical norms, and to musical norms that people are trying to establish. Essentially if we all listen to the same music, if we all dance to the tune of the same piper, we're all following the same program. The Charlie Parkers, the John Coltranes, the Fats Wallers, the real essential differences are being weaned out. Black people particularly owe it to themselves to re-examine their ritual experience. Just as we created functional music, we created ritual music.

(Thanks to George Hornaday for transcribing the original tape of this interview).



Archie Shepp

ARCHIE SHEPP: I've just come back from Europe, where we recorded a 32-piece band for a European label. The disc will only be released in Europe — I suspect it will be obtainable through some of the import shops here, but it's primarily for the European market. I led a 32-piece band conducted by Ray Copeland and we travelled in France, Holland and Belgium.

NORMAN RICHMOND: *So you're not too active in the United States now?*

A.S.: I never have been really. In the sixties I got to do a little travelling, I was out in California and like that, but I've never really worked that much in the States, to tell you the truth.

N.R.: *Would you go to South Africa to play if you were asked by a promoter?*

A.S.: It would depend who the promoter was. In fact Max Roach was asked to go to South West Africa about two years ago, by one of our students here at the University of Massachusetts. His blood brother lives in South West Africa and is prominent in the government there. They were trying to put on a big festival in South West Africa which was going to be a black thing. Of course South West Africa is a black nation, there are a number of implications to their autonomy right now... it's the territory that the United Nations now holds in contestation, I believe. At that time Max Roach had intended to go there, but it didn't come off, for some reason.

So when you ask the question, "Would I go there?", it depends on who would ask me to go there.

N.R.: *I'm asking the question because there seems to be a movement now to get people from black America, specifically rhythm-and-blues artists, to go there and they're being used by the government.*

A.S.: I think in general rhythm-and-blues artists have not represented perhaps our most politically conscious element in the music industry. Historically they haven't, and I support and endorse a lot of blues music, I love it, but I don't think that the people who play that music by and large have been the most representative spokesmen of our political aims and desires as black people here in this country. At least until very recently, now you get people like James Brown singing about "Black And Proud", and then some kinds of nationalistic elements creep in, and B.B. King's song about the welfare. On the one hand the blues *documents* a lot of social events, but in terms of blues players specifically being spokesmen, or politically conscious, well that's not always been the case. Surely, that's why these promoters go to those kind of people rather than to other types of elements within the African-American music

industry, because there they might run into a very sound rebuff from people who are perhaps, hopefully, a little more politically sophisticated.

Again, I'd say it depends on how an invitation like that were made. If it came through people whom I considered politically sound, I might be involved with something like that. The kind of thing that Max was about to do earlier seemed to me to be reasonable, because it came through people whom I respected politically. But I guess a whole commercial hit is what you mean, some big commercial agency asking me to come over there, I think I would have a number of reservations. I suppose, for these performers, anybody has a price, money buys a lot of things today, so I'm just saying it's not easy for a man to turn away a million dollars, especially if he's down on his luck. It's a time when political commitment means a lot. Everybody doesn't have it.

N.R.: *I'm interested in how you see the term "jazz". I know you use the term "black classical music".*

A.S.: Well I tend to stay away from that term "black classical music" because Random House and white folks seem to have pre-empted "classical" as meaning specifically the Western music that was played around the 17th and 18th centuries, so rather than get into those kinds of arguments, I define the music as African-American instrumental, African-American vocal and dance music. It's clear that no single culture can pre-empt the word "classical", particularly when it's much older than that culture to begin with. For example the word "classical" can apply to cultures of India, China, Egypt, Africa for that matter, which are much older than any areas of Western classical music or any Western classical art. So it's rather presumptuous for any single culture to pre-empt that word. I've had a number of students question me about that because of course it does contradict the Random House definition of the word "classical", which is a racist definition by my own thinking.

So it's not that I don't believe that black music is classical enough, but the ambiguity of the definition often raises problems when you try to define the music along those lines.

Nor do I reject the term "jazz", but I think it's meaningless when we try to figure out the sum total of what African-American music is, in all its various forms. Because so-called "jazz" music is a conglomerate of blues, work songs, ragtime, all these various forms. Unfortunately Negro music has been fragmented into all kinds of meaningless terms, like "disco" for example, which is simply another way of referring to modern African-American blues music. But people don't use those terms because then they'd have to start giving Negroes money for those items. That's why they use the term "jazz", because it's so general that it never cites the black people as the actual originators or creators of that music. Even if it were "jazz", then who's the king of it? — it's Benny Goodman. Who's the father of it? — then it's Paul Whiteman. So ironically, even if we're stuck with the term "jazz", it's something again that black people seem not to have created, and they don't even control, so it's not a good word for us. It's not an effective word, Duke Ellington never used it, Louis Armstrong never used it, neither did Sidney Bechet, neither does Max Roach, so why use it?

N.R.: *Do you think that we can say that this music is an African-American music exclusively,*

or do you think that there was a parallel development? Was this type of music played in South Africa and the Caribbean as well as in the United States?

A.S.: Actually, no. It only happened here in the Diaspora, in this area of the Diaspora. Incidentally that's another name that I've begun to call it, "Disaporic Music", because I feel that there we get into the Caribbean, South America, the United States, the whole black continuum. Diasporic music. And my own concept, musically, is going more and more in that direction. With the big band I've been reaching for more what you might call "Third World" elements. An expression of a black message, one which speaks for the entire continuum.

N.R.: *I was reading in Duke Ellington's book where he called bebop "The Marcus Garvey Extension", and I wondered if you had any idea what he was speaking about, because I don't know if anyone was West Indian inside that whole bebop movement. I might be wrong.*

A.S.: Well, he might have been referring to the very strong nationalist content in the bebop movement. That was when the brothers first started to take on Islamic names, some of the brothers made pilgrimages to Mecca, and I don't mean so much to cite any specific religious affiliation of black folk during that time in that particular music area, but the fact that they were somehow consciously rejecting white Christian elements. That's why I cited earlier the fact that blues players in general have not taken on those kinds of conscious political stances, and the fact that Duke Ellington pointed this out was very insightful, because people like Charlie Parker, and before him Lester Young, refused to go into the army, refused to fight the war, they were conscientious objectors. Some people say that's where Bird got his name, because the guys who refused to go into the army were called "Yard-birds". So there again, he was one of the early conscientious objectors. Max calls him a freedom fighter. Well, in a way you could see that, and perhaps that was the implication of Duke's statement. I would see that as an allusion to the strong nationalist content, and the fact that Marcus Garvey himself aroused the nationalist consciousness of many black people regardless of whether they were West Indian or not, particularly in the New York area, and perhaps created one of the largest autonomous black movements in recent history. He brought together close to a million people, so Mr. Garvey should be given a great deal of credit for his efforts. He was a diasporic man in many ways. He belongs to us, as a people.

N.R.: *What do you think about reggae music, and the way it's coming out today?*

A.S.: There again I see it as a diasporic consciousness, a deepening of the diasporic aesthetic in a way, because it's African-American blues, it's given a kind of a beat which represents certain religious revivals in the West and particularly in Jamaica. I see it as very important music because again, it attaches and underscores and helps to deepen our sense of community with brothers and sisters in another area of the Americas. In a sense, they have created something different, but of course it's based harmonically on African-American blues music. I think the beat itself comes partly from some of the cult music of Jamaica, but the actual harmonic content is provided by African-American blues

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music. Everything from boogie to stride piano and jazz has made possible forms like the reggae; it's a very modern blues form.

N.R.: *When you talk about Coltrane, and him using field hollers in his music, how much does gospel music influence you today?*

A.S.: I make a distinction between gospel and spiritual music. The gospels are a form of art song, which is deeply influenced by the blues. The spirituals are a traditional and a folk song, which were not written down, and which inspired the blues, and later so-called "jazz" music. I have been deeply influenced by both, but I feel gospel music is deeply influenced by the blues, and by spiritual songs. Of course when you say "gospel", I must say that I owe quite a debt to that, because my grandfather was very fond of church music and so was my father — he plays the banjo, and through my home I heard a lot of gospel music, especially being born in Florida.

N.R.: *When I'm in the South, I hear people call all of it spirituals, they don't use the term "gospel".*

A.S.: That's how they look at it. A lot of those songs, to them, come out of the oral tradition.

Thomas A. Dorsey is the man who's the founder of modern gospel music. He was Ma Rainey's piano player in the 1920s, and he experienced a spiritual reawakening — you know, he had been ill — and Mr. Dorsey still lives in Chicago, I believe, they did a very beautiful article on him in *Black World* a few years ago. He, along with Roberta Martin, are the actual architects of modern gospel music, and the gospel song is an art song, actually, meaning that it's written down and people pay copyrights on that kind of music. They don't pay any copyrights on songs like *Go Down Moses* or *Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child*. Those songs we brought from Africa, that's the difference. The gospel songs were created here,

but many of the spiritual melodies we brought from Africa. For example Felix Sowande, the Nigerian musicologist who was teaching at the University of Pittsburgh, he's a man of about 75 and is a full Yoruba chief, as well as being a man who has played all kinds of Western music, and also knows his own music very innately — he played for me a piece in 6/8 rhythm, the melody of which was exactly the melody to *Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child*, but he said that it was an ancient Yoruba burial song! Only the rhythm is changed to 6/8. So it means that many of our original songs, particularly our spiritual melodies, which are incidentally the source of the blues melody, come directly from Africa, and not necessarily from Islamic cultures in Africa.

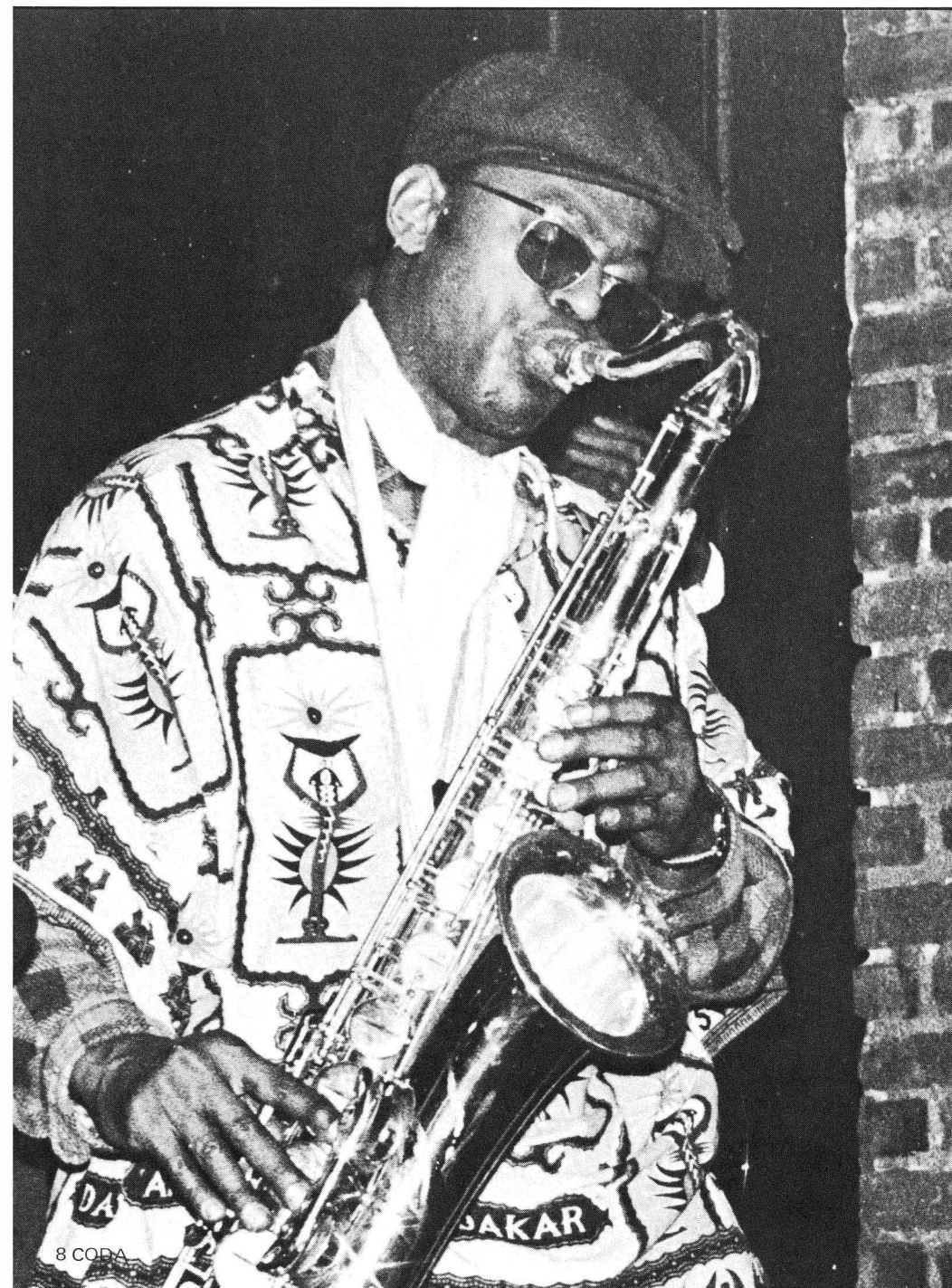
N.R.: *What other parts of the African heritage do you see as having survived in black people in North America?*

A.S.: Our music, primarily, and I think that that's enough. If you have music you have enough, because within the music we have codified and documented our experience, from the blues, people like Bessie Smith and up through Muddy Waters and B.B. King, through the evolution of our art music, the so-called "jazz" music. Through the music of Ellington, Basie, Bird, Pres, Trane, Hawkins, Bechet. We're documented through our instrumental music, and also through our dances, which are constantly evolving. The whole tempo and nature of life here in the United States. So I think we've kept very much in touch with our African presence and personality through our music. However, we have not taken sufficient time to analyze the meaning of our music. Unfortunately, the black man in the United States still only sees recreational meaning in his music. He has yet to look for serious meaning in his music the way whites have sought it in Beethoven and Bach. But that would take the recognition that Bird, and these people I've just mentioned, are our Beethovens and our Bachs.

N.R.: *Do you think that so-called "jazz" began in New Orleans?*

A.S.: Not necessarily, I think it began when they put the first black man on the boat. There are good reasons for believing that certain elements of the music were reinforced in New Orleans especially because of certain historical factors, mainly because the drum existed in New Orleans to a much later date than anywhere else in the United States. And the second factor is that the whole African culture was reinforced by the uprising in 1799 in Haiti, when many black people were exported from the island of Haiti and sold to New Orleans, just prior to Toussaint Louverture's revolution in 1801, which resulted in the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Because it was the Haitians' taking of the island of Haiti which destroyed Napoleon's dream of an empire in the West. He had planned to use Louisiana as a base because the French owned Louisiana at that time. But after the destruction of his plans by Toussaint Louverture and the successful revolution by the Haitians he sold Louisiana to the United States.

In 1799 there had been a big shipment of blacks from Haiti because of the war that was raging prior to the settlement of that territory. So the culture was reinforced in New Orleans, it was like a fresh injection of African culture, because these people came directly from Haiti, and many of the brothers and sisters who went



to the West Indies were shipped directly from Africa, whereas in later years, particularly in the 19th century, many of the brothers and sisters in the United States appear to have been bred in the West Indies. Which is why people of West Indian descent sometimes make the claim — and it's a divisive one I think, it's not a very positive one, it certainly doesn't reinforce our diasporic consciousness — that the American Negro was "washed white" through the fact that he was not directly from Africa, but often had come from the West Indies where certain types of amelioration of his experiences, attenuation had taken place, which we can see through the whole latter-day middle-class experience of the American Negro. But I think many of our people right here — I know in the South for example, I was born in the South — many blacks came directly from Africa. I know that because there's a bunch of blaack niggers where I come from! They ain't got too much admixture, you know what I mean? So that speaks for itself, in fact, I'm not doing so bad myself. You see what I'm saying?

So I think the African-American experience here in the United States is pure enough, we don't have to cop any pleas or explain ourselves to anybody. I think what we did in Watts, and in Harlem, and in Jersey, and in Chicago, I think our struggle has been on a par with any freedom-loving people anywhere; even with that of the Vietnamese, because we're fighting from within a structure where we're definitely in a minority and a lot of cats out there are in the majority and don't seem to be able to do anything!

...Even Africans have yet to accept their relationship to African-Americans. How can Africans be free when Negroes in the United States are not free? One of the most critical questions that Africans must answer for themselves is that of their own role in the slave trade. They've never done that. Subsequently there's a whole guilt/fear trip in terms of communicating with American Negroes on a contemporary level.

For example, if you look at Africa today, you see that they need agronomists and other technical people. Very often their own people whom they train don't want to go back to Africa. Yet there are thousands of trained people in the United States, Negroes who would love to go to Africa and work — if Africans would open their countries to black people and say, "Come back home, brother". Africans never do that, because within this diasporic consciousness, there's a certain level at which we've never really come to grips with ourselves. Part of it's social and economic, so the Marxists try to provide a simple answer; but Marxism is too Western, it doesn't solve our problem. If we could see that there is some continuity between the field cry that some guy's making in Georgia and some Ashanti working in a field in Ghana, that's a basis.

N.R.: *A lot of people from the Western Hemisphere say, "We are all one", but a lot of times people see Pan-Africanism as just the unification of the African continent.*

A.S.: Precisely. Which excludes a good deal of the diaspora, and it lets us off the political, historical hook. Because once again I think that the problems of Africa for black folk, and particularly the problems that Africa is having today, rest partly in the fact that Africa has never seriously come to grips with the problems of slavery, and the whole nature of the slave trade: how it developed, how black people



were sold into slavery, their own role in it, and in fact how black people in the United States could be brought back into the African system. They haven't gotten to that level because they haven't first dared to psychologically deal with their own complicity in something of which they may be historically ashamed. So today I think the American Negro could play a most crucial role in the liberation of Africa.

Why is it that the white people are always saying, "Why don't you niggers go back to Africa?" How come the Africans don't say, "Why don't you niggers come on home?" That's the quandary of the American Negro today, that the white man doesn't want him, and neither does the black man in the country that he was originally shipped out of. So you started by saying, "Where else is this music played?" It can only be played here, I think.

N.R.: *I was reading what Dollar Brand had said, and a lot of South Africans have told me that they play the same music as we play.*

A.S.: Well, I can only say that I only know of one Sidney Bechet, one Lester Young, one

Coleman Hawkins, one James P. Johnson, one Scott Joplin... if there is one of these types of people in South Africa, I wish they would stand up. The world needs them.

N.R.: *You were speaking of the consciousness that artists who play African-American instrumental music have as opposed to, say, rhythm-and-blues. I've never heard an R&B artist — say somebody who sings the high falsetto things like the Bee Gees stole — talk about Claude Jeter, the Swan Silvertones singer who was supposed to be the father of that particular style, which is an African style. I have yet to even read that, I read a lot of white music critics when they talk about this falsetto singing....*

A.S.: Yes, of course, *they* understand where the sources are.

N.R.: *Right, but I haven't seen any blacks talking about them....*

A.S.: No because those things, very often, even the techniques that are utilized by blues players aren't consciously formulated, they don't have any way of articulating that. And that's why I think they're encouraged, because it creates a role for white aficionados on the one level, for people to produce them, and to perform certain kinds of services. On the one hand people like Paul Oliver, who can make certain types of references between Ashanti music and music in Mississippi, and on the other hand just the whole series of commercial panderers, the kinds of guys who produce the Donna Summers and these kind of people. It gives jobs to a lot of these white middlemen because very often in this kind of medium black entertainers have even less power, and so they *must* be spoken for by whites. So I think the result of that is that these people tend to be less outspoken, they tend to be less articulate about some of the overall political problems of black people, and in general they're chosen specifically for their lack of consciousness, because it accomodates the patronizing attitude of the white audience. The whole craze for blues also dovetails with an historical condition in the United States. When blues held sway, like in the twenties, was when they were lynching more Negroes per capita than ever before. And I think it's the attempt, again, to regularize our whole musical economy, to the extent that we become like a one-crop economy. Black music used to be very varied. At one time we could enjoy people like Louis Jordan and Charlie Parker at the same time, we had a whole minstrel show tradition which is gone — and most people never saw that, which was fantastic, from the point of view of theatre. We even had black theatre in the twenties, but many of these things are gone because they have never really been systematically encouraged the way other forms are that are created by whites in this country.

If we consider the "stars" that are turned out by our community, Stevie Wonder, Aretha Franklin, Earth Wind And Fire and so on, there must be millions of dollars that are turned out by their entertainment. But we have different communities — you have the Philadelphia sound, the Detroit sound — why doesn't each community open up its own record emporium, create its own recording talent, begin to invest in its own musical genius? Create schools where we could turn out Jackson Fives every year — except that the community would own these people, and invest in them. And when they began to make money, through recording, a certain percentage of that money would come

back into the black community. You see, music is a natural resource to black people, but they never think of it that way. We could use music to work for us the way we use gold. Because the whole world wants black entertainment. I've travelled around the world playing music that nobody here wants to hear. The world wants to hear it, but Negroes aren't aware of that.

I think Stevie Wonder has been very important to the industry in terms of the kind of music that he's producing, and hopefully for black people in terms of raising their own self-image, particularly for masses of our people. However I think Stevie, and a number of what you might call black superstars, represent an enigma because at the same time they are created by the black masses, who go out and buy their records in large numbers, they are unable to effectively communicate any of their super-iches into any kind of political change for their people. As a friend of mine pointed out, these people, the Marvin Gayes, the Stevie Wonders, become in our modern society a sort of heightened form of priest. So their role takes on more implication. If their roles are in the form of priests transplanted into the New World, then in the ritual sense the implication of what they are is much deeper. So Marvin is not exactly an analogue of Frank Sinatra. And even there, Sinatra is an interesting study, because Sinatra has a lot of folk roots. I mean, even if they identify him with the Mafia, I can dig that, because that's his people, man! What's wrong with that?

N.R.: *I was reading something where you were talking about this book that Chris Albertson wrote about Bessie Smith, and the whole question of Bessie Smith bailing Columbia Records out of bankruptcy....*

A.S.: In his book Albertson produces a photocopy of the application for receivership by the old Columbia firm prior to the issuance of its 14000 series, which launched Bessie Smith's career, all her records are on the 14000 series from that particular period when she first started recording with Columbia, and they can trace from that period the whole re-emergence of Columbia from the verge of bankruptcy, to a viable company again.

Here at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst I teach one lecture course and two music courses. The lecture course is called "Revolutionary Concepts in African-American Music" but we're about to change that to something a little more innocuous. You see, Black Studies started as a vehicle for bringing black students into an awareness of their own roots — intellectually, aesthetically, socially, economically, historically — but it ended up really being just a glorified history department. Because there was never a sufficient place made within Black Studies for the role of culture. I originally came here with Max Roach, and between the two of us we're expected to teach the entirety of black music. I happen to be a saxophone player; but in a department of Western classical music, they have three or four people teaching the violin, four or five teaching trumpet and whatever reeds and so on, not to mention people majoring in harmony and theory who specialize in those kinds of areas. Yet when we come to black music one individual is expected to teach the entirety of this discipline. It's because black people themselves never seriously thought how complex this discipline must be, and yet black music is perhaps the one area at the academic level which

cannot be taught by white expertise. Yet that's the one area that has received the least attention as far as Black Studies are concerned. Even in black colleges they're basically teaching Puccini and those guys. Hank Crawford and those guys, they have to fight to teach this kind of music because they're not encouraged to teach it, they're encouraged to teach Bach and Beethoven. I remember when I was down in Howard, how fed up Donald Byrd was with the whole system.

That's why I call my course "Revolutionary Concepts", because I want to get away from the "entertainment" idea, and get into what I feel are serious social and political implications in this music, that were touched on by Ben Sidran in his book "Black Talk". It's an interesting book on the whole nature of the oral tradition and oral communication among black people, specifically in music. It's an Englishman's PhD thesis, and I said to myself why didn't some black man write this, why didn't some African write it? It shows that

our culture is seriously in danger of being assimilated.

Black music, so-called "jazz" music, is the one thing that has stood against our being militated, against our being assimilated. Largely because it's the one music form that has not been mastered by white people. There are white boys who imitate Coltrane, but they didn't do it first. They imitated Bird, but they didn't do it first. So now they'd rather destroy that music, because they never learned to play it. But they did master the blues, and in fact now they're the masters. The Rolling Stones and the Beatles, they're much bigger than Stevie and those guys, they make much more money. It's turned the nature of our music business back a million years, and that's why they're pushing blues, because the white boys finally learned to play it. They went into our church and they didn't steal our religious music, but they did steal the blues. After all, the blues is a 12-bar form, scientifically you can break it down and analyze its components and

Jimmy Garrison, Beaver Harris, Archie Shepp photo by Bill Smith



then you've got it on a certain level. It was so-called "jazz" music that helped the blues to evolve through ragtime and through composers like W.C. Handy, Ellington, into another kind of form, a form which was far more complex than anything that The Rolling Stones could handle. But it was that form, and those people who seem to have been systematically killed off by this system.

N.R.: *Keith Richards recently made a statement that there was nothing happening in Black American music, and Frank Zappa has made a similar statement....*

A.S.: Well, Frank wrote a tune for me years ago called *Archie's Tune* — but I'm still waiting to hear it.

N.R.: *But you didn't read what Keith Richards said?*

A.S.: No, and frankly I'm not on the defensive with those guys, because I don't think they really know anything about this music. They have become arbiters largely out of default, because a lot of this music is not played on

the air popularly, we have no real access to television or mass media.

Furthermore I think many Europeans feel today that they have created a form of so-called jazz music which is equivalent to African-American jazz music. That's another danger in using the term "jazz", because if we call it "African-American music" it localizes it, it fixes it, it's ours. So now they ask me when I go to Europe what I think of "Polish jazz", which is like asking me what I think of Polish slavery. Because that music, that they call "jazz", grew out of slavery. It grew out of our suffering, it tells our story, but nobody wants to look at it like that because that's too political. So it's understandable that a white boy could say that there's "nothing happening" with it; it threatens his whole existence. First of all it identifies him as a slave master.

My own hope is that the kind of music we're playing will eventually be understood to be of importance to our own people. It should be seen as worthy of research, I don't only

mean jazz music by that, I mean diasporic music. That we should begin to educate ourselves out of a Top Ten mentality, that we should begin to take a long, serious look at our music, not only the music created here in the United States, but created throughout the African-American, the Pan-African world. We should begin to look into that music for certain types of political analogies, references that we can find.

I'd like to get a team of research scholars and musicians, writers, and go into an area like Brazil, up around Bahia, or Cuba into one of the heavily Yoruba areas where a lot of that music and that lore is still alive, and begin to document some of this material, and to begin to utilize this as a form for creating other types of diasporic musical structures — similar to the reggae — because rhumba and all these forms had international implications, especially when they came from down below the United States. They've usually had tremendous implications as regards dance, and they've had a lot of implications as regards their universal reference, perhaps in a way that our own music has not had. We've reached Europe, but a lot of our music has yet to reach South America. But a lot of South American music has been very successful in reaching the entire world. Like Samba, we've reached the world differently, and we've reached other areas of the world. So-called "jazz" music often reaches the intelligentsia, it reaches the middle class, because it's a very sophisticated music, whereas our dance music reaches the mass of people in those areas. When I was in Japan, not too long ago, we played to a hall of maybe 2,000 people, and that was our biggest audience. When Earth, Wind And Fire came through, they were staying at the same hotel, I know they played to about ten or fifteen thousand. Because their music appeals to a whole mass audience that my music would not appeal to.

Then again I think it's the whole nature of blues music appealing to essentially a working-class audience. They're the people who go out and buy the 45s. And they create the whole Top Ten syndrome. So somehow those people have to be assuaged, and they have to be engaged, because a lot of those are our people, and we shouldn't forget the fact that "A Love Supreme" was a gold record. In fact they sort of withheld that information from John Coltrane. He discovered it by accident. If Stevie Wonder gets a gold record, well, usually it means that you rewrite your contract. But John just came up to the ninth floor and he saw this gold record and he asked the A&R man "Isn't that a gold record out there?" And the A&R man said, "Yeah, I forgot to tell you...."

They don't want niggers playing that music no more, man. That music was the music they played in the sixties, and the sixties were a turbulent period here in this country. I hope the eighties will be the same way, but on another level. I'm not talking about the kind of engagement which would result in the lives of many of our people being lost, but I'm talking about a level of engagement in which we would really begin to change things. That's truly a revolution, another level of revolution which we haven't achieved yet, but I'm hopeful that we can. And I think that there again, music could help us to realize this if we could seriously understand all its references.

Thanks to David Lee for transcribing and editing the original tape of this interview.



Blues On Record



From Sweden we have more from the Route 66 reissue series. This round includes Wynonie Harris, "Mr. Blues Is Coming To Town" (KIX-3); Ivory Joe Hunter, "7th Street Boogie" (KIX-4); Charles Brown, "Sunny Road" (KIX-5); Roy Brown, "Good Rocking Tonight" (KIX-6); and Amos Milburn, "Just One More Drink" (KIX-7). Route 66 is a serious and first class record label. Each release has a healthy program, selected to illustrate different aspects of the artist's career. They have good clean mono sound, detailed discographies, informative liner notes, and complete lyrical transcriptions on the inside record liner. All information is in English. In the case of Amos Milburn, Charles Brown and Roy Brown, royalties are being paid for each LP manufactured. All five of these releases are strongly recommended to anyone with a taste for 1940s-'50s jazz-inspired jump blues, R&B, blues and rock and roll.

"Mr. Blues Is Coming To Town" presents sixteen vocal sides by Wynonie Harris from 1946 to 1954. With the exception of four pre-1949 sides, the material comes from his days with King Records. This LP is a good complement to the Harris reissue on Phoenix Jazz 7 — "Mr. Blues Meets The Master Saxes", that features earlier sides from 1945 and 1946,

and to the King reissue — "Good Rockin' Blues" (K-1086). There is no repetition of material.

Harris' spectrum includes jump blues, R&B, ballads and blues. His music is goodtime Saturday night music, and even the slower melancholy sides have a friendly, reassuring edge to them. His lyrics reflect the social side of big city life during the 1940s and 1950s, but his themes are adult in nature, a factor that led to his decline in popularity as the record-buying public in the 1950s became gradually dominated by a more youthful audience, one bent on teenage fantasies. His stories deal with an old maid who kept sitting on it until it was too late — *Sittin' On It All The Time* — right through to the power of New York City to change men into women and women into men — *Big City Blues*. Other themes deal with travelling, good rocking, loneliness, drinking, being in love, being out of love, Cadillac prowess, and more good rocking.

The personnel varies from session to session. Horns are featured extensively, answering and punctuating Harris' vocal line, and taking the majority of lead breaks. Good moments come from Hal Singer (tenor sax), Hot Lips Page and Jackie Allen (trumpet), Joe Burton (trombone),

Bill Graham and Curtis Pigler (baritone sax), Leroy Hanes (alto sax) and others. The guitars of Jimmy Shirley and Clarence Kenner come to the foreground on *A Love Untrue* and *Christina* respectively. Session pianists are Sonny Thompson, Milt Buckner, Todd Rhodes and Bill Doggett. On *Rock Mr. Blues* and *Keep A-Talking* a male doo-wop group is included to good advantage.

Next is the Ivory Joe Hunter set. "7th Street Boogie" is made up of boogies, swing, blues and jazz-inspired ballads from Ivory, Pacific, King and M.G.M. sessions. In all there are sixteen different sides from nine different sessions cut from 1945 to 1950. This collection does justice to Hunter as vocalist, pianist and songwriter.

In contrast to Wynonie Harris' dance hall shout style, Hunter's style is more in the sophisticated supper club vein. Small groups are featured with a greater emphasis on quieter vocals, safer lyrics, and softer instrumentation. At times Hunter's approach leans in the direction of the black tie stylings of Moore/Cole/Brown. In fact on the 1945 Ivory hit *Blues At Sunrise* Hunter's vocal statement is aided by The Three Blazers with Johnny Moore (guitar), Charles Brown (piano) and Eddie Williams (bass). The remaining cuts feature Hunter's

piano with a variety of brass and reed men over a basic rhythm made up of various guitarists, bassists and drummers. Again the personnel change from session to session.

Within this format Hunter's piano plays a significant lead role. He was a strong, imaginative pianist with clear stride leanings. The horn players dominate the solos, with nice statements by Ernie Royal and Harold Baker (trumpet), Budd Johnson and Sammy Ford (tenor), and Russell Procope (alto). The instrumental, *Siesta With Sonny*, features Hunter, Baker and Procope along with Tyree Glenn (trombone), Oscar Pettiford (bass) and Sonny Greer (drums). This group also provides the impetus on the hot jump tune *I Got Your Water On*, pushed along by some spirited scat singing from Hunter.

Although Hunter's style leans toward the subtle, more sophisticated side, his music does break out and at times he jumps like the rest of the shouters and honkers. This is evident on the boogies *7th Street* and *Boogie In The Basement*. Hunter's strength as a lyricist shines in *Reconversion Blues* and *High Cost, Low Pay Blues*, both dealing with the boom/bust economy during and immediately after World War II. On the smooth ballad side there is *Don't Fall In Love With Me*, and on the blues side, *Grievin' Blues* and *What Did You Do To Me*. The remainder are relaxed, uptempo jumpers. A well-rounded and highly enjoyable collection.

While on the sophisticated side, it is appropriate to drift on to the Charlie Brown collection; he certainly epitomizes the clean, urbane side of West Coast blues. Side One of "Sunny Roads" features eight Aladdin sides from 1945 to 1947, with Johnny Moore's Three Blazers. The personnel are Charles Brown (vocal/piano), Johnny or Oscar Moore (guitar) and Eddie Williams (bass). Of the eight cuts, the lyrics of the three uptempo sides are somewhat trite, while the lyrics of the five slow blues generally provide more thematic fibre. Of course, the lyrics of *Merry Christmas Baby* have become clichéd with time. Oh yes, Brown turns in his piano for a celeste on *Merry Christmas...* in order to achieve a more Christmasy sound. Of the eight sides the strongest are the slow and moody *Sunny Road* (the Roosevelt Sykes return-to-the-South song), and *Travelling Blues*. Both have thematic substance and feature good instrumental work by Brown and Johnny Moore. It should be noted that the trio works well on all the sides. They had a tight formula worked out. However the sameness in Brown's vocal style and the trio's formula tends to wear the listener (me) out.

To some degree the sameness in Brown's vocal style is carried over to Side Two, which picks up with Brown after the Blazers had broken up, from sessions cut in 1950 to 1960. The first four sides come from two Los Angeles sessions, and place Brown with a small group featuring tenor saxophonist Maxwell Davis. The next three cuts come from two New Orleans sessions and place Brown with the likes of Amos Milburn, Lee Allen, Alvin Tyler, Justin Adams (maybe) and Charles Williams. The final cut is from a 1960 Cincinnati session, and places Brown with an unknown band plus a male vocal backup group.

On the L.A. sides guitarist Jessie Erwin has some nice moments, and Maxwell Davis certainly adds a new dimension. The New Orleans sides naturally take on a crescent city flavour. This is especially evident on the uptempo *I'll Always Be In Love With You* and the medium tempo stroll, *Please Believe Me*. The third

New Orleans side is the better-known Brown/Milburn vocal duet, *I Want To Go Home* — again a strong, moody Brown stamp. Finally from Cincinnati there is *Angel Baby*. This cut is really fine if you like syrupy doo-wop music. Last dance!

From an historical perspective "Sunny Roads" is an important release. The selection of material has cast Brown in a variety of settings and several key musical idioms. This selection helps to link Brown to the many artists that he has influenced with his personal style. General listeners might be overwhelmed, however, by the sameness of Brown's delivery, especially on Side One.

It's back to solid blues and R&B with Roy Brown's "Good Rockin' Tonight". This one is a good follow-up to the earlier Brown reissue on Route 66, "Laughing But Crying" (K1X-2; see *Coda* No. 163/1978), and includes a mix of fifteen Deluxe and King sides recorded from 1947 through 1954.

The program begins with Brown's career-launching 1947 hit, *Good Rocking Tonight*. From there it alternates between examples of Brown's dramatic crying blues and his high energy jump numbers. Catch the energy that jells on *Good Man Blues*. With the exception of a single cut the program is comprised of Brown originals. His strength as a lyricist is again showcased. On slow blues such as *Fore Day In The Morning, Long About Midnight*, and *Dreaming Blues*, the combination of his lyrics and voice conjures up intense images. Of course the jump tunes emphasise a good-humoured, party atmosphere — *Grandpa Stole My Baby* and *Old Age Boogie*. Brown's apparent fondness for the violent image is quite pronounced on *Butcher Pete, Old Age Boogie, Whose Hat Is That*, and *Black Diamond*. On the lighter side there is *Teenage Jamboree*. This is a nice little ditty about hot dogs, bands that jump, horns that toot, and sodas that are ice cold — obviously aimed at the early 1950s teenage market.

The Amos Milburn set, "Just One More Drink" is a very pleasing collection. Milburn was somewhat of an R&B giant during the 1940s and early '50s. On numerous occasions he scored big with successful hits (some of which are included here). His music was geared towards the Saturday night bar room crowd. As influences he incorporated the heavy-handed boogie-woogie piano of popular predecessors, Pete Johnson, Albert Ammons, etc., and the sophisticated stylings of a popular peer, Charles Brown. As evident on this set, his particular brand was vocal and piano-dominated with ample room for horn soloists and, later, guitar soloists.

Included are sixteen Aladdin sides cut from 1946 through 1954. Backing is from small ensembles that change from session to session. The material is split to include even portions of uptempo jumps and boogies, medium tempo blues, slow blues and blues ballads. The material was also thoughtfully selected to complement the Milburn reissues on Riverboat (900.266) and United Artists (UAS 30203). Of special merit is the last cut, *Why Don't You Do It Right*, a remake of the eerie Lil Green blues, and features expressive vocal work by Milburn and some mood-reinforcing piano, sax and electric guitar (possibly Wayne Bennett). This cut is the tour de force of the collection, and a real incentive to pick up the LP. Like the others, "Just One More Drink" is a good one to have.

Future releases from Route 66 include reissue sets by Roy Hawkins, and Paul Gayten and Annie Lawrie. Route 66 is filling some important gaps in the reissue field and doing it with class. This label is well worth supporting. If Route 66 releases are not available at your specialty record shop, drop them a line at: Route 66 Records, c/o Jonas Bernholm, Halvingatan 14A, 113 23 Stockholm, Sweden.

To finish things off, let us turn our attention to a Herwin prewar country blues reissue. The LP's title, "Delta Heavy Hitters"1927-1931" (Herwin 214) gives both place and time to this collection of fifteen vocal/guitar sides by Mississippi country bluesmen William Harris, Blind Joe Reynolds and Skip James. Side One features eight sides by William Harris. These particular sides were originally released on the Gennett, Champion and Supertone labels, and come from four different sessions cut in 1927 and 1928. In the liner notes Harris is described as having been primarily a dance musician, and his forceful, rhythmic guitar style and strong vocal delivery reflect the extroverted requirements of this role. Harris fares well both as a vocalist and as a guitarist. Seven of the cuts are solo, while he is joined by second guitarist Joe Robinson for a good driving workout on *I'm Leavin' Town*. Four of the cuts have appeared on the Mamlish reissue "Bullfrog Blues" (S 3809). On the first six cuts the reproduction quality is passable to quite good. However the sound quality on the last two cuts gives the impression of a recording session cut in the midst of a raging forest fire.

Side Two opens with four tunes by Blind Joe Reynolds (also recorded as Blind Willie Reynolds). These sides come from two sessions cut in 1930, and were originally released on Victor and Paramount. Reputed to be a street singer, outlaw and general rounder, Reynolds is interesting both as a vocalist and as a guitarist, true to the intense character of Mississippi country blues. His compositions consist mainly of AAB stanzas built around an erratic pattern of repeated guitar riffs. He creates a nice droning, rhythmic effect on the guitar. This is evident on the uptempo *Third Street Woman Blues* and the slow *Outside Woman Blues*. Also included are *Nehi Blues* and *Married Man Blues*. The sound quality ranges from tolerable to quite good.

Side Two finishes with three tunes by the better-known Skip James, all from a 1931 Paramount session. *Yola My Blues Away, Illinois Blues* and *Devil Got My Woman* are typical Skip James compositions. They are smoothly constructed without following any orthodox structure. James creates his characteristically haunting atmosphere on the first and last cut (especially on *Devil Got My Woman*), and his clean single note guitar work is heard throughout. The sound quality is tolerable to good.

"Delta Heavy Hitters" will be of general interest to collectors of pre-war country blues (be wary of duplication). The liner notes are informative and quite technical, and a detailed discography is also provided.

by doug langille

BEA BENJAMIN

Sathima Sings Ellington
Ekapa-001

Bea Benjamin, hitherto unknown to me, is an unassuming, flawed, but moving singer who deserves recognition. In this set of Ellington standards, she illustrates what has been known for decades but needs repeating: one need not have great technique or range to interpret songs effectively. It is also possible for one to stay close to the melody and still contribute to what may loosely be called the jazz idiom. With uncertain control, limited range, and a desire to investigate a melody's nuances, Benjamin

creates superior music similar to that of Sheila Jordan.

Benjamin's program is impeccable. From a straight *Mellow Tone* through *Prelude To A Kiss*, *Sophisticated Lady*, *Mood Indigo*, *Lush Life*, *I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart*, and *Solitude*, the mood is predominantly reserved. Pianist Onaje Allan Gumbs, bassist Vishnu Wood, drummer John Betsch, and congaist Claude Latief form a perfect sounding board for Benjamin's idiosyncratic singing. Only Gumbs solos regularly, and he does so well.

The best performance, without question, is on *Solitude*. Only the two drummers accompany Benjamin as she and they present a master class in interpretation. For over six minutes she bends and extends notes to suggest per-

fectly the anguish of aloneness. Often droning, her treatment of the lyrics takes from them any element of sophistication and establishes them on a primitive level that is reinforced by the drums. Less shocking than Sheila Jordan's *You Are My Sunshine* with George Russell in 1962, a performance with which this *Solitude* has some affinity, Benjamin's is a major new rendition of Ellington's often-recorded composition.

Highly recommended, this album is available from EKAPA, 222 West 23rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10011 U.S.A. — Benjamin Franklin V

Record Reviews.....

CHASE * WARLEIGH QUARTET

One Way
Spotlite SPJ 510

Just in case any further proof is needed, this record demonstrates once again that skilled jazz players can develop and reside outside of North America. This album is clearly within the broad bop tradition and features the striking alto saxophone of Ray Warleigh. There is a strong presence in Warleigh's playing that grabs the listener's attention.

Co-leader Tommy Chase lends able rhythmic support on drums. Along with Danny Padmore's full sounding bass and the swinging piano of John Burch they meld together into a well-oiled unit.

While side one makes for enjoyable listening, it is on side two that things really come alive. A major catalyst here is the addition of expatriate trumpet player Jon Eardley, to turn the group into a quintet.

This is the fourth recent Spotlite record featuring Eardley. He is rapidly establishing himself as one of the best bop/hard bop trumpet players now active. Rather than just playing a string of notes, he tells a story when he solos. A story that is, in fact, well put together and develops to an appropriate resolution.

This 1978 recording features 37 minutes and 35 seconds of good music spread throughout five evergreen standard tunes and one Eardley original.

— Peter S. Friedman

ANDREW CYRILLE & MAONO

Metamusicians' Stomp
Black Saint BSR 0025

From the opening notes of Nick DiGeronimo's bass this music glows with freshness and anticipation. "Maono" is DiGeronimo, Andrew Cyrille on drums, Ted Daniel on trumpet and flugelhorn and David S. Ware on tenor saxophone. This is very rhythmic music, and its harmonic character is directed by DiGeronimo's bass playing, which is mostly oriented towards playing patterns related to the tunes, rather than "walking" or playing chord changes in the conventional jazz sense. Thus the music sounds more folksy, more African if you will, and in fact tunes like *Metamusicians' Stomp* remind one more immediately of the music that Chris McGregor, Louis Moholo, Johnny Dyani and other South Africans are playing in Europe, than it does of American jazz. For the most part the lead voice is DiGeronimo, a striking and very unusual bassist. Formerly I

have not been terrifically impressed by David Ware, having heard him on record, and in person several times with the Cecil Taylor Unit, where he interpreted all of Taylor's sheer energy very adequately, yet with virtually none of the pianist's complexity, grace or subtlety. This record, however, finds Ware working out of an Archie Shepp persona which is a fine showcase for his considerable technique; his tenor playing is highly enjoyable. Ted Daniel is an excellent neo-bop trumpeter whose muted work on *My Ship* can be heard as a tribute worthy of Miles Davis. *The Park* section of Cyrille's suite on side B, "Spiegelgasse 14" also brings Miles to mind, its achingly cool quality implying depths of emotion similar to those of the best of Davis' music. The subtle shadings and statements of the leader's drums, the clarity and swing of DiGeronimo's bass, the rough vigour of Ware's tenor, the glimmering brightness of Daniel's horn — plus the precision of the arrangements and the exuberance of Cyrille's writing (all of the compositions except *My Ship*) make this the most successful incarnation of Maono to date — as well as one of the best jazz records to appear in 1979. — *David Lee*

ANTHONY DAVIS

Of Blues And Dreams Sackville 3020

Anthony Davis - piano; Leroy Jenkins - violin; Pheeroan Ak Laff - drums; Abdul Wadud - cello.

Side 1: *Of Blues And Dreams, Lethe, Graef.*
Side 2: *Madame Xola, Estraven.*

Anthony Davis draws the listener into this recorded experience with a pausing, Ellingtonian grace on his piano solo *Of Blues And Dreams*. Within moments, though, he forewarns of things to come with shadowy left hand rumblings and steely chordal assertions. *Lethe* follows immediately, unfolding ominously with Wadud's dark bowing and soon the listener encounters shifting episodes of cello/piano/violin, each lasting long enough to underscore a musical image. *Graef* sustains this conception, it is a rather chilling matrix of suspensions and re-entrances, almost Hitchcockian in character. If all this sounds rather imposing it is instructive to look at this music as conceived at ground level.

Davis, it seems, has drawn direct inspiration from the phantasmagoric world of speculative fiction, particularly that residing in the imagination of his wife, writer Deborah Atherton. Her vivid liner scenario verifies Davis' portrayals of her often harrowing visions: a telepath-inhabited mystery planet, an apocalyptic drug which tells the user the moment and method of his death, a "futurist woman" heroine, Madame Xola, who survives the planet's nightmarish perils with knifing wit, and so on.

These are demanding musical transductions requesting further listenings — they are probably best taken with the programmatic journey in mind. The music sounds like so many different things that the imagination often founders in wonder as much as it does in clear perception — a not-unintended effect, I think — but in total it is a remarkable web of interaction.

For the most part, the music encompasses and inhabits the space rather than moving through it. Most characteristic is Jenkins who most often cuts the edge of character definition

and abstract description. His violin emits jagged textural images and angular motions that arrest the melodic inclination as well as the listener's attention.

Davis finally concedes to a sense of forward motion on *Estraven*, a canon with a rhythm that actually lurches. But even here, typifying his role throughout, drummer Ak Laff follows the motion as a fourth voice rather than defining the rhythm conventionally.

This unsettling music would suggest that in distant, surreal worlds even something as dependable as one's heartbeat will betray its bodily function. In "Of Blues And Dreams" the body experiences unearthly metamorphosis and trauma, but remains mysteriously whole. This is potent music, to traverse lifetimes by.

— *Kevin Lynch*

HAT HUT RECORDS

Music — as such seemingly diverse practitioners as John Cage and Albert Ayler, to name only two, have taught us — is where you find it. In its purest form it surrounds us, haunts us, uplifts us, terrorizes us, spiritualizes us. Only when it is prostituted, diluted, and distorted by corporations, profitseekers, egotistical musicians and, yes, the media (including critics) does it fail to fulfill its natural functions.

Music today is most often encountered on records, rather than in a live situation, and the Canadian pianist Glenn Gould envisions the day, not long in coming, when live music will be obsolete and everyone will be able to experience music solely in the privacy of their own home via the supposedly perfectible technical means of the recorded medium. Gould has, in fact, stopped performing live concerts to concentrate on adapting his unique musical vision to records.

Gould's position is, of course, a tenuous one, and most musicians still confirm that their best music is made in front of a live, reacting, energetic audience — and this is especially true in the case of improvising artists. Nevertheless, the overwhelming numbers of records sold in the last decade alone proves the power of the record industry, and suggests that its potential lies in areas beyond the strictly financial and documentary. For the most part, however, record companies are not known for their philanthropic or artistic endeavours. They have been created to make money, primarily, and any artistic good that comes from them is secondary and probably accidental. H.L. Mencken's dictum that "No-body ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the (American) public" could be considered the byword of the major record companies as far as music is concerned.

Fortunately for musicians and musiclovers, there have always been and still are exceptions — usually in the realm of small, individually owned and operated labels which are run as a labor of love rather than a tax shelter or get-rich-quick scheme — and Hat Hut Records is notable among them. Without a large budget to be wasted on the unnecessary trappings of the industry, without a high-priced promotional blitz in *Variety* or the *New York Times*, and, unfortunately, without much of their deserved recognition, they have quietly begun planting the seeds of an important, enlightening catalog of music — not artificial, pasteurized sonorities carefully calculated to make a splash in the *Billboard* charts and sell a million units, but

music with obvious human feelings behind it, music which attempts to communicate in a sometimes difficult, occasionally oblique, often unique, usually interesting, thoroughly creative fashion. And it's all the result of one man believing in the music of another man, trying to help him share his music with others, and then expand into helping others from there, one step at a time.

The Hat Hut story begins with saxophonist/trumpeter/composer Joe McPhee. McPhee is one of the phantoms of the "new music scene"; through no fault of his own or his music he is criminally unknown in the United States, though he has commanded more of a reputation in Europe through a number of appearances at various festivals. A part of this native neglect can be attributed to McPhee himself; born in Florida in 1939, he studied music throughout his elementary and high schooling and — like Ayler and others — played with assorted bands (marching and otherwise) while serving in the U.S. Army. But after getting out of the Army in 1965, he decided that Europe might be more sympathetic to the adventurous, spontaneously-conceived sounds he felt necessary to create: "I didn't feel the climate was right in this country for the music I wanted to play, that is, my own internal climate as well as the external climate for the kind of things I thought should or could be going on." McPhee didn't turn his back on the States and adopt expatriate status, he continued to live in Poughkeepsie in upstate New York while doing most of his performing in Europe. In 1967 he was a part of the group Clifford Thornton put together for his "Freedom and Unity" recording (Third World Records), and in 1969 he and Craig Johnson took the bull by the horns and started their own record company, CJR Records, which issued five recordings of McPhee and various assisting personnel (including one, "Pieces of Light", with synthesizer virtuoso John Snyder, a frequent collaborator as we shall see).

Hat Hut began to take shape when Werner Uehlinger (who, though Swiss, was working for a German chemical firm at the time) heard "Freedom and Unity" and the subsequent CJR recordings and was so impressed that in 1974 he contacted McPhee about the possibility of his sponsoring a recording of McPhee's music — even though he had no previous experience in the record business. The result was "Black Magic Man", an in-concert recording of the 1970 McPhee quintet at Vassar College. The subsequent releases came quickly, one at a time, and the current total is fifteen recordings (five of which are two-record sets). McPhee is featured on seven of the recordings, including the first four; however, with the expansion of his label Uehlinger has opted to explore diverse parallel conceptions of new music in addition to McPhee's, so that Hat Hut now boasts albums by Steve Lacy, trumpeter Baikida Carroll (a frequent collaborator with Oliver Lake and Julius Hemphill), percussionist extraordinaire Phillip Wilson (in duet with trumpeter Olu Dara), young tenor trump David Murray, the Claude Bernard/Raymond Boni duo, and the Milo Fine Free Jazz Ensemble. Each of the recordings, whether a live or studio date, is exquisitely engineered and pressed on vinyl free of surface noise and annoying pops and ticks (not a small consideration when dealing with music which is heavily dependent on subtle timbral variations, dynamic levels, and passages of silence), and each features fascinating artwork of a minimal nature by the Swiss

artist Klaus Baumgartner.

Before we discuss the records issued to date, a word about Joe McPhee is in order. As previously stated, McPhee may be one of the lesser-known lights in the music world, but, as the music of these recordings attests, he is certainly one of the unsung giants of our day. he is an articulate spokesman for the music, who lectured on "The Revolution in Sound" at Vassar College for two years, 1969-71, and his own published description of his musical approach is probably as good an introduction as one could come up with: "It's not predictable and therefore poorly recognised for sales promotion. Some call it avant-garde, perhaps because it is not so much concerned with traditional preoccupations of rhythm, melody, and harmony, as with tensions and energy rhythms. Nor is it concerned with traditional concepts of tone and pitch, but with micro-tones and off-pitch oblique variations of melody. Anthony Braxton has many analytical theories concerning his music that are interesting because his music is good. How does one know "good"? Any clear mind has a second inner-ear that calls the signals. How do you analyse walking? I put one note after the other, like walking, and my foot tells me when the ground is false. Between here and Beethoven, analysts have not got one step closer to his secret (nor will they ever). That secret is the artist's prerogative, perhaps the only one. I can only talk about my secret, which concerns the sounds of subway trains, things that click, whirr, buzz, and flash. It's about cooking, drinking, general carousing, jet planes, and unmentionable sex, dogwood trees, Star Trek, and whole cranberry sauce. And it's also about finding that one long note that will so paralyze everybody that I might steal their minds and identities. These I would place in unmarked containers and cast them to the winds — then send everyone out to find themselves."

To this I would only add a few comments about the nature of McPhee's music in general. Though he began as a trumpeter and still utilizes that horn, it is as a saxophonist that he creates his most effective music; in addition his relationship to his material is so emotionally charged and electrically prompt that the music often seems to sound diluted when additional participants are involved. His solo performances are models of clarity, single-minded direction, and expression. By using the technical and emotional extravagances of Ayler and the structural exigencies popularized by Chicago's AACM'ers, McPhee has developed an individual voice which, in the words of Peter Fuller describing the Abstract Expressionist painters in a recent *Village Voice* article, seeks to create aural equivalents "not just for dreams, or immediate perceptions, but also for anguish, hope, alienation, physical sensations, suffering, unconscious imagery, passion, and historical sentiments." In so doing, McPhee is exploring a difficult and dangerous field, one that is ripe for personal cliché, parody, and empty exploitation. What saves him is his multiplicity of structural stances, melodic conceptions, dramatic attacks, and stylistic effects — a diversity within a single genre which contrasts with the more methodological approaches of, say, Braxton, or Lacy, or Roscoe Mitchell, but which nevertheless makes the four of them, at least in my opinion, our leading practitioners of the saxophone solo.

THE RECORDS

Hat Hut A

Black Magic Man

McPhee (tenor and soprano saxophone), Mike Kull (piano), Tyrone Crabb (bass and electric bass), Ernest Bostic (percussion), Bruce Thompson (percussion).

This is the earliest display of McPhee's music that Hat Hut has released, and the only one which finds him in the company of a "conventional" rhythm section. The saxophonist's noble, muscular entrance on *Song For Lauren* brings Coltrane immediately to mind, though he seems too anxious to slide into his upper register screeches, rendering them unconvincing. The title cut finds his glossolalia backed by the flailings of the two percussionists, creating a great deal of energy which is mitigated by pianist Kull's Tynerish episode. McPhee's fluttering, Jarmanesque soprano on *Hymn Of The Dragon Kings* is the album's most interesting outing, but here, as elsewhere, the rhythm section is superfluous, since it never really interacts with what McPhee is doing. Heard at this early stage of development, McPhee's playing seems overly discursive and derivative.

Hat Hut B

The Willisau Concert

McPhee (tenor and soprano saxophone), John Snyder (synthesizer, voice), Makaya Ntshoko (drums).

Recorded live at a 1975 concert in Willisau, Switzerland, these four compositions evoke a wide range of moods, colors, and textures. Ntshoko's drumming is especially sensitive to the nature of McPhee's abbreviated phrasing, as the saxophonist bites off bits and pieces of phrases, never stringing statements together for too long, and making excellent use of tension and relaxation in his solos, while the drummer backs him with wit and an inventive use of dynamics. The projection of Snyder's voice through his synthesizer on *Voices* suggests a choir of chanting Tibetan monks, while McPhee's tenor is plaintive and placating, with extreme, affecting bent squeals and a barrage of percussion at the climax. *Bahamian Folksong* is one of McPhee's most immediately ingratiating compositions, consisting of his tart and tasty dancing filigrees over a bouncy ostinato of electronic timbres. *Harriet*, on the other hand, is a ballad comprised of extremely oblique melodic parameters.

Hat Hut C

Tenor

Joe McPhee (tenor saxophone)

This first illustration of the unadulterated McPhee tenor finds him bluesy and breathtaking, indolent and sincere, with a panoply of expressive effects: bending of pitches, smears, growls, smacks and occasional bows to Archie Shepp via Ben Webster's breathiness and bluster. *Knox* is slow, laidback, smoky, and satisfying, all wrapped up in a cavernous tone, while conversely, *Good-Bye Tom B* alters and extends his tenor's timbre and use of harmonics in an evocation of cohort Snyder's electronics. The sidelong *Tenor* is a showcase for all the colors and flavors he can squeeze out of the horn. The cumulative effect of the album is one of introspection, which seems to flow effortlessly out of McPhee's horn, with less visceral excitement than his live performances with ensemble, but

with more emotional depth — all the more remarkable for being completely, spontaneously generated.

Hat Hut D

Rotation

McPhee (tenor and soprano saxophones, conch shell, trumpet, pocket cornet), John Snyder (synthesizer), Marc Levin (trumpet flugelhorn, mellophone).

Recorded live in Basel, 1976, this outing adds a number of horns to McPhee's coloristic palette and again places him in a variety of compositional situations. *Sweet Dragon* is another, more aggressive version of the tune which appeared on his "Tenor" album, and *Bahamian Folksong* reappears in a more concise, though similarly buoyant interpretation. The soprano solo, *Theme From Episode #3*, is controlled, tight, melismatic, oboe-like. *Spaces* is a mournful ballad with a gem of a solo by Snyder, whose flexibility is reminiscent of Richard Teitelbaum, though he seems to create more of a linear momentum with his thrilling textural designs than the latter's expansive, theatrical approach. Snyder is, easily, McPhee's most empathetic collaborator, perhaps the only musician who can adapt himself totally to McPhee's powerful musical personality.

Hat Hut E

Hah! The Milo Fine Free Jazz Ensemble

Fine (drums, bowed cymbals, piano, clarinet), Steve Gnitka (guitar).

Fine and Gnitka are concerned with creating an ongoing rush of complementary and contrasting textures and timbres, some obvious and some subtle. They apparently owe much to the "English school" of improvisation as characterized by the Spontaneous Music Ensemble, the Music Improvisation Company, and Derek Bailey's various Company aggregations, though they deal less with the microscopic correlations of intervallic detail and textural design than with a flamboyant extension of tonal syntax. Unfortunately, the duo sounds as if their reliance on the extreme parameters of sound and gesture has limited them to a number of episodic, ultimately exaggerated clichés of the idiom. Fine is often irritating and overbusy on drums, and his clarinet work can be quite aggravating. Gnitka's guitar creates some remarkable colors and attacks à la Bailey though without his aplomb; unfortunately there is nothing for them to relate to, compositionally. This album consists of ten numbered studies, but only those which project miniature moods and fragrances are successful, the rest seem aimless and out-of-control.

Hat Hut F

Clinkers

Steve Lacy (soprano saxophone)

Despite the proliferation of recently recorded solo recitals by Lacy, this wryly-titled offering is one of his best. Especially fascinating is his ability to fashion intricate and occasionally labyrinthine modulations of phrase, and *Trick-les* is a sterling example, as he manoeuvres in and around the thematic material, ornamenting it baroquely, paraphrasing, or slicing off the fat to reveal its barest component, the particular interval or series of intervals which create the theme. Often at that point he suspends progress at whim and explores these intervals via repetition and extremely subtle modification of tone, phrasing (articulation), and nuance of attack.



Coastline here presents some lovely cantabile invention, while *Micro Worlds* is based on overblowing, reed harmonics, and, as the title suggests, microtonality. The close microphone placement captures Lacy's colorful chirps, growls, weals, and wails well.

Hat Hut G Pot-Pourri Pour Parce Que

Claude Bernard (alto saxophone), Raymond Boni (guitar).

This French guitar/saxophone duo works off of a more conventional melodic base than the Fine/Gnitka duo, though they occasionally dig into the color-gesture field too via quasi-electronic effects à la Hendrix or Bailey. Bernard's alto can sound like Braxton or Konitz when rushing his phrases into a propulsive, fluid, abstruse logic while the guitarist fills in the open spaces with a rush of riffs, ostinatos, chunky echoing rumbles, and wispy delicate figures. Their use of medlies rather than individual compositions naturally stresses the episodic nature of their approach, as they frequently jump from impressionistic imagepaint-

ing to bluesy blowing in a single bound — and they're not afraid to attempt a Dada tact; witness the bizarre incorporation of *Tenderly* and *Cherry Pink And Apple Blossom White* into the most raucous of timbral explosions. Occasionally their juxtapositions get out of hand, however, resulting in an awkward melange of unidentified aural objects.

Hat Hut H

The Constant Extension of Inescapable Tradition

Milo Fine (drums, clarinet, prepared piano, bowed cymbal, voice), Gnitka (guitars).

Gnitka's *Guitar Solo I* is full of ringing, glittering overtones, plucky flutters of notes, and strange humming effects like a bowed saw. His muted, abrupt attack and flush of details is intriguing. Fine's clarinet ballad, meanwhile, is puerile. The remaining six solos and duets are of varying quality, usually beginning with an interesting line but eventually sliding into gratuitous, aimless excursions. Gnitka has a good ear for effects. Fine's drum solos won't make anyone forget Barry Altschul.

Hat Hut I/J

Graphics

Joe McPhee (tenor and soprano saxophones, trumpet, pocket trumpet, conch shell, bells).

This double set of solos by McPhee finds him exploring similar paths as Mitchell, Lacy, and Braxton, though anchored by his own dramatic sensibility throughout. The title tune has a theme close to Lacy's repetitive *No Baby*, though McPhee's workout is striking for its sense of conflict and resolution, as his exaggerations of tone and thematic caricatures are wider and wilder than Lacy usually attempts.

Legendary Heroes opens with bells and conch horn (which Joseph Jarman has also used to stunning effect) and segues into a Clark Terry trick — two trumpets played simultaneously in harmony. McPhee is no slouch on this horn, though he cannot match the depth or fluency of his reedwork, as is evident from the first notes of his rich, full-throated tenor entrance here. *Vieux Carre/Straight* is a blues-based piece dedicated to Lacy and Sidney Bechet, and played on soprano. The scope of McPhee's soprano again calls to mind Jarman, especially in its resilient fluidity which rejects the typical snake-charmer connotations and adds the ability to belch fire or wax rhapsodic in articulate upper-register enunciation, though possibly without Jarman's theatrical and sheer lyrical gifts. McPhee's ideas are always his own, however.

Hat Hut K/L

Stamps

Steve Lacy (soprano saxophone and Japanese bird whistle), Steve Potts (alto and soprano saxophones), Irene Aebi (cello, violin, voice, bells), Kent Carter (bass), Oliver Johnson (drums).

The first record of this double set was recorded live at the Willisau Jazz Festival in 1977, and the second record was a live concert at the 1978 Paris Jazz Au Totem. In the past Lacy's group conceptions have ranged from conceptual monochromatic repetitions to free-form polyphonic flights of fantasy, and the seven performances here embrace those two styles and a lot in between. If occasionally this ensemble approaches their material in a way similar to those early Cecil Taylor Quartets in which Lacy matured, one can continue the analogy and suggest that Steve Potts fulfills the same functions as does Jimmy Lyons to C.T. today — instigating new directions when the music seems to get bogged down within its own complexity, or simplifying and redefining the thematic material within recognizable conventional outlines; as heard here, for example, on *Wickets*, when he slides into an out-and-out gutbucket blues which forces the rambling rhythm section to tighten up and follow him, or *Duckles*, which is bland until he stretches out and blows hot. Moreover, it's remarkable that Potts has been able to retain his own bluesier, legato identity in the face of continual exposure to Lacy's compositions and characteristic intervallic investigations, and it's easy to see that he is the key element in this group; his contrasting stylings are crucial to the balance and variety which this group offers. Meanwhile, as a composer Lacy has taken Thelonious Monk's angularity and repetitive riffs and made them into an all-consuming religion, as on *Ire*, which begins with unison head and segues into an ensemble improvisation programmatically defining the title through a hazing of details and overlapping lines. The jovial intricacies of *Stamps* would

sound great orchestrated by a Lacy version of Monk's Hall Overton.

Hat Hut M/N The Spoken Word

Baikida Carroll (trumpet, flugelhorn, prepared trumpet, live electronics)

Consisting of two separate sessions recorded live in 1977 and 1978 at the Mapenzi Theater in Berkeley, this music affirms Carroll's roots in the blues tradition, whether evoking speech patterns through his trumpet mouthpiece in the title composition, or offering florid, heavily ornamented flurries of notes occasionally volatile in their urgency on *Third Image*. Carroll's usual attack is one of a sparse, laconic, leisurely unveiling, however, and most of "The Spoken Word" is thus made up of his lovely, lyrical, ballad statements framed by long pauses, not of uncertainty but of moody brooding. The lack of supporting rhythm section or alternate solo voices creates an arhythmic pulse sculpted out of air, akin to fellow trumpeter Leo Smith's solo work, but on *Double Rainbow Forest* Carroll adds electronic cricket sounds as a droning ostinato underneath his plaintive song. Be advised, though, that Carroll is not prone to overstatement, and some listeners might find this set tame to the point of tedium.

Hat Hut O Variations On A Blue Line/Round Midnight

Joe McPhee (tenor and soprano saxophones)
McPhee's most recent solo recording, dating from late 1977, contains some of his best, most substantial work. *Beanstalk* - dedicated, if I'm not mistaken, to Ben Webster - is a side-long tenor track which exhibits an extremely wide range of dynamics (from pad-popping softness to roaring) and dramatics developed organically through McPhee's ever-expanding technical prowess and colorful palette, which manifests itself in slow timbral distortion of his impossibly wide, velvety vibrato. *Motion Studies* for soprano includes, alongside the timbral excursions and machinegun staccato bursts, plaintive wails and rhapsodic melodies almost like some shepherd piping in loneliness to his flock and the moon. Very lovely and archaic, but no more so than his beautifully tender, straightforward, emotional rendering of *Round Midnight*.

Hat Hut Q Esoteric

Phillip Wilson (percussion), Olu Dara (trumpet, serpent horn).

Though this session might outwardly resemble Wilson's duet with Art Ensemble of Chicago trumpeter Lester Bowie (on Improvising Artists 37.38.54), this is a looser, less melodically delineated collaboration. Wilson's work, as always, is adventurous, unpredictable, and full of a rainbow of effects. He's at his best with deft, dancing filigrees of light and shadow, while Dara is reckless and provocative with more outright vocalization through his horn than the melodic Bowie exhibited in the same situation. A further difference, however, lies in the fact that in this case the two instrumental roles seem independently conceived, often sharing the same space, but not actually following the directions of the other.

Hat Hut S/T MFG In Minnesota

Joe McPhee (tenor and soprano saxophones), Milo Fine (piano, prepared piano, drums, clarin-

et), Steve Gnitka (guitars).

I know that Joe McPhee enjoys playing in this group, but I have to state that to my ears it seems an unfortunate collaboration of stylistic unequals. McPhee is simply too overpowering a presence, and he buries the microscopic detail which Fine and Gnitka do best. When they try to raise themselves to his level of expansiveness they sound sophomoric and irritating. When he tries to lower himself to their level he sounds simplistic and parodistic. They are simply incompatible at this stage of the game, though there are a few fair moments — one of which is Gnitka's backing of McPhee's shouting tenor with soothing feedback washes, another incredibly haunting soprano passage over quiet guitar chords ending the side-long *Part II B*. The rest of this two-record live concert from 1978 is painful to hear, especially when McPhee fragments his attack to fit into his associates' syntactic abbreviations.

Hat Hut U/V 3D Family

David Murray (tenor saxophone), Johnny Mbizo Dyani (bass), Andrew Cyrille (drums).

Some critics whose writing and opinions I admire see Murray as the salvation of the tenor saxophone, and at Murray's young age it's the sort of reputation which might crush a lesser man. My past experience with his music has not justified their effusive praise, but there's no getting around the fact that this is an excellent collection of performances. The two-records full of music was taped live in late 1978 at the Willisau Jazz Festival, and realistically relates what must have been a four-alarm concert. Dyani is a model of support throughout and his solos are artfully sculpted. Murray reveals an unexpected amount of flexibility and variety; for example *In Memory Of Jomo Kenyatta* finds him fire-breathing and using the cathartic extremities of his horn over the drummer's ferocious attack and Dyani's drones and flurries, and later he paints a sympathetic balladic portrait of *Patricia*, willowy but with sinew and a touch of gristle in his tough tone.

3D Family is his best solo of the date, however, as he swings buoyant and boisterous over the rhythm section's covert calypsoish imitations. There are moments of dull, seemingly rote invention in Murray's playing at times, most notably in *P.O. In Cairo*, where he isn't inspired by either a dramatic conception or the thematic intricacies of the line and is forced to fall back on an exhibition of his sizeable technique. If there is a hero of this set, however, it must be drummer Andrew Cyrille, whose chiaroscuro sensitivity and relentless propulsion regardless of speed or volume keeps everything flowing admirably. And Cyrille's solos are absolutely arresting, variegated in texture and nearly narrative in their communicative power. All together, this is a killer trio, and should be heard at all costs.

Postscript: Hat Hut has already announced the release of a McPhee/Reto Weber duet entitled "Glasses" as Hat Hut P, an album by Andrew Jaume entitled "Saxanimalier", and the premiere recording (as a leader) of Cecil Taylor alumnus saxophonist David S. Ware on Hat Hut W. The remaining three letters, and whatever Uehlinger will issue after that, remains a mystery, though Joe McPhee has promised a "different, exciting concept" is in the offing. Regardless of what comes in the future, Hat Hut has proven to be an endearing

and entertaining endeavour. More information about availability of recordings can be obtained from Hat Hut Records, Box 127, West Park, N.Y. 12493 USA, or Box 461, 4106 Therwil, Switzerland. — **Art Lange**

(Editor's note: since this review was written Hat Hut has released, in addition to the above records, Hat Hut X: "The Very Centre of Middle Europe", a record of duets between pianist Irene Schweizer and saxophonist Rudiger Carl; also a record by Jimmy Lyons.)

HANK JONES

Love for Sale Inner City 6003

At one time nearly everybody's favorite accompanist, Hank Jones is stretching out on his own with numerous albums under his name. This one, originally recorded in New York City for a Japanese record company and billed The Great Jazz Trio, has Jones accompanied by Buster Williams (bass) and Tony Williams (drums) in a mixture of generally well-known ballads.

A stylist in the Tatum-Wilson school, Jones plays with flair, but without the flash associated with some big name pianists. Tasteful (but never tepid), he weaves through the strong melodic lines of *Gee Baby, Glad to be Unhappy*, *Someone To Watch Over Me*, *Secret Love* and — possibly the best tracks — *Autumn Leaves* and *Love For Sale*, without getting lost.

Buster and Tony Williams provide solid support and in brief solo spots (Tony on *Sale*, Buster on *Someone*) never hog the limelight. It all adds up to some low keyed, high quality jazz such as you might hear in a good club — if you are lucky. — **Al Van Starrex**

Ain't Misbehavin' Galaxy GXY 5723

Something strange is happening. After years spent buried in the studios doing little but studio work, Hank Jones has lately emerged with a lengthy string of albums of his own. And after decades of comparative neglect, Fats Waller is being celebrated to the extent that there are now as many "--- Plays Fats" as there are new Hank Jones records. It had to happen — Hank Jones, acting under the law of averages, had to put out some kind of Fats Waller record sometime. To be fair though, one must admit that Jones has been involved in the Broadway show *Ain't Misbehavin'* as pianist/conductor for some time, and this album has been waiting to be issued for over a year. Too bad they waited; this is not the best time to put out yet another Fats record. We are faced with the probability of a glut of "Fats rediscovered" records similar to that of the Joplin bonanza that began five years ago. This time around, though, it's not so simple. Joplin's genius was one-dimensional — he was a composer, and all his revivers did was to play his compositions, with a minimum of interpretation. But Fats was a piano stylist, an entertainer, a singer, a songwriter and a composer of piano pieces. There seems to be some question about which aspect(s) of Fats should be revived, and unfortunately it looks like the Broadway show has tried to present him as an entertainer/songwriter, virtually ignoring the piano stylist. It's pretty sad that the real meat

of Fats' musical personality is again being passed over in favour of the methods he developed in order to survive in the music business. And on this record the only Fats Waller you will hear is in the songs themselves.

Three of the album's six tracks are trio performances — Jones, backed very appropriately by Richard Davis and Roy Haynes. Jones plays with all of the grace, wit and taste that he has always had. The problems start with the addition of Bob Ojeda, Teddy Edwards and Kenny Burrell on the three other tracks. For one thing they are forced to play Bill Holman's arrangements, which are boring to the point of being downright annoying. Holman's ideas for the title track are about as simple-minded as it is possible to be. Fortunately, Ojeda, Edwards and Burrell all solo at Jones' high level, except when Edwards switches to clarinet on *Honey-suckle Rose* to take a really abominable solo. It sounds as if he hadn't previously attempted to play this instrument and comes as something of a shock after his exemplary tenor playing.

It was, I think, something of a mistake to try to evoke the spirit of "Fats Waller and his Rhythm" simply by using the same instrumentation (and anyway, Burrell plays an electric guitar). The musicians here do not make any attempt to play in the style of Fats' Rhythm records and so we get an unsatisfying idiomatic compromise on the sextet tracks. I don't think producer Ed Michel was particularly clear about what he was aiming at here. The trio tracks have no such problems, and perhaps this would have been a better album as a wholly trio record.

All in all there is about one half of a good album here, which is not much of an incentive to buy it when there are so many good whole albums of Hank Jones around. If you're considering buying this record because of Fats Waller, don't bother. For all the liner notes' claims of Fats' spiritual presence, there is more of the spirit of Bird and Bud here than of anyone else who wasn't present at the sessions.

— Julian Yarrow

SHELLY MANNE

French Concert
Galaxy 5124

JOHNNY GRIFFIN

Bush Dance
Galaxy 5126

On his album recorded in France in 1977, veteran drummer Manne has a tight trio reminiscent of Bill Evans' best groups. Pianist Mike Wofford is especially impressive; Manne and bassist Chuck Domanico support him ably throughout.

This release contains five standards plus Ellington's *Take the Coltrane* as a closing theme; the prevailing mood is mellow. The trio plays *Softly as in a Morning Sunrise* and *Body and Soul*, and Wofford's slightly dissonant statement of the latter's theme is both unexpected and effective.

As impressive as the trio is, it is topped by the inspired alto playing of Lee Konitz on four tunes. Billed as a guest, Konitz is the album's major voice. He introduces *What is This Thing Called Love* with a short but sinuous unaccompanied solo reminiscent of Sonny Rollins, and he

dominates the remainder of this seven-minute number. His limpid tone fits the mood of the piece perfectly. *What's New* is also introspective, and here Konitz is at his best. He never strays far from the melody and he plays as seemingly effortlessly as Johnny Hodges or Paul Desmond ever did, but his embellishments are both logically and emotionally appropriate, thus helping to create a wonderfully fresh interpretation of this chestnut. He also plays well on the controlled *Stella By Starlight*, but Manne, in an unusual breach of taste, plays too loudly behind the alto solo.

This is an unassuming but excellent album by a superior trio and one of the half-dozen best-ever alto saxophonists.

Less satisfying than Manne's album is Johnny Griffin's. Of the five performances, two are funky fluff (*The Jams Are Coming* and *Since I Fell for You*) and another, the title tune, is ordinary. The unlikely *Knucklebean* contains straight-ahead blowing in the best Griffin tradition. Pianist Cedar Walton plays well consist-

ently.

The album's highlight is a stunning seventeen minute *Night In Tunisia*, with superior performances by all: Griffin, Walton, guitarist George Freeman, bassist Sam Jones, drummer Albert Heath, and percussionist Kenneth Nash. Surely the longest, most intricate recording of Dizzy Gillespie's bop classic to date, this rendition begins mournfully with Griffin's chanting, shifts to a staccato statement of the melody, includes excellent solos by Griffin, Freeman, and Walton, and contains some of the most inspired and justified drumming (by both Heath and Nash) on record. This recording's hallmark is texture; dense but never stifling, it creates a tapestry of unending delights.

This uneven album is mildly disappointing, but *Night In Tunisia* is a classic performance that must not be missed.

Fantasy should be commended for devoting its Galaxy label to mainstream musicians, but so far the general quality is not as high as one would like. This Shelly Manne album is,



photograph of Johnny Griffin by Jørgen Bo

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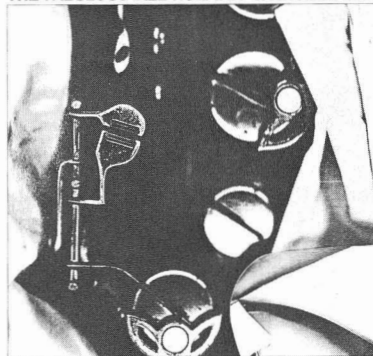
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THE FABULOUS BILL HOLMAN - SACKVILLE 2013



BILL HOLMAN
 "The Fabulous Bill Holman"
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The historic 1957 big band session with Bill Holman, tenor saxophone, arranger, composer and leader. Al Porcino, Ray Linn, Conte Candoli, Stu Williamson, Bob Fitzpatrick, Ray Sims, Lew McCreary, Harry Betts, Charlie Mariano, Herb Geller, Charlie Kennedy, Richie Kamuca, Steve Perlow, Lou Levy, Max Bennett and Mel Lewis. Originally released on Coral.

Airegin, Evil Eyes, You And I, Bright Eyes, Come Rain Or Come Shine, The Big Street.



JAY McSHANN
 "Kansas City Hustle"
SACKVILLE 3021

JAY McSHANN (solo piano)
Round Midnight, (Since I Lost My Baby) I Almost Lost My Mind, Kansas City Hustle, Willow Weep For Me, Blue Turbulence, Don't Get Around Much Any More, Baby Won't You Please Come Home, Rockin' Chair, My Sweet Mama.

happily, consistently delightful, and the Johnny Griffin, while often disappointing, contains one of his best performances.

— Benjamin Franklin V

DAVE McKENNA

Giant Strides
Concord Jazz CJ 99

This is a superbly realized album. The tunes are right, the piano is right, the engineering is right, and most importantly, of course, the pianist is always on top of the situation. In fact, the really happy aspect of this record is the fact that there is no one interfering with McKenna's music. There is no superfluous accompaniment, no heavy-handed production, nothing to get in the way.

McKenna opens the album with a fiercely swinging *If Dreams Come True* that blows away any possible comparison with previous recorded versions of the tune. The fact that it *does not* remind one of James P. Johnson's piano solo recording of the song demonstrates just how impressive McKenna can be. This version stands on its own terms. The left hand runs the gamut from Garneresque strumming to stride to Tristano-like walking bebop bass, while the right hand recalls Teddy Wilson, Oscar Peterson, Bud Powell, and so on. And yet it is ultimately McKenna's own music that he plays. So it goes with the other tunes on the album - one is constantly made aware of the presence of other musicians in his style but McKenna brings it all together into his own personality, putting his stamp on whatever he chooses to play. Take the swing to bebop feel he uses on *Yardbird Suite* or the Garneresque romanticism of *I've Got the World on a String* or the triple meter airiness of *Windsong* - they are all products of one highly sensitive musical mind.

McKenna has a host of pianists at his fingertips, and they are all on this record with him, but he has the imagination and integrity to keep from becoming some kind of musical impersonator. For all his influences he remains unique. He is not a stride pianist in the way that Ralph Sutton and Dick Wellstood are, nor is he simply a Wilson-styled swing pianist, nor a Powell-styled bebop pianist.

Rather, McKenna's style came about perhaps in a similar way to that of a musician like Jess Stacy. Stacy used Hines and Bix extensively in order to express his own musical vision as McKenna uses Peterson, Garner *et al* to define *his* conception. He also brings to mind Jaki Byard's mastery of various piano styles which are amalgamated into Byard's personality. Not many other pianists are capable of functioning in this way; such eclecticism produces few integrated musical personalities.

McKenna has, over the years, created a distinctive and highly engaging approach to the piano. It's worth taking the trouble to check him out if you haven't got around to him yet. If you know about McKenna's music you don't need this recommendation of this fine example of his art.

— Julian Yarrow

PHONTASTIC RECORDS

Phontastic is a Swedish record company which concentrates its energies on small group jazz based on the styles developed by Teddy Wilson,

Benny Goodman and company in the 1930s. They have recorded Bob Wilber in various settings but, for the most part, feature musicians from within Sweden.

Alice Babs' "Far Away Star" (Phontastic 50-11) and Karin Krog: "A Song For You" (Phontastic 7512) focus attention on the two leading singers in Scandinavia. The first side of the Alice Babs record has the added attraction for Ellington collectors of being recorded in New York with Duke and his band. Side two is with the Nils Lindberg Orchestra and was a concert performance in 1974 in Sweden. The focus of attention is Ellington's music and Alice Babs' rich voice soars instrumentally and verbally through some less familiar of Duke's compositions. In contrast to the ornamentation of the Babs session, Karin Krog is alone with pianist Bengt Hallberg in a program of popular American songs which range from Leon Russell's *A Song For You* to Harold Arlen's *I've Gotta Right To Sing The Blues*. As good as both Hallberg and Krog perform, there is the uncomfortable accenting of some of the phrases which is unavoidable for non-Americans and it *does* affect the outcome of the material.

Bengt Hallberg, a mature and highly qualified interpreter of jazz, is featured on all three of the remaining recent Phontastic releases. "We Love Norway" (Phontastic 50-13) is a collaboration between trumpeter Rowland Greenberg, tenor saxophonist Totti Bergh, drummer Egil Johansen (all from Norway) and Hallberg, clarinetist Ove Lind, guitarist Staffan Broma and bassist Arne Wilhelmsson (all from Sweden). It's an evocative but typical modern mainstream jazz session in which the stylism of the idiom transcends any individuality. Each of the horn players vaguely echo one or more of the music's major stylists except that rhythmically they remain glued to the bar structures of the songs. The level of expression is, unfortunately, as superficial as that found in present day traditional jazz. Despite the exemplary musicianship, it is a shallow, repetitive shell and will appeal mostly to those who care only for the framework.

"Dialogues in Swing" (Phontastic 10) is quite different. An album of clarinet-piano duets by Ove Lind and Bengt Hallberg, it is elegiac, thoughtful and full of delightful melodic twists as these two musicians intertwine themselves around the melodies and changes of some excellent popular songs. Hallberg's piano, in particular, is at its best here. He lays a velvet carpet on which the clarinet can stretch beyond the predictable. It is very European in its studied perfection and yet it would not be possible without the heritage of jazz music.

"Downtown Meeting" (Phontastic 7518) is the outstanding album in this grouping. Bengt Hallberg is the featured pianist and he shares the leadership with altoist Arne Domnerus, whose wispy, finely-tuned alto is particularly comfortable in this setting. George Mraz and Oliver Jackson give the music an authentic American texture and the two Swedes respond with excellently structured solos. The repertoire, once again, is the American popular song and on this occasion the choices are perfect for this kind of music — *Gone With The Wind*, *Embraceable You*, *On The Sunny Side Of The Street* and *I Cover The Waterfront*. Clark Terry joins the band on side two and his talents add lustre to the occasion. His solos on *Swedish Butterfly* and *Come Sunday* are re-

markable statements from a master musician. Both Domnerus and Hallberg respond positively to Terry's presence in these selections, but sound less comfortable in the freewheeling and overly familiar surroundings of *In A Mellotone* and *C Jam Blues*. Apart from these two programming letdowns this is an excellent and often intriguing program of music.

— John Norris

SAM RIVERS

Waves
Tomato TOM-8002

Sam Rivers (tenor and soprano saxophones, flute, piano), Dave Holland (bass, cello), Joe Daley (tuba, baritone horn), Thurman Barker (percussion).

Shockwave; Torch; Pulse; Flux; Surge

Sam Rivers' approach to small group improvisation has undergone no overt changes in the past decade, yet its melding of form and content and its reverberation of source materials is never less than stimulating. In this respect, Rivers' music possesses the "ever-changing sameness" attributed to the blues by Amiri Baraka. Conceptually, 'Waves' offers few surprises for those familiar with Rivers' work. The caliber of the ensemble and Rivers' ever increasing abilities as an instrumentalist, particularly at the piano, makes 'Waves' a distinctive addition to Rivers' recordings.

Solo piano opens the album, incisively presenting its material and setting up the deft entrances from the ensemble. Reemerging on tenor after a bristling baritone horn solo by Joe Daley, Rivers raises the intensity and thickens the texture for Thurman Barker's acutely virtuosic drum solo. *Torch* is a sprint for flute down a path not unfamiliar to Rivers. He darts about racing tuba and bass lines and rotary-powered brush work; he sensuously weaves through counterpointing riffs and rhythms; he glides to a halt, relaxed, and resolute in his statement.

After a duet between Joe Daley and Dave Holland that would have seemed too short even if it had lasted the entire second side of the album, *Pulse* remains true to its name as Rivers delivers a characteristically hypnotic soprano solo. Rivers' piano and Holland's cello figure prominently in *Flux*. Again, Rivers' articulation at the piano is impressive. Holland's cello has improved in proportion to Rivers' piano: his bowing technique is immaculate and the transposition of his bass style seems complete. Ending the album with a signature blaze of tenor-fire, *Surge* presents an inarguable case of Rivers' eminence as a saxophonist. — Bill Shoemaker

DETLEF SCHONENBERG/ MICHAEL JULLICH

First of April
Moers Music 01050

Detlef Schonenberg, Michael Jullich (drums, percussion)

Fur Inge; Olymp; Kalbim; Askim

'First of April' is an intriguing album, for it neither relies on tired pyrotechnics or glossy



DEREK SMITH QUARTET: The Man I Love (Progressive 7035) with Scott Hamilton, George Mraz and Billy Hart.

DICK MELDONIAN & The Jersey Swingers: Some Of These Days (Progressive 7033) with Derek Smith, Ronnie Bedford, Linc Milliman.

SCOTT HAMILTON QUARTET: The Grand Appearance (Progressive 7026) with Hank Jones/Tommy Flanagan, George Mraz, Connie Kay.

Progressive All Star Trumpet Spectacular (Progressive 7015) with Harold Lieberman, Marky Markowitz, Howard McGhee, Marvin Peterson, Lou Soloff, Danny Stiles, Ronnie Bedford, Bucky Pizzarelli, Richard Davis, Derek Smith.

CHRIS CONNOR: Sweet And Swinging (Progressive 7028) with Mike Abene, Mike Moore, Ronnie Bedford, Jerry Dodgion.

BUDDY DE FRANCO Quintet: Like Someone In Love (Progressive 7014) with Tal Farlow, Derek Smith, George Duvivier, Ronnie Bedford.

CARMEN LEGGIO QUARTET: Smile (Progressive 7010) with Derek Smith, George Duvivier, Ronnie Bedford.

CHUCK WAYNE: Traveling (Progressive 7008) with Jay Leonhart, Ronnie Bedford, Warren Chiasson.

HANK JONES TRIO: Arrigato (Progressive 7004) with Richard Davis and Ronnie Bedford.

LEE KONITZ QUINTET: Figure And Spirit (Progressive 7003) with Ted Brown, Albert Daily, Rufus Reid, Joe Chambers.

DEREK SMITH TRIO: Love For Sale (Progressive 7002) with George Duvivier and Bobby Rosengarden.

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academics. Throughout the album, Schonenberg and Jullich respond to basic percussion premises with strong, pellucid approaches.

This album is comprised of two duets for extended trap kits and solos by both percussionists that have seemingly unlimited instrumentation. The duets have a more formal presence than the solos. *Fur Inge* operates off a stark figure of ten evenly spaced strokes that receive incremental development. *Kalbin* orchestrates thrashing fanfares, eerie cymbal effects, and deft manipulation of drum heads and rims. The duets point up Schonenberg and Jullich's ability to feather the edges between composed and spontaneous materials.

But it is the solos, particularly Schonenberg's, that are of special interest, for they explicate the components of the dialogue between the two percussionists. Jullich's *Olymp* builds from sparse beginnings and carefully works the melodic aspects of the vibraharp into the piece. As emotive as it is lucid, *Askim* shows Schonenberg to be much more elastic than suggested by the duets. A quick-witted improviser, Schonenberg is a touchstone between the various aesthetics that now comprise the music.

— Bill Shoemaker

KEITH SMITH/BENNY WATERS

Up Jumped the Blues
Hefty Jazz HJ105

Chicken, Patrol Wagon Blues, Up Jumped the Blues, Undecided, Just-a-Sittin' and a-Rockin', Perdido Street Blues, Blues Amour, Sweet Marijuana Brown, Caledonia.

Here we have nine examples of clean, straight-ahead, middle-of-the-road jazz by a British septet assembled by trumpeter Keith Smith to feature veteran tenor sax man Benny Waters. The easy-going jam format is given structure and variety by loose charts sketched out by pianist Stan Greig to include happy surprises like a Waters spot on *Undecided* accompanied only by bassist Peter Ind, a saxophone chase on *A-Sittin'* by Waters and alto sax/clarinetist Bruce Turner, drum solo by John Cox on bridge of closing *Undecided* chorus, and other devices to give each performance some distinguishing character beyond the familiar ensemble-solos-ensemble framework.

Nothing more profound than swinging is the goal here, but everybody knows how to do that, with Waters delivering low, full-throated lines, Smith a laid-back staccato lead and four semi-whispered, urging vocals, and the ensemble thick and back-roomy in the improvised passages, tight and crisp when the four horns are moving in unison or harmony. Individually, Greig, Waters and Smith make the most of their moments in the limelight, but in this relatively unpretentious date, even they run a little dry when allocated extended solos, e.g., Waters' four choruses on *Undecided*, Smith's four on *Caledonia*.

The 12-bar blues gets a pretty thorough exploration from the slow, late-hours, Waters-with-rhythm *Amour* to the jumping shuffle of *Caledonia*, plus three others. The minor chords of *Patrol* add a novel twist to the standard pattern and a dark, low-down flavor to the excellent rendition. Conversely, I would have been much happier if something less than 11 of the 18 choruses on *Jumped*, an up-tempo boogie, had been awarded to trombonist (on the

other tracks) Johnny Mortimer's solo harmonica, an instrument that may not have the capability of developing expressiveness over such length.

I come up with five solid, easy-to-take foot-tappers, four closer to average with a number of moments of special interest, averaging out to about a B. From Hefty Jazz Productions, Suite L18, 30 Baker Street, London, England W1M 2DS.

— Tex Wyndham

MICHAEL STUART/ KEITH BLACKLEY QUARTET

Determination
Endeavour ST 1001

Compassion; Awakening; In View; Determination.

What with his playing with Elvin Jones, Michael Stuart must be tired of hearing that he sounds like Coltrane. But this album won't alter that comparison, and frankly the quartet's closeness to its model makes this a disappointing record.

Each side is structured in the same way; an opening slow theme followed by a highly charged piece.

The slow themes are by far the most engaging here, Stuart providing a softer, melodious touch to his playing without sacrificing his undeniable power, and Steve Wallace's bass adds some rather stately placements and an interesting solo on *Compassion*. It is on this cut that Stuart offers his most persuasive playing, his closing solo on it developed logically, yet passionately moving into a densely powerful statement.

But the high energy material tends to rely on misdirected force, especially the title cut which has a quick, many-noted theme surrounding free workouts. These are often haphazard in direction, disintegrating into wayward flurries or strained extensions. There seems no real guiding hand here.

Awakening is better, though Stuart is not so comfortable on soprano. His playing is marred by some fluffs and a reediness in tone that makes the emotional content seem thin. George McPetridge turns in his best work on this cut, though his left hand is occasionally repetitive -- but then he's only following McCoy Tyner who -- heresy! -- also in his Coltrane days fell back onto his own repeated set patterns. At times on this cut Keith Blackley's drums pick up a nicely crisp cymbal beat that bounces on top of Wallace's steady bass.

I'd like to be more positive about this album. It has some good moments in the slower pieces but there's a great need for the quartet to pursue its own development, extending from Coltrane and not sticking quite so closely to the original model as it tends to do here.

— Peter Stevens

BEN WEBSTER

No Fool, No Fun
Spotlite SPJ 142

This record offers the listener two rewards. The first reward is the classic tenor saxophone playing of the late Ben Webster. Any reader of this magazine is likely to be aware of Ben Webster's important position in the pantheon of tenor saxophone giants. Webster's full throated lush

breathy sound is well displayed as guest soloist with Denmark Radio's Big Band. I particularly enjoyed his solo on *Old Folks* and his obbligato on *Baby It's Cold Outside*.

However, it is the second reward that makes this record a truly memorable one. This album was recorded secretly at a rehearsal for a Copenhagen radio show in October of 1970.

What transpires during this rehearsal will not soon be forgotten. Webster, for all practical purposes, takes over and in a firm yet humorous manner attempts to teach the band the correct way to play jazz music. This recording was eventually heard and approved by Webster. It is happily now available for sale and gives us a greater depth of understanding of what jazz is actually about.

— Peter S. Friedman

SOME OTHER STUFF

MARIO PAVONE

Digit
Alacra 1002

Side 1. *Digit - Nine Note - Wood - AB.*

Side 2. *The Dom - Toledo - Bones - As Is.*

Recorded April 11th · 1979.

Mario Pavone - bass, Mark Whitecage - alto, soprano saxophones & flute, Bobby Naughton - vibes, Pheeroan ak Laff - drums.

My only real knowledge pertaining to the music of Mario Pavone comes from a rather obscure recording, dating from 1968, with the Paul Bley trio (Radio Canada International 305). The style of music that was created by Bley and his associates (Gary Peacock, Mark Levinson, Barry Altschul etc.) throughout the sixties, was in many ways the opposite polarity to what was considered jazz at that time. Their attitude to rhythm, melody and texture was not in tight parallels, but more involved in an open, airy, melodic kind of space. And so with this quartet.

Being very organised, with the content coming from very obvious tunes, is a major strength in this recording, and somewhat of a direction that much "new music" in America is taking in this period. Almost, one might say, returning to the tradition. The other strengths, outside of the fact that Pavone composed all the pieces, is the very sensitive work of Bobby Naughton and Pheeroan Ak Laff, two musicians whose music I am very fond of. As a trio with Pavone, which occurs often throughout this recording, their ability to co-ordinate melodically and rhythmically is truly amazing. If it appears that I am ignoring Mark Whitecage it is only because he seems, in some ways, to simply be an added "attraction". In the past I have not been so impressed by his music, finding him stiff and cautious in concept. This music is a good area for him, being as I have said, more open, and thus allowing more possibilities to think freely. DIG-IT!

CHRIS MCGREGOR

In His Own Good Time
Ogun 521

Side A. *Call - Raincloud - Umhome.*

Side B. *Yikiti - Mngqusho - In His Good Time - The Bride - Ududu Nombambula.*

Recorded November 18 · 1977.

Damn, I really don't know what to write about

Chris McGregor, after all he has been my friend for a dozen years. His powerful personage moved into the English scene in the middle sixties, and eventually created the Brotherhood Of Breath, and in doing so influenced a whole group of English players to continue his African concepts. He brought with him the incredible players of South Africa, among them the late Mongezi Feza, Dudu Pukwana, Louis Moholo, Ronnie Beer and Johnny Dyani. His reputation was based almost entirely on his ability as an organiser, as a band leader, and his previous solo piano recording on Musica was not really representative of his ability. This Ogun production however shows that his heritage can come forth without the aid of an orchestra. The performance, a concert at the Palais des Glaces in Paris, consists, with the exception of Dudu Pukwana's *The Bride*, of all original compositions, compositions that show Chris to be a powerful and original pianist. Of course you can hear Africa clearly, even living in England and now France, could not take that away. He used to say that when he lived in South Africa, receiving records from America was like getting letters from a friend. Chris I thank you for this latest correspondence.

DWIGHT ANDREWS

Mmotia/The Little People
OTIC 1007

Side One. *Um Girrasol - Não é? - Moers 1978.*

Side Two. *Danca das Kashala e Sarhanna Mmotia/The Little People - Vamos Para Casa.*

Dwight Andrews - wind instruments and percussion - Nana Vasconcelos, percussion - Nat Adderley Jr., piano.

Recorded January 11 & 12, 1979.

Who is Dwight Andrews? That might seem like a fair question. Well of late he has been the saxophonist, with Leo Smith and Bobby Naughton, that forms the trio known as New Delta Ahkri. This spring at the Moers Festival I had the occasion to keep his company for extended periods of time, he was then a member of the Roscoe Mitchell/Leo Smith Creative Music Orchestra. His music should perhaps not surprise me, for like him it is warm, positive and friendly.

Now about this unusual trio. Not just in instrumentation, but in the very form of its presentation. The six pieces are vignettes, short descriptive musical pictures, proclaiming feelings for some of the people that are most close to him. For Mingus, William Grant Still, Estelle Andrews and the children of Oliver Lake, Anthony Braxton, Michael Gregory Jackson and perhaps even more. The language he uses is of great interest, for it is not exposed in a stylized form, but set up on each occasion as a separate piece of music, dealing with each of the instruments that he plays according to their inherent textural colours.

Um Girrasol (The flower that follows the sun), has the trio opening with Dwight Andrews on soprano, setting a romantic, modal mood for a most pretty piano solo by Nat Adderley Jr., that builds in body to explode into the trio again. More jubilant. *Não é?*, the composition for Jahi Sundance Lake, has the wonderful rich textures of the alto flute in clear solitude. Of love. *Moers 1978*, for Tyondai Braxton, of course out of necessity on alto in duet with Nat Adderley. The humour must

make Braxton smile, and the ending (head) so full of Braxtonian tricks or (treats). *Danca das Kashala e Sarhanna* opens side two with the feeling being very much determined by Nana Vasconcelos, bringing about the feel of tribal dance, wood flutes and percussion have that way about them. The contrabass clarinet interjects a sombre note. *Mmotia/The Little People* is for Dyamai Emu Jackson, who has had only one year of life (little people), enough it seems for a celebration of distant percussion. *Vamos Para Casa* is for Mingus, Estelle Andrews and William Grant Still, a most fitting way to conclude this album. The bass clarinet so strong and sure, a little lonely perhaps, or is the description to be serious. Somehow though it still seems like ritual. Please allow me to introduce Dwight Andrews.

— Bill Smith
November 7th, 1979

REISSUES

This column is designed to guide the listener through the maze of LP reissues. Repackaging plays an important role in the schemes of record companies both large and small, and the international ramifications of parallel reissue programs in different countries is often confusing. This column also covers notable sessions from the past which are only now being issued for the first time.

AL COHN: The Progressive (Savoy 1126) was last available as Savoy 12048 (less a previously unissued take of *That's What You Think*) but part of it originated on Triumph 78s before first becoming LP material on Progressive. The first four tunes are from 1950 and feature Cohn with George Wallington, Tommy Potter and Tiny Kahn. The balance of this reissue is from a 1953 session with trumpeter Nick Travis, Horace Silver, Curley Russell and Max Roach. There's a lot of Cohn's Prez-styled tenor and the rhythm section on the second date is superb with characteristically volatile solos from Horace Silver.

ERNIE WILKINS: The Trumpet Album (Savoy 2237) repackages Savoy 12044 ("Top Brass") and Savoy 12096 ("Trumpets All Out"). The former session features Donald Byrd, Ray Copeland, Ernie Royal, Idris Sulieman and Joe Wilder while the latter is a showcase for Harold Baker, Emmett Berry, Art Farmer, Ernie Royal and Charlie Shavers. The format is similar to Granz's sessions -- there's improvising on the blues as well as the inevitable ballad medley. Ernie Wilkins wrote the charts which frame the solo contributions of the contrasting stylists.

HANK JONES: Solo Piano (Savoy 1124) was originally issued in the mid fifties and has stood the test of time. This collection presents the *elegant* Hank Jones at his best. He develops lyrical lines which complement melodic/harmonic structures with the grace and ease of a Teddy Wilson. Despite the proliferation of Jones' recent recordings, it is nice to have this reminder of his skills recorded 23 years ago. It remains one of the definitive examples of Hank Jones' music.

SIDNEY BECHET/MUGGSY SPANIER: Jazz from California (Jazz Archives 44) are radio broadcasts from 1953 and 1937. The Bechet selections were performed at San Francisco's Down Beat when the soprano sax virtuoso was

a guest with the Marty Marsala Band. Bechet works wonders with the familiar repertoire (*Royal Garden Blues, Memphis Blues, High Society, Muskrat Ramble, Summertime*) but the band can best be described as solidly competent. The Muggsy material is from a Ben Pollack Los Angeles performance and the cornetist's distinctive sound adds to the flavour of the swing-oriented arrangements of *Deep Elm, Peckin', Jimtown Blues* and *So Rare*. An 'archival' issue for Bechet and Spanier collectors.

CLARE FISCHER: 'Twas Only Yesterday (Discovery DS 798) is a repackaging of the Atlantic LP "Thesaurus" -- a much acclaimed but little known big band LP of the late 1960s. Listening to this music a decade later only reconfirms the quality of the music and the writing skills of Clare Fischer. This was a cohesive, well rehearsed big band who were totally committed to Fischer's concepts. There's plenty of solo space for Warne Marsh, Conte Candoli, Gary Foster, Steve Huffsteter, and Bill Perkins (on baritone sax) within the framework of such Fischer originals as *The Duke, Miles Behind, 'Twas Only Yesterday* and *In Memoriam*. Two originals by Stewart Fischer (*Calamus* -- a solo feature for Bill Perkins -- and *Bitter Leaf*), Billy Strayhorn's *Upper Manhattan Medical Group* and *Lennie's Pennies* complete the repertoire by a very rewarding, musical orchestra. Remastered sound adds to the clarity of the playing.

LESTER YOUNG: *Lester Leaps In* (Columbia JG34843) is volume 4 of CBS' 'complete' Lester Young. The sequence is picked up with *On the Sunny Side of the Street* from the Glenn Hardman session. *Upright Organ Blues* and

Who are also available on "Super Chief" (CG 31224) and all titles (including *Jazz Me Blues*) were on the Japanese Lester Young Memorial Album. All four takes of *Dickie's Dream* (one of which is supposedly unissued but it sounds suspiciously close to the original 78 with a different sound balance) and both takes of *Lester Leaps In* comprise all of side two. The alternates are also on Tax 8000. The 78 versions of both selections were on the original Epic LPs and its two LP repackaging available until recently in Europe as Epic 66212. Also from that set are the following Basie band selections: *Song of the Islands, Clap Hands Here Comes Charlie, I Left My Baby, Riff Interlude, Ham 'n Eggs, Hollywood Jump, I Never Knew, Tickle Toe*. Other Basie selections are -- *The Apple Jump* (Queen 022), *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* (Queen 008), *Let's Make Hey While the Moon Shines* (take A on Queen 008, take 2 on CG31224). *The Man I Love, You're Just a No Account* and *You're a Lucky Guy* are from Billie Holiday's December 13, 1939 session. *No Account* has not been widely available on LP for a long time but the other two selections are included in the Columbia Holiday sets. Only selections with Lester Young solos are included in this survey. The transfers are superb -- which makes it all worthwhile for the long suffering collectors. Those people who may still be wondering what all the fuss is about should listen to *Dickie's Dream, Lester Leaps In, Song of the Islands, Riff Interlude, Ham 'n Eggs* and *Tickle Toe* for definitive examples of Lester Young's playing from this period.

THELONIOUS MONK: The Riverside Trios (Milestone 47052) is a repackaging of "Monk

Plays' Duke Ellington" (Riverside 201) and "The Unique" (Riverside 209). They are unlike any other Monk lps -- and yet they are typically Monk! The repertoire consists of Ellington tunes on the first lp and standards on the second. And yet they are somehow translated into Monkish figurations of the highest order. Oscar Pettiford is the bassist and Kenny Clarke and Art Blakey split the drum chair. From this point forward Monk continued to include standards in his performance/ recording repertoire and they add a further dimension to one of the major individuals of the music. Both *Solitude* and *Memories Of You*, the piano solos, were included in Milestone 47004 "Pure Monk".

CANNONBALL ADDERLEY: What I Mean (Milestone 47053) restores to the catalog Cannonball's Quintet Plus session (Riverside 388) -- but minus *Straight No Chaser* -- and his collaboration with Bill Evans entitled "Know What I Mean" (Riverside 433). These 1961 sessions capture the elastic brilliance of Cannonball's alto playing at its best. The collaboration with Bill Evans is one of the outstanding recordings from this period. There's the sensitivity of a ballad like *Goodbye* as well as the drive of *Waltz For Debbie* and Clifford Jordan's *Toy*. As a bonus there is a lengthy alternate version (which is much different) of the title tune. The Quintet date is almost as interesting. Victor Feldman, the group's pianist, switches to vibes on four of the six selections to make way for Wynton Kelly on piano. There's only a hint of the funky cliches which catapulted the band to success. Instead we have thoughtful and intriguing solos from both Cannonball and Nat as well as Kelly and Feldman.

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STAN GETZ: Early Getz (Prestige 24088) will intrigue collectors of the tenor saxophonist's music. No less than twelve titles are either unissued or were only on early 78s and lps. In all cases they are alternate versions of tunes issued on other lps. Most of the rare selections come from Terry Gibbs' March 14, 1949 sessions and Getz's first Prestige date on April 8, 1949 — both of which are heavily touched by the Herman sound. A Seeco session from May 12, 1949 under Al Haig's name produced four selections (*Skull Buster*, *Ante Room*, *Poop Deck*, *Pennies From Heaven*) which were on a Dawn lp (1126). *Marcia* (June 21, 1949); *I've Got You Under My Skin* (plus an alternate), *What's New* (January 6, 1950); *You Stepped Out Of A Dream* plus alternates of *My Old Flame*, *The Lady In Red* (April 14, 1950) all complete sessions currently available on Prestige 24019. Finally, this reissue contains the Al Haig Sextet session from July 28, 1950 (with Kai Winding) and Jimmy Raney's April 23, 1953 session with Hall Overton on piano (*Signal*, *Lee*, *Round About Midnight*, *Motion*). The better known versions of the material on this twofer have been on an assortment of Prestige lps (7255, 7434, 7516, 7337, 7256, 7252). It's a confusing mess for collectors and it is to them that the music on this lp is directed. This is a documentary of the growing stature of Getz as a stylist. The many Verve lps afford more enjoyable access to Getz for the average listener.

BOOGIE WOOGIE TRIO: Volume 3 (Storyville 4006) is a US/Canadian reissue from Danish Storyville. It begins with the four Pete Johnson sides (*Yancey Special*, *J.J. Boogie*, *Swanee River Boogie*, *St. Louis Blues Boogie*) from Gene Norman's Just Jazz concert in December 1947, all on Oldie Blues 2801. *Four O'Clock Blues* (Johnson), *Dupree Blues* (Lewis), *Monday Struggle* (Ammons) are solo efforts from the 1939 Sherman Hotel broadcasts. All three titles were originally issued on Storyville 183 and have also appeared on Euphonic 1208/1209. *Boogie Woogie Prayer* is a 1947 A.F.R.S. duet by Ammons and Johnson. All of side two features Meade Lux Lewis from Club Hangover broadcasts of 1953-54 when he performed opposite the various resident traditional jazz groups. The album title is a little misleading -- the three leading exponents of boogie woogie do not perform together. The most expressive interpretations are the three Sherman Hotel solos but the predictability of the later performances is compensated by their authoritative stance.

DUKE ELLINGTON/JOHNNY HODGES: Orchestra (Storyville 4003) is the North American equivalent of Storyville 243. It contains the seven Ellington band performances from the Goodyear movie which were also available on LP. Recorded in 1962, they are typically convincing performances of the day on such familiar fare as *Take the A Train*, *Satin Doll*, *Blow Boy Blow* (*Crescendo in Blue*), *VIP Boogie/Jam with Sam*, *Kinda Dukish*, *Things Ain't What They Used to Be* and a brief tip of the hat to the tire company in *The Good Years of Jazz*. The LP is completed with the 1964 Hodges unit playing four selections (*Good Queen Bess*, *Jeep's Blues*, *Dooji Wooji*, *The Jeep is Jumpin'*) which were previously available on Onyx 216. Cat Anderson, Paul Gonsalves, Russell Procope and Lawrence Brown share the spotlight here with Hodges.

RED GARLAND: Saying Something (Prestige 24090) features the pianist with Donald Byrd and John Coltrane in most of the selections. Reissued complete is "High Pressure" (Prestige 7209) which contained *Undecided*, *What Is There To Say*, *Two Bass Hit*, *Billie's Bounce*, and *Soft Winds*. *Lazy Mae* and *Solitude* come from the same sessions and were on Prestige 7229 ("Dig It"). Completing this reissue are *On Green Golphin Street* and *If You Could See Me Now* — the two tracks with horns (Richard Williams, Oliver Nelson) from Prestige 7307 "Soul Burnin'". The solos by Garland and Coltrane make the earlier sessions from 1957 the more interesting but, overall, there is a pleasing, if casual ambience to the music on this repackaging. Lacking, however, is the kind of direction which someone like Miles Davis was able to bring to informal sessions such as these.

CURTIS FULLER: All Star Sextets (Savoy 2239) is a retrospective look at the early exploits of musicians who were later to achieve widespread recognition. Lee Morgan is the trumpeter on the earlier of these two 1959 dates and Thad Jones is his replacement on the second session. Benny Golson and the trombonist complete the front lines. Wynton Kelly, Paul Chambers and Charlie Persip are a well-knit and swinging rhythm section. They are replaced by McCoy Tyner (his first recordings), Jimmy Garrison and Dave Bailey at the December session. The music is closer in spirit to Art Blakey, Clifford Brown and Horace Silver than the organised tightness of the Sextet formed at that time under Benny Golson's musical direction. The first date, with its crackling rhythm section and the gifted ebullience of its horn players, is a joy throughout. The second date finds the musicians at their best in *Lido Road* and *Blues De Funk* where the relaxed tempo gives everyone some space. Especially enjoyable are Thad Jones' economical solos. This set is a repackaging of long-deleted Savoy lps 13010/13011, and has stood the test of time.

YUSEF LATEEF: Angel Eyes (Savoy 2238) could be said to be little more than a footnote in the history of jazz and yet.... there are countless musicians who have barely drawn attention to their talents or received any real recognition. All of the music on this two-record set was recorded in June, 1959 and features Lateef on tenor sax (his most impressive voice), flute and oboe. But it is Terry Pollard's piano which consistently attracts the listener's attention. Her lines are clean, articulate and full of interesting ideas. In addition, she phrases with all the assurance and nuances of a major musician. William Austin and Frank Gant complete a most elastic rhythm section and Bernard McKinney's euphonium is the other instrumental voice. Lateef's bands were always cohesive, interesting and sometimes surprising groups whose individuality is still apparent twenty years later. This music was originally available on Savoy 12139/12140.

BOOKER ERVIN: The Freedom And Space Sessions (Prestige 24091) includes all the material from both "The Freedom Book" (Prestige 7295) and "The Space Book" (Prestige 7386) as well as *Stella By Starlight* and *The Second #2* which were on "Groovin' High" (Prestige 7417) and came from the Freedom and Space sessions. Hopefully this repackaging will remind listeners of the volatile uniqueness of Booker

Ervin and his associates (Jaki Byard, Richard Davis, Alan Dawson), who make up one of the great rhythm sections of the 1960s. While playing totally within the boundaries established for jazz music they demonstrated anew the remarkable elasticity possible in the music. While they never gained the recognition of the Miles Davis team of the period (Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter, Tony Williams), this threesome were more versatile, more explosive and ultimately more interesting. They were an ideal complement to Booker Ervin's slashing tenor saxophone attack. He seemed to cut a swath through the material and while his canvas may have been on the small side he gave to it many different colours. These two sessions, the one which produced "The Song Book" and the Candid session are the starting points for anyone wishing to experience one of the great stylists of this music.

SAM PRICE: Rib Joint (Savoy 2240) - a reissue of Savoy 14004 and World Wide 20016 with King Curtis and Mickey Baker.

MOSE ALLISON: Ol' Devil Mose (Prestige 24089) - reissue of Prestige 7215 "Ramblin' With Mose" and Prestige 7189 "Autumn Song".

CHARLIE PARKER: Bird/Encores Vol. 2 (Savoy 1129) - a repackaging of more Savoy's, including the alternates of *Marmaduke* left off the box set (5500).

WES MONTGOMERY: Groove Brothers (Milestone 47051) - reissue of "Grooveyard" (Riverside 362) and parts of Fantasy 8052 and 8066.

JOHNNY GRIFFIN: Little Giant (Milestone 47054) - selections from "Sextet" (Riverside 264), "Way Out" (Riverside 274), "The Little Giant" (Riverside 304) and "The Kerry Dancers" (Riverside 420).

NAT ADDERLEY: That's Nat (Savoy 1128) - reissue of Savoy 12021 - with Jerome Richardson, Hank Jones, Wendell Marshall and Kenny Clarke.

BIX BEIDERBECKE: Giants of Jazz (Time-Life) is an illuminating survey of the legendary cornetist's recording career. It brings into focus the uniqueness of his style -- a way of playing far removed from the concepts of all but a few of his contemporaries at that time. Only Eddie Lang and Joe Venuti seemed to feel the intuitive harmonic pull which gave Beiderbecke's music such startling clarity. There's a timeless sense to his playing which remains fresh today -- and that is something which only a few musicians have succeeded in doing. Bix's contributions were pivotal -- as were Armstrong's -- in lifting jazz music beyond its role of functional dance music. In its separate ways both the music of Armstrong and Beiderbecke were entries into brave new worlds, and musicians (black and white) were quick to absorb the contrasting ideas of both these talented musicians. And jazz music was never the same again. The gems of this collection are all to be found in the first two discs -- small group recordings by Frankie Trumbauer and his Orchestra and Bix and his Gang. Only one of these (*Blue River*) contains one of those nightmarish vocals by Seger Ellis which mar so many recordings of this period. The last LP is Bix in decline --

with the Paul Whiteman Orchestra and four smaller groups from within the band issued under Bix and Trumbauer's name. Bix with Whiteman is the same as Louis with Henderson - one man trying to swing an orchestra. Sound quality is marvelous so there's no better way to have the essence of Bix than through this collection.

-- John Norris

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(Black Saint Records are available from **Coda**, and are distributed in the U.S. by Rounder Records, 186 Willow Avenue, Somerville, MA 02144).

BRIAN BROWN Quintet

'Bells Make Me Sing' Aija 002

(Aija Recording, 23 Wellington Street, Kew, Victoria, 3101, Australia).

DEWEY REDMAN

Tenor saxophonist/composer Dewey Redman has been a participant in the improvised music scene for over fifteen years now. First gaining prominence as a member of various aggregations assembled by Ornette Coleman, which usually included bassist Charlie Haden and/or David Izenzon along with percussionist Edward Blackwell, Redman has gone on to lead numerous groups of his own. The only recorded document of early pre-New York Redman is the reissue available on Arista 1011, "Look for the Black Star". Although this Lp is not fully representative of Redman at his best, nor does it give a clear indication of what is to come in the musician's work, one does notice a characteristically expansive sound and harmonic dexterity as well as a highly varied and attractive approach to the rhythmic foundations of the music — all elements that would eventually become trademarks of the Redman approach.

The saxophonist finally abandoned the idea of working with the piano in subsequent groups after recording and concertizing with Coleman (roughly four or five recordings are available of Redman with the famed altoist — the most familiar probably being the Blue Note package "New York Is Now" that includes Elvin Jones and Jimmy Garrison). After this period there was work and recording with Keith Jarrett and sporadic performances and two record dates with his own band that included trumpeter Ted Daniel, bassist Sirone and drummer Eddie Moore. The two recordings which survive on Impulse have this nucleus of players augmented on one session with cellist Jane Robertson ("The Ear Of The Behearer") and on a few selections of the second recording of this period, "Coincide", violinist Leroy Jenkins appears.

Presently Dewey has returned to the piano quartet format and a recorded example of his findings is now available on Galaxy Records. The current band includes pianist Fred Simmons, bassist Mark Helias, and drummer Eddie Moore. A second recording on the Galaxy label should be available soon that will have Charlie Haden in addition to Helias on bass.

While listening to the quartet at New York's Tin Palace I was amazed at how easily these men create a velvety rich feeling of communication and cohesion in their music. It's never a forced or impaired energy but a natural and evenly successive one. Redman told me at the gig that he's "really satisfied with this band, definitely the best group I've ever had."

Pianist Simmons, a somewhat elusive figure, was a member of one of the finest bands at the dawn of the '70s — percussionist Rashied Ali's legendary quartet. Since that time he hasn't worked much in public but has been content studying and refining his art. In Redman's presence he is the "time modulator", the sharp dictator of clean line and exhilarating swing — he can pull anything out of his musical bag and it will fit the circumstance like a tailored glove. Bassist Helias has the harmonic dexterity and gut feeling of a Charlie Haden with the countermelodic "thought" of a

Gary Peacock or a Scott LaFaro. He has played and recorded most notably with composer/pianist Anthony Davis and percussionist Gerry Hemingway, among others. He's also an important force in a new trio called "Oahspe" which includes Hemingway and trombonist Ray Anderson (two Lps are available on the independent Auricle label). Helias is perfect with Dewey — building and holding the melodic tension of the music with a general fluidity and heartfelt cohesion. He is a thinking bassist who knows when to hold the fort and when to recede and relax — and it is this type of modulatory effect in his playing and how he achieves it which might prove to be his greatest and most unique asset.

Eddie Moore has been a musical colleague of Redman's since the San Francisco days and plays New Orleans-styled drums which echo the tonal and rhythmic spirit of Edward Blackwell. Yet Moore isn't as explicit as his mentor and his accents tend to manifest themselves as "rhythmic shading" as opposed to evenly-modulated, tempered assertions parallel to the lines and shape of the tonal feeling generated by the entire band which is Blackwell's genius. Moore's conception works well in the band, and gives Redman a chance to really speak for himself and to his pianist and bassist when the occasion calls for it. Group interaction and social reliability is at its best in this band.

ROGER RIGGINS: When did you begin to play professionally?

DEWEY REDMAN: I guess when I was in college was the first time I was paid for playing. Although, in another sense it might not have been my first real gig because in high school Ornette and I played in the concert marching band. This was around 1945 until 1948.

RR: How important was the Southern musical terrain to your development and to your firm grasp of music theory, especially harmonic theory?

DR: The Southwest is known for the Southern blues. I was born there. It was an environment of people like B.B. King, dance music and rhythm-and-blues. All of this had an influence on me, and in Dallas and Fort Worth there were jazz influences too. I would say that the harmonic thing is more a personal thing, but I do have that Texas tenor sound.

The way I play is more a personal way, I'm not trying to play like anyone else but myself. Some years ago I decided that everyone I liked in whatever area of music had one thing in common and that was a good sound. And that's foremost in my mind, to project the sound quality of the music. Technique doesn't mean anything, if you don't have the sound.

I've always had my own band, even in San Francisco, although I've gone through Ornette and Keith. I've always had my own group, even if we weren't working that much. So I've had a pretty good idea of how I wanted my own music to go for a while.

RR: Are those two Lps on Impulse records, "The Ear of the Behearer" and "Coincide", pretty much indicative of your musical thinking at that time?

DR: Yes. I always insist on playing with who I want to play with and I've always insisted on recording what I want to record. Those recordings don't really indicate a single direction, but many different directions. There's a ballad, a real blues and things with strings. In my music I've always tried to be diverse.

RR: During the period when those two recordings were made, did Leroy Jenkins exert much of an influence, conceptually speaking, on some of that music?

DR: Let me put it this way: Leroy and I were friends and he was the best string player that I knew. I've always liked strings... Calo Scott was the first string player I hired. Actually, I just liked the way Leroy played the instrument; it was nothing other than that.

RR: How did this current edition of the Dewey Redman Quartet begin?

DR: It began a little over a year ago. I had been using Ted Daniel on trumpet and I specifically wanted to hire a piano player. I had been



auditioning piano players and I'm lucky I got Fred Simmons. So we went to Europe and worked and recorded. As a matter of fact this is the first time I've made a recording with a piano player since San Francisco.

RR: You've just finished touring with the "Old And New Dreams" band (with Don Cherry, Charlie Haden and Edward Blackwell) and have gotten great reviews. How does it feel to be re-united with your old colleagues and what new terrain is being covered in the music?

DR: Most of what we play is Ornette Coleman's music, so what this is is a celebration of Ornette's music by people who play it the best. I love his music and he's one of the best

composers and certainly one of the best alto players. Charlie, Don and Blackwell have been playing this music for twenty or twenty-five years but I'm sort of new to it compared to them, so it's really a privilege for me to be involved in this.

What made it difficult when I was playing with Ornette was that Charlie and Blackwell knew Ornette so well, and a lot of times they would just look at the charts and get it down and then we'd go into the solos and Ornette would go first and I'd have to go after him and think up something to play. That was probably the hardest musical challenge I've ever had.

RR: The musette seems to put an entirely different colour in the music. Aside from its African and Middle Eastern flavor and/or references, does this instrument allow your musical thinking to be more consciously conceptual?

DR: Of course, the musette is like my soprano in that way. On every tune I try to play differently. Diversification is what I like and the musette definitely adds to that. It's like a saxophone, it's another challenge, another mood, another style.

At the close of the interview I asked Redman about his clarinet playing. He expressed a desire to record more with this instrument — it appeared briefly on "Coincide" but has since seemingly been retired. Redman said that the clarinet is a difficult instrument, but he really likes it. He informed me that for his upcoming gig at The Public Theatre (during last season's series of New Jazz concerts) he hoped to play it along with his tenor saxophone and musette in the company of Simmons, Helias and — the special treat — Blackwell behind the batterie.

One hardly suspects that Redman, like Ornette Coleman, is basically a self-taught musician. It seems that the process of attainment is itself a creative act and for those whose life is truly art it is inescapable that they wouldn't "...really learn unless they taught themselves". Like Archie Shepp and Leroy Jenkins, Redman was a late starter. Having taught school for a while, it was only when he was in his mid-thirties that he made that inevitable move to New York on the advice of other musicians. "I've never attracted much attention in the polls," he said, "but I really don't care because I've always gotten respect from my peers." And those peers include Sonny Rollins, Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane and Freddie Hubbard — all musicians who have told Redman they like the way he plays.

It's beyond me why Redman hasn't received more credit for his "vocalizing" through the tenor saxophone. It's a major contribution and one that has been picked up on by a lot of people (mostly for the wrong reasons I might add). The technique is thoroughly inspiring when it appears in the saxophonist's work — multiple harmonic lines with vocal inflections manipulated through the mouthpiece (listen to his entry after Coleman on the first track of the "New York Is Now!" album — simply breathtaking).

Redman has been quite influential on younger musicians in "Jazz" simply for the fact that he's one of the last of the authentic journeying "Jazzmen". One could hardly say that they know the tenor saxophone today without really going through him. New wave traditionalists as diverse as David Murray and Ricky Ford have absorbed him and have spoken of the beauty in how he plays.

Divine light, sacred melody, and the winds of yesterday... today. Take a look into the musics of Dewey Redman and see what the seer sees.

— Roger Riggins

INTERVIEW BY

**roger
riggins**



Around the World

CANADA

Tenor saxophonist Don Thompson returned to the Toronto scene this Fall with an appearance at The Red Lion. More importantly perhaps, he took part in two CBC-TV shows seen locally in Toronto in December under the heading of "A Little Special". The setting was a nightclub and trumpeter Sam Noto, trombonist Terry Lukiwski and guitarist Peter Leitch were prominently featured along with the leader, who dispensed the kind of soulful, straightahead jazz for which he was noted in the early 1960s.

Michael Ondaatje's novel "Coming Through Slaughter" — a fictionalised account of Buddy Bolden's life — is now a play. It debuted January 9 at Theatre Passe Muraille with Ardon Bess in the title role. Jim Galloway provided the live music for the play.

Bourbon Street, Toronto's leading night club, changes back to a Monday-to-Saturday format (with no Saturday matinee) and on Sundays there will be local groups appearing.

"Birdflight", a play by Peter Stevens based on the life of Charlie Parker, had its premiere run in Vancouver January 6 to 20 at the Robson Square Theatre.... The bassist pictured in the Creative Music Studio ad on page 40 of this issue is Vancouver's Lyle S. Lansall-Ellis, of the New Orchestra Workshop and Quintet.

Ella Fitzgerald returns to The Imperial Room of the Royal York Hotel in Toronto on April 28 for a two-week engagement.

Eric Stach gave three concerts in Alberta in January with drummer Dennis Brown. He made appearances in Edmonton, Calgary and Banff.

— John Norris

TORONTO — And yet another decade begins with proclamations of the future, summaries of the past seeming to be abundant in multitudes of publications. Not so *Coda*, for history has proven that improvisation is not a fashion, to be dictated as a crystal ball, but a natural emotion that exudes from creative people in all disciplines. Forever.

But back to reality. The Toronto music scene.

Beno's Restaurant — Vaughan Road at St. Clair West, has presented a sprinkling of jazz music amongst its predominantly more popular fare. The Mike Segal Quartet, who have often been featured at Cafe Soho, were the latest attraction, but the group I went to hear was somewhat of a surprise. Some five years ago, tenor saxophonist John Tank, disappointed with the Toronto scene, went to find his end of the rainbow in New York City. His opportunities were realised on a small scale in that he performed regularly in such bands as that of Joe Morello, and this move also allowed him to move back and forth between the two countries. His two sets at Beno's showed him to be a most matured player, with a powerful original voice, that was complemented by his fine band, consisting of George McFetridge (piano), Greg Pilo (drums) and a very good bassist. It was fine to have you back John Tank.

Theatre Passe Muraille - 16 Ryerson Avenue, is not perhaps an environment where one would expect to hear talk of Buddy Bolden, but as the publicity says, it's a play about this legendary New Orleans jazz hero. Based on a book by



Michael Ondaatje, entitled "Coming Through Slaughter", the play has live music, onstage, by the Jim Galloway Quartet. Response has been mixed!

The Red Lion - 467 Jarvis Street, has continued with its local bebop policy, presenting players that one does not hear enough of in our community. Most impressive was the Pete Magadini/Rick Wilkins Quartet, which featured the superb talents of pianist Joe Sealy, whose presence prompted another eastcoaster, tenor saxophonist Bucky Adams, visiting our city to do a Jazz Radio Canada broadcast, to "sit in" for a set. Upcoming are such talent as Ed Bickert, Frank Wright, and Eugene Amaro, who is the musical director of this club. The promoter, however, is the irrepressible David Caplan, a permanent fixture on the Toronto scene for numerous years. Also under Dave's wing are the Chicken Deli, which has so far presented Jimmy McPartland, with Marion even sitting in one night, Jim Galloway and Jodi Drake. The list continues with the Westbury

Hotel, Danielle's and the Selby Hotel. Busy busy

Bourbon Street — 180 Queen Street West, is still the predominant club for presenting American "stars", and we were fortunate to hear Milt Jackson on his yearly visit. "His band" was Ed Bickert, Don Thompson and Terry Clarke - Thanks. The club has returned to its regular Monday-Saturday format, cancelled Saturday matinees, and now has Sunday afternoon sessions with local players. Coming in February are Clark Terry, Scott Hamilton and Warren Vache.

The CJRT series of live broadcasts continues from The Ontario Science Centre in Don Mills, with Phil Nimmons (Feb. 11), the New Art Music Ensemble (Feb. 25), Terry Lukiwski (March 10) and the Toronto Jive Bombers (March 24). Admission is free, because in part these productions are co-sponsored by the Toronto Musicians Union.

The Music Gallery - 30 St. Patrick Street, started the year off with an interesting idea.

Under the direction of saxophonist John Oswald, a group of players were invited to perform in various permutations, thus allowing musicians who had no knowledge of each other, the opportunity of a new experience. The idea is similar to that of Derek Bailey's Company, in England.

The Edge, at the corner of Church & Gerrard Streets, presented trombonist George Lewis in a concert for solo trombone and computer, and plans to continue presenting Sunday Jazz, as the opportunity arises. The presentations are in cooperation with Sackville Recordings and Onari Productions.

Blues fans will be happy to know that a new club is opening at the Isabella Hotel, 556 Sherbourne Street.

To end my column, I should like to investigate a very good rumour that the Michael Stuart/Keith Blackley Quartet includes, in addition to bassist Steve Wallace, guitarist Lorne Lofsky. — *Bill Smith*

MONTREAL — The last program of Cine Jazz Concordia featured three items from Ralph J. Gleason's "Jazz Casual" series. The 1968 Charles Lloyd footage (with Keith Jarrett, Jack DeJohnette and Ron McClure) footage captured, amongst other things, a performance of *Forest Flower*. Regretfully this film was marred by so many technical flaws that it was difficult to enjoy the music. The 1962 Sonny Rollins (Jim Hall, Bob Cranshaw, Ben Riley) date was far superior in this regard. The music was solid Rollins, and included *The Bridge*, *God Bless The Child* and *If Ever I Would Leave You*. Finally, the 1964 John Coltrane piece (McCoy Tyner, Jimmy Garrison, Elvin Jones) was a rare treasure par excellence. Everything was clearly focused and audible. And the spirits of *Afro-Blue*, *Alabama* and *Impressions* were truly captivating. Both professor Andy Homzy and collector Walter de Mohrenschildt are to be congratulated for their efforts. I am sure the hundreds of people who attended the four programs look forward to another series.

Dizzy Gillespie did his year-end stint of filling the Rising Sun. Known to many as a jocular raconteur and prankster, Dizzy handily cajoled his audience with his fatuous french and tales of Alex Haley's adoption. The music was classic Gillespie — *A Night In Tunisia*, *Tin Tin Deo*, *Salt Peanuts*, *Brother K(ing)* — with a funky accompaniment by Michael Howell (bass), Ed Cherry (guitar) and Tony Campbell (drums). Doudou Boicel is thinking of booking Lionel Hampton and Airtio for Festijazz '80.

Ran Blake (Chairman of the Third Stream Music Department at the New England Conservatory of Music) did a lecture/demonstration and solo piano performance as part of McGill University's "Series in the American Civilization" on December 11. The concert presentation, comprised of Spanish folk music, gospel, Monk, Blake originals and more, was much too ambitious and academic. Instead of the expected "rich musical tapestry", the performance added up to an eclectic assemblage of musical styles and traditions.

The Sunday prior to the concert, Len Dobbin devoted three hours of Jazz 96 to "third stream music" and Ran. That portion of the show which I heard was excellent. Hopefully Len will give us a few hours of Eric Dolphy and Ornette Coleman in the not-too-distant future!

Michael Snow (trumpet), Casey Sokol (pi-

ano), Allan Mattes (bass) and Nobuo Kubota (alto saxophone) of the CCMC did a concert at the Musee des beaux-arts de Montreal on December 14, in conjunction with an exhibition of Michael Snow's work. They obviously have a dedicated group of admirers here in Montreal given the impressive number in attendance (over 100) and the enthusiastic response to their diverse moods, energies and antics.

Kenny Wheeler made a guest appearance with the Jean Beaudet Quartet at L'Air de Temps on January 8 and 9 — see the review on page 36 of this issue.

The Eric Stach New Art Ensemble played at the Musee d'art Vivant Vehicule at the beginning of December.... L'Imprevue, one of the main rock stages in Vieux Montreal, now presents local jazz on Monday nights.... Percussionist Michel Seguin (formerly of the Ville Emard Blues Band) has put his Toubabou group back on its feet, along with Senegalese percussionist Ibrahim Guege and saxist Gerry Labelle. ...Another jazz spot, Cafe Bebop, recently opened at 317 Rue Ontario E.

— *Peter Danson*

OTTAWA — On December 3rd a remarkable series of concerts and recitals came to an end. George Lewis played at Hull's Theatre de L'Ile as the final performance in Bernard Stepien's New Jazz presentations. Bernard has been promoting this series for over two years now. It has brought to the Ottawa/Hull region players of a type never heard here before: Archie Shepp, Roscoe Mitchell, Anthony Braxton, Kenny Barron — twenty concerts or recitals in all over a period of two years. Astoundingly, it was subsidized by the city of Hull. But this would not do for the jazz listeners of Ottawa and Hull. In their wide-lapel plaid jackets they pack the Opera at the National Arts Centre for Oscar Peterson or The Preservation Hall Jazz Band. Except in the case of Shepp and Braxton, Bernard's events were attended by a faithful group of only twenty to thirty-five. Presumably this is the firm public for avant-garde jazz in the region.

On November 15th, Kenny Barron returned to Theatre de L'Ile to play for the third time, giving perhaps the most richly rewarding performance of the whole series. The virtuosity with which his style seems able to incorporate rhetorical devices from the playing of diverse masters is breathtaking. There were passages that reminded one of Tatum, of Cecil Taylor, of Bud Powell and, above all, of Thelonious Monk and of Bill Evans. One may still have reservations concerning his eclecticism; but the command with which these various manners are smoothly incorporated into an expansive treatment of the material is at times staggering. This is not the Kenny Barron heard on his recordings; it is one of the most accomplished solo performers playing today.

By request, he played *Movement*, a free piece from his first appearance. In this and in the other free improvisations of the evening there was extraordinary variety: *Free Improvisation*, dedicated to Bud Powell displayed an uncanny ventriloquism. Hearing the music again on tape, one could imagine in many passages that it was Powell himself. However, Barron reminded us that the harmonic explorations of popular tunes had been one of the foundations of "be-bop", itself the ancestor of today's free playing. The masterpieces of the evening were *Lover Man*, *Darn That Dream* and *My*

Funny Valentine. His beautiful exploration of the last tune made one want to say "hats off" to Chet Baker for establishing such a lovely vehicle in the repertoire. Rhapsodic and delicate in its controlled Tatumism, it kept a suggestion of tempo and life that contained the virtuosity within the bounds of its pervading lyricism. *Darn That Dream* inevitably recalled Bill Evans, whose elusive, shifting voicings form the basis of Barron's ballad playing, strengthened with an astringency that recalls Monk. *Lover Man* was the high-point, where the influence of Powell and of Monk fitted historically and harmonically his prodigious but delicately lyrical exploration. It is time someone recorded Kenny Barron playing in this way.

On November 12th Anthony Davis gave a piano recital that was reported in the last issue.

Monday, November 26th marked a low point in the loyalty of the Ottawa/Hull jazz public. It was Bernard's evening, and one might have expected that those who had benefited so much from his unusual initiative would have turned out to hear him. Only eight people, including wives and critics, showed up.

Bernard played his own attractive and inventive avant-garde compositions into which alto saxophonist Vernon Isaacs, who remembers Charlie Parker and playing with John Coltrane, interpolated improvisations on analogous mainstream tunes. The idea was to show the kinship of avant-garde and mainstream jazz, but the awkwardness of the players, due largely, one supposes, to the depressingly small audience, did not lead to a convincing cohesiveness in the performances. Bernard again showed his lovely big tone and his fluency throughout the registers, and it was good to hear Vern Isaacs again. Raymond Houle drums with flair, but he plays too loud, using the whole kit the whole time. Things might have gone better had he modulated into mainstream rhythm for Isaac's contributions.

For those who can remember the three-minute record and Eddie Condon saying 1-2-3-4 at the beginning of numbers, the sight of George Lewis setting up for his December 3rd recital seemed out of a different world: if the Woody Herman Orchestra had really been "Men from Mars", it couldn't have been wierder, as George moved the plugs on his computer-synthesizer, while he studied the digital/analog programme in his book of print-outs. In fact the improvisations with the computer were among the more memorable passages from Bernard's whole series. There was a delightful contrast of tone colour between Lewis' rich and searing trombone and the pops, fuzz and crackle of the synthesizer; and this gave a lightness and variety to both pieces. The computer is programmed with melody patterns, which are selected by rules (decided by the computer) in response to the improvisations of the solo instrument. The computer offers neither random sounds nor a set programme, but in fact improvises along with the soloist. Lewis told us that he gives more and more of his time to computer composing, and less and less to his instrument. Like Gunter Christmann, he sees himself as taking his place in modern improvisational music.

Lewis opened with what he called a "Toning and Pacing" piece. It was essentially a drone for muted trombone, at first with very little variat-

JAZZ BOOKS

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by Simosko & Tepperman (hardcover) 14.35
- THELONIOUS MONK: important solos and
tunes as played by... (from Riverside, Blue
Note and Columbia recordings) 7.00
- Vintage Jazz Mart*: the magazine that will
find or sell any elusive recordings (78 & LP;
books too) - published about twice yearly,
5-issue subscriptions are available for US
\$4.25 (surface) or US\$8.50 (airmail) or
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HELP JIMMIE LUNCEFORD'S MEMORY

CODA staff are contributing to a Bio-
Discography of the Jimmie Lunceford band
being assembled by the respected Dick Bak-
ker of Holland. There are 2 very hazy areas:
1) Warner Bros. (Vitaphone) film shorts and
"Blues In The Night". What partial number
did Lunceford play in this feature?
2) AFRS (Armed Forces Radio Service)
work during and after World War II.

Can any jazz buffs help with details in
these puzzling areas? Contact Dan Allen at
CODA.

ion of pitch. It built up very slowly through
changes in timbre, utilising cyclic breathing to
maintain a continuous sound. It served to
remind us how important Lewis feels timbre to
be. In *Untitled Dream Piece* for solo trombone
he played more in the jazz idiom, but, despite
their virtuosity, I found the solo performance
less winning than those with the computer. A
fascinating, relaxed evening, with the audience
chatting with the performer afterwards, it was a
suitable conclusion to a great series. Thank you
Bernard Stepien.

— Trevor Tolley

AMERICA

ANN ARBOR — The group assembled at East-
ern Michigan University's Pease Auditorium Nov-
ember 15 was probably Woody Herman's 438th
Herd, and the distance between the old trail-
master and his young herdsman continues to
widen. The band could almost be a graduate-
level extension of North Texas State University,
to judge by personnel and some of the arrange-
ments — there's polish and facility, coupled
with a certain lack of individuality. Herman has
had less to do than, say, Basie (or Ellington be-
fore his death) in shaping his group's sound,
and as a result the band seems to have multiple
personalities. A good, versatile band to be
sure, but a bit more of a laboratory band than
one might have expected.

Jaki Byard's first set in the University of
Michigan Union's Pendleton Room on November
17 proved most enjoyable. The genial Byard
(obviously a man who enjoys his food) quickly
established an easy rapport with the small
audience. *Hello Young Lovers* opened out-of-
tempo, shifted into a two-handed waltz, through
a brief 4/4 swing and out. Much of the set
was taken up with the performance of most of
Byard's *Family Suite*. Evidently Byard comes
from a large and varied family; there were
something like twelve movements, which dis-
played Byard's command of the keyboard and
all its technical resources (afterwards Byard told
us he'd cut it in half by dropping several coun-
ins). A medley of *Memories Of You* and *In
Your Own Sweet Way* drifted into Erroll
Garner; the closer, *European Episode*, roared
out over a striding left hand. It made for a quick
hour.

Vibraphonist Karl Berger was in residence at
the University of Michigan November 28-30;
most of the residence was to be spent forming
and rehearsing an orchestra to perform with
Berger in concert on the 30th. We sat in on the
first session and gained some insight into the
rhythmic concepts taught at Berger's Creative
Music Studio in Woodstock, New York. His
solo set in the Pendleton Room was evenly
divided between piano and vibes. Much of the
set was completely improvised, featuring modal
explorations of relatively odd time signatures
(with even odder phrases superimposed). The
set with the student orchestra was less success-
ful, mostly because Berger's rhythmic freedom
can't be learned fluently in three short days;
the absence of a drummer didn't help either
(Berger filled in with a ride cymbal). The
unusual instrumentation (several flutes and an
electric guitar along with saxophones and brass)
created some interesting textures at times. For
the students it was obviously valuable, but I'd
like to hear Berger and a workshop group
seeded with more experienced players.

One of the season's only snowfalls (so far)

came on December 1, the night we were to
drive up to East Lansing for a Showcase Jazz-
produced concert featuring Sonny Fortune and
Betty Carter. Ms. Carter's performance was
worth the icy drive. The first set at the Eric-
son Kiva opened with two instrumentals by
her trio (John Hicks, piano; Curtis Lundy, bass;
Kenny Washington, drums). Betty opened with
some medium 4/4 scat that resolved into *I
Could Write A Book*. All the usual elements of
a Carter performance were present — the agon-
ized, airless ballads; the bubbling scat at medium
and up-tempos, those oddly mannered gestures —
but in a way difficult to describe it seemed
freer/tighter, more intensely, infectiously jubi-
lant. Betty bantered with the crowd, especially
about a sassy Cole Porter tune called (I think)
Kick It Around. Her supporting cast was, as
usual, high-caliber. Hicks is perfectly in tune
with her; Kenny Washington (who looks too
young to vote or drink) has the crisp, crackling
authority of the early Tony Williams.

The opening set by Sonny Fortune's quartet,
with Michael Cochran, piano; Ben Brown, bass;
and Rudy Walker, drums, was less arresting.
Fortune's is a strong solo voice; his alto speaks
with that raw, hard-edged tone (remember
James Spaulding?). He has an attractive way
of grabbing a short phrase and worrying it
obsessively. But in the four tunes of this set —
Nica's Dream, Kenny Barron's *Sunshower*, Coch-
ran's *Revelations* and *Comin' Out Of The Rain* —
the group displayed for me no real feeling of
individuality, no characteristic to set them off
from any other good horn-plus-rhythm quartet.

Detroit hosted a jazz festival of sorts December
6 through 9, but we learned of it (secondhand)
too late to attend. Reportedly a number of
interesting people participated in workshops,
lectures, panel discussions and four concerts,
including Slide Hampton, Ron Carter, Harold
McKinney, Jimmy Wilkins (who performed) and
(among others) Frank Foster, Curtis Fuller,
Muhai Richard Abrams, Ernie Rogers, and
James Tatum (who spoke).

A sad note from friends in Honolulu:
pianist Ernie Washington died on Christmas
Eve of a brain tumour. Ernie was a fixture
on the Honolulu jazz scene from the mid-
fifties until quite recently. An ageless, vibrant
man of Tatumesque abilities, Ernie also sang
(hoarse yet rich and true) and played trumpet
(echoing Gillespie). Like those few who
chose to play jazz away from the beaten track
he was a true keeper of the flame, highly
inventive, slightly eccentric, giving more than he
received. Those of us who knew him, jammed
with him, learned from him, will miss him.

— David Wild

LOS ANGELES — On the weekends during last
October and November Snooky's at 12021 W.
Pico Blvd. presented Freddie Redd and His
Western Union. Redd you will remember was
the composer of the music for the album
from the Jack Gelber play, "The Connection".
His Western Union consists of Allen Jackson
bass, Chauncey Lock flugelhorn, Delbert L.
Hill baritone sax & bass clarinet, Donald Dean
drums, Jim Maranti flute, tenor & soprano sax
with Freddie Redd on piano.

Smokie Wilson has a new 45 rpm out on
Big Town Records, *You Shadowed My Dream*.
His Pioneer Club at 88th and Vermont (Watts)
still hops on weekends featuring Smokie and his
band who, rounded out with Smokie's powerful
vocals and Fender Stratocaster, can really
bring you close into the real blues, rugged, pure

and forceful. A much different music than appears on his records. The uncredited group on his first two albums is the fine post-war Chicago blues style (mainly through mimicry) band led by harmonica player Rod Piazza, who play Monday nights in Riverside downtown at The Squeeze.

Monday evenings at the Right Track in Pasadena, 317 S. Arroyo Prkwy. are well spent with John Tirabasso and group. The evening I caught them it was Frank Strazzeri on very un-electric sounding electric piano and trombonium, Frank DeLaRosa, a bassist heard frequently around town, who is always ready to give his all, Steve Huffstetter, very melodic trumpet and flugelhorn, Lew Ciotti, tenor, a Coltrane improviser with a Zoot feel, and John Tirabasso on drums, a diligent player, relaxing on brushes, an L.A. regular for the last fifteen years. Other evenings have featured Gary Foster alto sax, Putter Smith bass and Dave Koonse guitar.

Alex Cline first met alto saxophonist Tim Berne in NYC in late 1977 while on the road with Julius Hemphill and Baikida Carroll. Berne as a student and friend of Julius' had granted the use of his space for a rehearsal. This relationship has brought Tim to the West Coast yet another time. In this visit he premiered several new original compositions, recorded live Oct. 28 at the Century City Playhouse, 10508 W. Pico Blvd. in hopes of a second release on his Empire Records. Vinny Golia, Roberto Miranda, Glenn Ferris and Alex Cline are the group he entitled VAT for this occasion.

At I.D.E.A., 522 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica December 2 Vinny Golia gave a solo reeds concert. On the same bill, from Woodstock, was alto saxophonist Walter Thompson, playing solo. On December 30 was Alex Cline, "Rites and Rising" solo percussion. And Nov. 17 was the Canadian Creative Music Collective at the Leica Downtown Gallery, 815 Traction Avenue.

Bobby Bradford's rhythm section for the last year has been Noah Young on acoustic bass and Bert Karl (sometimes Alex Cline) on drums. Noah, since moving here from NYC in late 1976 also has been heard with Sam Phipps, John Wood, Dick Berk, John Carter and Joanne Grauer. "Unicorn Dream" is the first release from his own label, Laughing Angel Records. This features Mark Whitecage, Cleve Pozar, Bobby Naughton, Perry Robinson, Andy Laverne and Peter Loeb in a series of duets, trios and quartets with Noah. The title number is a phantasmagoric odyssey through multi-tracked bass imagery and marks his predilection for injecting contemporary European Western elements and forms (eg. overdubbing) into his largely jazz-wise approach. A beautiful album available from 2508 Arizona Ave., # 1, Santa Monica, California 90404.

Mark Dresser was the principal bassist with the important Stanley Crouch Black Music Infinity (that lasted from 1973-75) out of Claremont, California, the others being Roberto Miranda and David Baker. He has also worked with the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, Anthony Braxton, Sonny Simmons and Leo Smith. His concerns in San Diego are in several different settings. There is a trio with vocalist Diamanda Galas and Jim French on saxophones, bagpipes, Renaissance instruments, flutes and home-made instruments, of which the Frenchophone is one. Another trio with French, and percussionist Phil Keeney, who is associated

with the Harry Partch Ensembles. (Danlee Mitchell and the Partch instruments are still at large in San Diego). Another trio with Galas and Keeney. There have been groupings with Bert Turetzky, Margo Simmons, Dave Millard and others. The young Todd Bryson, composer and percussionist runs the Eferal Orchestra. The Centre for World Music has moved to San Diego recently. The Center for Music Experiment is active. Debbie Cavash, Linda Vickerman, Ed Harkins and Phillip Larson make up EVT — extended vocal techniques group. At UCSD there is a large production outfit involved in improvisation, KIVA with Brad Dow, John Silber and Jean-Charles Francois. Dresser mentioned a piano player, Butch Lacy, and a tenor player, Howie Smith, working in the bop idiom, and of course Charles McPherson is keeping a low profile in San Diego. And Sundays a jam session with Jimmy and Jeanne Cheatham at the Sheraton Inn on Harbor Island. And a whole school of microtonalists out of the Partch concept: Arthur Frick, instrument inventor. John Glaser and his son Jonathan, viola and classical guitar (one with interchangeable necks). Print Rogers, instrument inventor and maker. Ivar Daig (sp?), home-made giant amplified koto-like instruments. So many things to experience!

— Mark Weber

NEW YORK — One of the most eagerly awaited events of the past several months was the Cecil Taylor/Max Roach collaboration at Columbia University's McMillan Theatre on December 15. The two musicians excelled in both their solos and duets — although in the latter case, it took them a while before they created an integrated performance. However, once Taylor and Roach began reacting to each other, they demonstrated that there is ample room for exploration between musicians working in different stylistic areas. Particularly noteworthy were several stunning exchanges in which the pianist's powerful clusters, runs, and blues phrases conversed with the drummer's more overtly traditional work. In addition, Taylor offered a brief, soft, yet tension-filled solo that outlined a refreshing alternative to his usual long, energetic workouts.

James "Blood" Ulmer and John Tchicai were co-featured at Soundscape on December 23 as part of the loft's Festival of European and American Musicians. The former's set was uneven; there were too many unfocused passages that robbed the music of its impact. On the other hand Tchicai, making his first New York appearance in twelve years, was totally convincing. He employed ostinatos in many of his pieces, repeating each pattern at length before breaking it down and exploring its rhythmic and melodic contours. On one piece, the saxophonist utilized both his instrument and his voice, alternately playing and talking about his experiences in New York. Tchicai also attempted a participation piece in which he tried to get the audience to verbally free associate to his long, sustained saxophone sounds.

Downtown at The Bottom Line, Sonny Rollins (Rollins, tenor saxophone and Iyricon; Mark Soskin, piano; Jerome Harris, electric bass; Al Foster, drums) demonstrated his special brand of music-making on November 4 and 5. The saxophonist's expressive sound was big and full-vibratoed, as he tore into each composition with a seemingly inexhaustible supply of ideas. Opening with an up-tempo blues, Rollins progressively became more heated with

each successive chorus. He interspersed thematic fragments throughout his improvisation, giving his already pointed work even greater cohesiveness. In addition, Rollins presented a virtuoso rendition of *And Then, My Love, I Found You* in which he quoted from *It Might As Well Be Spring* and *Broadway* as well as created his own substantial melodic variations.

Communication (Red Mitchell, bass; Tommy Flanagan, piano; Jerry Dodgion, saxophones and flute) recorded before an audience at Fat Tuesday's from November 13 to 17. As its name indicates, the band featured a highly communicative music. However, the absence of a drummer allowed the three musicians to converse musically at a low volume, forcing one to have to listen carefully in order to pick up the numerous subtleties of their music.

Upon returning to the United States after their five-week-long European tour, the Woodstock Workshop Orchestra — directed by Karl Berger and featuring faculty and students of the Creative Music Studio — performed at the Public Theatre on November 24. The first half of the program was devoted to eight members of the band, who collectively call themselves Five Feelings. The group produced an eclectic, global folk music, combining Turkish, African, European and American sources. One of its better performances was a duet by Berger and Ed Blackwell in which the vibist's ringing chords and runs were firmly supported by his colleague's New Orleans parade-style drumming.

The full orchestra, plus guest artists Lee Konitz and Blackwell, was featured after intermission. Its unusual makeup combined such unlikely jazz instruments as bassoon, cello, and oboe in a jazz context, resulting in many fresh and haunting textures. *Coffee*, for example, found the group exploring various dynamic levels, while another piece included a heated alto saxophone solo by Donny Davis.

Lester Bowie made a rare appearance heading his own quintet (Bowie, trumpet; Arthur Blythe, alto saxophone; Amina Claudine Myers, piano, organ and vocals; Malachi Favors, bass; Jack DeJohnette, drums) at the Public Theater on December 7. The trumpeter navigated his group through two long sets, distinguished by a free interpretation of the Platters' hit *The Great Pretender*, and a swinging, blues-drenched composition. As a closing to the performance as well as an appropriate summation of the eclectic spirit that dominated much of the past decade's music, Bowie offered a provocative rendition of *Hello, Dolly*, in which he wove traditional and contemporary elements into a heartfelt tribute to Louis Armstrong.

Briefs: Phil Schaap broadcast an eleven-part series on the music of the 1940's on WKCR during December. The Heath Brothers recorded "live" at the Public Theater on December 17.... New releases available from Artists House (40 W. 37th St., New York, N.Y. 10018) are Ornette Coleman/Charlie Haden's "Soapsuds, Soapsuds", James "Blood" Ulmer's "Tales of Captain Black", Dave Liebman's "Pendulum", Andrew Hill's "From California With Love", and Wayman Reed's "46th and 8th". The records can be purchased in record stores, or direct from the company for \$7.00 domestically (New York State residents add sales tax) or \$9.00 overseas... New City Musicians presented "A Tribute to Clifford Jordan" at Leviticus International on December 11. Among the featured performers were Hank Mobley, Billy

Harper, and Philly Joe Jones.... Chick Corea and Gary Burton presented various solos and duets at Carnegie Hall on November 4.... Upcoming events at Soundscape (500 W. 52nd St., New York, N.Y. 10019) include the Dennis Charles Duo (February 16), Ed Blackwell/Charles Brackeen (March 1), Byard Lancaster (March 14), Rashied Ali (March 15) and Sunny Murray (March 29).... Gunter Hampel's "Flying Carpet" is on Kharma Records (165 William Street, New York, N.Y. 10038 USA).... Recent releases available from New Music Distribution Service (500 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012) include Leo Smith's "Spirit Catcher" (Nessa) and David S. Ware's "Birth of a Being" (Hat Hut).
— Clifford Jay Safane

DUKE ELLINGTON ALUMNI

**N.Y.U. Loeb Student Center, New York City
November 8, 1979**

While any group of competent musicians can recreate the music of Duke Ellington, it's when genuine Ellingtonians get together that the recall is total and the effect more stimulating. Such was the case with the Duke Ellington Alumni concert, when some four generations of Ellingtonians got together to celebrate their old boss in music and spirit.

Led by pianist-bassist-arranger Aaron Bell (class of 1960-62) the reunion band included Harold Ashby, Francis Williams, Britt Woodman, Norris Turney as well as non-Ellingtonians Buddy Tate (flute, alto), Al Lucas (bass) and Connie Kay (drums). They had the place rocking with standards like *A Train*, *Perdido* and the less frequently played *Rockin' In Rhythm* (in which Duke anticipated rock music by some thirty years).

Duke's original boss Sonny Greer (when Duke was with Sonny Greer's Washingtonians in 1919) got special thanks from director Bell for introducing Ellington to New York and the big time in 1921. Still very much active, Greer sat in on drums for several numbers associated with him during his 30-year tenure with the Ellington band. Joya Sherrill, carrying on the traditions of striking Ellington vocalists (in appearance as well as style), added vocal and visual color to several numbers by Ellington-Strayhorn, including *Prelude To A Kiss*, *Lush Life* and *Duke's Place*. Junior Mance, though not an Ellingtonian, sat in for personal trio interpretations of some Ellington pieces.

Individual soloists, while evoking the spirit of originals like Hodges, Webster, Cootie and Tricky Sam, gave tunes like *Prelude To A Kiss* (Turney), *Had It Bad* (Ashby), and *Don't Mean A Thing* (a marvelously lyrical Franc Williams on trumpet) their own individual treatment. Ultimately it all added up to a joyous evocation, hopefully to be repeated by Ellingtonians still with us.
— Al Van Starrex

BILL EVANS

**The Beacon Arms, Ottawa
January 7, 1980**

One of the joys of hearing Bill Evans again was the discovery that there are still some good things that do not change or deteriorate. It was an evening of recognitions and reencounters — and an evening of complete delight.

There were tunes that recalled the old reper-



toire — *If You Could See Me Now* (going back to Sarah Vaughan and the early days of bop) or *Green Dolphin Street*, that anthem of the late fifties. Yet there was no luxuriating in nostalgia, nor any sense of hearing the old favourites trotted out for our applause. In the packed Fife and Drum Room of The Beacon Arms, with beer glasses clinking, the head and shoulders of bassist Mark Johnson, rapt in improvisation, just visible above the crowd, you could imagine, without needing to close your eyes, that you were back somewhere like the Village Vanguard twenty years ago, in the days of Scott LaFaro. So much was the same, and so much was as fresh and as new as it was then. Some of the material was contemporary, like the theme from "M.A.S.H.", but subdued to Evans' completely consistent and unmistakable style.

The conception of improvisation was more open than in Evans' earlier days, and there were fewer muted Debussyesque voicings in the ballads. The rippling, cascading phrases with the lovely singing intonation still charmed and left one breathless. Evans' runs are always perfectly executed, and the rhythmic pattern of the music is sustained within them. In the slower tunes, his control of dynamics was as perfect as ever.

Mark Johnson soloed frequently — intricately and intently. He held his own in the role that goes back to LaFaro, Chuck Israels and Eddie Gomez.

This was music in an ideal atmosphere so seldom encountered in Ottawa — a lovely surprise made financially possibly by clearing the bar in the middle of the evening to give a second house. This produced the only blemish: we got just one set of fifty minutes. Everybody seemed very happy about it, all the same. It was an occasion worth repeating.

— Trevor Tolley

VANCOUVER (*This column does not appear in the Canadian section of Around The World because it was received so late*) — This winter's highlight was Betty Carter and her trio. This gig was held December 11 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. Betty Carter was in top form and that of course is the state of the art of jazz vocalizing. Many thanks to the Vancouver Jazz Society for such a fine capper to 1979.

November 16-18, the N.O.W. Studio presented our 1st Annual Creative Music Festival (for details see *Coda* issue 170). The high point for me occurred on the final evening, in the form of a totally inspiring and completely outrageous string bass solo by L.S. Lansall Ellis. In a piece dedicated to German trombonist Gunter Christmann, who was here in October with the New Art Music Ensemble, Ellis synthesized theatrics (pole vaulting on the bass) with the music in a most sophisticated (really) and satisfying manner.

A Vancouver Jazz Society benefit was held

November 25 at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre. Fraser McPherson's Trio was first up and played a fine set of standards featuring Fraser's Lester Young-inspired tenor stylings. The second set was a trio of Dick Smith (tenor), Bob Murphy (piano) and Jan Hood (drums). Smith played fine Rollins-inspired saxophone and Hood did a fine job of keeping the rhythmic impetus happening, but Murphy sadly chose the electric piano for the bulk of the set. The electric's murky sound only served to confuse the music's direction. The third band up, the N.O.W. Quintet, brought the house down. Paul Cram (reeds), Paul Plimley (piano & vibes), L.S. Lansall Ellis (bass), Ralph Eppel (brass), and Gregg Simpson (drums) played pieces that were carefully worked out, but executed with a zest which connected strongly with the audience of 250. This rhythm section is the toughest in town and the music often has that freebop attack. At one point Cram knocked off a tenor excursion with Ellis-Simpson backing that was totally electric. Besides Paul Plimley's excellent piano work, he was featured a capella on vibes as an introduction to one of the pieces. He was smokin' and the audience responded with thunderous applause. It was a treat to catch the Quintet playing in front of this large and responsive audience. It was well past midnight when the final duo appeared: Al Wiertz (drums) and Bob Murphy (piano). They play a high energy music, very derivative of much '60s avant development.

A final alto player from Toronto, Maury Coles, has relocated in Vancouver. His first Vancouver gig was at The Western Front (303 East 8th Ave.), where he was accompanied by Paul Plimley, L.S. Lansall Ellis and Gregg Simpson. Maury played again, December 16 at The Classical Joint in Gastown with the full N.O.W. Quintet. The performance was recorded by CFRO FM (Vancouver Coop Radio) for re-broadcast. Maury's saxophone approach seems to have lots in common with Roscoe Mitchell, and he's wasted no time getting down with the most adventurous cats on the local scene; new blood is always welcome and necessary. Check Maury's solo sax disc on Onari (if you can still find a copy).

Bob Bell and Henry Kaiser performed a guitar duet at the N.O.W. studio November 24. At the end of November the Studio closed down and the New Orchestra Workshop is now seeking an alternative location.

Walter Zuber Armstrong (bass clarinet, flute) appeared at the Soft Rock Cafe (1925 West 4th Avenue) December 26-27. He's just released a new record on his World Artists label. It's a duet with the great soprano saxophonist Steve Lacy and is available from Black Swan Records, 2936 West 4th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1R2 for \$9.00 (postage included).

Mandolinist David Gusman appears with his quintet February 3 at the QE Theatre, opening for Doc and Merle Watson. B.B. King appears at the Orpheum January 27, and Muddy Waters will be at the Commodore Ballroom February 8 and 9. Water's band will include Luther Johnson, Willie Smith, Calvin Jones, Joe Perkins, Robert Margolin and Jerry Portnoy.

The world premiere of Canadian author (and *Coda* contributor) Peter Stevens' play "Birdflight" has been rescheduled to occur at the V.E.C.C. February 1-23. The play promises to offer a moving and sometimes tragic mosaic of the life, music and career of Charlie Parker.

Finally, Black Swan Records will present the Bay Area's Rova Saxophone Quartet at The

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Western Front February 25. They have three LPs available on Metalanguage and they've also recorded with percussionist Andrea Centazzo on Ictus, and for Moers Music.

— Ken Pickering

AUSTRALIA

The jazz scene in Australia has been growing gradually throughout the 1970s, with trad performers maintaining their long-standing popularity, and modernists finding more interest in their work, at least in Melbourne and, more so, in Sydney.

In the last two years there has been a sharp increase in the number of tours here by overseas artists of varying styles and abilities. Among others, 1978 saw Oscar Peterson and Joe Pass, George Benson, Chick Corea, Weather Report, Stephane Grappelli, Keith Jarrett, Luiz Bonfá and Ella Fitzgerald, while 1979 saw Jamey Aebersold, David Baker and their co-

horters, Mike Nock, Chico Freeman, David Friesen, Dave Liebman, Count Basie and his orchestra, Abdullah Ibrahim, John McLaughlin, Herb Ellis and Barney Kessel, Blossom Dearie, and delta bluesman Johnny Shines.

The big news for 1980 is the Sydney International Jazz Festival, January 16-26, organized by Horst Liepolt as part of the annual Festival of Sydney. The main attraction will be the Art Ensemble of Chicago, who will give three performances. Also featured will be a quintet led by Abdullah Ibrahim (Dollar Brand), including Carlos Ward and Cecil McBee; Dave Liebman's current band, with Terumasa Hino and John Scofield, and most of Australia's top jazzmen. A smaller-scale Festival will be held in Melbourne January 25-28.

The most important occurrence in Melbourne this year was the successful establishment, by a group of local musicians, of AIJA (Australian Independent Jazz Artists) Records. "McJAD" (Melbourne Contemporary Jazz Art Duo) is the tongue-in-cheek title used by pianist Tony Gould and cornetist Keith Hounslow, two of our most gifted musicians, who have developed an admirable empathy in their spontaneously-improvised performances, which manage to retain both musical freedom of expression, and the pair's innate sense of lyricism. Their AIJA record, "Introducing McJAD", doesn't capture the inspired heights of some of their live efforts, but is a satisfying representation of what they are about. Hounslow's playing here is typically original, although the influence of '50s Miles Davis is obvious in some parts, while *Blues For Rex* shows he has not forgotten the lessons he learned back in 1949 when he toured the East Coast with Mr. Stewart. His playing is most reminiscent of Lester Bowie's, but in fact Hounslow had never heard Bowie until some months after the record was made.

AIJA's other release is "Bells Make Me Sing" by the Brian Brown Quintet. Brown has been one of the most important voices in modern jazz here since the mid-'50s when he (and Hounslow) introduced hard bop to Australia, and since the mid-'60s has led several groups distinguished by the uncommon creative power of their music. His last quartet, a truly great band with bassist Barry Buckley, drummer Ted Vining and pianist Bob Sedergreen, unfortunately broke up early in 1979; "Bells" shows the change in direction brought about by the introduction of drummer David Jones and bass

guitarist Jeremy Alsop to the band, both half the age of their predecessors. The change in personnel, rather than any revision of Brown's aims or ideals, has led to the band's new jazz-rock sound, if the rhythms are rocky there can be no disputing the jazz spirit of the solos by Brown (soprano and flute), Sedergreen and guest Keith Hounslow, again in fine form. "Bells" is certainly not the strongest music Brown has produced, but it is a nonetheless enjoyable record of original jazz. And while the band's live performances have too often shown a disappointing lack of direction, everyone rose to the occasion when they played a special night at The Met to launch the record in November. The band played with a unity, spontaneity and sense of purpose that indicated that it may yet contribute as much to Australian jazz as Brown's previous bands.

Brown's previous records were all on the 44 label, an offshoot of Polygram, run by Horst Liepolt. 44's catalogue includes many of the most significant jazz records that have been made here, and if 44 has received little interest overseas on the basis of that fact, its two latest releases should stir some interest. They are Mike Nock's "Solo" and the David Liebman Quartet's "The Opal Heart", recorded in Sydney while on tour. Liebman is joined by Nock, Ed Soph and Ron McClure, playing four originals, a Cole Porter tune, and Strayhorn's *Star Crossed Lovers*. This is more "straight-ahead" jazz than any of Liebman's other albums, and the whole band is in top form. Nock's "Solo" presents him as both improviser and composer, with attractive lyricism the most striking feature of his style. A well-balanced, stimulating album of piano reflections; again, at least as interesting as any of his previous American recordings.

— *Adrian Jackson*

LOUIS BELLSON

Louis Bellson and the Big Band Explosion
The Forum Theatre, Hatfield, England
November 7, 1979

Louis Bellson's band is a sometime thing and draws on the best of the Los Angeles studio men, those looking to blow flat out on genuine jazz charts and preferring to be flanked by section mates of like mind. This no doubt explains their on-stage energy and good humour; these players look and sound as though they're having the time of their musical lives. Their Pablo albums and this first-ever European tour emphasize that the conventional big band format can offer new rewards to musician and onlooker alike. The band's charts mostly stem from its members — those by tenor saxophonist Don Menza are prominently featured — and Bellson is a wonderfully authoritative drummer, his breaks, accents and fills tying the ensemble passages together.

Bellson is aware of his own charisma and is hardly self-effacing; his sort of prodigious technique is irresistible to the jazz watchers whose senses are gratified by bravura display. Nonetheless, the drummer's lengthy solos seemed always to stay the right side of self-indulgence. I'm glad to report that Bellson also afforded his many soloists their chances too: Menza, another staggering technician, played as though possessed on an extended coda to his own *Morning Song*, pouring forth a fan's

guide to contemporary tenor, the tonal distortions complemented by a surging line whose heat and obsessive creativity never flagged. Throughout the concert Menza never put a musical foot down wrong: every solo had force and direction, supported by a flood of ideas. Bellson's opener, *Space At Home*, quickly defined this band's values: pianist Nat Pierce's introduction bubbling airily before the full ensemble hit hard, the trumpets tight and up, as they remained all night long, hitting the high notes consistently.

Aside from Bobby Shew's relaxed flugelhorn ballad, and *Rich Outing*, a vehicle for trombonists Curt Berg and Doug Wintz, first half honours went to *Time Check* (by Menza again) whose classic tenor battle induced more non-stop fire-raising from Menza and gutty if less tongue-tied work from Larry Covelli. *Girl Talk* was Nat Pierce's — his solo aided by the immaculate time laid down by the excellent bassist John Heard and Bellson himself.

After the intermission, the first piece spotlighted the gravel-toned baritone of Gordon Goodwin, spritely phrasing from Bill Berry, and Romano's pushy alto, before excellent ballads by Ron King on flugelhorn and Shew, the latter a tribute to Blue Mitchell which was both plaintive and soulful. The disarmingly youthful altoist Matt Catingub — a mere 18 years old — contributed *Explosion*, a chart and composition that produced superior trumpet and sax section performances, and a splendid alto exchange between the composer and Romano.

Rightly, it demanded an encore — Bellson giving us a loping blues featuring the trumpet team, each blowing long and strong, Berry the winner for taste and invention.

Bellson has an outstanding big band — its friendly demeanour and enthusiasm the proper reflection of his own bandstand persona.

— *Peter Vacher*

STEVE LACY

Solo soprano saxophone
d.c. space, Washington, D.C.
December 28, 1979

This was Steve Lacy's first D.C. performance in a quarter of a century. There was a deliberate flow of material that worked in tandem with the superb juxtapositions of sound and silence in Lacy's originals and his reading of Monk compositions. Except for Lacy's closing march around the room and adjacent hallways — which was both a grand homage and a paradigm of Lacy's formalism — the impact of the evening stemmed from accumulated statements that avoided awesome proportions.

The four Monk compositions that Lacy began the first set with exhorted the integrity of each phrase in the composition as a complete statement. Lacy's delivery underpinned the wit and the inferable pathos in Monk's music: *Light Blue* conveyed a stillborn melancholy and *Epistrophe* reeled with a wound-up energy. Beginning with *Trickles*, the succeeding Lacy pieces pointed up Lacy's distillation of Monk's phonetic sensibility. The music was far from simple — repeated asymmetrical phrases, pungent use of overblowing and chordal effects, the ever beguiling apposition of sound and no-sound — yet it was consistently infectious and, more often than not, echoed traditional jazz sources.

The second set had a more spontaneous feel. Splicing smatterings of melody and rhythm together with greater bursts of intensity, Lacy used a wider range of timbral effects through reed manipulation, muting the soprano with his leg, and bouncing the sound off surrounding walls and over a closed piano. Pauses were elongated with great effect. Even at his most feverous moments, Lacy introduced material that was keenly subtle.

It is bothersome that this was Lacy's only non-New York date on his first trip to the States in almost two years. It is simply outrageous that Lacy has yet to appear in North America with the excellent quintet he has kept together for nearly ten years: Lacy hopes to change this condition in either May or Fall 1980. As much as this solo concert outdistanced my expectations, it underscored the need to hear the quintet to fully assess Lacy at this point of his activity beyond the fact that he merits extensive consideration, if not study.

— *Bill Shoemaker*

KENNY WHEELER & EMIM

L'Air de Temps, Montreal
January 8 & 9, 1980

When, on December 20, rumour had it that Kenny Wheeler would be visiting Canada soon and might be available for a gig in Montreal, a group of Montrealers set in motion a flurry of activity to arrange such an event. L'Ensemble de la Musique Improvisée de Montreal's Jean Beaudet (piano), Robert Leriche (alto sax), Claude Simard (bass) and Mathieu Leger (drums) had a date at L'Air de Temps on January 8 and 9, and were only too happy to invite Kenny Wheeler to join them. L'Air de Temps is a bebop club in Vieux Montreal — perhaps not the most propitious environment for "free music", but the opportunity of having Kenny in Montreal was too rare to be missed.

Kenny arrived mid-day on the 8th. Due to unforeseen circumstances a private space to rehearse could not be arranged. So it was down to L'Air de Temps. Upon arrival the piano was found to be out of tune. But with only an hour and a half before "the happy hour", the musicians had to accept things as they were. So they raced through the eight or so heads for the evening's performance.

At 10:00 p.m. the bar was filling up; word of Kenny's appearance had obviously filtered down the appropriate channels. In attendance were members of the Pouet Pouet Band, L'Orchestre Sympathétique, Nebu, the Rhinoceros Party, plus numerous supporters of improvised music, various bebop musicians and the regular "beautiful" people.

Tentatively, the first set began. At first the heads were rough, but slowly the music took form. By the second night, the Wheeler-EMIM mixture was becoming uncanny. Whether the quintet voices were rhythmically jagged or ploddingly funereal, the chemistry became increasingly exact. Trio, duet and solo configurations began to flow with an ease born of the musicians' own skills and increasing familiarity with each other.

In general the music was in the Wheeler/Braxton vein. Kenny displayed a beautiful acumen for joining with the other elements in the music and his trumpet, with its clean resilience and relaxed poise, was a welcome

sound. When the mood or music dictated, he freely unleashed streaming glissandi, fluttering cascades of notes or staccato blasts. His collaboration with EMIM would have been notable for its timeliness alone; Kenny's balance of freedom and composure corresponds with EMIM's growing cohesion and assurance. The ease with which EMIM played with Kenny, his wish to return, the attentiveness of the audience and the frequent rounds of applause all attested to the success of these two evenings of music.

In a few weeks the LeRiche, Simard, Beaudet and Leger grouping of EMIM will be releasing their first recording on Cadence. Hopefully it will be a good document of their music and its recent developments. — Peter Danson

CREATIVE MUSIC STUDIO

**Creative Music Studio, Woodstock, N.Y.
December 31, 1979**

The Creative Music Studio in Woodstock, New York presented a ten-day Intensive conducted by the Cecil Taylor Unit December 27 to January 5.

The Studio celebrated the New Year with a concert by members of the student body, and the Unit. Three different student groups played Taylor compositions in the first set; first, a saxophone quartet; second, a large group of two basses, two amplified guitars, five reeds, three flutes, three violins and one trumpet; and third, three pianists playing respectively the upper, middle and lower registers of the single grand piano. This set was interesting mainly for the great degree of cohesion and cooperation the students showed in playing together after only four days of acquaintance with each other. Indeed the enthusiasm that students expressed for the experience of studying with the Unit was overpowering in its ebullience.

"Overpowering" as well was the performance of the Cecil Taylor Unit for the second set. Cecil Taylor, piano; Jimmy Lyons, alto saxophone; Ramsey Ameen, violin; Alan Silva, bass and Jerome Cooper, drums and percussion came on shortly before midnight and played for approximately two hours. Now that Jimmy Lyons is the only horn player with the group, he is taking a more active role in directing its energies and his wonderful playing dominated for the better part of the first hour. During his tenure with Cecil Taylor Ramsey Ameen is revealing himself as one of the most important violinists in improvised music. However he has not yet made the breakthrough in his continuing researches (into the technology of amplifying the violin) which will allow his instrument to be heard consistently and accurately above the volume of piano, bass, drums and saxophone. When he does so certainly all violinists will be in his debt. The music of Cecil Taylor is surely beyond category and I can say no more except that we could not have entered the 1980s in a better way. David Prentice and I drove from Toronto with friends for the occasion, and we would like to thank Jim Quinlan and everyone else at CMS for their great hospitality.

— David Lee

ODDS & SODS

In NYC, Soundscape (500 West 52nd St) held a European/American music festival over the holi-

day season with John Tchicai, Steve Lacy, Hans Reichel, James "Blood" Ulmer and Dennis Charles....Warne Marsh was presented in concert on January 26 at Alice Tully Hall by the Lennie Tristano Jazz Foundation.... Dick Wellstood held down the piano chair at Hanratty's (Second Avenue and 92nd Street) for a lengthy residence in late fall.... The new Tim Berne Quintet which features guitarist Allan Jaffe, drummer Gerry Hemingway, bassist Mark Dresser and the woodwinds of Marty Ehrlich performed at the Blue Hawaii on November 28.... George Shearing, along with bassist Brian Torff, will be in residence at Cafe Carlyle until March 22.

Trumpeter Stanton Davis is artist-in-residence at the New England Conservatory of Music. ...The 1980 International Trombone Workshop will be held in Nashville May 26-30. Albert Mangelsdorff, Carl Fontana, George Masso, George Lewis and Buddy Baker will be this year's faculty.... Bill Holman appeared in concert December 2 at Battelle Auditorium, Columbus, Ohio as part of the Jazz Arts Group's winter program. Upcoming concerts include Clark Terry (March 8), Lee Konitz (April 12) and Louis Bellson (May 3).... January 26 was the date of the Jazz Institute of Chicago's Second Annual Jazz Fair. It was held at the Blackstone Hotel and featured The Salty Dogs, Paul Serrano and Eddie Baker, Wallace McMillan, Chico Freeman's Quartet, the Rhythm-makers and Four Or More.

The Central Illinois Jazz Festival was held the weekend of February 1-3.... The fifth annual Bay Area Free Music Festival will be held April 5, 11 and 12 in San Francisco. Interested players and listeners should contact Loren Means, 36 A Gladys Street, San Francisco, CA 94110.... The New College of California (777 Valencia Street, San Francisco) presented the George Sams/Ildris Ackamoor Duo, and Adela Chu and Elaine Cohen, on January 19. February concerts include the Contempo & Russel Baba Trios (Feb. 2), Rasul Siddik and the Now Artet (Feb. 9), Andrew Hill (Feb. 16), Sonny Simmons/Barbara Donald (Feb. 23).... The Cornish Institute in Seattle, Washington presents Karl Berger in concert February 10. The vibist will also be conducting workshops for three days preceding the concert. Anthony Braxton will be appearing March 14/15. For more information call (206) 323-1400.... The 1 O'Clock Jazz Lab Band's Fall concert was dedicated to the memory of Stan Kenton. It was held November 28 at North Texas State University and featured trombonist Bobby Knight and saxophonist John Park as guest soloists.... This year's Quinnipiac College Inter-collegiate Jazz Festival will be held April 18-20.

January 2nd marked the third anniversary of Erroll Garner's death and a moving tribute to the late pianist was given, as follows, by Slam Stewart:

"It was on 52nd Street that I first heard the incredible talent of E.G. He was only 20 years old when I hired him as my pianist at the 3 Deuces. He soon became the youngest giant on 'The Street'.

"We were always musically compatible. I have fond memories of his sense of humor and of the little songs he was always composing for me. How he loved his fellow man! Erroll saw color and beauty in everything around him — I can hear the soul of the man in all his music. I am proud of our wonderful friendship that deepened through the years.

"It was because of artists like E.G. that

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52nd Street really swung. He played a major role in making this now hallowed ground become 'Swing Street'. What a true genius he was. He left us all with a great legacy of beautiful sounds. Erroll Garner gave joy to me and to the world — his music will live forever."

The 14th Manassas Jazz Festival was held at the beginning of December under the direction of Johnson McRee.... One of the earliest and most successful of the European festivals each year is held in Berne, Switzerland. This year's event takes place April 30-May 4 and among those appearing will be Earl Hines, Teddy Wilson, Jay McShann, Dick Wellstood, Lionel Hampton, Ralph Sutton, Bud Freeman, Ruby Braff, Wild Bill Davison and Sammy Price.

James Clay, who established his reputation as a member of the Ray Charles band and through a few recordings for Riverside is still performing in his home town of Dallas, Texas. Tim Schuller wrote an interesting article on Clay recently in a local paper.

"Jazz Alive", the all-important documentary program on National Public Radio has a full schedule of fascinating programs lined up for the winter season. Such artists as Wild Bill Davison, Urbie Green, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Randy Weston, Benny Goodman, Joe Henderson, Charles McPherson, Warren Vache, Scott Hamilton, Arthur Blythe, John Handy and the Frankie Capp/Nat Pierce Jugernaut will be performing... Richard Spangler writes from Detroit in response to the mention in *Coda* that Leonard King's "Full Circle" program on WDET-FM might be of special interest to *Coda* readers:

"This is true... but there are other shows, just as important. On Wednesday nights at

12:00 p.m. — Faruq Z. Bey's "Metezzetics" show. Faruq is the leader of "Griot Galaxy"... this show is **relevant**.

"Friday at 11 p.m. is Jim Gallert's "Jazz Yesterday". This is mostly jazz before bebop, by a real expert.

"Friday at 11 p.m. is Kofi Natombu's show. Kofi plays state of the art music and poetry. Another great program. After Kofi at 1:00 is Nkenge Zola's show specializing in Afro & Afro-American music.

"Saturday around 12:00 a.m. is Jeff Joque's 'Kalidaphone' show. This program is devoted to the jazz of the '40s, '50s and early '60s. On Saturday night is 'Blues After Hours', hosted by 'Famous' Coachman, president of the Detroit Blues Club. Show starts at 2:00, goes til 6:00. A great show."

New releases continue to strain the jazz fan's budget. ECM has issued the second lp by Old And New Dreams (ECM 1154).... George Coppers, Dutch jazz authority, is releasing in March a previously unissued Albert Ayler session which was recorded November 9, 1964 for Hilversum radio. Don Cherry, Gary Peacock and Sunny Murray complete the band. The label's name is Osmosis.... Jazzology Records is celebrating thirty years of existence, and has issued records by Tony Parenti, Wild Bill Davison and Art Hodes to celebrate the occasion.... Jazz Archives has two lps of Red Allen with blues singers in the works (JA 46 and 47) as well as more music from the Club Hangover with Ralph Sutton and Edmond Hall (a previous lp of material from these broadcasts was issued by Storyville).... MPS has released the Singers Unlimited lp with Rob McConnell and The Boss Brass as well as a

most interesting session with Martial Solal, Lee Konitz and Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen, entitled "Four Keys".

French RCA's reissue of the Jeanne Lee/Ran Blake lp "The Newest Sound Around" received the Billie Holiday Award from the French Academie du Jazz.... RCA have also reissued the two-lp set of "The Memoirs of Willie The Lion Smith"(PM 42417).... The second lp on Matrix Records is now available. It features Clark Terry, Kenny Drew, Red Mitchell and Ed Thigpen.... Bee Hive Records are readying new releases. "Burn Brigade" (7010) features Cecil Payne, Nick Brignola and Ronnie Cuber while "Juicy Lucy" (7009) is a second lp on the label by Sal Salvador. Pianist Billy Taylor is also featured on this record.... Admirers of McCoy Tyner's piano playing will be interested in "Passion Dance" (Milestone 9091), a collection of solo and trio performances recorded last year in Tokyo.... Blue Note have come out with a bushel of lps — none of which have ever appeared before. They feature Dexter Gordon, Grant Green, Bobby Hutcherson, Jackie McLean, Hank Mobley, Lee Morgan, Wayne Shorter, Jimmy Smith and Stanley Turrentine.... Rounder have been importing SteepleChase pressings for several months but now the Danish company has set up its own U.S. operation under the direction of Chuck Nessa. They plan to manufacture the records in the U.S.

A second edition of "The Jazz Guitar" (reviewed in *Coda*, issue 168) has been published in England.... Daniel Koechlin, 1 Rue Desire-Laigre, 76160 Darnetal, France has published a 55-page discography of Barney Bigard. Total cost, including mailing, is \$6.25.... Contrary to

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what we reported in our last issue *Chimes*, the successor to *Bells* magazine, will *not* commence publication.... Roger Hunter of England and Thomas Rusch (c/o Blue Moon Records, 301 Cedar Avenue, Minneapolis, Minn. 55454) are in the process of compiling a Hampton Hawes discography. They would like to hear from anyone who is working on a similar project.

Trombonist Henry Coker died in Los Angeles early in December of a heart attack. He was 59.... Saxophonist John Park, who was featured with the Kenton band, also died in December.

— compiled by John Norris

SMALL ADS

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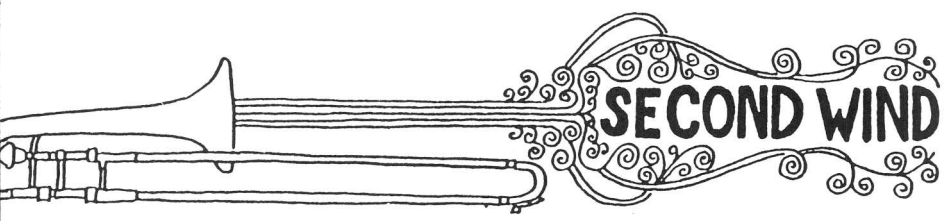
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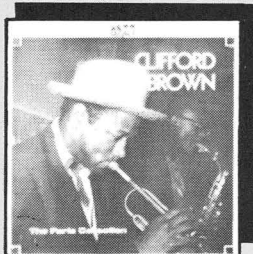
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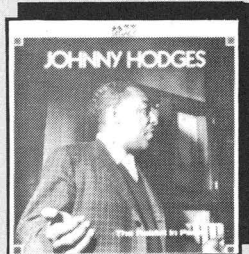
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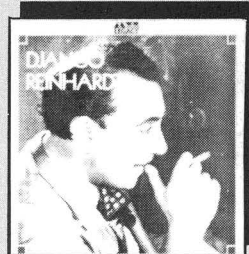
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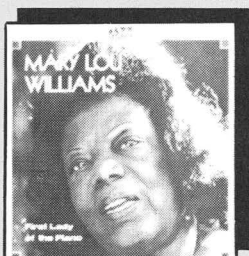
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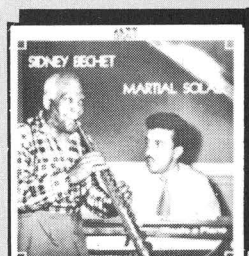
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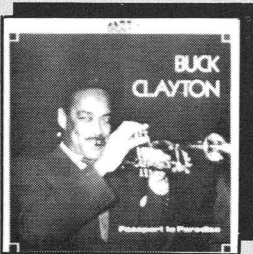
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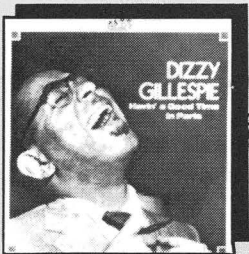
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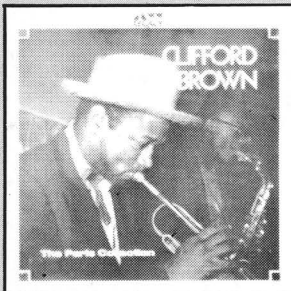
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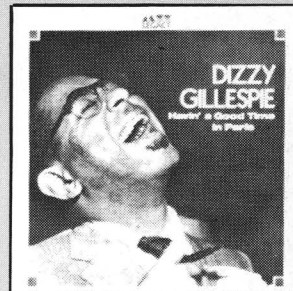
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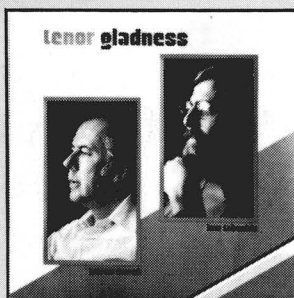
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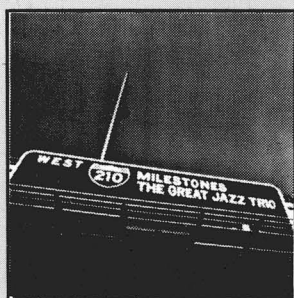
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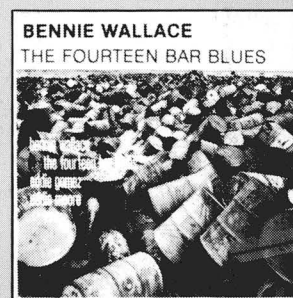
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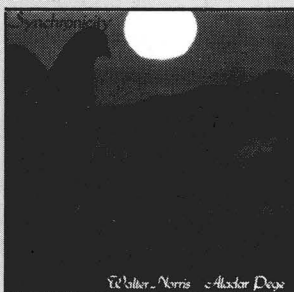
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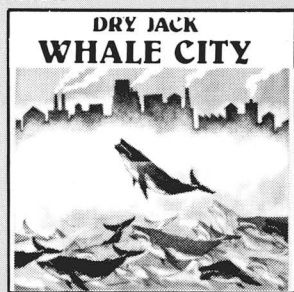
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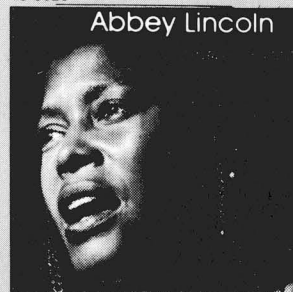
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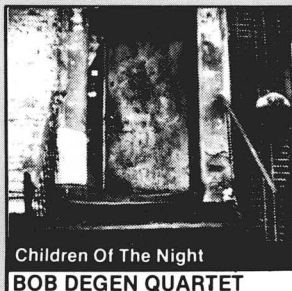
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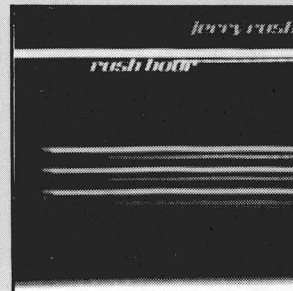
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