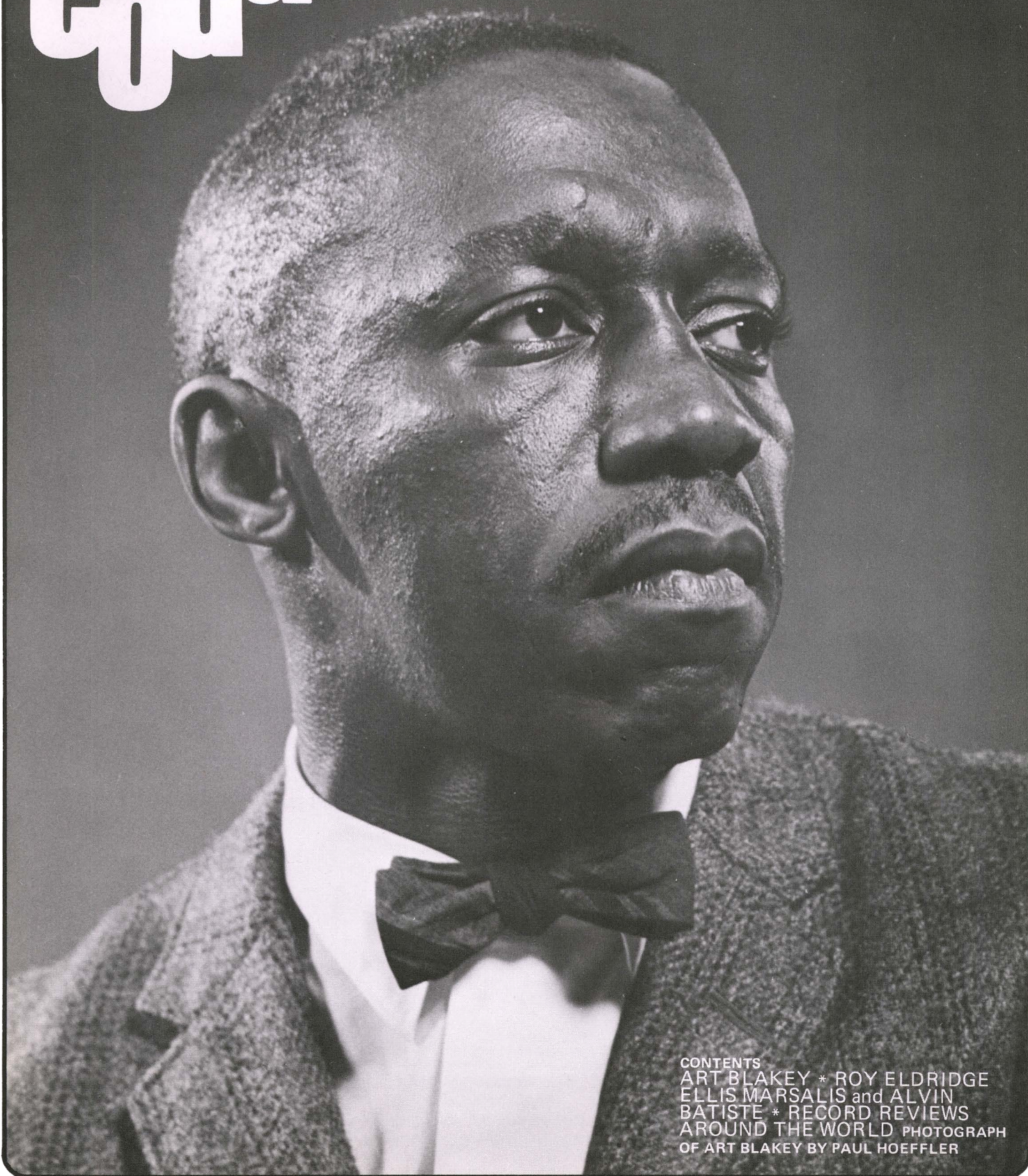


Coda

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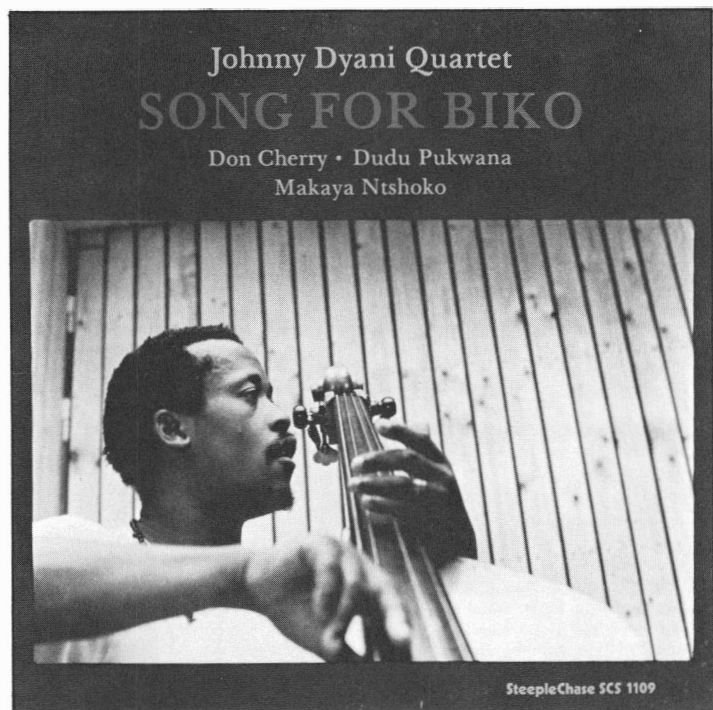
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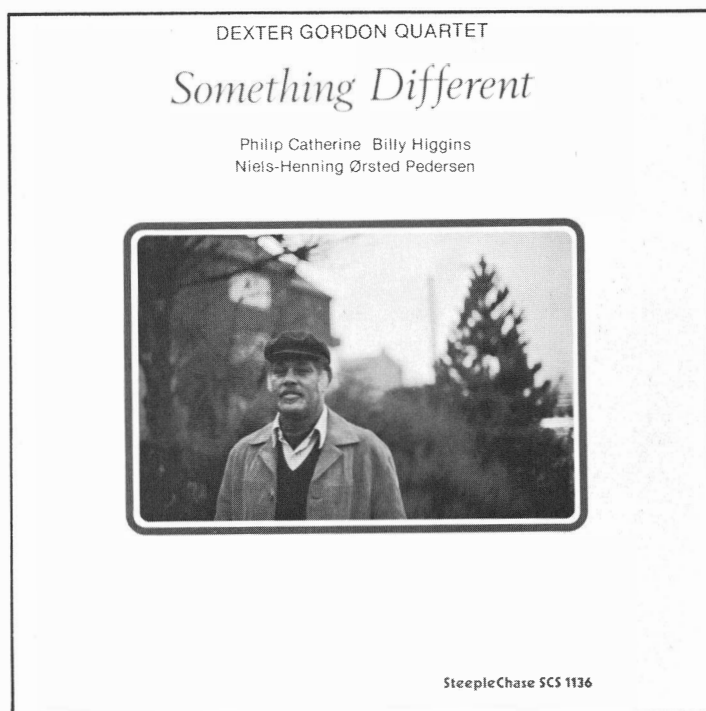
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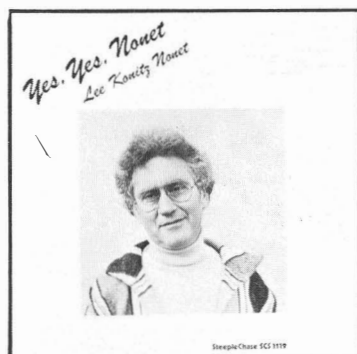
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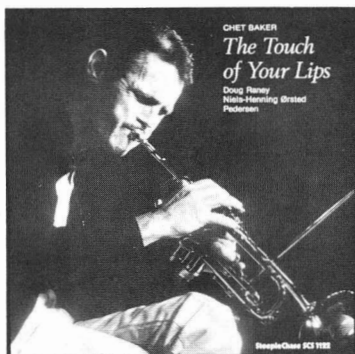
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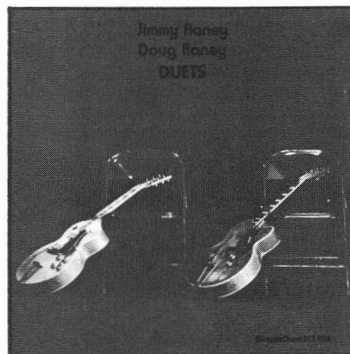
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AN INTERVIEW WITH **ROY ELDRIDGE** BY JACK WINTER



This interview was done in Denver, Colorado on March 26, 1972.

JACK WINTER: We've just been talking about how Roy Eldridge has been an active jazzman for 47 years now, and about how jazz can be brought to a wider audience, specifically young people. Roy was telling me about some gigs last summer, working at shopping centres....

ROY ELDRIDGE: The first one we played was in Paramus, New Jersey. There were a lot of young kids around there, and they looked at me and looked at Richie Kamuca and the organ player, C.C. Williams and Eddie Locke, and I heard some say, "What are these old men gonna do?" A couple of them came up and asked me for some of the rock tunes and I said, "Well, we don't play them." "What kind of music do you play?" "Well, you just have to wait and see." So we hurried and got set up, and we went and found the closest bar, because we were just sure we were going to be in for a bad time. But we went on and we played, and we had our first break, and these kids came over and said, "What kind of music do you call that?" I said, "Well, it's just music." "Well, we like it. We never heard it before." So to me that's a whole story. They never get a chance, they're never exposed to it, so they don't know what it is, you know? We were playing standard

tunes, arrangements that Coleman Hawkins and I used to play: *Bean And The Boys*, *Stuffy*, *Stomping At The Savoy* and the little songs I sing, *School Days*, *Saturday Night Fish Fry*, things like that. They liked it, and we had this same situation everywhere we played. They'd always say, What are those old men gonna do? and put us down before we'd made a note, but once they heard it, everything was all right.

Where I'm working now is a dixieland joint in New York, Jimmy Ryan's, and when I first started working there you got the older crowd, some of the people that remembered, and some of the people that really dig the dixieland thing, which is not my schtick, but I just play whatever my job calls for. Well I've been there almost two years, and since I've been there more younger people have been coming in. And they've been coming back. So I think if you get a chance to play before them, they will dig what was happening. And I have quite a few opportunities to do that. Radio's the thing that's going to get them, you know? And records. But my friends and I made an album and it was nominated for a Grammy, I didn't win it but at least I was nominated. It was a good album, but nobody can buy it. I don't even have a copy. "The Nifty Cat" with Benny Morton on trombone, Budd Johnson, Oliver Jackson, Ray Brown on bass and Nat

Pierce on piano [originally on Master Jazz Recordings].

Recently I played a college with Slam Stewart, up in Binghamton. And I did some of those concerts with the Jazzmobile. Those are good, in fact the last one we did was a sensation, it really surprised me. We did this up in Harlem, the streets were packed and what made it so beautiful, some lady from an apartment cooked up a lot of chicken, and brought some Coca-Colas and a salad down for the band. They really dug it, and the kids were around there, they had a ball. It was so nice. Even the guy that drives it around came up and congratulated the band, he said it was the first one he'd been on that he really enjoyed. So I think if we would get the chance to play the right places and play something that could get to the people, it would be a different story.

Jack: You've stayed pretty close to the heart of mainstream jazz for all of your recording career; never playing anything too commercial.

Roy: Well, I've played like I play, you know?

Jack: Was it a situation where, when you were a kid you decided you were going to be a jazzman and that was it, and you weren't going to compromise?

Roy: No. In the first place, I didn't want to be no jazzman, I didn't want to play music, period! My father owned a lot of trucks - this

was in Pittsburgh - and I really wanted to drive one of those trucks. But I had no eyes for music. My brother Joe was the one that did all the studying. I used to play drums, and he had my parents get me a trumpet for Christmas, and I wasn't really interested in it. But finally I ran away from home with a little band, that used to play for basketball games. And we got stranded after the first night. I was ashamed to write home for the money to come back so I've just been here ever since.

But I think the way I play is the way I feel. I've never set up anything in my mind, "Well, I'm going to play this way." If I'm going to play good, I'm going to play the way I feel. I've made a lot of record dates where they've said, "Well, Harry James did this and it sells...." but I'm not Harry James. Or "Jonah Jones did this...." Well, I'm not Jonah. I have to play myself, and it's nothing that I've set out to do - it's the only way I can play.

Jack: What have been the most satisfying records you've done - the things with Coleman Hawkins?

Roy: Yes, and *Rocking Chair* that I made with Gene Krupa, which I think is one of the best things I ever made. And the things with Chu Berry, I like those too.

Jack: Recently I played the version of *Body And Soul* that you did with Chu Berry. I think that it was probably the first time anybody double-timed *Body And Soul*, on that recording. And in 1938 that was an amazing thing. I read somewhere that when Charlie Parker hitchhiked to New York in 1939, he went to some kind of a breakfast dance and asked if he could sit in. He went up and played *Body And Soul* and tried to doubletime it, and he got laughed off the bandstand. That's when he went back to Kansas City and woodshedded for a while. And I thought at the time, "Well, *Body And Soul* is not the kind of a tune that you can play up tempo." And then a couple of years after that I got hold of that Chu Berry recording that you did, and you did it very successfully.

Roy: I used to play all those tunes, like *I Surrender Dear* - we called it long meter, that doubling up - *The Man I Love, Lover Come Back To Me*.

Jack: How do you feel about some of the showcase numbers you did with Gene Krupa, like *After You've Gone*?

Roy: Well I think it was good for the time, to have a little comedy in the front of the thing....

Jack: But a magnificent solo.

Roy: Yes the solos were good and it was up tempo and it was an exciting thing for that time.

Jack: When I first got interested in jazz as a kid, I couldn't get enough of that record. I couldn't buy the record because it was during the war, and records like that were pretty much unavailable. I had to just take what I could get on the radio, and every time I'd hear that on the radio I'd run over and stick my head in it. I just couldn't get my fill of that music, and it still sounds awfully good.

I talked to you in about 1950 or so in New York and asked you about the state of the jam session. You were pretty down at the time and you said, "Well, nobody wants to jam any more." There's been some confusion as to why there's no such thing among jazz musicians as a jam session any more. Didn't the musicians union at one time try to dissuade people from having them?

Roy: No, what the musicians union did was,

for instance if we were on a job, and we were supposed to have five pieces, and you'd look up and there's ten pieces, so the owner's getting ten musicians for the price of five. That's what they stopped, but jam sessions weren't run like that. They were after hours, and that's where the hitch is - there are no after hour places. There was always some place like Monroe's Uptown House in New York, there used to be a lot of joints that stayed open all night and guys used to go in and jam, but there's no place like that now. If you go to somebody's house and jam, they'll call the law on you and you get stopped there. So there's just no place to go and play.

Jack: Do you feel, as I do, that the jam session was one of the most valuable things that contributed to the growth of jazz? It let young players sit in with established people, like Lester Young and Coleman Hawkins, it let them learn from these masters. And the idea of the cutting contest, two tenors standing up and seeing who could play the best, don't you think that was a healthy thing for jazz?

Roy: Well, sure, I think it was the greatest thing. That's why everything got so separated. Now, like the guys who are playing what you call avant garde music, they've had nothing to go with because they don't jam with the cats who were playing some of these things, so they've just gone their own way.

Jack: Of course that was true to some extent back in, say, the early '40s when Diz and Bird and Monk and Bud Powell and those people were getting together to form bebop, they excluded, say, traditional musicians from sitting in with them....

Roy: No they didn't, I used to sit in with them.

Jack: Yes, I've read that there were certain people who did sit in with them, but mostly they wanted to keep musicians who weren't thinking along the same lines as them off the bandstand. Somebody would try to sit in with, say, Monk or Bird and they would kick off an impossible tempo or they would play changes that this cat just couldn't dig. I don't know how true that is, maybe you can tell us a little about it.

Roy: Well, let me explain that to you. That didn't only happen with bebop when bebop started. When me and Chu Berry used to go around and jam, we used to have a piano player, Garland Wilson. And if anybody came and sat in with us, we would always take a break and put that thing in so fast that they couldn't get around to it no kind of way. Or else put it in a key that they couldn't play in. So it's always been like that, you know.

Jack: Cannonball Adderley was telling me that when he first came to New York he had an opportunity to sit in with Oscar Pettiford's group. And O.P. didn't want ringers on the bandstand, so they kicked something off at a tremendous tempo and Adderley handled it, he was able to cut it with them. So all of a sudden he was welcomed into the inner circle. So I guess this finds out who can make it, who's got the chops and everything.

Roy: And years ago they were a bit more musical than they are today. For instance if we played a tune, and you wanted to sit in with us years ago, you had to know that tune in every key. So if you played *Tea For Two*, they'd always start off in G instead of A flat. Or start the piece off in A flat, then change it to G. When it comes time for you to play, if you could make it in G they'll keep on changing it, until somewhere you've got to falter.

So that's the advantage they used to take of cats sitting in.

Jack: Do you think that the general level of musicianship among younger jazz musicians is lower than it was with the older jazz musicians? Do you think these people are less equipped than some of the older cats?

Roy: Well, in a way for creating I think they are, but they've learned a lot of music, they've come a long way. But the only thing I can't understand is that the majority of them play the same thing. And this wasn't so with good musicians way back.

Now someone might try to play like Coltrane, or Miles. And when bebop started, the guys that were playing bebop would play the same solos, the same lines and everything. But back in the old days, you would play like you would play and I would play like I would play.

Charlie Parker was great. Another thing that a lot of people don't know about Bird, Bird had those roots. I'll never forget, in 1950 when I was living in Paris, and they sent for me to come up to the Scandinavian countries to do a concert tour with Bird. We were playing in Copenhagen, and Bird said to me, "Hey, Jazz, let's get some of those Kansas City riffs going." He had those roots, where these younger cats don't.

Jack: And you're talking about blues of course, which is the root of all jazz. Maybe there's one of the problems - a young cat who's grown up, say, in Columbus, Ohio, he wants to play jazz and he says to himself, "Well, I know that blues is the root of all jazz, but my father has a pretty good job, we didn't want for anything, and how do I get the blues?"

Roy: I don't think that has anything to do with it. One of the hardest things for me to learn how to play was the blues, and it wasn't on account of any sorrows or anything, I don't think that has anything to do with it. You see, by me practicing so much, and coming up during the time when nobody was playing fast on the trumpet, I never got around to getting to the blues. So any time they'd play a blues in a slow tempo, I couldn't get to it; I'd have to do what they're doing now, double it up or triple it up or something. Some people just have the feeling for the blues, like Lips Page I think could play the blues on the trumpet better than any trumpet player I ever heard.

So I couldn't tell you how a young kid now could learn to play the blues, unless he listens... I don't know how to explain it, it's really like I said: to play the blues, really play the blues. It's no easy thing. It's much easier to play something up tempo, like *Cherokee*, something like that.

I don't believe that, once you get on the bandstand, you relate to the troubles that you have. If you do that then you're in trouble because you aren't going to be able to play nothing. Take myself for example: that first set I play is always a rough set for me, getting warmed up and everything, but once I get warmed up I don't think about tomorrow or what happened yesterday, you get involved in what you're playing, and the troubles you've had are gone, out the window. So I can never see why people say, "The only way you can play the blues is if you've suffered." Come on, I don't believe that.

I've seen this happen when I've had many a band. I've seen guys have a fight with their old lady, and they come to work and bring that on the bandstand. And it shows in their playing. You can't think about two things and

play. You can't think about what trouble you have and play.

Jack: What do you think about the younger players who play what has been termed "angry jazz"?

Roy: Well, that's a little above me, I'm a little bit too far back to know what they mean by that.

Jack: But the idea of just getting up, and letting it all out on your horn and to me what they have done is not really music.

Roy: To me too, that's why I say it's beyond me. Actually I've heard some things that I could actually play myself like that — I have a saxophone, and in fact I can play that way!... if I have to, but to me it just wouldn't be making any sense.

Jack: Well, if you're working in a club and the atmosphere is something that you could get up-tight about, maybe there are people there who are rude or who you know don't dig jazz, does any of this feeling ever come out on your horn?

Roy: No, I just go on and play. Especially if you're working in a place where they sell whiskey, just let them go ahead if they want to be noisy. I don't get into that hostility bag. Then that starts affecting your playing. The one thing that is important is that if I'm up on the bandstand, I like to like the cats I'm working with — for example, these cats are nice that I'm working with now here in Denver. And if people see that you're having a good time, they don't know why but you're having a good time, I think it takes the pressure off of you. But if you're up there and everybody's not speaking to each other....

Jack: How long have you done that version of *Let Me Off Uptown*, where you do Anita O'Day's part?

Roy: I did it for kicks one night — people kept on asking for *Let Me Off Uptown* and I'd say, Well, Anita's not here. "Oh, you can do it without her!" I'd say, look, the only part I sang was that last part, "Anita, Anita"... besides the talking. But just one night for kicks I tried it. And they liked it! So I said, I'm gonna keep it in. Right away a cat said, "You should get a wig!" I said, I'm not going through that!!! So my version takes the place of what went on on the record.

A couple of years ago Anita and I worked in New York at the Half Note together. But we did nothing together. She didn't play on my set, I would do a set and then she had her trio play for her. That's why they hired her, they thought that we would do something together, but she had no eyes for it. People would ask and she'd say, "Oh, Mr. Eldridge doesn't want to play it." Which was not true. One night I got off earlier than her and I was getting ready to go home and these people were at the bar and they said, "Anita, why don't you do *Let Me Off Uptown*?" So she said, "Oh, Mr. Eldridge is going home."

I said, look, I don't have to go home. So I took my horn and laid it on the bar. She went up for her set... and she never called me. I sat there until the joint closed!

Jack: Of all the major figures in jazz over the years, who has given you the most pleasure?

Roy: Art Tatum, Coleman Hawkins, Benny Carter. Bobby Stark, he was one trumpet player that was overlooked. I used to like Joe Smith too, he had a wonderful sound. Rex Stewart I liked. Strange as it may seem, I used to like Red Nichols. Would you believe I used to play like him? I dug Red, but I didn't dig Bix Beiderbecke too much. I played with

Bix once, in Detroit in 1928 when he was with Goldkette. I know he was a fine musician, but to me he seemed a little stiff.

I like Miles Davis. And I liked Fats Navarro, he could play. There's a young cat playing now that I like very much: Freddie Hubbard. He did a tour with us once in Europe and I had a lot of chances to hear him play, I used to go out into the audience and listen to him.

Jack: How healthy do you think jazz is right now?

Roy: Well, everybody says it's looking up. I know one thing, I've been working in this joint now for two years and business has been fantastic. Bigger on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays than on weekends. They say it's looking up but I'm going to Europe soon, and that's where they really dig jazz. At least up to a point. Anywhere you go: Hong Kong, Tokyo, South America, anywhere you go they're more appreciative. One of the reasons I think this is true is because they weren't exposed to it as much as people are here. Over there they study it, and they're much more serious about it; here you'll get somebody who remembers every record I ever made — but they won't go so far as to remember what time I did it, who was on the date, I seemed like I was a little tired on the fourth chorus or something — which, when I think about it, I was! I lived in Europe for two years, and I'd talk to some of the jazz fans and they have their discographies and they have meetings when they get a new record and they sit and discuss this thing, play it and they know everything that happened on the date.

Jack: And in Europe, it seems like everything

draws a big audience.

Roy: Except Coltrane didn't draw good in Europe.

Jack: Do you think maybe they just weren't ready for him?

Roy: I don't know. Now I have to explain something to you about that. You see, they have two factions. The places where you've got to watch out are France and Germany. Like in Germany, Ornette Coleman has his fans, and when he starts to play it almost turns into a riot, with the guys that don't dig him and the guys that do. Then in France there are Louis Armstrong fans... and Sidney Bechet is like God over there. I went there with Benny Goodman, and all over Europe, everywhere I went I'd meet disc jockeys, and they'd insist I come up to the station and hear Sidney Bechet play, because they thought Benny was too cool.

Jack: Have you seen Ben Webster lately, by the way?

Roy: The last time I saw Ben was in 1967. I was with "Jazz from the Swinging Era" and he was in Brussels and we all went out to where he was opening up that night, a place called the Blue Note. That was the last time I've seen him. I forgot to mention him and Lester Young as being among my favourite musicians. You see, I've played with all these cats, you know what I mean? Everyone that I named I had personal experience playing with them and playing with them is just like... you can't wait to get to work. And when you get away from work you can't wait to see if you can get some of the things that they've been putting down, you know?



photograph of Roy Eldridge by Lou Koebbel



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ALVIN BATISTE & ELLIS MARSALIS

INTERVIEW AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY VALERIE WILMER

According to A. B. Spellman in "Four Lives in the Bebop Business," Ornette Coleman had already formulated his concept when he arrived in New Orleans in 1949 and was befriended by the late Melvin Lastie, a trumpeter of some repute. Spellman has written that the drummer Edward Blackwell and clarinetist Alvin Batiste were among the receptive ears, but this is not strictly accurate. For both men, their baptism of fire came later, out on the West Coast. Blackwell started playing with Ornette in the early fifties, Batiste spent a summer there in 1956. The New Orleans tenor saxophonist, Plas Johnson, who works in the Hollywood studios, says that Coleman was cold-shouldered by all the New Orleans musicians at first, Blackwell among them. The drummer, he said, refused to play with Coleman because he was "out of time."

While a great deal of attention has been focused on the New Orleans rhythm-and-blues bands of the 1950s, the more creative scene of the period has been overlooked. In these interviews with Ellis Marsalis and Alvin Batiste, two of Blackwell's contemporaries, there is an attempt to shed a little light on their music world.

Despite the different spelling of their names, Batiste is a distant cousin of saxophonist, pianist, arranger and composer, Harold Battiste, who has been active in the Los Angeles recording and television industry for the past few years including undertaking such tasks as musical director for Sonny and Cher. It was Harold Battiste, however, who formed AFO (All for One), the first musicians' cooperative in New Orleans history, in an attempt to put more money into the pockets of the music's creators. He has recently released a boxed album set which is a comprehensive collection of the music played by jazz groups in New Orleans in the fifties.

Both Marsalis and Batiste work in education. Batiste is head of Black Music Studies at Southern University in Baton Rouge, La., and has visited several African countries under the auspices of the U.S. State Department. Marsalis continues to lead his own group, the ELM Music Quintet, generally featuring the ebullient James Black on drums. Now read on.....

ELLIS MARSALIS:

It was in 1956 that Edward (Blackwell)

received a ticket from Ornette to go back to Los Angeles to do some more playing. At the time, Blackwell, Harold Battiste, Alvin Batiste and myself had a group together called the American Jazz Quintet. We'd work whenever we could find work, and did a lot of playing at my house, at Edward's, Alvin's or anywhere. I wasn't doing anything that summer, so I decided to go to LA with Edward. The three of us -- Harold, Edward and me -- drove up to LA in Harold's car. It was the first time I met Ornette, and on meeting him, he was playing some very unfamiliar kinds of music. I asked Edward about it and he said "I don't know what he's doing because he wasn't playing like that when I left, he was playing like Bird." Ornette was studying on his own with a very conventional harmony book, and I remember one of the things he said to me, looking in the harmony book. He said "This is a C chord, but it's really *not* a C chord. It's something else." Four or five years later I realised that what he meant was that in the scheme of things that he was trying to develop, this conventional C chord was something that he didn't have a name for. This

was the manner in which he used to study on his own, which is probably the kind of thing that everybody goes through if they're developing an original concept.

I had a unique experience with Ornette, and Harold had the same kind of experience, playing with him. Both of us were playing piano. We were playing somewhere and I started a cycle of 7th chords, just moving 'em up the scale, up the piano chromatically, and Ornette said "That's it! That's it! Keep playing that!" So I just kept playing it and I said "What *was* it?" I didn't really understand what I was doing, it's just that whatever it was, Ornette related to it.

Eventually it kind of disturbed Edward because I had forsaken the rhythmic responsibility of the group in favour of trying to play harmonically what Ornette was hearing and trying to hear for myself what was going on.

Some years later in New York I talked to Ornette. This was in the latter sixties, and I said that since that time I had listened to his music and learnt a few things and was curious as to just how accurate I was about a description of his music. Ornette plays segments of little musical motifs and they're very specific kind of statements which he sometimes develops. Like a phrase, he will develop that over and over again, and at other times he would play other little short motifs and connect them in a way that transcended the concept of Western form. It didn't make any difference as to whether it was 32 bars or 12 bars or any conventional type of form of Western music, Ornette's music would transcend it.

One day Edward was playing with Ornette, just the two of them in Ornette's living room. Edward was very adept at playing in the Western form. On playing the 32-bar song, he would usually play a press-roll on the turnaround and start at the top of the song again. And this one time he did it and Ornette stopped and said, "Why did you end my phrase?" which was to say, "If I'm playing a phrase and you come to the end of the song, play out the phrase - don't just adhere to the form of the song."

It was very interesting to hear Ornette and Edward play, just the two of them, because the things that they would do accentuated a certain kind of rhythmic importance and a rhythmic emphasis that was in Ornette's music, and in which the lack of a certain conventional kind of harmony - that is, the harmony that comes from piano, bass, guitars or whatever, was not even missing. Ornette's music was sufficient enough, especially with Edward, that he didn't need that.

How much influence do you think Blackwell had on Ornette?

It was tremendous, astronomical. But then Edward Blackwell had an influence on everybody that played with him. For example, when I was growing up in New Orleans, he called me one day and asked me would I come over to his house and sit in with him and a saxophone player named Clarence Thomas and just jam. Well, I knew of Edward Blackwell and I had heard him play, and it was flattering to me that he would want me to come and play because at the time I didn't really think of myself as a piano player. I was really still struggling and trying to learn.

I went over to his house and it was the first time I'd ever heard a drummer play a solo on a ballad with mallets. And Edward, even to this day, is the most melodic drummer I've heard. And after listening to him play - I think the name of the song was *The Nearness of You* - in his living room, there was no precedent for me.

Before Edward Blackwell there were just drummers who would play and I had no relationship to drums. I was from the school where drummers played a solo and when they got to the end of it they went "yata-tat-tat-tata-ta-boom!" and everybody came back in! I didn't know anything about choruses and the Max Roach style of drumming was still something that I had not really been able to tune into with an analytical ear.

But what brought all of that to a screeching halt was when we were on a gig together. Edward would play drum solos and all his drum solos were constructed for the form that we were playing in - just like if a horn player would play 3, 4 choruses, well then Edward would say "Like, I'm gonna play 2 choruses" or what have you and he would play that. And there were no mistakes about it, he was right there. It was up to the other musicians in the band to be able to hear the drums, the language of the drum. And sometimes we'd lock up on it and sometimes we wouldn't. So one day he got very angry, he got very disturbed, and stopped in the middle of the song. He smashed down on the cymbal and said "Man, what's the matter with you guys? Can't you hear anything?" And he explained it to us. He said, "Look, when I play the head I'm going to play with *this* cymbal. I'm going to play the bridge with *this* cymbal, and I'm going to go back to the head and play with *this* cymbal. And when I play a solo, listen to what I'm playing. And when I get to the end, you should be able to hear what I'm doing." We all felt kind of small.

So I started listening to drummers with a different ear because he had given me a clue to what he was doing. I'd always liked him but I thought he was just another drummer that was better than all the rest of the drummers I heard. I didn't really know *why*.

And it was then that I also started to be aware of Max Roach, because we would play records and Edward would say "Listen, I want you to listen to what Max is doing right here" and he'd sing along with Max. And I had begun to hear drum phrases in the same way that I would hear horn or melodic phrases and it was a kind of melodicism that existed in Edward's playing that also existed in Max's playing. And I began to hear Max and Philly Joe and Art Taylor and all the rest of the drummers. And the melodic/rhythmic concept that they used was influenced by the rhythmic variation of Charlie Parker's music.

To give you an example: on our way to Los Angeles, Edward had a snaredrum in the back of the car. Driving across the desert is pretty boring, so what he would do, he'd say "listen to this" to Harold Battiste and I, and he would play Charlie Parker's charts *on the drums* and we would tell him which one he had played. Now, that's a two-way street because it means that Edward had to be adept enough at playing Charlie Parker's melodic phrases on the drums so that they would come out sounding like a rhythmic version of Charlie Parker's solo - or at least his chart - and we had to be familiar enough with those charts to be able to recognise them. And it was very interesting because we started doing it and we didn't miss any - not that that was such a pat on the back for us because Edward was so good at articulating.

There are countless experiences I have had with Edward - in Los Angeles, here in New Orleans and later on in New York. I remember he was at a session in a loft in New York, and the same saxophonist I mentioned, Clarence

Thomas, was there. Some of the usual heavyweights in New York were in the band - Wilbur Ware, Cliff Jordan, Don Cherry - and Edward took a solo. He played three choruses on the piece and they didn't hear it. Clarence Thomas and I were sitting at the back, just watching. I had come to know Edward's playing well enough so that I could walk into a room and if Edward was in a solo, I could tell whether he was in the bridge or the last part of what have you - unless it was some tune with a different type of form. I had become very familiar with his approach.

Finally Edward stopped and he said, "Hey, man, how many choruses was I supposed to take?" Now, his approach in dealing with people would vary sometimes. If he were dealing with us, he would just jump on us and ask us "What's the matter with you - you can't hear? Where's your brain?" or something. But this time he used a different approach. I think the next time around they probably heard him, but I imagine most people who do not get the chance to play with an Edward Blackwell have to draw on another kind of sense to appreciate drums like that.

One of the advantages that James Black enjoyed when he started playing with us was that all of us had already played with Edward Blackwell. So consequently we put a certain kind of pressure on him to just live up to his own potential, but also, letting him know - or anybody else that would play with us at that point - that we expected the drum to fulfill more than just a "ching-chinga-ling-ching-ling, chinga-ling" and go "brrrrrrrrr" at the end of the song!

How long did you stay out in Los Angeles?

Just for that summer. I came back in August and got a job teaching in high school. In January 1957 I joined the Marines and strangely enough that took me back to Los Angeles. I ended up doing a TV show out there for about a year and a half, and I didn't see Ornette a lot because by that time he had started to work with Paul Bley.

The American Jazz Quintet existed both before you went out to the West Coast and when you came back, didn't it?

That was a name that we started using for local concerts. Harold Battiste was the saxophonist originally, and I remember how strange it was to have the lineup with clarinet and saxophone because I had studied clarinet for a while myself and fooled around with the saxophone, too.

Alvin and I parted at high school and college although we had gone to elementary school together, but we would still play together, especially in the summer. Alvin wanted to play his clarinet but everybody said "No, man, that's a *Dixieland* instrument. Nobody hears that - you got to play the saxophone." But Alvin wanted to play his clarinet, so Harold said "That's an idea, we could get a group with clarinet and tenor saxophone." And I said "No good. It'd never work." Well, I'm thankful that I was wrong, and it didn't take long for me to eat my words, because after hearing the two of them play together.....Alvin and Harold Battiste were the first horn players in the group that became the American Jazz Quintet. Later on, Nat Perrilliat became the saxophone player because Harold went into the recording business and didn't have as much time to play as he did. Harold has a lot of tapes of that group, too.

Perrilliat was one of the great New Orleans players, wasn't he?

I can remember when I first heard Nathaniel

Perrilliat. There was a session at the Dewdrop and this was probably about 1955 or '56. I had never heard him before and he started playing some cycles that I wasn't familiar with. I was playing piano and I stopped playing just to listen to him. It didn't make any difference whether he had a piano player with him or not, anyway! We sort of became acquainted as kindred souls or whatever, and Nat and Edward were close, too. Nat started playing more and more regularly with us.

There was one kind of landmark concert that I remember. I had just come out of the service and we were playing at Xavier University - Nathaniel, Alvin, Edward and myself. It rained that night and we were kind of surprised because we had a packed house. But we had been playing together on a regular basis so that we sort of breathed together. We didn't even bother counting off the songs, none of that. Alvin and Nat would just stand in front of the band, they'd look at each other and take a breath, and the tune would just take off like - pow! And people would sit in total amazement.

At that time 'serious' music was the classics and a few jazz musicians were 'inside,' very esoteric - anything other than that was not serious, it was entertainment. So it was geared towards the conventional thing of 'start and stop' and put something in the middle! And consequently the level of achievement was related to the response of the audience. But like, we would go beyond that. Most of the guys in the band had studied formally or informally in such a way that we had developed writing techniques. Harold was largely responsible for that. He wrote some beautiful pieces which were challenging for us. We even had to learn to play in different keys.

Were you, Blackwell and the others regarded as being elitists amongst the musicians?

I suppose in some cases we were. I guess in the main a lot of people probably never even heard of us, but it's very difficult to say how we were seen at that time. There were musicians that I knew who regarded us as being giants. I can remember there were a couple of guys that would take great delight when the 'road' bands would come in town. All the road bands, especially then, had hot-shots like tenor players and trumpet players and they'd come in town and say "hey, where's the session going on?" And like, if there were any of them supposed to be super-superbad, there were a couple of guys who would make it their business to call us up on the phone wherever we were and round up everybody. They'd say "Hey man, we got some guys in town supposed to be bad. Let's get 'em!"

I remember almost the whole Count Basie band was at the Dewdrop when Basie came here about 1956. Thad Jones was still in the band, Snooky Young, Frank Wess, Frank Foster, Eddie Jones - that band. We must have played until five or six in the morning.

Then another time the Billy Williams band was staying at my father's motel. I used to talk about Edward a lot and the drummer in the band would say, "Yeah, yeah, sure... we know." and like that. And ironically, here I am standing in the yard when Edward comes strolling through the gate. And I'm thinking he's still in Los Angeles. So I say, "Edward, get your drums. Set 'em up, we got to play!" And so the next day, one or two of the guys from Billy's band came over, but the bass player was the only one that ended up really staying.

The day after that, he came over and said,

"Man, Edward scared that cat to **death!**" And this guy had played with some pretty good musicians in New York, but he told them, "Man, you guys had better shape up. These young cats here are really **playing!**"

ALVIN BATISTE:

I first met Ornette through Blackwell in Los Angeles in 1956. They had all gone to LA and they called me and said, like, "Man, if you come out here to California, we can get into something." I had just finished college so I went out there.

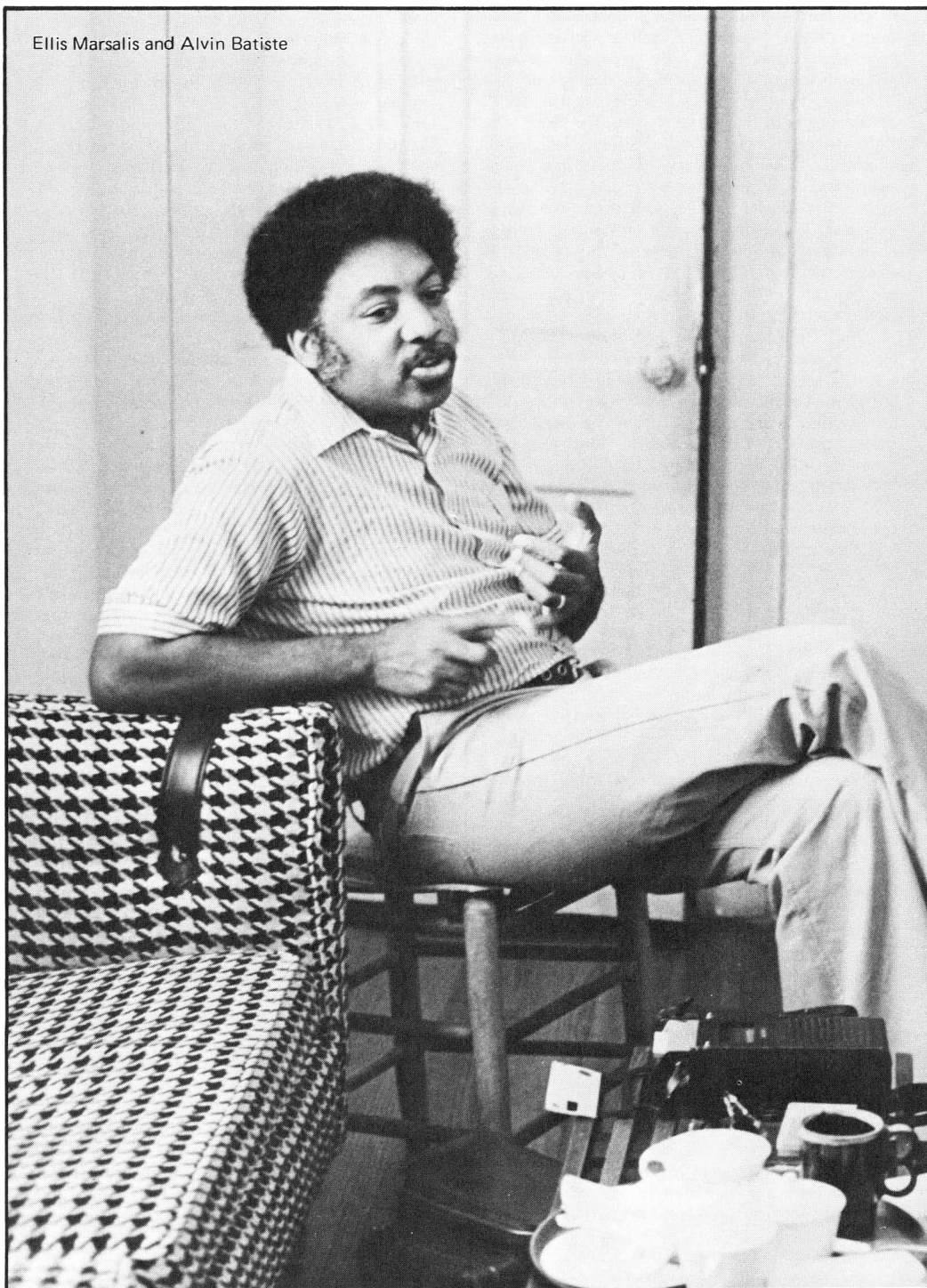
We played at the California Club in LA - not working, we just sat in - but after we played a set they wouldn't let us play any more. They had so many illustrious California musicians out there at the time, but it was a real hip thing because it prepared me for what's happening now. Ornette was staying across the street from

the California Club. He had been living there all along and he was really into his music. His music was very controversial as a topic, but whenever you were playing it, you dug it. Slightly after that I was with the Ray Charles band and the conversation around the country was all about Ornette's music. I was always defending him because I'd had the chance to play it. Right now it really proves that he had something going because everybody is into that. I mean his music is the basis of what's happening now.

Ornette's music was the music that put the jazz musicians in the frame of mind to go back to the roots because they had been going kind of far-out. Often Ornette Coleman's music was considered 'far-out,' but actually it laid the background for the whole receptivity of 'roots' music.

How important do you think Blackwell's

Ellis Marsalis and Alvin Batiste



role was in Ornette's music?

It was indispensable because Blackwell wasn't hung up in any form. And like from a musician's standpoint, he was prone for poly-rhythms and that's what the music needed. Plus he had the basic feeling that you're supposed to have when you play the music and at the same time he was profound. His music was very creative and he was always trying to manifest a high aesthetic in his music. This to me is self-expression, based on a particular tradition. So I think his playing actually laid the foundation for what is happening now.

See, Blackwell's music was the thing that led to the whole rock thing, the receptivity of rock, where people could hear that whole feeling. He just played like everybody is playing now, even though he never played *obvious* music. So he fitted perfectly with Ornette because he had the ability to play and practice with anybody if

they were into something.

I haven't played with Blackwell in a number of years, but I taught my students about the nerve and the commitment of just expressing themselves, regardless as to the pain and the price. As a result, when I play with them I can just naturally express myself, and that's the way it was with Blackwell. I got that from him.

He inspires you to express *yourself* rather than to just play a particular style or something. And I think that's why Ornette does it because he'd enhance whatever you were playing. Blackwell would play so *musical*. He'd play in the most *comprehensive* sense, he'd play all areas. And then, he just didn't play obvious, although everything that was supposed to be there was obviously there.

Leroy Cooper, who played with Blackwell in the Ray Charles band, said that Blackwell actually originated the so-called 'funk' rhythm.

Well, I understand what he's saying, but I wouldn't say it in that way because Earl Palmer was very important in that, too. And then 'Zigaboo' and the Meters, those were the ones who *edited* what was happening and put it in the state it is now. So if anybody is really at the centre of what's happening now in terms of the 'funk' thing, it would have to be 'Zigaboo.' He is like Charlie Parker. Like Charlie Parker edited a whole era and then brought it to a new thing.

I went to Booker T. Washington High School in 1951 and I was a freshman in elementary music course. Blackwell was in the band and the section leader was Wilbur Hogan. That was a fantastic band. I joined the Army at 17 and Blackwell at that time was playing with Wallace Davenport's band with Frank Campbell on tenor. Now I don't know who the rhythm section was because I wasn't going in joints at that time, but Blackwell was sounding good. They were playing all of Charlie Parker's things and the late swing things, and when I started practicing with him there was a trumpet player named William White III around the pad, too. Blackwell would keep his drums set up and would be drinking nasal inhalator and Coke! That was what was happening then! And he sounded very good - he was easily one of the best drummers in town.

As far as Blackwell's drumset was concerned, though, it looked like it had been in the hospital because it had all kinds of patches on it! But he used to make his own mallets and stuff, that's what Blackwell was into. One time Nat Perrilliat and me were trying to think about cats who really loved music. Commercial pressures were really strong then, but we were much younger and much more alone, but we couldn't think of nobody but Blackwell and Ornette. He's been very consistent; I really have the highest respect for him. I would really like to see him have the chance to do a lot.

You know, Blackwell and I were supposed to do a record date just before he had to get on the kidney machine, and it never did materialise. He's been sort of my booster and I just idolised him. We were going to do some dates for Strata-East, but he was sick, and they were trying to get me to come up there at a time when all my particular commitments were such that I couldn't leave.

We've done wonders here at getting the music resuscitated and the kids involved, because with the kind of music they hear on the radio, they have a kind of hesitancy about going into jazz. They just thought that it wasn't supposed to be music you played with a good feeling, they felt it was music that you thought about as a kind of cerebral thing.

What's the attitude of some of the young kids towards New Orleans music? Don't some of them see it as a kind of Uncle Tom thing?

No. Our generation was the one that dealt with that. We didn't want to have to go down on Bourbon Street and play Dixieland because that was what 'they' wanted. It wouldn't have been no hassle to *play* it because the first music I heard was New Orleans music. I love it and I can play it, but it's just like if somebody tells you this is what you have to do, your reaction is "Don't tell me what I have to do!" But the kids today, they don't have that kind of problem. If it's groovy, then they can deal with it. And they do deal with it. So the whole notion of an Uncle Tom thing like that was complex but it was really simple. Like a lot of the Black leaders that emerged with an Uncle

Tom image in that era, people can now understand that they were just doing the best they could under the circumstances.

Do you believe that jazz originated in New Orleans?

Truthfully, I believe it originated in cosmic consciousness!

I just finished transcribing a Buddy Bolden solo for my band, the one that Bunk Johnson whistled and was recorded. Now there's no way that that could have possibly started in the 1900s. The whole harmonic movement, the whole conception, it took at least fifty years to get that together.

Bunk Johnson is the only record we have of something that Buddy Bolden actually played. I transcribed what he whistled for my band to play at the New Orleans Jazz Festival. We used that thing in the teaching program and there are certain things in that solo that have been maintained as a part of the jazz language. A lot of times when I point these things out to the kids, that makes them a lot more receptive to things that have happened in the past, and they realise that a lot of things are not new, they're just approached from another generation's standpoint.

RECORDING EDITORIAL

One night after a concert in Kingston, Ontario, we were all socialising with the local community. Chris McCann, a drummer from that area and myself were talking about the style of drumming that seemed to have developed out of New Orleans. Most specifically the music of Edward Blackwell. In the course of the conversation he told me of this box set of modern jazz groups from New Orleans that contained recordings of the Legendary Original American Jazz Quintet. For me this was an amazing surprise, as I had never realised that such recordings existed. The following is the information pertaining to that treasure.

**Opus 43/4302-05
New Orleans Heritage Jazz
Recorded from 1956 until 1966.**

The Original American Jazz Quintet

Harold Battiste - Tenor Sax
Alvin Batiste - Clarinet
Edward Blackwell - Drums
Ellis Marsalis - Piano
William Swanson - Bass
Richard Payne - Bass

The Ellis Marsalis Quartet

Nathaniel Perrilliat - Tenor Sax
James Black - Drums
Ellis Marsalis - Piano
Marshall Smith - Bass

The AFO Executives

Harold Battiste - Piano and Alto Sax
Alvin Tyler - Tenor Sax
Melvin Lastie - Cornet
John Boudreaux - Drums
Peter Badie - Bass
Tami Lynn - Vocals

Gumbo includes guest appearances by Warren Bell - Alto Sax and Johnny Adams - vocals.

There has always been a centralisation of music in North America, it was a rule that if you did

not make the pilgrimage to New York City, then the chance of your music being heard was a remote one. Because of this tradition, which did indeed bring together some of the major voices in American improvised music, many players that remained in their own areas have been passed by. Such is the case of the performers on these recordings. In itself, simply as an historical document of an area of jazz, it is indeed most important, but this is not just a field recording but rather a superb example of the style of music predominant in America between 1956 and 1966. Anyone interested in that time zone should purchase this box set.

The following is an extract from a letter

I have recently received from Harold Battiste.

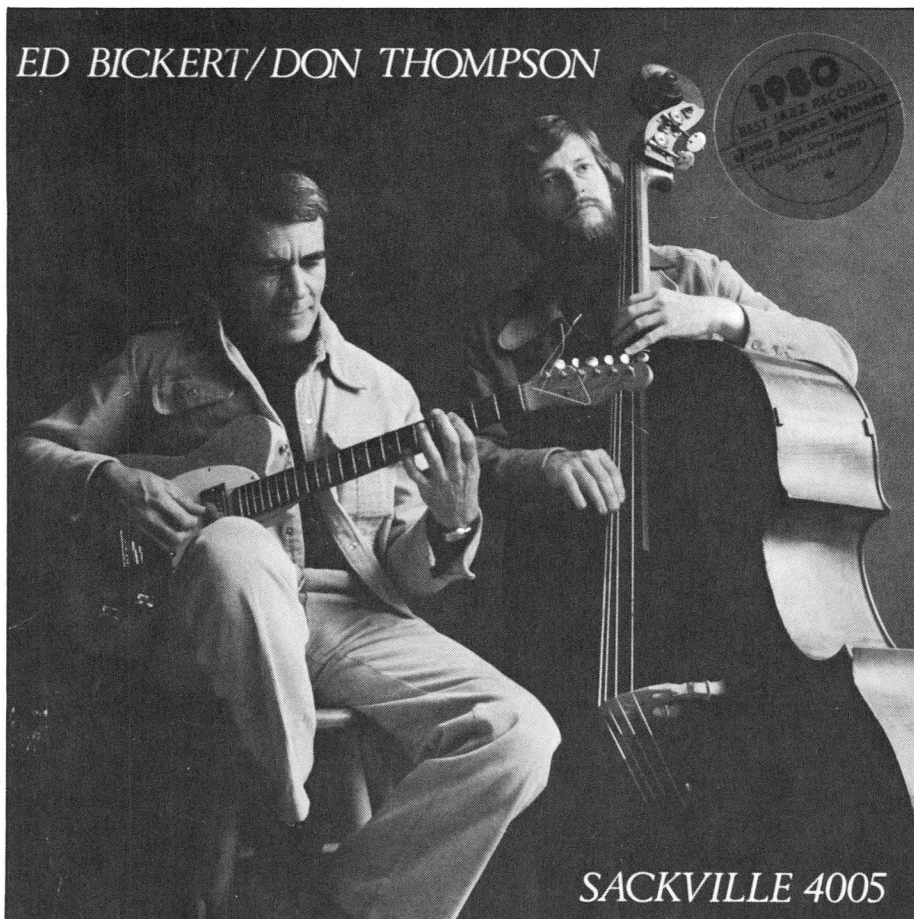
— **Bill Smith**

"The remaining stock on the N.O.H.J. limited edition has been donated to the National Association of New Orleans Musicians (N.A.N.O.M.). This organization (non-profit) receives its funding in part by donations from persons and groups interested in supporting the goals of NANOM. The package originally retailed for \$19.96 and Opus 43 records was selling to stores \$10.00 (min. order of five). NANOM, however, awards a package to donors of \$25.00 or more."— Harold Battiste, Marzique Music Co., 5752 Bowcroft Street, Los Angeles, California 90016 USA.



Alvin Batiste

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In search for our own music, we learn to realize that our personal material is already there; something to be discovered rather than learned. While we study our instruments and discipline our musical minds, our materials begin to surface. No one can teach anyone to play if the goal is improvisation. One can only teach common basics, awareness of the many details to be watched, traditional approaches and try to be an example of some kind. Music is a lifelong study, a way of life. It begins by imitating others, sometimes almost to the point of total identification, the same way children learn to walk and talk and do things. This is an important period and not to be ridiculed at all. Certain inroads into personal aspects of music can only be made that way; understanding what the layers are that can be reached.

Finally, there can be the liberating experience that the material is not the point at all; we train ourselves to become instruments when the music can flow through freely, like electricity through a transmitter. We don't know where it is going. We don't even know what it is doing. We are only as ready as possible, keeping the tools sharp, keeping fine tuning, essentially empty so we can vibrate.

KARL HANS BERGER

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ART BLAKEY

AN INTERVIEW BY PETER DANSON

ART BLAKEY: I started into music when I was a kid. I was very young and it wasn't just a question of starting in music, it was a question of survival at that time — you see, I'm a depression baby and I had to do something, because I didn't like working! I was working in the coal mines and in the steel mills and I didn't like that too much. So I started playing piano by ear but that didn't work out too well. I was playing blues, I was playing everything. I had a band and Errol Garner walked in one night and that was the end of my piano playing career! I started playing drums. And eventually I played with Errol. That's the way it had to be!

PETER DANSON: *Did you know Kenny Clarke in Pittsburgh?*

Definitely. He was older than me, but he was a home town boy and he always came back. He went to Europe early; in the late twenties or early thirties. Then he returned. Then he went back during the war and he returned to the States. Then he went back and stayed in Paris. He's a real Frenchman. He has his French citizenship now.

Did you take lessons from anyone when you started drumming?

No, you couldn't do it. Things were too rough at that time, it was the depression.

People were living in lean-to's and selling apples in the street. So you just had to do the best you could. So I just got down to business and started teaching myself, reading books and trying to get ahead that way, with other drummers helping.

Was there the tradition of people helping each other out?

Oh sure. Chick Webb, Sid Catlett, Gene Krupa, they always looked out for the little guys.

There would be sessions in the club where I worked. All the time bands would come into town and they would come to the Ritz, where I

photograph of Art Blakey by Peter Danson



was working and there would be sessions there all night. You'd get to rub elbows with the guys and you'd get to learn a lot. I liked that very much; it was a good part, watching these musicians play. They'd play all night and all day, take a break and go eat and come back and play, until it was time to go to work the next night.

What brought you into bebop music, into those circles of players?

I was in the middle of it you know. Billy Eckstine put the band together with Dizzy and Charlie Parker and they called me; I was living in Boston and I joined the band in St. Louis. That was it. When I looked around I was surrounded by all these guys!

At that time the music wasn't called bebop, but it was changing and people didn't understand it. The music was changing with the times, it was just a reflection from the society in which we were living. We had the greatest stars in the world in that band. Gene Ammons, Dexter Gordon, Tadd Dameron was in the band as an arranger, all those men. We opened up in one club, the Plantation, and they put us out. They replaced us with the Jeter-Pillars band and put us in the Riviera. We had a *good* time. I enjoyed that musically and I think that was one of the high points of my career.

Were you part of the jamming sessions in Monroe's and Minton's back in New York?

I came into all that right at the end. I came in on it with Thelonious Monk. We worked in there steadily with a quartet, Al McKibbin, Sahib Shihab, Thelonious Monk and myself. But before that they always had big sessions in there, and I was around there as much as possible. At that time Eddie 'Lockjaw' Davis had the group in there. It was a very exciting time.

You were a favourite drummer for Thelonious Monk, Herbie Nichols, and Randy Weston. Was there a personal affinity there, for their music?

I just tried to play what the guys wanted to hear, what they wanted to play. Just like all the big bands I played with, I didn't go there to play Art Blakey, I went there to play their music, to do what they wanted to do.

These people were original stylists but it took a long time for them to be recognized, even Randy Weston and Thelonious Monk, as real stylists, as contributors.

I think they were before their time and Herbie passed away. Thelonious was just before his time, but I'm very happy that he's still here and that he's coming back to play. That's wonderful. But people didn't want to listen to them. You see, it's very difficult to get people to sit down and listen. I find that problem even with myself. If you're going to listen to someone for the first time you can't just take a record and put it on and play it once and understand. You've got to play it over and over and all of a sudden the light will dawn on you what they're trying to do, what's happening with their music. Because music is just like anything else, the different styles, the different changes, the things that you're used to, it's just not that way and they go another way, it's another approach. Of course whatever's being played today or will be played *has* been played before, it's just another approach. People get accustomed to a certain approach and they get lazy and don't want to listen.

When you were playing with these three pianists you must have been aware that they

were doing something quite different.

Oh yes, and I liked it very much because they gave me freedom to do anything I wanted to do. Thelonious just told me to play with him not like I was playing with a pianist. Just play like I played with a horn or anybody; just play. That gave me a lot of freedom, a lot of encouragement.

Herbie Nichols once remarked that the way you played created a lot of overtones which put you on a par with the front line; that you were not just back playing rhythm, but that the tones you could get out of your drum really made the drums much more melodic.

I always tried for that. When I first started out it used to be fourteen musicians and the drummer. But then Chick Webb came along and he brought the drums to the front and he started playing along in syncopation and interpret the arrangements, right from his instrument. Then he became the leader of the band, and I took my cue from him because the man was playing a musical drum. It wasn't just a lot of noise. I think the drum is very musical if the approach is right. That's what's so bad about rock music, I think it puts the drummer in a vice, and that way he never finds out about his instrument, and about how much the drum can mean.

The drum is the first instrument after the human voice, but people still just hear the beat. But the beat can still be there, because once the time is there, you've said 1-2-3-4, that's it. I know dancers can do it, they don't have to have that whole over-beat, but most people when they come out to dance, they got to have it. So you have to keep that rhythm going in the drum and the bass. But at least they're out there dancing!

Did you ever have a favourite bass player, that you played with over the years?

Oh sure. I liked Al McKibbin, Oscar Pettiford, Wilbur Ware, Charlie Mingus. I'm very interested in this new fellow, Charles Fambrough. He's something else, He's young, not so experienced but he's really in there and I think he's going to make it. And he's outgoing, not introverted. He's the first one I've had in a long time that I liked, really, since Jymie Merritt. We've had bass players that were good but they were sort of introverted, they couldn't get out there.

I like this new group I have now. David Schnitter's on his own now. It was time, because he'd been there five years and that's my limit for the cats. I think they should get out and get their own thing; I don't think you should hold them in the group because I'm not trying to present a Modern Jazz Quartet. I like to present something new and new kids, they deserve a chance. This new kid, Billy Pearce is from Boston. He'd finished Berklee and was teaching school up there. I thought he should do something with his talent, and he wanted to come out. So he came out, and we were fortunate in getting him.

Dennis Irwin got married in the interim and the way we do it we don't make enough money. He has a family coming so he had to join up with a rock group and make some money. I know he'd be unhappy in it, but we always leave the door open so if he wants to he can always come back. But the idea of it is, ***it's not enough money.*** That's the whole thing.

I feel this way. It is some sort of an art form. Anybody in the arts doesn't go out to make money. You have to be dedicated, and I feel that the musicians playing this kind of

music are dedicated musicians and the money has nothing to do with it. The people who leave the band and go into the rock field, that's their choice. At least they have a hell of a foundation when they leave here and that's one thing I try to give them. It's their choice and their life. But I always say that there's no sense in that, because you won't find an armoured car following a hearse. The only thing that follows you to the cemetery is respect. I figure I'd rather have that. I figure I'm rich in comparison to other people. I've raised twelve children now, I've raised seven and adopted five. And never had a moment's problem out of one of them. I think that that enriches my life, because most people can't even raise one child! And playing the music, and did what I wanted them as well, because I was honest with my children, down front, and now I have all that love. And respect. If I call one of my children and tell them, come here, and some of them are in Europe now, they'll come, without asking me what I want, and get here: "What's the matter, pop? What's happening? We're here."

If you just be honest with them. If you say, "Don't do as I do, do as I say" then you're going to have problems, because they're people too. They're little people but they're people.

I've never understood the term "generation gap". We've got lots of young people coming into the band, eighteen, nineteen years old, and they get along with me just like they do with their buddies.

In the late 'forties, you went to Africa....

I was very interested in religion. I became confused about religion because the church that I was raised in was very strict. I had to learn the Bible from Genesis to Exodus and be able to quote it. I'm glad of that, but then I didn't understand the contradictions of it. I wanted to find out, but people would never discuss religion at that time. Religion and politics and sex were hush-hush. So I wanted to go and find out. People would tell me there are thousands of religions. There's no such thing, I found out. There's only eleven of them. But in my time over there, I never accepted religion. I knew which one I'd accept if I did, but the only reason I didn't accept it and become a religious person was that I didn't want to be a hypocrite. Because I knew I was a musician, first, last and always, and music is my mistress and that's it.

I know that Herbie Nichols and Randy Weston were well versed in African history and African cultures. Did Africa have an impact on your music?

No. I heard a few things over there that the natives played, and I heard some esoteric records but I didn't go over there to study music.

Most of the guys wanted to get some kind of identity and find out where they had come from. The only thing I resented about it was that people were trying to connect the music over here with the music of Africa. There's no such connection. It's two different things. No America — no jazz and that's just the way it is. All of us helped to bring about this type of music; it's a product of the society in which we live. It had nothing to do with Africa because we're still using a European harmonic structure. The Africans are very advanced in different rhythms; so are the people in Latin America and South America, they have different types of rhythms. But jazz had nothing to do with Africa, because it took all of our society to bring this thing about. I say this because I'm an

American. I don't go for shooting off anywhere else, because this is where it's at.

It's ironic that many American jazz musicians have to go to Europe to find respect and appreciation for their music.

You have to remember that Europe is an older continent than ours. So if you go to France you see Frenchmen, if you go to Germany you see mostly Germans, if you go to Scandinavia you see Scandinavians, but we have so many factions here that we have to deal with and it hasn't mellowed out yet.

I think Japan is more into the music than any nation on the face of the earth. They're more into our arts. They come here to Canada and they find the young artists here in Canada. They take their paintings back to Japan. They take them out of America. And ***all*** the records, of any jazz artist, if you want to buy them, go to Japan, go to any music store and they've got it. I haven't kept any of my albums, but when I get ready I'll go to Japan; they've got everything I ever made, and I've made four hundred and seventy albums. You can't find them in the States, but you can find them in Japan.

But Japan is five thousand years older than we are, so they have that respect for an art form.

Recently Max Roach played a duet concert with Cecil Taylor in New York. I know you've always felt somewhat apprehensive about the avant garde. Would you ever consider playing with Cecil Taylor, or with someone of that calibre, with that sort of freedom and power?

Well, I think Cecil's thing is different. I respect him for what he's doing, but I don't feel the same way about all of them. I think I have the wisdom to know the difference. I don't know if I could play with him, but I would try, because this man has gone into his own thing.

I had a gig with Art Tatum once and this man played so much piano! When we got through a set he put his arm around me and said, "Son, you did a wonderful job." I packed up my drums and went home because you couldn't play with that man. I was in his way. I felt I should get out of his way and sit down and listen to him like everybody else.

So it's the same thing with Cecil, I don't know if I could keep up with him. Max is a different thing. Max is Max Roach, and he can do it. He's my very very good friend and he could do it. Did you hear that concert? That would have been something.

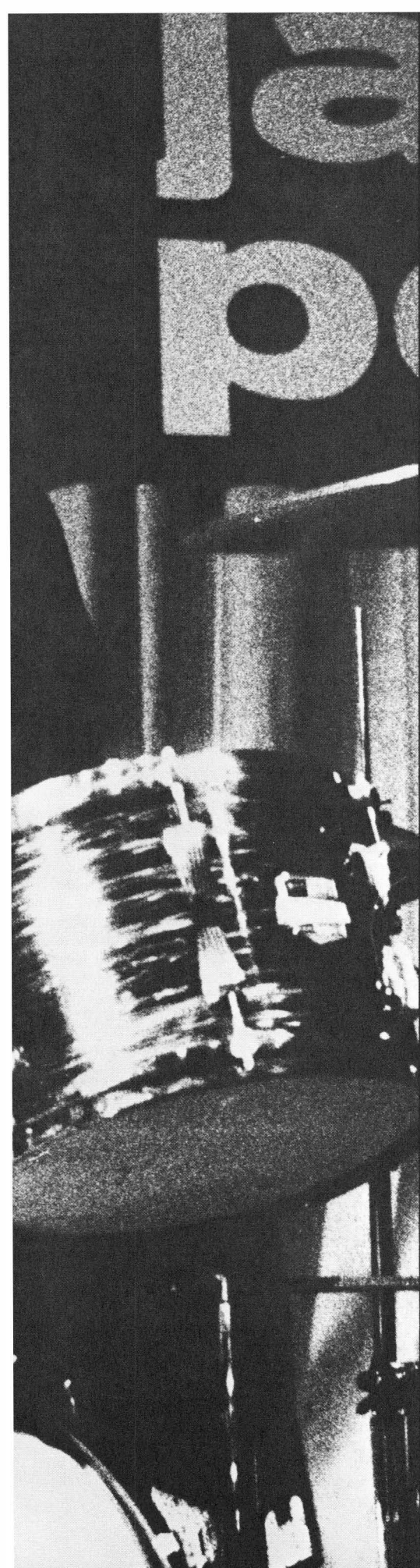
Back in the '40s were you and Max, and Roy Haynes and Kenny Clarke fairly close as a group? Did you share ideas?

Well, Roach and Klook were very tight; Roy Haynes and I came along a little later. We were all tight, we never had any problems.

I've always thought that Roy Haynes has never got his due. He's a fantastic drummer and I've always talked about him, but with people it's in one ear and out the other. He's always worked with singers, he's always worked behind somebody, with Lester Young when he was younger. Roy is like an introvert; he's never come out. But boy he's out there now - he's out! - and I think it's wonderful. He should have been out a long time ago because he's one of the most fantastic guys of our time, and people never had a chance to listen to him.

But Klook, he's still the old master. He would just take a snare drum and sit there and play. He didn't need any cymbals or tom-tom. He's a master of that. And Roach is a master of





what he's doing.

How did the concept of the Jazz Messengers come together?

I'll tell you what I think it is. I don't mean to pat myself on the back but frankly, I've always been an organizer, even when I couldn't read a note I had a fourteen-piece band. Because I know how to organize and talk to men and get them to do things. Being a leader isn't just becoming popular as a player or as a singer and going out and getting a band together. You have to have something for the men to look forward to. Someone down there has to have a certain amount of respect, to get men to do things. You have to deal with people, and a lot of artists forget about that, they lose touch. You have to keep going back and touching base. You don't get too far away from your men. You don't become a leader and live up in a big hotel and they only see you when you come on the bandstand. You've got to be with those men all the time. So you know what's going on. Plus give them room. Get out of their way so they can call you a bunch of dirty names like I used to do when I was a sideman. That's part of it. That doesn't mean that they don't love you. But it's something you have to learn how to do, and a lot of guys just didn't learn how to be leaders.

What happened was, I was sitting in New York and they had just organized a big seventeen piece band. It was at the end of Dizzy Gillespie's band, the end of Billy Eckstine's. They came to me and said, "You're the leader." So we tried to keep the band together, we had some fantastic musicians: Kenny Dorham, Idrees Sulieman. They called it The Seventeen Messengers, but financially it couldn't make it, the big bands were going out.

Then Horace Silver got Kenny Dorham and Hank Mobley and Doug Watkins and he came to me and said, "Art, we've got this group together. Wanna go out and play?" We just wanted to play around New York, make a little money — and get something organized, because people were tired of going to hear jam sessions; guys getting a band together — "Hey, you work with me tonight" — and always playing the same tunes. I like to be organized and know where I'm going and have an objective in mind. Horace said, "We'll call it The Jazz Messengers." and it stuck. The band gave us an objective, instead of just jamming all the time — that was getting to be pretty ridiculous. Only certain musicians could really go out and do that, like Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, and everybody tried to copy them, and that was no good. They were playing music that Charlie Parker wrote; if Charlie didn't write anything, nobody knew what to play, so we had to get the guys together and let them bring their own ideas out and play them. That's the way we did it, and since then a lot of groups have come up like that. Like Woody Shaw's out there, we've got a lot of groups out there that are playing music, real music. This year Woody Shaw's album was nominated for a Grammy award and that was something, that surprised me. Just the nomination means a hell of a lot to me. So for the first time I watched it, and it was quite a circus. Some parts were very good; some parts were ridiculous, but I like to see jazz get represented more.

But now they're not into it. They're into the big buck. Rock, country & western music, all that's good but I don't think that one should be put down for the other. Let's put it all out there and give it a chance and let the

people make the choice. Not somebody sitting in an office saying this is good and this is bad. How does he know? Some of these kids have made the big hit — but the music is terrible! If a note came up off the floor and slapped them in the side of the head they wouldn't know what hit them.

But these men in jazz are dedicated musicians, they're musicians you could put anywhere. Before the jazz musician came into rock, it was a catastrophe. They came in and brought the music into it. There was no place else for them to go, they had to make money, and they brought the music into it.

In other countries they like rock, country & western, jazz, classical, everything. Their scope is wider. People over here are very narrow-minded. They get set on one thing and they don't want to know anything else. And that's why the people don't come out. And they're blowing the whole thing. Their grandchildren will look back and say, "My god, what was my grandfather doing? He couldn't even get it together and it was right here for him!"

What makes me say these things is this: I still hear records now that were recorded thirty or forty years ago — they're still selling. And all this other thing, pop, rock, number ones, they've vanished. And the stuff those guys were playing is still here. As really classical music.

Guys will come out of my band and they can play. Then they put on some funny clothes or do something funny onstage and wow, they're bigger than bubblegum. It doesn't make sense. When they do those things their playing suffers and their talent is gone. With this kind of music, you have to keep playing it, and the more you play it the more you find out you don't know how to play it and it just keeps you searching.

I've often thought that Wayne Shorter never really played to his potential; that he could have been a much bigger original stylist.

Wayne Shorter is one of the most brilliant musicians I know of who have come along in the past twenty years. He is something else; he's well-educated, he has degrees, he was with the Messengers. He was something. When John Coltrane left, it was supposed to be Wayne Shorter, he could have stepped right in there. I saw what was happening, because his personality was smothered when Lee Morgan and Bobby Timmons were in the band. I had to let them both go and hire Cedar Walton and Freddie Hubbard, and make Wayne the musical director, to make him push out, and he really came out of it. But then he left the band and went with Miles Davis, I don't know what for. I knew his personality was going to be smothered because Miles is a different type of person. He's a star and he's himself and he doesn't need anybody. All he needs is a rhythm section and his horn and he's gone. And Miles is such a great musician he could take a bazooka and do the same thing he's doing on that trumpet and still sell records because he's something else, he's different. Then Wayne left there and went with this Weather Report thing and started playing soprano. When I heard his tenor playing, it had suffered awfully.

He was a dominant voice in jazz. The best music the Messengers had — Wayne wrote it. Wayne could sit down and turn out arrangements just like a machine. Whatever he was thinking about he could write about. A fantastic musician, and I hated to see that happen to him. I spoke to him about it; I made no bones about what I said because it was the truth

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and I didn't feel he should have done it. It seems to me to be a waste, because he had so much to say!

Curtis Fuller is another man. I'd like to get him going, he's got a lot to say, too. Curtis should have his own band but he keeps working around with Lionel Hampton and Count Basie. How are you going to get out there with Count Basie? Not by playing fourteen bars a week. That's Basie's thing. Curtis has got to get *his* own thing.

Did you ever have a favourite Jazz Messengers group?

I liked the group with Lee Morgan, Benny Golson, Bobby Timmons and Jymie Merritt. And the one with Wayne Shorter, Cedar Walton, Freddie Hubbard, Curtis Fuller, Jymie and then Reggie Workman — that was a hell of a group. And another group that never recorded: Bill Hardman, Slide Hampton, Billy Harper, Junie Booth and McCoy Tyner. I like this group too. I think it has a lot of potential, it just isn't ready yet, it isn't finished.

This summer I'm planning to take a larger ensemble to Europe. I'm taking two drummers. I have a couple of people in mind for the other drummer. Keith Copeland is one, I've known him since he was a child, his father used to work with me. And also Wynton Marsalis from New Orleans. His father used to work with me. He plays trumpet, he's very very good.

The reason for the big group is, I can't keep going back to Europe and Japan with the same format. Now in Europe and Japan the big bands are coming back. Archie Shepp was in Europe with thirty-three pieces!

Have you ever played with Archie?

No, I've never played with him but I think he's a prince. He's come and sat in with us a couple of times, but that's all. He's a real gentleman, he's all right.

But I didn't want to take a big seventeen, eighteen piece group. We want to take this group and make something a little different. If it works out we'll try and keep it together. But I don't want anything too big to take into the clubs. I don't like that, I want to stay with the small audience. And I'm not into that big stuff. There's so many personalities you've got to deal with! You need a road manager.

My band now is the nucleus of the big band and we just add to it. Three reeds, three brass, a guitar and a full rhythm section plus myself. I've never seen a band with two drummers playing together but if two horns can do it certainly two drummers can, and Keith is a fellow I think will listen. I always wanted that. I made some albums with other drummers, and some were a fiasco! All the personalities. I didn't want to see who could play the most drums. I just wanted to make some music, or it becomes just noise. Fighting all the time. That was the biggest battle I had in my life.

I think the drummer is there to exalt the rest of the musicians, to make them play. After all, how many drum solos can you play? I think even the greatest drum soloists in the world — Max Roach, Buddy Rich — I can't listen to that too much. I mean, if I come into some place to eat, I don't want to hear some damn drum solo all night, I want to hear some music too. Unless the drummer is very, very musical, and how musical can you get? I've featured the drums, but if people hear a drum solo they're supposed to get inside of that drum. They aren't supposed to see *you*. Most drummers practice in front of a mirror, so it's a visual thing, and I don't want that. I

want it to come from the heart and the stomach and they can feel it. Like when you go hear Elvin Jones or something you come home and say "What happened?" I asked one lady and she said, "I feel like I had a hot shower." That's what people are supposed to get. They aren't supposed to come out holding their ears, there's supposed to be something going on. But guys forget about that, the drummer has become a visual thing.

And most drummers are not able to identify themselves on a record. That is a big mistake. Because the teachers teach the drummers and they all come out sounding like they've come off a conveyor belt. They all sound alike, they never get their own originality. The teachers shouldn't teach them that. You can't teach anybody how to play. You can give them the fundamentals and let them go and they'll find their own way. Then you'll hear something new. That's the reason I never went to a teacher. Chick Webb taught me, he just left me up in a room and locked me up and told me to make a roll. He told me when I was playing, "Well son, when you get in trouble — roll." But a lot of drummers couldn't roll. Most drummers sound the same to me, except the giants. I know Buddy Rich when I hear him on a record. I can identify Max, Philly Joe, Elvin Jones, Shelly Manne, Roy Haynes, because they identify themselves. These young fellows haven't had that chance. They all sound the same, or they all copy someone.

It's like saxophone players trying to play like Charlie Parker. It's not possible. That's what I like about that little boy, Bobby Watson. He just plays, and the young people really identify with him. I see where he's growing, getting more experienced, coming into his own. He listens to everybody but he's got his own way. No matter what you tell him, when he gets on that stage he goes somewhere else. I think most guys should do that.

Some of the new players must be intimidated at first, playing with someone of your stature. How do you draw out their confidence?

I sit down and talk to them, tell them about it. Tell them what I think they should do. What they can use, take it; what they can't, discard it. Try it out.

The first thing I learned about saxophone players I've worked with is the big sound. Before Charlie Parker I heard Willie Smith, the alto player with Cab Calloway's orchestra, the sound that they had, the big sound. That's the most important thing. All the great artists I've ever heard, great violinists, they have a sound. I've travelled all over Europe, met gypsies and when they play, they make you cry. You cry when they get through with you. And that's what that instrument is all about. People are not supposed to sit there and go to sleep. If people are going to sleep while you're playing then what the hell are you playing — music to sleep by? They can go home and do that. The first thing the artist is supposed to do is hit them. When he picks up his horn, bingo! When he hits he's supposed to get the audience's attention right away. I've seen Charlie Parker do it, I've seen Clifford Brown do it. People would be eating dinner and before the food would reach their mouths they'd stop, right there. And they'd stay right there until he finished his statement. This is what the

This is what the young guys have to learn to do. Not just get up and blow a horn and see how many exercises you can play. That

doesn't mean anything. You have to be more creative; the exercises are only the fundamental part of playing jazz. They show you how to get over your instrument. Then it's got to come from inside the player.

I've heard that the last time you saw Charlie Parker he said something to the effect of "make sure they play the blues."

That's what he told me. Make sure that these kids learn to play the blues, because it hasn't all been done yet. We were talking the last Christmas before his death. He knew he was going to die, and he couldn't understand why the kids didn't want to play the blues. They all seemed to think that Charlie Parker had done all of it, but the blues hasn't all been played. He said that we're just scratching the surface, it's deeper than that. At one time it was very difficult for any of us to find even a trumpet player, because they didn't want to play the blues. They would go off into the avant garde thing and they would use that for a cop-out. And then, things just started happening. You'd turn around, and other trumpet players would have started playing. White trumpet players, we started getting them and they'd say, "Who? What?" But that's the way it is: once an idea is presented to the world, it doesn't belong just to the individual or individuals who brought it forth. It belongs to the whole world to utilize. I've got a trumpet player all the way from Russia, and before that I had one coming out of Japan. Get him if he can play, it doesn't matter. This is an idea and somebody will pick up on it and start studying it. And they come to the

U.S. to learn it, to sit down with other musicians and find out what it's all about.

Now young players are changing, they're beginning to come around to their senses a little bit. I thought it was ridiculous that they couldn't play the blues, I said, "Look, you've got to go past the masters before you can step all over them. You have to come through that."

That's interesting, because the avant garde that I've always identified with are an avant garde that in a fresh new way enriched the tradition. People like Julius Hemphill. The best in the avant garde tradition enriched the tradition, like Coltrane, Ornette Coleman....

Well, John Coltrane came out of the Charlie Parker thing originally, he was an alto saxophonist. It wasn't that he was being avant garde. I'd say, "John, what the hell are you doing?" He'd say, "Art, I don't know, but I'm searching." Good! Gotta search. This guy's searching for other ways to go. I think it's good. And I think John had reached the point where he could do that. Like Miles went out. I thought that these men had the knowledge to go out there and do what they wanted to do. No, when I refer to the avant garde in a derogatory manner, I'm speaking about the kids that used it as a cop out. That never proved anything. They just went out there, and if you say play some blues, they couldn't play them. Or play a melody. They can't play it.

But some people, instead of going straight ahead they want to search. These other men are capable of going out there. Like the pianist I was talking about, Cecil Taylor, he's capable.

You cannot put him down, he's one of my favourites. He knows that instrument, he knows music, he's come through everything, so he's capable of going out there. He knows what's happening. He comes to see the Messengers all the time and has himself a ball!

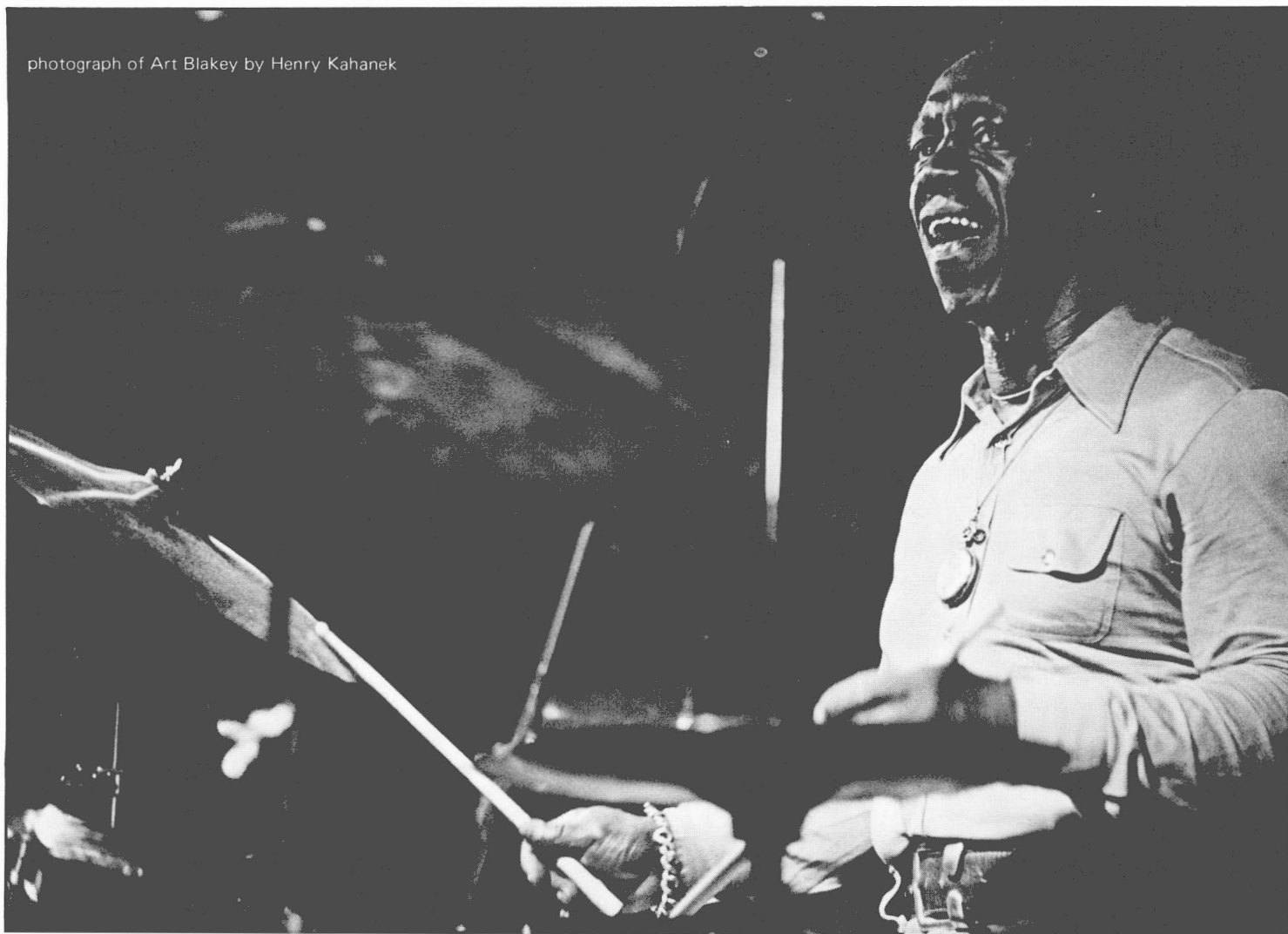
It takes a musician of higher calibre to go out in the avant garde. I like that — guys going out searching. It's up to them. To me, it was a dangerous thing to do, financially. You're already into jazz, so if you lose the audience you have, then you're out there again! But if a man wants to do it and he's capable, he can. Given enough time, he might run into something, that's so beautiful, so far, as Coltrane did. It was so beautiful, what he was touching on, and so deep, very deep.

This interview was done in Montreal on March 7, 1980. Thanks to David Prentice for transcribing the original tape.

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photograph of Art Blakey by Henry Kahanek



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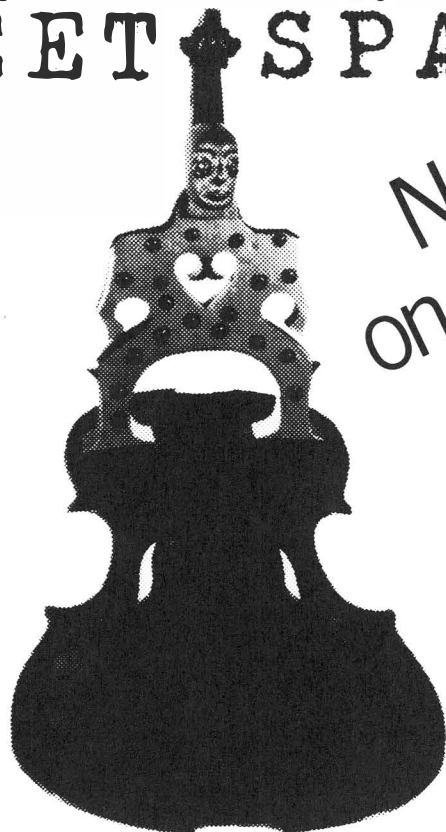
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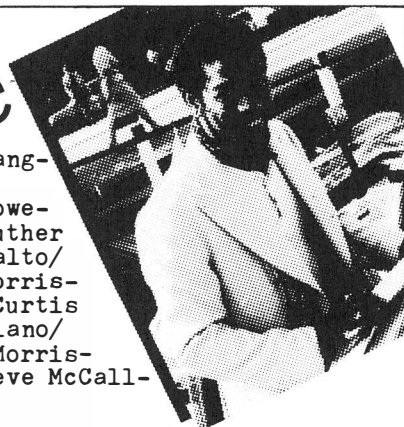
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STANLEY TURRENTINE

New Time Shuffle
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Blue Note was obviously one of the great jazz companies, and recent years have found its vaults yielding previously unknown delights. The Liberty/United Artists conglomerate has just released nine albums of previously unissued Blue Note material from 1957-1967. These recordings provide a cross-section of Blue Note's activities during those years, and as such they are valuable. The musical quality is uneven but adequate; only one album is clearly poor. I shall discuss them chronologically.

The Jimmy Smith album contains typical jams on *What Is This Thing Called Love*, *Confirmation*, and *Cherokee*. The first and third were recorded in August 1957; the second in February 1958. The earlier date was Smith's eleventh as a leader after his first recording for Blue Note in February 1956. Perhaps the company chose not to release this music in the 50s because of the amount of Smith material already available.

Smith shows admirable restraint throughout this album. He functions primarily as a member of the rhythm section, soloing once on each tune. Among the major soloists are the fuzzy-sounding Curtis Fuller, George Coleman (on tenor), Kenny Burrell, and the now-legendary Tina Brooks showing the influence of Benny Carter. Best of all—and the primary reason that this is a successful album—is young Lee Morgan, then a member of Dizzy Gillespie's band, who had made his first recordings in 1956. As pleasing as his colleagues are, Morgan dominates

these recordings. Brash and resourceful, he clears the air, demands to be heard, and expresses himself articulately. He was the first significant new trumpeter after Clifford Brown.

Beginning in the late 1950s, Donald Byrd, like Jimmy Smith, recorded frequently for Blue Note. He was then a fine trumpeter whose playing was enhanced by the quality of his accompanying musicians. Baritonist Pepper Adams was the perfect foil for Byrd, and the two recorded together, off and on, from 1958 until 1961. This current album is representative of their playing, although it is not quite as effective as their best album recorded under Adams's name for Warwick in 1961.

This session from April 1961 has three tunes per side, half of which are originals by Byrd or Duke Pearson. As attractively as Byrd plays here, Adams is the better soloist. His idiosyncratic playing is especially appealing on *I'm an Old Cowhand* and *Sophisticated Lady* (on which Byrd does not play). Herbie Hancock, Doug Watkins, and Eddy Robinson lend rhythm support; the young pianist solos regularly but in a fairly predictable manner. Most obviously, this album provides a bench mark by which to measure Byrd's decline in the last two decades.

The Wayne Shorter album was recorded in March 1965, and it is mildly disappointing. With Shorter (on tenor), Freddie Hubbard, and James Spaulding; a rhythm section of McCoy Tyner, Ron Carter, and Tony Williams; and originals by Shorter, one naturally expects considerable quality. The musicians demonstrate energy and technique (especially on *Angola*), but what results is generally uninspired playing. Two cuts are vastly superior to the other four, however. On *Lady Day* the tempo is down, and each player interprets — sensitively and appropriately — this piece that suggests the artistry of Billie Holiday. Similarly, on Sibelius' *Valse Triste*, the group, more concerned with nuance than pyrotechnics, once again performs well. This is, finally, an uneven album.

If Shorter's up-tempo numbers are less successful than his slow ones, the opposite is true on Bobby Hutcherson's "Spiral." *Jasper*, while hardly a flagwaver, moves energetically and intelligently from beginning to end with good solos by the leader, Freddie Hubbard, Sam Rivers, and the composer Andrew Hill. Recorded in April 1965, at Hutcherson's first date as leader, this is the album's best performance.

The remaining five tunes, all originals by Hutcherson, Joe Chambers, Stanley Cowell, or Harold Land, constitute an early manifestation of the Hutcherson/Land alliance. Here they favor, as they usually did, the impressionistic and cool to the point of preciousness. While pleasant enough, this material adds little to the reputation of either Hutcherson or Land.

The Dexter Gordon is arguably the best of these new releases. Recorded in May 1965, the day before the New York session that produced Gordon's last Blue Note album, "Gettin' Around". My own view is that his Blue Note recordings decreased slightly in quality after "A Swingin' Affair" (1962), and "Clubhouse" is essentially the caliber of "One Flight Up" (1964). Here Gordon is accompanied by Freddie Hubbard, Barry Harris, Bob Cranshaw and Billy Higgins, all of whom play well, as does

the leader. The tunes range from a march (*Hanky Panky*) to funk (*Lady Iris B*), but best of all are two ballads, *I'm A Fool To Want You* and *Jodi*, a Gordon original. This release contains good performances by one of the most important improvisors in all of modern jazz.

Jackie McLean recorded regularly and well for Blue Note both as a leader and as a sideman. This new album, from December 1965, has him at his best in the hard bop idiom. Part of the reason for his success must go to Lee Morgan, who is inspired throughout. These two prod each other to considerable heights, with McLean usually soloing first. Annotator Larry Kart observes correctly that *Bluesanova* and *Consequence* are the album's best performances, and I would add this album is welcome if only for Morgan's soloing on the former tune. *Tolyppo* is an attractive calypso, and *Vernestune* is hard bop at its best. Harold Mabern, Herbie Lewis and Billy Higgins support McLean and Morgan well, with Mabern taking an occasional solo.

Another Blue Note regular was Hank Mobley, a musician from whom nothing has been



heard for some time. Like McLean, Mobley surrounded himself with good musicians, and in this new release, recorded in March 1966, he fronts an octet that includes James Spaulding, Lee Morgan and McCoy Tyner. Mobley is the major soloist, although he permits others considerable solo space. An Oriental flavour pervades several of the tunes, with the unlikely *Cute 'N Pretty* being the most attractive of them. Also noteworthy is *Hank's Other Bag*. Played up tempo, it features a weak solo but good accompaniment by Tyner and inspired work by the leader and Morgan. *There's A Lull In My Life* is all Mobley; he offers a masterful interpretation of this lovely standard. This album is a welcome addition to the Mobley discography.

On "Sonic Boom", recorded in April 1967, Lee Morgan, Fathead Newman, and Cedar Walton are the major soloists. The leader is, as always, technically adroit; Newman's funkiness is precisely the foil that Newman desired; and Walton, obviously influenced by Horace Silver, fits comfortably with the others and emerges as the date's most impressive soloist.

Five of the six compositions are Morgan's. They are uniformly undistinguished frames for funky hard bop. The most rewarding performance is on the only standard, *I'll Never Be The Same*, on which Newman does not play. The tempo is down, the mood is sedate, and Morgan and Walton are in top form. Morgan appears to great advantage on several of these Blue Note releases but, strangely, his own date constitutes his least impressive outing.

Stanley Turrentine's album is, as might be expected, the weakest of the nine here under review. Featuring arrangements by Duke Pearson, Turrentine's two 1967 dektettes plod through seven tunes ranging from a fairly sensitive *Here's That Rainy Day* to an acceptable *Return Of The Prodigal Son* to a trite *Ain't No Mountain High Enough*. This album mainly documents Turrentine's declining powers and should not have been issued.

While not one of these nine releases contains consistently great music, there is enough quality to warrant issuing all but Turrentine's album. Blue Note has unearthed some superlative Lee Morgan, a welcome Dexter Gordon date, and some other surprises. One hopes that other such recordings may be located and released.

— Benjamin Franklin V

CANADIAN ENSEMBLES

New Orchestra Quintet

Up 'Til Now

New Orchestra Records NOR 001

Paul Cram - alto and tenor saxophones; Ralph Eppel - trombone and euphonium; Paul Plimley - piano; L.S. Lansall-Ellis - bass; Gregg Simpson - percussion.

10 X 10; Up 'Til Now; Terminal Shift; Delicate Chestnut Roll.

Bill Smith

Pick A Number

Onari 004

Bill Smith - soprano and soprano saxophones, alto clarinet; David Lee - bass, cello; David Prentice - violin.

Up (A Love Song) For Captain Robot; Little Boo; Bones & Giggles; Interludes.

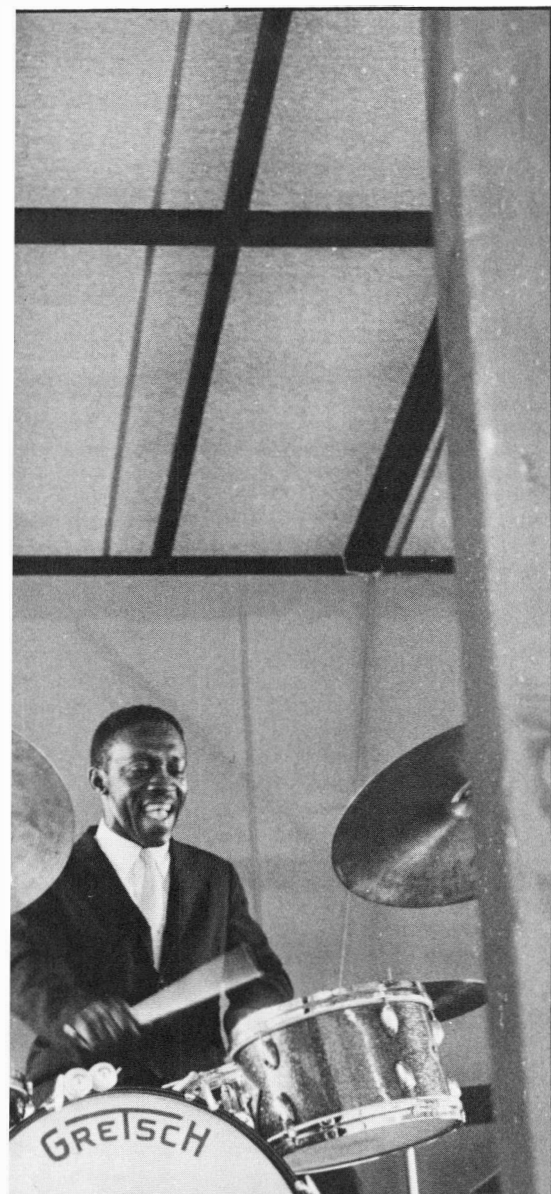
The state of improvising ensembles in Canada is well represented by these two recordings. The two main strains that run through these performances are an avid assimilation of planet-wide activity and an interfacing and/or opposition of composition and improvisation. Where these recordings differ is in the cogency of the material and the ability of the musicians to forward their ideas without peril to the ensemble effort. In these respects, Bill Smith's trio (formerly the New Art Music Ensemble - N.A.M.E.) fares better than the New Orchestra Quintet. While the N.O.Q. seems to take more daring conceptual and structural risks, the abrupt juxtapositions and flaring tangents that punctuate "Up 'Til Now" have generally less effect than the deliberate thematic developments of "Pick A Number". L.S. Lansall-Ellis' *10 X 10* is an immediate example of how the

various jazz and new music components used falter in building a synergistic whole. Conspicuously absent is the emotional consistency of Smith's *Interludes*, a side-long excursion that bears the imprint of Anthony Braxton, to whom the piece is dedicated.

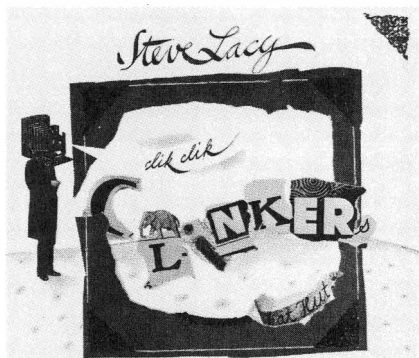
Despite this problem, "Up 'Til Now" reveals the New Orchestra Quintet as five able voices that occasionally coalesce for an exceptional performance. Paul Plimley's *Delicate Chestnut Roll* is such a performance. After an engaging freebop ensemble passage, Paul Cram delivers some tough tenor, supported incessantly by Lansall-Ellis and drummer Gregg Simpson. A smooth transition into a solo piano passage finds Plimley ruminating with such verve that his ample borrowings from Cecil Taylor go unnoticed. Ending his solo on tranquil turf, Plimley then leads the quintet through a sardonic passage that draws from Charles Mingus and Roscoe Mitchell's *Old*. Solid solos from trombonist Ralph Eppel and Lansall-Ellis ensue before the infectious opening passage wraps things up.

Given Bill Smith's editorial predilections over the years, is it not surprising that "Pick A Number" is far-reaching in concept and well-centered in performance. While the music of this formidable trio is shorn of the traditional rhythmic basis of jazz it has the momentum and immediacy of jazz that is primarily defined by rhythm. Written for Steve Lacy, who has purveyed this type of music for so many years, *Captain Robot* is a fine vehicle for the trio to explore both lead/support and collective areas of improvisation, as it circumvents the rough-edited feel of the N.O.Q.'s assemblages. Smith's soprano follows, for the most part, Lacy's splicing of short bursting phrases and longer undulating passages. As part of an impressive recording debut, violinist David Prentice seemingly descends from the stratosphere with pure tone and a sure sense for the well-placed phrase: his duet with Smith at the end of *Bones & Giggles* is excellent. Adding gravity and nuance to the piece, bassist/cellist David Lee intermittently propels the music with a dark rumbling that is brisk and elastic; Lee also puts in an exceptional performance (on cello) on *Bones & Giggles*.

These promising first recordings suggest that much of this activity in Canada is realized on a collective basis. Certainly, most of the finer moments on both albums — sections of *Terminal Shift* and the forementioned *Bones & Giggles* — occur when the collective basis is most evident. It is much too early to tell from this vantage if the differences in ideas and projections on these two albums stem only from the individuals or if the same kind of geographical factors that have shaped the music in the U.S. and Europe are also at play here. And, except for the recent extended visit of saxophonist Maury Coles to the N.O.Q.'s home turf of Vancouver, there is little to indicate that the itinerancy prevalent in the U.S. and Europe exists in Canada beyond domestic touring. Subsequently, the development of a Canadian music will suffer and gain from relative isolation. Not that this isolation is apparent on these recordings. Instead, these recordings seem to have benefited from the growing internationalism of the mus-

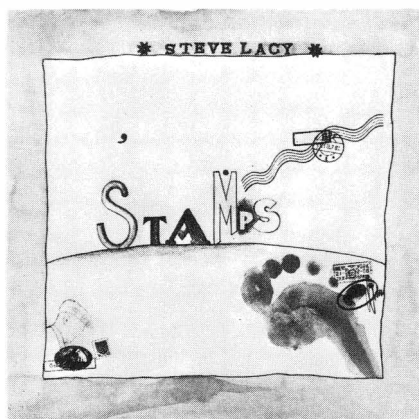


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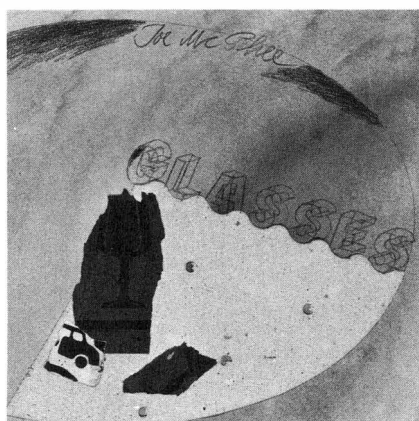
STEVE LACY
CLINKERS 1977
Solos

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STEVE LACY
STAMPS 1977/78
with Steve Potts, Irène Aebi, Kent Carter and Oliver Johnson

hat Hut K/L



JOE McPHEE
GLASSES 1977
Solos and a duet with Reto Weber

hat Hut P

ic, especially Smith's. What would seem to be a pertinent task for Canadian musicians at this point would be to enter the international arena and let the seeds sown at home bear fruit in other lands: Americans, especially, have a long tradition of this. Already possessing the ideas and musicianship that are the prerequisites, the N.O.Q. and the Smith/Lee/Prentice Trio are at that point where they should journey and bring home a Canadian music. — **Bill Shoemaker**

(Both of these records are available from **Coda**; in addition, NOR 001 is distributed by Black Swan Records, 2936 W. 4th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1R2 Canada, from which single copies are available for \$7.00 each postpaid).

BOY EDGAR

**Music Was His Mistress
BVHAAST 022**

Boy Edgar is a Dutch pianist/arranger who salutes the spirit and inspiration of Duke Ellington in this lp. Like other post-imitation European bands (Clarke-Boland, Alpine Power Plant) the personnel is a mixture of European and American musicians who display their constant dedication to the concepts of big band jazz playing. Benny Bailey, Dizzy Reece, Slide Hampton, tenor saxophonists Toon van Vliet and Fred Leeflang, Johnny Griffin and Art Taylor are among the featured soloists. But it is really the writing and playing of the band which is the dominant entity of this recording.

Side one is an evocation of Ellington through reworkings of many of his themes. It begins with a gorgeous solo by tenor saxophonist Toon van Vliet on *In A Sentimental Mood* which sets the mood and feeling of the music. An unusual but important contribution to the sound of this band is the manner in which Boy Edgar has incorporated the voice of Gerrie van de Klei into the ensemble sound of the band as well as in a more conventional vocal framework. The muse of Ellingtonia is explored through the familiar as well as the unusual. Who would have thought to utilise *T.G.T.T. (Too Good To Title)* from the second Sacred Concert or an orchestration of Paul Gonsalves' tenor solo on *Ready Go*?

Side two is a seven-part suite celebrating the unlimited inspiration available to the musician in the ideas and philosophy of Duke Ellington. *Music Is My Mistress* begins with the indelible stamp of Ellingtonia through the resonant sound of Gijs Hendricks' baritone sax. Like so many of Ellington's suites it is episodic in content rather than being a continuous whole. But there is room for dramatic and tender solos by many of the musicians.

Big band recordings which are full of the spirit and feel of jazz are becoming fewer today. This is one to keep. — **John Norris**

CHICO FREEMAN

**Spirit Sensitive
India Navigation IN 1045**

Freeman, tenor saxophone; John Hicks, piano; Cecil McBee, bass; Billy Hart, drums (Don Moya drums on *Don't Get Around Much Anymore*)

Autumn in New York/Peace/A Child is Born/It Never Entered My Mind/Close to You Alone/Don't Get Around Much Anymore

Except for David Murray, Chico Freeman is the most talked-about tenor saxophonist to emerge in the last few years. As the son of Chicago tenor legend Von Freeman and a product of the A.A.C.M., Freeman has had much more of an immediate tradition to carry on than most musicians. An album of old and new ballads, then, comes as little surprise, as Freeman's passion for the tradition is traceable throughout all of his recorded work. What is occasionally astonishing about the album is that Freeman, who is in his early thirties, plays with the authority of a player with thirty years experience with the idiom. Subsequently, "Spirit Sensitive" is a highly refined yet rawly inspired romantic statement.

As on Freeman's previous two India Navigation albums, the core of the interplay is between Freeman and bassist Cecil McBee. The duet version of *Autumn in New York* is characteristic of how the two musicians evoke and sustain an emotional framework by shadowing each other's phrases and allowing each other the space to let their respective ideas resonate. Another fine example of this is in the opening and closing duet passages of the magnificent *A Child is Born*, where they magnify the wondrous feeling of suspension, inherent in the material.

The heralding of grand tradition permeates every note on the album, but nowhere on the album is the music as regal as on *It Never Entered My Mind*. Pianist John Hicks's use of voicings, sweeping chromatic runs and pedaling is artful in its manipulation of conventional accompaniment techniques. Freeman's statement of the theme is seamless. His tone is never too breathy or too brittle. The contours of his solo are sleek and brimming with imagination. There is perfect support from McBee and drummer Billy Hart. The tag is breathtaking. Six timeless minutes of music that never enters the mind but goes directly to the spirit.

— **Bill Shoemaker**

ANDREW HILL

**Nefertiti
Inner City IC 6022**

Andrew Hill, piano; Richard Davis, bass; Roger Blank, drums.

Blue Black; Relativity; Nefertiti; Hattie; Mudflower; Unnatural Man.

Andrew Hill's various ensembles, instrumentally passionate and structurally poised, as they were recorded by Blue Note Records, are among the joys of jazz over the last two decades; however, Hill has always been a prolific artist in addition to a conscientious one, and Blue Note apparently has hours of excellent material in their vaults which we'll probably never get to hear — in fact, those albums which were released are becoming rarer by the minute.

Since leaving Blue Note, however, Hill's work has been treated even more shabbily by the record industry, with only occasional sessions surfacing on SteepleChase or Arista. Therefore it's characteristic of Hill's recording career that we've had to wait four years to hear this strong date, as Inner City only recently rescued it from the inaccessibility of Japan's East Wind label.

Like the truly great pianists — Monk, Morton, and Taylor among them — Hill's instru-

mental sensibility cannot be divorced from structural concerns, and as a result his unevenly phrased bar lengths, metrical effects, and stutter-step articulation serve to raise the six performances on "Nefertiti" above the often monochromatic level of most piano trios. Of course, having Richard Davis' pugnacious bass probings and Roger Blank's percussive aplomb in tow helps considerably. But for the most part this is Hill's show, and his playing is expressive and emphatic throughout.

A few highlights. *Blue Black* is the longest cut at fourteen minutes, and begins with a long, rubato-full solo piano introduction so engrossing that the shocking entrance of bass and drums is positively orchestral. Hill's use of repetition in *Relativity* seems at first pragmatic, jumbled, haphazard, but eventually allows intriguing interruptions of mood and elliptical phrase constructions to emerge. In *Nefertiti* Davis states the pensive, plaintive theme arco, with a bitter edge to his tone, backed by Hill's ornamental fills. Eventually the pianist's rich harmonic elaborations vie for your attention, and with the incorporation of Blank's articulation of the rhythmic component of the theme the music becomes a mosaic interaction of three equal parts.

Hattie features an optimistic bounce which contrasts effectively with the sombreness of the previous piece, while *Mudflower* is craftily designed to juxtapose three speeds — the piano suggesting half-time against the drummer's fast 6/8 chiming and the bassist somewhere in between, causing unpredictable and curious accents. Hill's right hand phrasing and chord punctuation is oblique — occasionally straightforwardly rhapsodic and Tyner-like, then Monk-ish random and disjointed.

"Nefertiti" is not Andrew Hill's best album — I for one especially enjoy his writing for two or more horns — but there is a great deal more creativity going on here than in the majority of new releases. I for one hope that we don't have to wait four years to hear his next musical offering.

— Art Lange

BILL HOLMAN

The Fabulous Bill Holman
Sackville 2013

Airegin/ Evil Eyes/ You And I/ Bright Eyes/ The Big Street. Recorded April 25, 1957.

Bill Holman, tenor sax, arranger/composer; Al Porcino, Ray Linn, Conte Candoli, trumpets; Stu Williamson, trumpet/valve trombone; Bob Fitzpatrick, Ray Sims, Lew McCreary or Harry Betts, trombones; Charlie Mariano, Herb Geller, alto saxes; Charlie Kennedy, Richie Kamuca, tenor saxes; Steve Pelrow, baritone sax; Lou Levy, piano; Max Bennett, bass; Mel Lewis, drums.

Originally released on Coral in 1957, this is a near definitive example of the more swinging aspects of the West Coast school. Holman, already a veteran of the Stan Kenton band, was and is a highly respected writer, but he was also an above average tenorman, as his frequent solos here will indicate. Ostensibly a "brother", Holman credits many saxophonists as having influenced him, but based on aural evidence alone, it is the Lester Young line, with Zoot Sims and Al Cohn at the helm, that is the most prevailing. In spots, though, a

creeping Rollinsism may also be noted.

Holman did all of the charts as well as contributing three originals, *Evil Eyes*, *Bright Eyes*, and the seventeen-minute three-part suite, *The Big Street*. Besides the leader's own playing, the various tracks also offer extensive solo work by Candoli, Williamson, Sims, Mariano, Geller, Kennedy, Kamuca, Levy, and Bennett. And while each of the altomen disport themselves commendably, with Geller having the slight edge, it is Kamuca, in his exchanges with Holman on the final part of *The Big Street*, who ultimately emerges as the most pleasing of the saxophonists. Candoli, expectedly, is in a Gillespie bag, but Zoot's brother Ray may surprise with his laudable impersonation of Bill Harris.

This is not the most important big band record of the '50s, but it does serve to counter the notion that all West Coast jazz was either limp and pallid or stuffed with pretension. Holman's writing — clean, forthright, and swinging — reflects equal parts Basie and bop, and, as such, aspires to no other heights than those common to all straight ahead jazz.

— Jack Sohmer

HONEYDEW RECORDS

BEN WEBSTER

Layin' Back With Ben — Volume 1
Honeydew HD-6606

Perdido/ My Romance/ Lover, Come Back To Me/ Danny Boy/ On Green Dolphin Street/ Go Home.

Ben Webster, tenor sax; Michael Renzi, piano; Bob Pettrutti, bass; Joe Veletri, drums.

Layin' Back With Ben — Volume 2
Honeydew HD-6607

Bye, Bye, Blackbird/ Lover, Come Back To Me/ My Romance/ Wee Dot/ Sometimes I'm Happy/ How Long Has This Been Going On?/ Embraceable You/ The Theme. Note: "Lover, Come Back" and *My Romance* are different versions from those on Volume 1.

Same personnel.

BOBBY HACKETT

Butterfly Airs — Volume 1
Honeydew HD-6617

The Good Life/ Take The A Train/ You Stepped Out Of A Dream/ Poor Butterfly/ Satin Doll/ How High The Moon/ Poinciana.

Bobby Hackett, cornet; Sir Charles Thompson, piano; Benny Wheeler, bass; Ed Polito, drums.

Butterfly Airs — Volume 2
Honeydew HD-6618

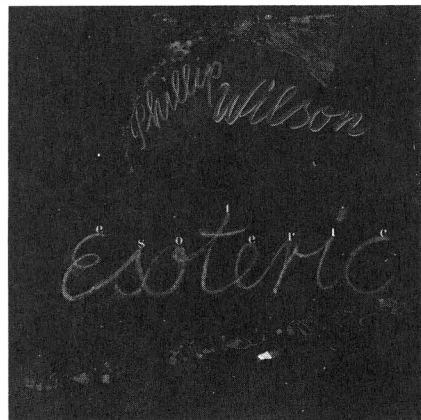
Sweet Georgia Brown/ You Do Something To Me/ How High The Moon/ As Long As He Needs Me/ I Left My Heart In San Francisco/ Exactly Like You/ Perdido.

Same personnel.

Tin Roof Blues
Honeydew HD-6620

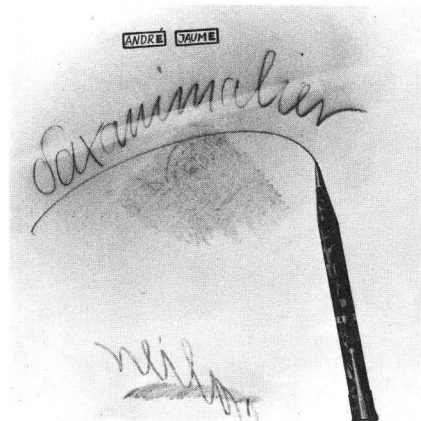
On Green Dolphin Street/ Cherokee/ You Stepped Out Of A Dream/ After Today/ Emily/

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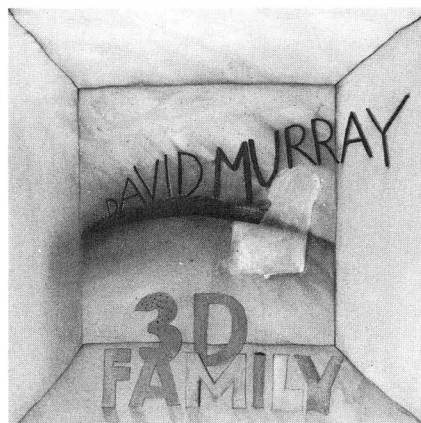
PHILLIP WILSON
ESOTERIC 1977/78
Solos and duets with Olu Dara

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ANDRÉ JAUME
SAXANIMALIER 1978
Solos

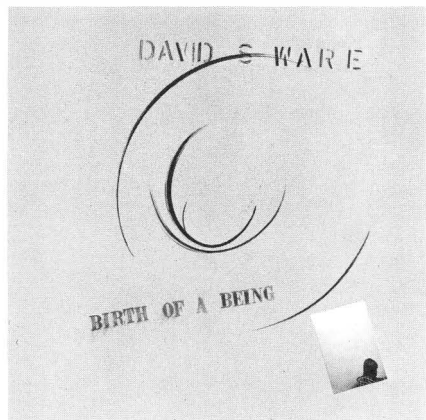
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DAVID MURRAY
3D FAMILY 1978
with Andrew Cyrille and Johnny Dyani

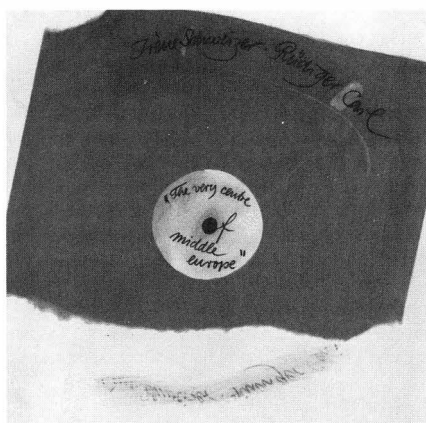
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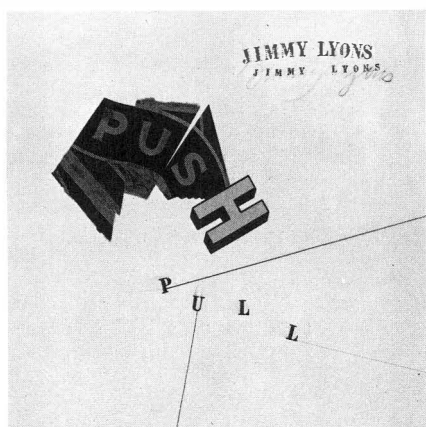
DAVID S. WARE
BIRTH OF A BEING 1977
with Gene Ashton and Marc Edwards

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IRÈNE SCHWEIZER/
RÜDIGER CARL
THE VERY CENTRE OF MIDDLE EUROPE 1978

hat Hut X



JIMMY LYONS
PUSH PULL 1978
with Karen Borca, Hayes Burnett,
Muneer Bernard Fennell and Roger Blank

hat Hut Y/Z/Z

Sweet Georgia Brown/ Jitterbug Waltz/ How Deep Is The Ocean/ Tin Roof Blues.

Bobby Hackett, cornet; Dave McKenna, piano; Bob Daugherty, bass; Ron Lundberg, drums.

A recent entry, Honeydew's catalog of live performances is small but provocative, and includes, in order of sequence, one album by Nina Simone, four by Elvin Jones, three by Ben Webster (one of these leavened by the presence of singer Carol Sloane), two by Dave Schildkraut and Tony Fruscella, two by Joe Newman, two by Dave McKenna and Wilbur Little, two by Pee Wee Russell, three by Bobby Hackett, and one each by Dizzy Reece and Vera Auer. An odd collection of labelmates, to be sure, but Webster would appear to be the biggest potential seller. And even considering the vast gulf between the world-renowned tenorman and the local rhythm section accompanying him, a surprising amount of good music takes place. Recorded at a club in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, immediately before his exodus to Europe, this material finds Webster in excellent shape, whether he be swaggering his massive way through a familiar repertoire of standard swing tunes or caressing, as with a bear's paw, the limitless beauty of his favorite ballads. The rhythm men neither impede nor inspire; they are simply there. So, for all intents and purposes, Webster is the whole show.

Not so with the Hacketts, though, for at least on "Tin Roof Blues", the eminent cornetist is matched with a pianist of commensurate ability and flawless discernment. Indeed, McKenna is featured even more than Hackett on this album, for four of the tunes — *Cherokee*, *Jitterbug Waltz*, *How Deep Is The Ocean*, and his own *After Today* — are devoted to solo piano. However, Hackett more than justifies his presence by his work on the remaining titles, with *Sweet Georgia Brown* being an especial highlight. The rhythm section is both crisp and comfortable. On the other two albums, though, Hackett finds himself with different and less interesting players. Sir Charles Thompson is an acceptable Basie cum bopper in his own right, but, unfortunately, he lacks either the breadth or the willingness to fulfil his role as Hackett's accompanist. Correspondingly, the music fails to jell and even Hackett sounds dispirited.

There is an abundance of surface noise on the Honeydews that have come this way, but not so much as to obscure the music. They can be obtained through Zim Records, P.O. Box 158, Jericho, N.Y. 11753. — *Jack Sohmer*

INTERPLAY RECORDS

The Interplay label is one of the small independent record companies currently making an important contribution to jazz music. A major focus of Interplay has been directed toward piano players.

Al Haig is featured on two trio dates, both of which were recorded in 1977. *Al Haig — "A Portrait of Bud Powell"* — Interplay 7707 features five tunes written by Powell plus one tune written by Benny Harris (*Reets and I*), but recorded by Bud. Haig is joined on this date by Jamil Nasser on bass and Frank Gant on drums. *Al Haig — "Serendipity"* — Interplay 7713 has compositions by Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Golson, Duke Ellington, Cole Porter plus one Haig original. On this outing Jimmy Wormsworth replaces Frank Gant on drums.

Both records are well worth buying if your taste runs, as mine does, to be-bop piano players. Haig treats the listener to swinging yet lyrical playing topped off by his delicate touch on the instrument. I would like to see Al more as a sideman on record dates with horn players. He has always been superlative in that role. If pushed to pick my favorite of the two Haig LPs, my choice would be "Serendipity," but only by a slight margin.

Another welcome artist given two albums is Claude Williamson. A mainstay of the so-called West Coast jazz scene of the 1950's, Williamson faded from public view during the 1960's and most of the 1970's. *Claude Williamson — "Holography"* — Interplay 7708 is a solo performance, while *Claude Williamson — "New Departures"* — Interplay 7717 teams Claude up with the marvelous Sam Jones on bass and Roy Haynes on drums.

In his earlier recordings, I heard a more direct Bud Powell influence in Williamson's playing. Some of that still remains, but a liberal dash of Hampton Hawes has been added. I don't want to suggest that he is an imitator, but rather that his influences have left a mark on him. In fact, I like Williamson's playing very much. He has a harder, more percussive approach to the instrument and is more bluesy as well. Again I can recommend both records.

Freddie Redd is one of the more underrated jazz piano players. He has been around for some time and recorded some good music for Blue Note in 1960. He has also recorded for Riverside plus some fine albums on French and Swedish labels I am fortunate to have in my collection. This December 1977 date *Freddie Redd — "Straight Ahead"* — Interplay 7715 demonstrates Redd's originality and depth. He gets into the music rather than glosses over the surface the way many other better known performers often do. Bassist Henry Franklin and drummer Carl Burnett round out the trio on what is a very enjoyable recording.

I am still trying to figure out why Joe Albany has received so much praise in the jazz press in recent years. I have heard most of his records and have not been at all impressed favorably by them. However, in *Joe Albany — "Bird Lives"* — Interplay 7723, recorded in January of 1979, I finally have an Albany record I consider reasonably pleasurable. The major difficulty seems to be with Albany's rhythmic conception. He moves around the beat, sometimes ahead of it, sometimes right on it, while other times lagging behind it -- and all in the same solo! This can create the impression of an amateurish musician who could stand a lot of woodshedding. Nonetheless, on this record he has it more together than any other since his return to the scene a few years back. I am reminded in places of Elmo Hope without the blues feeling with which some of Hope's best work was imbued. That comparison is meant as a compliment. I would like to think that one day Joe Albany will be able to put it all together and give us a record up to the level of the critical praise he has prematurely received.

Lou Levy has been a solid journeyman jazz piano player for many years. He has played and recorded with a wide range of musicians and can be counted upon to acquit himself well in any situation. The few records he recorded as a leader, though, were all rather mediocre. *Lou Levy — "Tempus Fugue-It"* — Interplay 7711, easily surpasses his previous efforts. Joined by Fred Atwood, bass and John Dentz, drums Levy has recorded a tasty

trio album with all hands turning in sparkling performances. The choice of tunes was excellent, as seems to be the case on almost all the Interplay releases. We get Bud Powell's title track plus Coltrane's *Countdown*, Bill Evans' *Very Early* and Johnny Mandel's *Emily*, to mention a few.

The final pianist in this batch is Sal Mosca. I first became tuned into Mosca's playing when I heard him back in the middle '50s on the classic Lee Konitz-Warne Marsh Atlantic recording. Following that, he played beautifully on one side of the Konitz quartet LP "Inside Hi Fi" also on Atlantic, and the Verve quintet led by Konitz entitled "Very Cool". Later bassist Peter Ind put out some Sal Mosca material on his Wave label. Mosca is a Lennie Tristano disciple, but I have always preferred Sal's playing to Lennie's — I find a bit more emotional warmth from Mosca. "**Sal Mosca Music**" — **Interplay 7712** is actually closer to Tristano than was true on his Wave recordings. As a result I prefer the Wave sessions, but with so little music available by Sal Mosca this solo recording takes on a greater importance. I hope Mosca gets recorded far more frequently in the future.

The one vocal record in this grouping is **June Christy** — "**Impromptu**" — **Interplay 7710**. The most glaring problem with this record is the terrible surface noise on the disc. Most of the Interplays have good pressings, but a few are poor, with this easily the worst of the bunch. Musically it is pleasant enough, but not much more than that. The supporting musicians include Christy's husband Bob Cooper, the late Frank Rosolino, Jack Sheldon, Lou Levy, Bob Daugherty and Shelly Manne. June has intonation difficulties in spots and the session, while unlikely to offend anyone, won't excite anyone either.

This next LP, however, is one to place at the very top of your want list. **Art Pepper** — "**Among Friends**" — **Interplay 7718** is a beautiful listening experience. Pepper is reunited with Russ Freeman on piano, and Frank Butler on drums. Bassist Bob Magnusson is the one relatively new face. The whole band was inspired on September 2, 1978 when this music was recorded. For my money, this is Art Pepper's best record since his return a few years ago. Perhaps the title indicates the reason why? The music is straight ahead, swinging bop with four creative, together musicians at the peak of their artistry. As Interplay seems to take pride in recording overlooked bop piano players, I hope they give Russ Freeman the nod sometime. He sure sounds good here. By no means should you let "Among Friends" slip through your fingers.

I have ambivalent feelings about the trumpet playing of Ted Curson. At times he is a highly incisive, creative player, while at other times he sounds slightly out of tune and seems to be struggling to master his instrument. The two records under review here illustrate both sides of the equation. **Dizzy Reece and Ted Curson** — "**Blowin' Away**" — **Interplay 7716** is as the title suggests, a jam session with two trumpets and rhythm section. Claude Williamson, Sam Jones and Roy Haynes make up a wailing rhythmic support team and have one delicious track to themselves. The trumpets each have one track in a quartet setting. The remaining three tracks include the full quintet. On the quintet numbers, Dizzy Reece cuts Curson to pieces. Reece, who originally hails from Jamaica, deserves far more recognition; his solos here

are fluent, interesting and swinging. Had another horn player replaced Ted Curson on this record it would have been one hell of an album. However, Curson's aforementioned problems crop up so regularly on this recording that the general quality of the LP suffers.

Ted Curson — "**The Trio**" — **Interplay 7722** shows off the positive side of Curson's talents. It may be that Curson was just having a good day on this date, but I suspect there is another explanation. This is a pianoless session with only a bass and drums for support, so Curson had fewer harmonic parameters to restrict him. This is also less of a traditional be-bop record than the date with Reece, and the confidence Ted exudes in this format strongly suggests he feels far more at home in this sort of context. Roy Haynes is back again on drums and fits just as well as he did on the quintet session. Bassist Ray Drummond was with Thad Jones and Mel Lewis for a while and most recently has been travelling with Johnny Griffin. Enter his name to the rapidly expanding list of excellent jazz bass players.

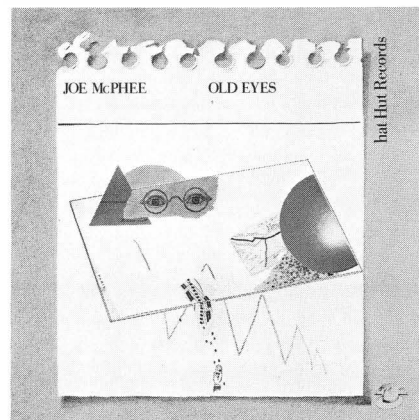
It is a shame that more jazz musicians don't take up the baritone saxophone. It is a rich, full-throated, expressive instrument. In the hands of the right person it can produce exciting and beautiful music. Yet for all that, we have only a few top-flight baritone players. One of the best is Nick Brignola. After Nick's wonderful Bee Hive recording with Pepper Adams, "Baritone Madness", people began to sit up and take notice of this fine musician. This makes **Nick Brignola** — "**New York Bound**" — **Interplay 7719** not a bad record, but a disappointing one. The problem is that out of the six tracks that go to make up this L.P. only one features Brignola on baritone sax. On the remaining five tunes we get to hear Nick play flute, soprano sax, alto sax, etc. He plays all these horns well enough, but it is on the baritone sax that he is an important voice. I hope that in the future he decides to focus more of this attention on the big horn.

Warne Marsh is perhaps one of the most purely creative jazz musicians now playing. His biggest weakness is in the area of dynamics. Almost everything he plays is at one dynamic level. Sometimes when listening to Marsh I compare the experience to listening to someone tell a story in a monotone voice. While the story is interesting, the storyteller never varies his voice. He never raises it or lowers it. After a while, no matter how interesting the story, boredom can begin to creep in. As a result, although I enjoy Warne Marsh's playing very much, I wouldn't want to listen to many Warne Marsh records one after the other.

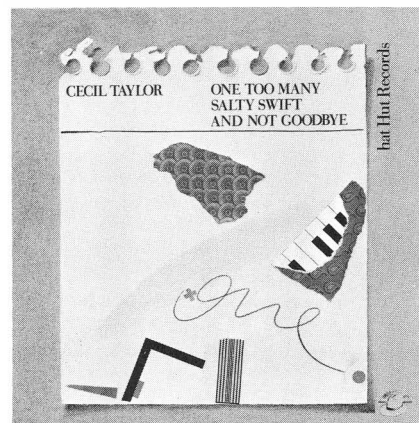
On **Warne Marsh** — "**Warne Out**" — **Interplay 7709**, Marsh plays at one of his creative peaks. Each time I have listened to this record I have become increasingly positive in my reaction to it. Side one is a trio with Jim Hughart and Nick Ceroli on bass and drums respectively. On side two we have a quartet, but one made up of only three musicians. Through the "magic" of overdubbing we are treated to two Warne Marsh's on two of the three tracks. While I am usually a bit skeptical of that sort of thing, I must honestly admit that on this record it turned out very well. It would likely have been less successful had it been done on every tune. But using it on only two of the six tracks adds just the right touch of variety to the recording. This is a highly recommended, artistic jazz album.

Bill Perkins — "**Confluence**" — **Interplay**

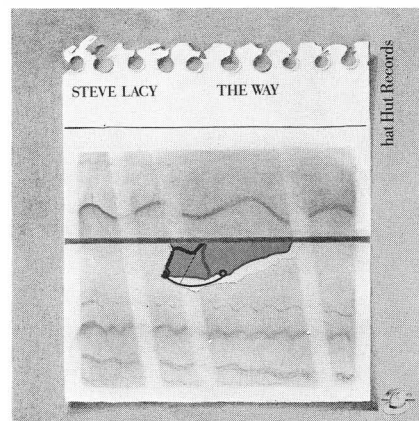
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JOE McPHEE/OLD EYES HH1R01
with André Jaume, Jean-Charles Capon,
Raymond Boni, Steve Gnitka, Pierre-Ives
Sorin and Milo Fine.
Recorded May 30, 1979/Paris



CECIL TAYLOR/ONE TOO MANY HH3R02
SALTY SWIFT AND NOT GOODBYE
with Jimmy Lyons, Raphé Malik, Ramsey
Ameen, Sirone and Ronald Shannon Jackson.
Recorded live June 14, 1978/Stuttgart



STEVE LACY/THE WAY HH2R03
with Steve Potts, Irène Aebi, Kent Carter
and Oliver Johnson
The first complete recorded performance
of TAO; live January 23, 1979/Basel

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7721 is another record that required numerqus listening sessions before I was able to firm up my thoughts.

In this situation I had to break through my preconceived expectations. Ever since I first heard Bill Perkins blowing his Pres inspired tenor back in 1955 I have been a committed fan of his. The sound that he can coax from the tenor saxophone is something very special indeed.

Yet on this recording, his tenor playing is not really featured. The major solo work comes from the magnificent Pepper Adams on baritone saxophone. Other soloists are Gordon Goodwin on tenor sax and Lou Levy on piano. Perkins plays flute and baritone sax as well as tenor. No arranger credits are given but they should have been, as the arrangements add a great deal to the success of this album. Bob Magnusson's bass, and Carl Burnett's drums lend the perfect foundation to what is a highly enjoyable musical experience. Once I got over my initial disappointment in finding so little of that gorgeous Perkins tenor playing, I discovered a very nice record has been released nonetheless. I am still hoping for Interplay or some other record company to give us a Bill Perkins tenor record. (A Japanese label has recently issued an excellent new quartet recording featuring Perkins' tenor, but it is not readily available in North America).

In summary, Interplay has done a good job thus far in producing jazz records for those who want their jazz pure and untainted by commercial elements. We owe a debt of gratitude to small labels such as Interplay. They play a critical role in keeping alive the music performed by numerous jazz musicians, representing a broad range of styles, who would not have the opportunity to record were it not for labels such as Interplay.

— Peter S. Friedman

RECENT RELEASES

JIM BEEBE'S CHICAGO JAZZ

'Saturday Night Function' Delmark DS-218
"Technically accomplished players with usually

good solo ideas, but ensemble balance does not sufficiently favor horns and too many tracks are conceived as superficial tourist-type Dixieland."

— Tex Wyndham

J.J. JOHNSON 'Pinnacles' Milestone 9093
HAROLD OUSLEY 'Sweet Double Hipness' Muse MR 5141
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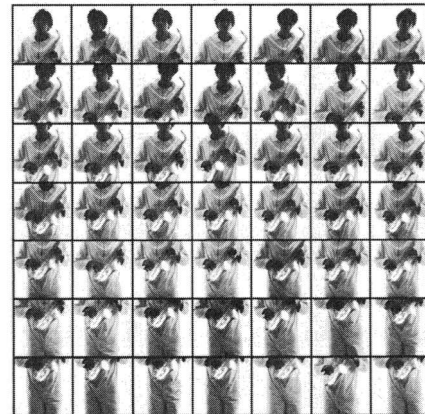
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AROUND THE WORLD



CANADA

In Toronto, Ed Bickert and Don Thompson won the Juno Award for best jazz recording at the 1980 presentation on April 2. Their duet performance was recorded at The Garden Party in 1978 and is available on Sackville 4005.

The Ragtime Society (P.O. Box 520, Station A, Weston, Ont.) is one of the oldest and most successful organisations devoted to the preservation and promotion of classic ragtime. Now in its eighteenth year, the society publishes a magazine, offers reprints of rare rags in sheet music form and hosts an annual "bash". This year's event takes place at The Cara Inn on October 18.

The latest wrinkle for Toronto jazz musicians is the early evening engagement. Jim Galloway (with guitarist Peter Leitch and bassist Steve Wallace) can be found nightly in The Village on the Concourse level of the Toronto Dominion Centre from 4:30 to 7:00. Pianists Bernie Senensky and Gary Williamson have initiated a similar program of solo recitals at Melodies. The Village By The Grange is also presenting jazz for ten weeks between 5:30 and 8:30 p.m. The Ed Bickert Trio were on stage in the Market Court during the week of May 19. Booked to follow at one-week inter-

vals are Mike Malone, Gary Williamson, Pat LaBarbera, Jim McHarg, Jane Fair, Marty Morrell, Lorne Lofsky and Sam Noto.... Gene Di Novi has found a new home for his elegant piano stylings. He holds court nightly at Dominic's Restaurant, 173 Eglinton Avenue East from 8 p.m. to midnight.... Basin Street is to continue its "jazz" policy through the summer. June bookings include Arthur Prysock (9-14), Johnny Hartman (16-21), and Jon Hendricks (23-28).... Ella Fitzgerald was at the Imperial Room of the Royal York Hotel from April 15 to May 10.

Toronto's jazz community lost a good friend and a fine photographer when Henry Kahanek died in January. April 30 to May 9 Mary Kahanek displayed a selection of her late husband's photographs at The Music Gallery.

The Association for Recorded Sound Collections held its 14th annual convention in Ottawa from May 8 to 10.... Bob Parent's traveling photographic show, "The Golden Years of Jazz" was on display April 1-19 at the Eye Level Gallery in Halifax.... Eric Stach returned to the Music Gallery May 10 and Bill Jamieson played there May 24 as part of an Eastern tour which also took him to the SAW Gallery in Ottawa and Art Vehicule in Montreal.

The recently enlarged Chicken Deli, Toronto's mid-town home of jazz, promises well for those interested in the music. It will pro-

vide a positive alternative to Bourbon Street and the competition should enliven the city's jazz scene. May 12 to 24 is Ernestine Anderson and on June 16 Jay McShann and Vic Dickenson appear for a one-week stint. Following them on June 23 will be the Earl Hines group.

Gary Williamson, Dave Field, Stan Perry, Pat LaBarbera, Ed Bickert, Rob McConnell and Big Miller will be joining Phil Nimmons on the faculty of the Banff Centre for the two-week program of jazz workshops which run from July 28 to August 6.... Jazz Calgary, in response to a questionnaire it received from the Winnipeg Jazz Society, has proposed a Federation of Canadian Jazz Societies to assist in the coordination and expansion of present activities — especially in the field of concert promotion. Organisations and individuals interested in this proposal should contact Dick Cowie at Jazz Calgary, Sub. P.O. 91, 2920 24th Avenue N.W., Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4.

Vancouver's New Orchestra Workshop presented a weekend benefit concert at The Western Front, May 2 and 3.... Vancouver now has its own "all-jazz" radio station — CJAZ. This should benefit the expansion of the music scene in that city.... Vancouver's Gavin Walker is host of the new CBC FM jazz show "Jazzland" which has replaced Jazz Radio Canada.

— John Norris

TORONTO — This year seems to have burst forth with a large number of new "jazz rooms" opening in Toronto. For the most part they have little to do with what I consider to be jazz, but are in operation to cater for a drinking, non-listening audience. The Selby Hotel, on Sherbourne at Bloor, has for most of its history, been a local draft beer house, with budget priced hotel accommodation, and it is with some surprise that I approach their jazz policy. Nothing in its interior has changed, including the patrons, except that there has been some interesting jazz presented. The most notable has been the Jim Galloway quartet, with Jim shedding his more usual dixieland persona, and concentrating on a mainstream music based loosely in the style of Buddy Tate and the Kansas City idiom of music. Even more interesting is his new drummerless trio, with guitarist Peter Leitch and bassist Steve Wallace, which has been performing an early evening gig (from 4:30 until 7:00) in the Village Restaurant, located in the Toronto Dominion Centre complex at Bay and King streets.

Steve Wallace is also a musician with a multiple personality, for the next time I heard him was in the Coltrane-inspired surroundings of the Michael Stuart/Keith Blackley Quintet at The Edge. The quintet was completed by Mike Lucas on trumpet and Lorne Lofsky on guitar. Over the past year it seems that Michael Stuart has been working very hard to escape from the traneclone image that he had previously relied upon, and the resulting voice has opened out into a much more vocalised style of playing. Sounds like himself! Apart from Michael the most impressive solos came from Mike Lucas' trumpet and the strong bass playing of Wallace. A band that could flower into something really important.

The Edge, in cooperation with *Coda* and Onari Productions, presented the amazing music of the Archie Shepp Trio, with a young bassist, Santi DeBriano, who we will hear much about in the near future, and the amazing drumming of John Betsch. There is not much to say about Archie, whose great power, lyrical beauty and immaculate choice of composition, just continues to grow more and more as each year passes. We would like to thank Bernard Stepien of Ottawa, for all the assistance he gave in organising this tour.

Legends do not frequently visit the City of Toronto, so the amazing weeklong engagement, at Basin Street, of Betty Carter and her trio was a pure delight. Over the years, I have heard many Betty Carter records, and read a great deal of the controversial press about her, but even all this had not properly prepared me for my first in person encounter. A lady of great jazz talent, performing with a trio of superbly attuned musicians. What can I say. A DELIGHT INDEED.

A final word. The Spadina Hotel has, in cooperation with Onari Productions, instigated a Monday night new jazz policy. Check it out.... — **Bill Smith**

OSCAR PETERSON/JOE PASS

**CBC Studios, Toronto
March 1980**

On the evening of March 27 the television audience of Toronto and the surrounding area were treated to half an hour of these two superb musicians in a program that was happily unmarred by the usual gimmickry of production (i.e., fitting it into some kind of format). The taping, which took place at the CBC studios on Yonge Street one week previously, was especially remarkable because of Peterson's absolute professionalism in the face of a loudly clanging air conditioning system and a crew which included surely some of the clumsiest noisiest cameramen working anywhere.

The finished show opened with a Peterson solo on *Mean To Me* which had everything one waits for in a Peterson ballad performance: the slow abstracted stride with tenths in the left hand, the dazzling runs in the right, and always the masterful reharmonizing. This was followed by Joe Pass in an unaccompanied solo of a delightful medium tempo riff tune which I didn't catch the name of, mainly because they didn't announce it. Presumably audiences are intended to rely on ESP. Next up was a duet on *Stella By Starlight* which started as an out of tempo ballad featuring first Pass, then Peterson in solo choruses, falling into an easily swinging duet which then turned into a very fast duet. This was the second version they taped of the tune, the first of which was declared unacceptable because of the aforementioned air conditioning system (air conditioning in March?) but which, while it followed the same routine, was vastly different in content. Then we got to the inevitable flag-waver, which in this case was *Benny's Bugle*. This began with Peterson and Pass trading whole solo blues choruses that were so fast it seemed as if they were playing "fours", ending with four or five choruses of absolutely manic stride and boogie woogie that would have had a less staid studio audience on its feet. So far so good. Then, unfortunately, after all that high velocity of *Benny's Bugle*, they went through virtually the same routine with *Sweet Georgia Brown*. No show needs two big endings, especially one right after the other.

The only other sour note of the affair was the omission of a piano solo of Peterson's own *Place St. Henri* which was taped in two versions, both of which were tours through the whole history of the jazz piano and very well received by the studio audience. Why didn't they use this instead of *Sweet Georgia Brown*?

All in all the show was a very pleasant experience, and one wishes that there was more of this kind of unadulterated jazz programming

on television. It would also be nice if one didn't have to be the world's leading virtuoso in his idiom to bring thirty minutes of good music to televisionland. — **Julian Yarrow**

RAINER WIENS

**Bathurst Street Theatre, Toronto
April 13, 1980**

In Toronto on April 13 there was a warm reception for 13 Silk Stockings, a presentation of the music of Rainer Wiens. His music deserves the fullness and diversity made available at this concert by the combinations of solos, duets, quartets and ten-piece orchestra within the Silk Collective.

The strength of Rainer Wiens' music is in the sound of interesting combinations of instruments, the richness of the playful anarchy of his dissonances, and the structure of his compositions. The instincts that Wiens describes in his music are laudably primitive, but his refinement and description of them are considered and intelligent. In addition, he leaves his music open enough so that musicians can improvise some interesting directions.

The piece *It May Be Tough But It's Still Not Bottom* illustrated the deliberateness of Wiens' writing. As a graphic and personal statement the music spoke articulately. Played as a duo with Wiens on guitar and Rory Slater on bass, it inspired Slater to craft a remarkable bass solo. His percussive playing underscored the hand-wringing tension in Wiens' work. This piece, as did a number of others in the concert, involved joint improvisation, and if that is to work effectively musicians must be sensitive both to the music and to the audience. In a lot of ways it demands more courage than improvising over a repeated cycle of chords that a rhythm section pounds out. In this concert Rory Slater, as did the whole Silk Stockings ensemble in general, illustrated his sensitivity to the job at hand — creating music.

Among other musical treats in the evening was the solo work of alto saxophone player Bill Grove. In *Pablo Neruda* with Wiens (guitar), Neil Evans (bass) and Bill Stewart (drums), saxophonist Grove let loose a solo so daring and spicy that you could wonder afterwards what the world energy shortage was about.

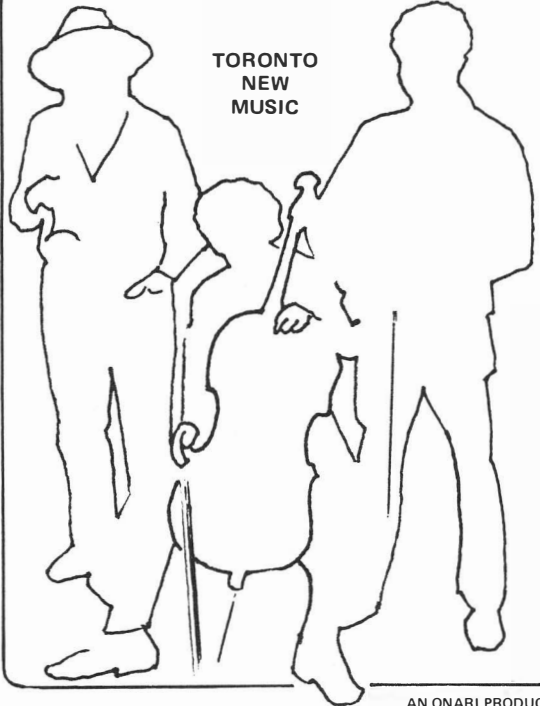
Other musical delight included the scat singing of Larry Cramer. The wit and novelty of *December May March Into June* was appreciated. By far the briefest piece on the program, it lasted about a minute.

Toronto will, I hope, be looking forward to more concerts offering the music of Rainer Wiens. Apart from the traffic problems involved in moving thirteen musicians, it is encouraging to see so many good musicians cooperating on a single artistic vision, and a pleasure to listen to such good music. — **Bill Tracey**

CALGARY — The recent Jazz Calgary sponsored solo concert by Tete Montoliu was very successful and introduced his art to many in this area for the first time. The event took place on April 20th at the Glenbow Museum Theatre.... Barney Kessel's late March engagement, promoted by Ayesha Jazz Productions Ltd., was limited to one night at the Trade Winds Hotel instead of the scheduled four, due to work permit complications. Jazz Calgary advises that the Benny Goodman concert announced for August 14 has been cancelled due to

photograph of Betty Carter by Bill Smith





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circumstances beyond their control.

Provided funding is approved, Jazz Calgary is planning a one-day outdoor jazz festival to celebrate Alberta's 75th Anniversary. The concert would take place on Prince's Island from noon to nine p.m. on Sunday, June 29th. Producer Larry Gilliam plans to feature such local groups as the Eric Friedenbergt Quartet; the Eddie Morris Big Band; the Centre Street Ragtime Orchestra; Celebration; Big Daddy & The Dixie Cats; and the Mainstream Jazz Quintet. Emcee for the event will be CBC's Norris Bick, announcer and producer of their "Just Jazz" program (Saturday midnight).

CJAY-FM's "Jazz Space" is now hosted by Jazz Calgary, at a new time slot — Sunday night, 10 to 11. Yours truly emcees the show. *The Albertan* recently added jazz record reviews, written by James Muretech, as a feature every other Sunday.

Jazz Calgary's new Board takes office on June 1st. Re-elected were John Reid, president; Marjorie Cowie, treasurer; Richard Cowie, secretary. The new vice-president is Gary Sylvester. Board members include Martin Wilkins; Aad van den Heuvel; Dahl Caldwell.

Oscar Peterson will be in Calgary for a few days to publicize the Royal Bank's computerized teller system. A press conference is scheduled for April 29th, but no public concert is planned.

Big Daddy and the Dixie Cats will be among the traditional bands to play at the Sacramento Dixieland Jubilee, May 24-26. The regional competition winners of the Canadian Stage Band Festival — Colonel Irvine Junior High School (jr.); James Fowler High School (Inter-med.) and Bowness Senior High (Sr.) will attend the National finals in Ottawa, May 1-3. A concert was held April 28th to raise funds for the trip.

The Edmonton Jazz Society is producing the "Jazz City" International Jazz Festival August 17th to 24th, as a major feature of Alberta's 75th Anniversary. Artists signed include Oscar Peterson and Joe Pass, P.J. Perry & Friends; Big

Miller & The Blues All-Stars with Buddy Tate and Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson; Tommy Banks Big Band with guests Sam Noto and Pepper Adams; Phil Woods Quartet; Concord Super Band; Jack DeJohnette Quartet, Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin Big Band; Art Ensemble of Chicago; Kenny Wheeler with Ralph Towner, John Taylor and Norma Winstone; and the Sonny Rollins Quartet. Additional signings will be announced in the very near future.

— *Dick Cowie*

MONTREAL — The Woody Shaw Quintet played at the Rising Sun in the last week of March. It was obvious why Woody has become such a definitive trumpet player. Like his immediate predecessors, from Clifford Brown to Lee Morgan, he has nurtured individual muscle and poise. Moreover he has developed a compositional and arranging style which, like master Miles, has resulted in a finely-tuned group sound. A sound which combines looseness and unity.

The quintet was comprised of Carter Jefferson (tenor & soprano saxes), Victor Lewis (drums), Stafford James (bass) and Larry Willis (piano). Like Victor Lewis, Stafford James was consistently colourful, pumping out a steady stream of ideas that propelled the others and enlarged the improvised groundswells.

Archie Shepp began his Quebec/Ontario tour at Cafe Campus (Universite de Montreal) on April 7. He brought along a bass clarinet and flute as well as his tenor and soprano. John Betsch was on drums and Santi DeBriano was on bass.

Initially a good deal of the playing was cautious. But once Archie got his own "steam" going, the unit generated an excitement akin to the Shepp/Brown/Harris aggregation. And the delivery of his revolutionary poetics, "Mama Rosa", easily fuelled the insurgent spirits of the largely young Quebecois audience.

Other events included a presentation of the Chuck Israels Trio on March 12 by Andy Homzy of Concordia University. Chuck (bass),

Steve Brown (guitar), and Bill Dobbins (piano) are all members of the National Jazz Ensemble, an American repertory band. Their programme was largely bebop — *Confirmation*, *Subconscious Lee* — but also included a tribute to Fats Waller and many originals by Dobbins. Charles Ellison (trumpet) and Doug Walters (alto & soprano saxes) joined the trio for the second half of the evening, which included tunes by Clifford Brown and Sonny Rollins.

The Musee de beaux-arts de Montreal has continued to offer a stage for experimental music. At the end of March Steve Reich was invited to present a recording of his recent Carnegie Hall concert, "Music for a Large Ensemble, Octet and Variations for Winds, Strings and Keyboards".

A new weekend jazz bar, the C Note, opened up at the end of March. The first booking featured three evenings of pianist Kenny Barron, along with local bass heavyweight Michel Donato and Toronto drummer Joe Bendza. Jazz standards were the order of the day — which permitted Kenny to display his stylistic range. This entailed some amusing Buckner on *Autumn Leaves* and a lovely Tatumesque introduction to *Lover Man*.

Charles Ellison brought in a quartet consisting of Dennis James (bass), Maury Kaye (piano) and a drummer (whose name escaped me) the following week. Charles, a professor at the McGill University Conservatory, has been on the scene for some time, and is playing with more confidence and finesse than ever. His unaccompanied solo introduction to *Stella* was full of lovely turns of phrase and bent notes. And his fiery improvisations on *Mr. P.C.* proved that saxophone players do not have a monopoly on Coltrane.

Rubin Fogel presented the Gary Burton Quartet and the Carla Bley Band at the Theatre Outremont in mid-April.

Pepper Adams played the better part of a week in late April at Yvon Symonds' Jazz Bar. Regrettably the local rhythm section was not on a par with Pepper, who had to carry more than his share of the load. He certainly is a beautiful bebop player.

Milt Jackson did a week at the Rising Sun in late April with Reggie Johnson (bass), Johnny O'Neal (piano) and Dave Adams (drums). As usual Milt gave solid performances. More often than not, he shared his limelight with his 23-year old piano virtuoso. A wizard of styles, O'Neal exhibited ornate Tatum, block-busting Buckner and soulful Silver. At the end of most sets he would remain onstage to play a few solo numbers. Here the music was all in an Oscar Peterson vein. In fact Doudou Boicel dubbed him Oscar II and booked him for the following week.

Future bookings at the Rising Sun are: Albert Collins (June 3-8), Dexter Gordon (June 12-15), Barney Kessel & Herb Ellis (June 17-22) and Mary Lou Williams (July 1-6).

The Third Annual Festjazz (July 17-20) has been billed as "the greatest international jazz and blues festival ever produced in Canada". Hyperbole aside, the following have been confirmed: Woody Herman, Gerry Mulligan, Memphis Slim, Luther Allison, Louisiana Red, Lightning' Hopkins, Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, Willie Dixon, Buddy Guy and Junior Wells, Big Mama Thornton, Taj Mahal and Miriam Makeba.

Charles Ellison will be playing at the C Note, June 12-14.... Len Dobbin began his fifth year on the air.... The last four or five issues of

Parachute (a bilingual contemporary arts magazine) have contained interviews with Steve Reich and Robert Parent, plus an article by Raymond Gervais (in french) on the history of jazz, and the nature of its creation, production and appreciation. **Parachute** can be obtained in various book stores and galleries in North America and Europe. Its Montreal address is C.P. 730, Succursale N, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2X 3N4.

— **Peter Danson**

ARCHIE SHEPP

CW'S, Ottawa
April 10, 1980

As time passes, the great innovators of jazz appear as the makers of the jazz tradition. Their roots in that tradition appear stronger and stronger, until it requires an effort of the imagination to see how they in fact revolutionized the music. These were the reflections that came to me when I heard Archie Shepp again in Ottawa on April 10th at CW's.

Shepp played with a trio consisting of Santi De Briano on bass and John Betsch on drums. His most compelling performances were those in which his relationship to the rhythm instruments was close to that of a mainstream artist. On **52nd Street Theme** — an urgent, driving performance — they were his "rhythm section". As he excitingly explored this bop anthem, I was constantly reminded of Ben Webster — the Webster of Ellington's **Cotton Tail**; and Shepp's relation to Webster here and on **Invitation** (a relaxed Webster tune) emphasised how much Webster had done to advance and consolidate the playing of his instrument. Shepp combines the richness and the firmness of tone that was the mark of Webster's playing, and he has Webster's gift for simultaneous drive and relaxation.

The other presences evoked were those of Sonny Rollins (the formative influence for Shepp, one imagines) and John Coltrane. The opening Shepp original, **Ujamma**, had the hard, dry richness and urgent fragmentation characteristic of Rollins. The debt to Coltrane was most apparent when Shepp took up the soprano saxophone. Like Coltrane, he gets an "oboe" quality from it; like Coltrane too, he brought the melody down to simple phrases, repeated with rhythmic variation, building up gradually with increasing intensity.

Perhaps this is no way to write about a player who is a master, a great influence in his own right, and one who has a manner as distinctive as anyone playing today. Yet, as T.S. Eliot said of the poet, "the most individual parts of his work may be those in which... his ancestors assert their immortality most vigorously". **Sophisticated Lady** was, as it has been for years, the occasion for the full assertion of Shepp's individuality, as he shaped it into something unmistakably his own in its richness and power, yet gave a performance that was a revelation of the character of a sometimes jaded standard.

Shepp also played bass clarinet, flute and piano. The piano playing, encountered long ago on record, was compelling and very straight-ahead. The performances on the other instruments added to one's sense of his versatility, though he was less than enthralling on flute.

It is a compliment to Santi DeBriano and John Betsch to say that they measured up to the demands of the evening. It is a pity that the

room brought the drumming out a bit too loud for enjoyment — the only blemish to a great occasion.

CW's is a bar that features jazz — generally by local players. Bernard Stepien, whose wonderful series of recitals by eminent contemporary jazz artists showed up the poverty of Ottawa taste through poor attendances, is trying his luck this side of the river in a club setting. The turn-out was good. One hopes it keeps up. But even in Hull they turned out for Shepp.

— **Trevor Tolley**

VANCOUVER — "A-Group" has been rehearsing for some six months now. The quartet consists of 3/5 of the much lamented, but now demised N.O.W. Quintet, a band which was among the finest groups of improvisors in Canada during this period. A-Group consists of Paul Cram (alto, tenor, clarinet, flute), Gregg Simpson (drums), Bob Bell (guitar) and Ralph Eppel (euphonium, trombone, trumpet). The music focuses much less on intricate, compositional forms than its predecessor, but does not totally neglect predetermined aspects of improvisation. Their music tends to be more dangerous in the sense that it is more spontaneous in its concept, allowing itself to grow organically into strong statements.

A-Group debuted at The Classical Joint, April 15. They were joined for the two final sets by Paul Plimley (vibes, bass clarinet). Cram was spectacular on alto, oscillating from lyrical Konitz-like melodies to barking post-Ornette excursions. His attitude was authoritative and he was conceptually and technically very advanced. Eppel's euphonium was the foundation; he provided excellent counterpoint, always finding the right complement to the music and occasionally firing off into a tough solo. His contribution brought to mind the approach of Arthur Blythe's various tuba ensembles. Bell's guitar worked up rich chordal backdrops and textures, a la Terje Rypdal's best work but without the pretentiousness. His tonal qualities are improving markedly and his solos are characterized by short staccato phrases contrasted by fluid single-note lines. The glue and the momentum was Simpson, simply one of the finest drummers in Canada. A-Group displays an abundance of ideas and plenty of natural

interaction, but still one feels that the best is yet to come. Look out!

The New Orchestra Workshop presented a Spring Exposition May 2 and 3, at the Western Front. Featured performers were Harriet van Deusen - Don Laird (a cello-flute duo); Don Druick - Lyle Ellis - Jane Phillips (flute-bass-cello trio); the Contemporary String Quartet (Van Deusen - cello; Karen Oliver - violin; Jeff Ridley - viola; Don Ogilvie - viola) and the CORD Orchestra, a 12-member acoustic ensemble; a trio of Paul Cram (reeds), Karen Oliver (violin) and Ken Newby (soprano saxophone); Joe Bjornson & friends (Joe on trombone with Andreas Kahre - perc., Clyde Reed - bass, Karen Oliver and Ken Newby); and A-Group. All proceeds from this benefit concert weekend will go to the N.O.W. Society and the Second Annual Vancouver Creative Music Festival in November.

Tete Montoliu returned to Vancouver for performances at the Cafe New York, April 17-19. His pianistics were as dazzling as expected.

Pianist Ruben Landers, who had been active in this area in the early '70s, presented a concert of his own music April 20 at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre.

April 17-18, the New Westminster Jazz Festival took place at New Westminster Secondary School. The event featured performances by over sixty school jazz bands from Canada and the U.S. The feature concert will be the Bobby Hales Big Band with guest tenor saxophonist Don Menza.

Commencing March 17, tenor sax man Fraser MacPherson took a quartet with Oliver Gannon (guitar), Steve Johnston (bass) and Rudy Petschauer (drums) into the River Inn in Richmond for a six-month stint.

Stephane Grappelli appears with the Don Etherington Trio at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre June 27.... Mose Allison is at the Cafe New York July 9-12.... Dexter Gordon brings his quartet, Kirk Lightsey (an excellent pianist), Rufus Reid (bass) and Eddie Gladden (drums) to the Playhouse July 27.... Freddie Hubbard appeared at the Arts Club Theatre May 4 with a quintet of David Schnitter (ex-Art Blakey) on tenor, Larry Klein on bass, Carl Burnett on drums and Billy Childs on keyboards.

The legendary Canadian mainstream alto

photograph of Santi DeBriano, John Betsch and Archie Shepp by Bill Smith



saxophonist P.J. Perry appeared at the Red Barrel in March. His quartet included Bob Murphy (piano), Torben Oxbol (bass guitar) and Nels Perry (drums).

The N.O.W. Society presented Leroy Jenkins (violin) and Oliver Lake (reeds) in a solo/duo concert at The Western Front May 14.

Betty Carter returns to Vancouver for two shows at the Arts Club Theatre on Granville Island May 25. The great vocalist's trio includes Mulgrew Miller (piano), Curtis Lundy (bass) and Greg Bandy (drums).

Blueswise, John Hammond appears at the Playhouse July 20.... The Robert Cray Band played at the Spinning Wheel April 21-26.... Ex-St. Louis resident Jim Byrnes is probably now Vancouver's finest practitioner of the blues. His repertoire is extensive and his guitar picking fine. Of note to jazz fans is the fact that Byrnes, while living in St. Louis, performed with musicians such as trombonist Joseph Bowie, and saxophonists Julius Hemphill and J.D. Parran, among others. Byrnes appeared at The Spinning Wheel April 28-May 3.

— Ken Pickering

AMERICA

ANN ARBOR — Everything changes in time (or maybe time changes everything). Two decades ago Ornette Coleman's newly-minted music touched off violent controversy. Today the same general idiom, as presented by the Old And New Dreams Band, seems to express with almost classical purity the jazz tradition in its acoustic swing and wonderfully melodic lines. Don Cherry (trumpet, piano), Dewey Redman (tenor sax, musette), Charlie Haden, (bass) and Ed Blackwell (drums) are all Ornette alumni, and Cherry has indicated that one reason for the group is to present "live" music that most of us have only heard on records. If time has shown continuity rather than radical change, the idiom can still challenge strong players like these with its freedom. And decades of performing together have created a unified ensemble feeling unmatched in today's music. It is of no small importance that the band's repertoire includes a number of Coleman compositions otherwise undocumented by Ornette's erratic recording career. Their opener at the Ann Arbor concert on March 28 was one of these: the effervescent *Happy House*, with powerful solos by all four. Coleman's *Broken Shadows* followed, with an Indian-influenced segment featuring Redman's musette over a bowed bass drone (almost a slow trill).

Ornette's *Man On The Moon* is another medium-up tempo cooker. Cherry's *Full Moon* (with the composer at the piano) segued into *Togo*, which featured a long mallet solo in Blackwell's African-evocative style. The set closed with *Lonely Woman*, highlighted by a vocal, idea-filled Redman solo. Incidentally, the Eclipse-sponsored concert used the nightclub atmosphere of the University Club, but Eclipse underestimated the band's appeal — both shows were sold out, the room was packed, and many would-be attendees were turned away at the door.

What proved to be one of the best concerts this season, on April 12 at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor, featured Richie Cole's Alto Madness, with Bruce Forman, guitar, Peter Byrdy, bass; Babatunde, conga; and Scott Morris, drums; and Johnny Griffin, ably assisted

by pianist Ronnie Mathews, bassist Ray Drummond, and the young, gifted and hot drummer Kenny Washington.

We missed several other interesting performances these past few months. In late April the Showcase Jazz people at Michigan State put on the East Lansing Blues and Jazz Festival, which featured (among others) violinist Leroy Jenkins and the World Saxophone Quartet. Back in Ann Arbor Prism Productions unleashed Gato Barbieri at the Michigan Theatre on May Day. At presstime we were planning to catch the resurgent Mark Murphy at Baker's Keyboard Lounge.

June should be busy around here. The venerable Baker's had Yusef Lateef and Joe Williams early in the month; at Dummy George's the venue included Terry Callier and Al Hibbler (in June) and Houston Person with Etta Jones (in July). There will be jazz concerts at the Renaissance Center and at the Ponchartrain Hotel this summer. The P'Jazz series has yet to be announced, the Ren Cen's series offers Noel Pointer, Yusef Lateef, Freddie Hubbard and Dizzy Gillespie scattered through a commercially-oriented season. In Ann Arbor Eclipse will be presenting a series of free concerts at West Park and at Liberty Mall, featuring local performers. And although the Dearborn Hyatt Regency's db's Club is taking a summer-long siesta, you can still hear J.C. Heard's Quartet (augmented by trumpeter Johnny Trudell) in their Lobbibar. Details on such goings-on are usually available from the Detroit Jazz Center, at 962-4124.

— David Wild

BALTIMORE/WASHINGTON — Through a happy combination of enterprise and opportunity the remarkable Catalonian pianist Tete Montoliu was brought to Baltimore's Bandstand early in March for two nights of solo piano. The size of the audiences said a lot about Montoliu's artistry and the power of word-of-mouth. On Thursday there were only a handful of listeners; Friday the place was packed. On that night Tete seemed extremely eager to play, taking the most perfunctory pauses between tunes (mostly standards) without waiting for applause to die down. His stride-tinged versions of *Blue Monk* and *'Round Midnight* were especially appreciated; for some reason one rarely hears Monk tunes in Baltimore. Montoliu, as quickly became evident, is a marvelous technician and inventive player, but he's so meticulous and such a virtuoso that there comes to be a sameness (on a very high level) to many of his improvisations. So much for nit-picking; the audience was rapt. From here Tete went on to play two nights in Washington.

One thing I've learned about Washington's D.C. Space is never to predict the size of the audience at any event. Nonetheless I was surprised by the remarkably small turnout for the duo of George Lewis (trombone, electronics, tape) and Douglas Ewart (reeds, Ewart wood flutes, percussion) on March 14. Lewis has been devoting a lot of his energy to electronics recently (fortunately not at the expense of his trombone work), but his concept's not yet fully developed; part of the problem is, his patchwork sequencer doesn't have much harmonic flexibility; in any one piece the relationship between the notes of the chords is constant, so he'll have only minor chords, or major chords, or whatever kind. Most of the electronic pieces (like Lewis' *Homage To Charlie Parker*) built slowly; often Ewart would accompany Lewis' drones

with the sustained tones of bowed bells. Ewart played a reflective solo piece in which he kept switching between one of his flutes (with beautiful round low tone) and bass clarinet. On an alto piece he attempted a tricky phrase, fluffed it, and instead of pretending the gaffe was intentional and proceeding, kept working at the original figure until he could complete his thought. During the course of the evening Lewis on trombone displayed his 50 ways to blow a note, slipped his lips over the mouthpiece, made kissing and sucking sounds (as did Douglas on flute), sang notes that went in and out of phase with the horn, circular breathed. I found the best duo pieces to be the most conventional, both penned by Ewart; one for alto and trombone, one for trombone and bass clarinet.

The Don Pullen/Beaver Harris 360 Degree Music Experience appeared at the Space on April 12 for one of the best shows I've seen in the last year. The group's present incarnation, with Pullen as musical director, features Hamiet Bluiett on baritone sax, Ricky Ford on tenor, Cameron Brown on bass and Trinidadian Francis Haynes on steel drums. Haynes is a master, making his two pans sound variously like harp, sitar, or the screeching brakes of a subway train. The band shows uncommon structural flexibility, and played great music; luckily there was a large crowd to appreciate it. (The following week Brown appeared at Baltimore's Closet in a group backing saxist Bill Saxton).

Sun Ra is something of a cult hero in Baltimore, where he plays often; on March 5 a feature on him appeared on a local TV channel's "Evening Magazine". The segment virtually ignored Ra's music, excerpting screaming finales, adding psychedelic visuals and stressing the "hey, this guy thinks he's from outer space" angle. That's a bit like a show about Einstein that only says "Look, no socks. And what about that hair?"

What was billed as a "Byard Lancaster Solo Concert" at D.C. Space April 22 turned out to be one of a number of ongoing Tuesday jam sessions Lancaster holds with any interested players who show up. On this occasion he was joined by about seven others, including three doubling pianist/drummers, a flutist who played a mean tenor sax, and a pianist named Hasaan who managed to play modally at length without (hardly ever) sounding like McCoy Tyner (even on a rapid solo version of *My Favourite Things*). Lancaster is a tenorist who plays with lyrical muscle, has a distinctive alto-range cry and a Coltrane influence that doesn't become overbearingly derivative (save for a version of *Naima*). They were already playing when I arrived at nine, and still going when I left at one. It was the kind of jam session we're often told doesn't happen anymore.

— Kevin Whitehead

LOS ANGELES — Guitarist Hollywood Fats (Mike Mann) moved in with Shakey Jake and family in the late '60s to learn the blues. His bands (Album available on PBR International, 7033 Sunset Blvd., Suite 322, Los Angeles 90028) have backed up lately Witherspoon, Big Joe Turner, Big Mama Thornton and Hooker. He is also on Shakey Jake's latest greatest album, "Make It Good To You" along with Piazza, Larry Taylor, Sam King and Lee King. Still another artist of this variety is William Clarke who plays a sort of countrified electric Chicago harp with a fine album on Good Time Records. Catch Clarke's column on the

L.A. Blues scene in *Living Blues* magazine.

Baritone saxophonist Johnny Williams is back on the Basie bus, having served off and on since around 1967, '68. His work in L.A. over the years has included stints in the big bands of Ray Charles, Shelley Thomas, Ray Shanklin, Roger Spots, John Anderson, Don Lancose and Horace Tapscott. (he's the fellow on the cover of Nimbus 357 playing the bass clarinet). He is replacing the late Charlie Fowlkes. The addition of drummer Duffy Jackson and bassist Cleveland Eaton is definitely a plus for the Basie Orchestra.

Bop modern guitarist H. Ray Crawford's Quartet consists of Charlie Dumas, drums, Harold Howard, trumpet (who also played in the aforementioned bands with Johnny Williams) and Keith Hanratty, organ. (This is my "home" band). H. Ray doubles on organ and flute and lays down some high bebop on his Tal Farlow Gibson guitar.

Every couple of months Queen Ida and her Bon Temps Band make the trip from San Francisco to play at the Santa Monica guitar store McCabes. Al Lewis is notable on electric guitar and vocals. The music is of the Chenier type with Ida Guillery on chromatic accordion. Their two recent albums on GNP Crescendo are a welcome beginning to a California Zydeco tradition.

A Philly Joe Jones Quartet appeared at Donte's April 9-12. At the drop of a hat Philly Joe can have the band skittering for cover as in the wake of an African bush fire. His quartet consisted of fellow Philadelphians Charles Bowen (strong) on tenor sax and Andy McKee, bass with the addition of local pianist Jack Wilson who has surmounted a couple of terrifying set-backs (diabetic coma — auto accident — messed up hand) to return within a year's time with renewed vigour and a new album to boot. His two-piano style — Rhodes and acoustic grand set at 90° angles to each other is well-documented on the Discovery

album "Margo's Theme". My most memorable Cleanhead performance was with Jack using this format with Larry Gales and Bruno Carr.

Zan Stewart puts together an informative column on the local haps in the *L.A. Weekly*. Round the clock jazz station KBCA hit the airwaves in 1961. In November 1978 it transformed into KKGO 105.1 FM.

Fred Katz' first movement to his cello concerto was performed April 26 in Fullerton with Fred on the principal cello.

Joanne Grauer is a local native keyboard artist who works in some of the contemporary tributaries of the mainstream. Her trios of the last couple of years have been with David Troncosso, electric bass, Bob Badgely, bass, and Colin Bailey or Al Cecehi, drums. Her music is intimate and personal. At times she will be jamming a funky bop blues with a gritty tension and in a turn will be amidst the most delicate of note placement. Her December 1976 recording on Avar Records (she has one other on MPS) is available from her at 12301 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 206, West Los Angeles 90025. The night we caught the Grauer Trio (Joanne on Yamaha electric grand at Two Dollar Bill's, Hollywood) vocalist Pinky Winters was with them in one of the noisiest supper club settings I have ever witnessed. Dark clouds to Mingus. Nevertheless Pinky managed to convey her sincere and warm spirit to those of us who listened, my favourite was Dave Frishberg's *I Got To Get Me Some Z's* (who was in the house along with Pinky's husband saxophonist Bob Hardaway).

— Mark Weber

NEW YORK — Recent attractions at Fat Tuesdays included Art Pepper (Pepper, alto saxophone; Milcho Leviev, piano; Bob Magnusson, bass; Carl Burnett, drums) from April 29 to May 3. In a rare New York appearance, Pepper reaffirmed his ability to intimately communicate with an audience. He dug deeply into the music, making provocative statements on

both familiar works by various composers and his own tunes. *Over The Rainbow*, for example, included an unaccompanied saxophone solo and passages with the rhythm section that were characterized by a vocal-like sound and quick, jagged runs. In addition, pianist Leviev offered several outstanding solos, mixing chords of varying degrees of dissonance and sparkling melodic lines that often segued in and out of the music's tonal center.

The Ricky Ford Quartet (Ford, tenor saxophone; John Hicks, piano; Walter Booker, bass; Jimmy Cobb, drums) concert at N.Y.U.'s Loeb Student Center on March 14. The leader is an authoritative, swinging player who thrives in a free-wheeling atmosphere. He plays hard and forcefully, and wastes no time getting into the music. With the rhythm section pushing him, the saxophonist fashioned several inventive solos in a post-bop style. The fast-paced *Take The Coltrane*, for example, included unusually long lines as well as an exciting passage in which Ford let loose with a barrage of sounds that ended in an ecstatic climax.

Among the Public Theatre's offerings in an abbreviated Spring season (see Briefs for further details) were the Sam Rivers Trio (Rivers, tenor saxophone and flute; Dave Holland, bass and cello; Steve Ellington, drums) on April 11 and the Giorgio Gaslini Quintet (Gaslini, piano; Gianluigi Trovorsi and Gianni Bedori, reeds; Marco Vajji, bass; Gianni Cazzola, drums) on April 28. Recorded live for a future broadcast on National Public Radio, Gaslini and company gave a stimulating display of their unique brand of improvised music, drawing from their European heritage and jazz. One of the group's greatest strengths is its leader's compositions and arrangements which provide strong and creative frameworks for the various musicians' solos. Tempo and stylistic shifts — often reminiscent of Charles Mingus — abound, giving each composition multi-textures and moods. On *Free Actions*, Gaslini contributed some striking plucks inside the piano. (On other occasions, however, the keyboardist's penchant for running through Bach, Monk, Taylor, and Stravinsky-influenced passages in a brief period of time made his work somewhat disjointed). The two reed players were quite satisfying in a complementary fashion, Trovorsi using harmonics while Bedori remained in his horn's normal registers.

Barry Harris turned in fine performances with his trio (Harris, piano; Art Davis, bass; Leroy Williams, drums) at Bloomsday Bookshop on March 12 and his 57-piece orchestra at Symphony Space on April 5. The concert featuring the larger ensemble (which included Clifford Jordan, Chris Anderson and Lonnie Hillyer) was, for the most part, well-paced and well-crafted, although even the pianist's excellent arrangements with their interesting inner voicings could not completely solve the problem of integrating string textures into a jazz orchestra context. When, as on *Round Midnight*, the horns did not play, however, the violins, violas, cellos and bass were quite moving.

BRIEFS: Because of a shortage of funds due to decreasing revenues from "A Chorus Line", the Public Theater suspended its Spring jazz series as of April 26. However, a Saturday evening fund raising series began on May 17 with performances by Sam Rivers and Muhal Richard Abrams. Other artists scheduled to appear in the following weeks include Gil Evans, Max Roach, Carla Bley, and Jackie McLean.... Red Garland (piano) with Sam Jones (bass) and

photograph of Philly Joe Jones by Gerard Futrick



Keith Copeland (drums) was featured at Salt Peanuts, a new club featuring bebop, in April. ...Michael Ullman's "Jazz Lives" - 22 portraits of jazz artists, including Tommy Flanagan, Horace Silver, Ran Blake, and Joe Venuti as well as other figures involved in the music - is published by New Republic Books (1220 19th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036).... Da Capo Press' latest books include Rex Stewart's "Jazz Masters of the Thirties", Joe Goldberg's "Jazz Masters of the Fifties", and Martin Williams' "Jazz In Transition, 1957-69".... The World Saxophone Quartet made its "first tour of New York City" in late April with appearances at The 80's, Trax, Hurrahs and TR 3.... The Quinnipiac College Intercollegiate Jazz Festival (Hamden, Ct.) featured the Darius Brubeck Quintet, the Galvanized Jazz Band with special guest Herb Gardner, and the Amherst Saxophone Quartet during its 12th annual festival April 18 to 20.... WKCR presented birthday salutes to Billie Holiday (April 7) and Duke Ellington (April 29) as well as marathons honoring pianist Teddy Wilson (March 9-12) and bassist Oscar Pettiford (April 11-14)... **NYC Jazz** magazine and Dewar's Scotch sponsored the Second Annual New York Jazz Awards presentation at Greene Street on April 2. Cecil Taylor was chosen Musician of the Year, while Arthur Blythe and Dexter Gordon were among the winners on their respective instruments.... for information about this year's Newport Jazz Festival, see the "Odds and Sods" column on page 37 of this issue. — **Clifford Jay Safane**

MUSIC OF THE '80S

**Greene Street, New York City
April 29-May 3, 1980**

"Music of the '80s" included three programs - Michael Gregory Jackson and the Henry Threadgill/Fred Hopkins Duo (April 29 & 30), Amina Claudine Myers and the Anthony Davis/James Newton Duo (May 1 & 2), and the David Murray/Curtis Clark and Marion Brown/Hilton Ruiz Duos (May 3 & 4) - that documented the viability of the jazz tradition and compositional structures in the New Music.

Those performers who this reviewer heard were quite stimulating. Jackson delivered a brief set, following the musical style outlined on his recent albums "Gifts" and "Heart And Center" (both on Arista/Novus). Most of the time he sang songs in a popular vein, accompanying himself on the acoustic guitar. His last number, however, was an instrumental in which delicate chordal harmonies were imaginatively framed by single-noted lines.

The Threadgill/Hopkins Duo (Threadgill, various flutes and alto saxophone; Hopkins, bass), which is two-thirds of the group Air, developed a magnificent body of work that integrated blues and classical techniques. It was quite exciting to hear the two artists imbue pointillistic, abstract music with passion. On their first number, for example, Threadgill alternated between bass and soprano flutes, while Hopkins kept up a steady stream of notes that created a knotty, two-part dialogue with his colleague. Together, they produced an intense, energetic sound that obliterated any need for drums.

The second set of performances opened with the Davis/Newton Duo (Davis, piano; Newton, flute). While both musicians are only in their twenties, they exhibited mature, thoughtful

approaches in their thorough explorations. Furthermore, Davis and Newton opt for precise, clearly defined music even when creating wide angular leaps or animated passages. On **Wayang #4: Under The Double Moon**, they utilized gamelon music as the foundation for their improvised flights. **Whose Life**, on the other hand, refreshingly included conventional harmonies that enabled Davis and Newton to demonstrate their creativity in a more traditional, blowing-oriented context.

After a brief intermission, Myers followed with a provocative set. Like Jackson, she utilized both vocal and instrumental forms of expression. One piece for solo piano alternated jagged-phrased sections, in which the beat was implied, with more flowing passages that included a walking bass line. At one point, she played dissonant chords in a rhythm that recalled the classic **Sonnymoon For Two**. The singer/keyboardist concluded her set with a delightful, gospel-influenced number that rocked with enthusiasm from beginning to end.

Judging by the music heard during the Festival, the '80s promises to be an eclectic decade, not dominated by one or two figures as was the case in the '40s and '50s (Charlie Parker) and '60s (Ornette Coleman and John Coltrane). It should be an exciting, creative period.

— **Clifford Jay Safane**

TEXAS - daagnim (dallas association for avant-garde and neo-impressionistic music) released its first album in October 1979 ["Air Light (Sleep Sailor)" by Heinasirkka Dennis Gonzalez] and is in the process of releasing two subsequent albums, "Hints" by Ron Bucknam (guitar) with Jim Hunter (bass - currently playing with Houston Free Music Orchestra leader, David Henschen) and Heinasirkka Dennis Gonzalez (pocket trumpet, duhexaphone, chinese musette, and small instruments), plus "Absolution" by the Colored Music Ensemble/Orchestra, led by Betel Bill Emery (trombone) and Gerard Bendiks (drums, percussion).

Daagnim is the pioneer "new music" organization in Texas and the Southern States, and was co-founded by ECM and 1750 Arch St. Records artist Art Lande. The group has produced workshops by Lande ("Use of the Whole Instrument") and Anthony Braxton, as well as made rehearsal and performance space available for creative musicians and artists. Currently, members of daagnim are using four main spaces for performance: The Allen Street Gallery, D.J.'s (a new wave cafe that also caters to the New Music scene), the Ladies' Social Club, and Benny's (located near NTSU in Denton).

Daagnim is also responsible for the Third Ear Festival of Music, a three-weekend/six-day event featuring local creative musicians, in conjunction with the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts.

Also worth mentioning are the programs "Miles Out" and "Profiles" on KERA-FM in Dallas. They are both produced by daagnim co-founder Heinasirkka Dennis Gonzalez and are the only programs in this "sector of the planet" that feature New Music. The programs are so successful that the station is always deluged with calls and letters requesting more time for the shows, which have a combined weekly length of just under two hours! Gonzalez always manages to squeeze in at least 80 years of music into that hour and 3/4. Braxton and trumpeter Hugh Reagan have even been co-hosts on this groundbreaking show.



The local press, including the monthly jazz tabloid (**Texas Jazz**) has not yet started giving support to creative music, which, as we have figured, is the case in most places in the U.S. Neither daagnim or the Houston Free Music Orchestra are yet considered to be "jazz" organizations. You will be hearing much more from daagnim and Texas.

Addresses: "Miles Out/Profiles"
c/o KERA-FM,
3000 Harry Hines,
Dallas, Texas 75201 USA
(New Music promos are welcome!)
daagnim,
1127 N. Clinton,
Dallas, Texas 75208 USA

— **Birk Resendaag**

AUSTRALIA

Some fine music has been heard in Australia lately, from Earl Hines, Stan Getz, Charlie Byrd, and especially an excellent Chico Freeman Quartet with Buster Williams, Kenny Kirkland and Billy Hart.

Also touring here for the Adelaide Arts Festival was the Moe Koffman Quintet, whom I didn't hear, but by all reports they were uninteresting. The other jazz band featured at

the Festival was the Bruce Cale Quartet. Bassist/composer Cale returned to Sydney in 1978 after some ten years' experience in England and the US, and has established himself as one of the most original composers leading a band here. He differs from most non-commercial musicians here in that he eschews the heated intensity that most of our best creative soloists strive for, in favour of a more understated avenue of expression. Determinedly subtle, without necessarily being "cool". "The Bruce Cale Quartet at the Opera House" on 44 Records is one of the better Australian jazz records. His current band, heard in Adelaide, has a different personnel, with the talented and very promising young Dale Barlow on tenor and soprano, the much-respected Roger Frampton on piano and the very constructive drummer Phil Treloar. It is a band worth hearing; unfortunately Cale, like most modern band-leaders here, finds regular work elusive.

— *Adrian Jackson*

ENGLAND

LONDON — One of the highlights of the recent Camden Jazz Week at London's Roundhouse was the McCoy Tyner Sextet (Joe Ford - reeds; Carl Ector - violin; Avery Sharpe - bass; George Johnson Jr. - drums; Guilherme Franco - percussion). The pianist last performed here some four or five years ago and his two appearances during the week were played to full and enthusiastic houses. In the main the band was successful, but there were some weak spots. For example, it was difficult to tell whether Avery Sharpe's sound problems were due to equipment or the acoustics at the Roundhouse, but his playing lacked strength and he had trouble getting his ideas down. And Carl Ector's intonation was at times, quite suspect. This was particularly disturbing on his unison lines with Joe Ford and Tyner. He didn't appear relaxed in the setting (I should point out that violinist John Blake was on the second gig at the Roundhouse). But aside from that, the tension never lapsed, with swells and troughs, multifarious climaxes, colourful and vibrant percussion work from Franco and, of course, Tyner himself. A compelling performance, and the audience responded appropriately.

Peter Boizot's Pizza Express in Dean Street has long been known as one of the leading venues for mainstream jazz and during the past year his newest club, Pizza On The Park, in Knightsbridge has come into its own as the venue where jazz in duo can be heard to good advantage. Placing a duo in jazz presents a problem in that most club audiences are geared to hearing larger groups and consequently noise level tends to obscure the music, so Boizot's policy at The Park fills a gap. The room itself is well appointed and the acoustics are good. Visiting Americans are often slotted in when they turn up and last month Roland Hanna was in town and did a few days with bassist Peter Ind.

Hanna and Ind have worked together before and it's obviously a fruitful partnership. Both are fine players with the thorough musical knowledge that encourages freedom. The subtle harmonies that Hanna produced, for instance, in *A Child Is Born*, (it is, in fact, his tune) were absolutely beautiful and Ind's keen ear guaranteed the perfect choice of bass notes. The balanced interplay and sensitive superimposition of their individual lines worked with natural ease

and Ind's masterful use of harmonics yielded clear, resonating notes. As one fan commented ...jazz for the connoisseur!

For a while when George Coleman came to town, Ronnie Scott's club was filled mainly with other musicians, but now he's drawing more and more jazz fans and it's about time! Coleman's a tremendous saxophone player and a great jazz musician. His technique is phenomenal and his energy output staggering... which, combined with a real "feel" for the music, makes for an unforgettable experience. With him were Hilton Ruiz (piano), Herbie Lewis (bass) and Billy Higgins (drums).

— *Barbara Ind*

CLAUDE WILLIAMS

**Pizza Express, London, England
March 27, 1980**

As a member of Jay McShann's all-star quintet,

the violinist Claude Williams made a memorable UK debut at the 1979 Capital Festival held in London last July. On that occasion, he was joined in McShann's front line by the estimable Buddy Tate and supported by a first-rate rhythm section which reunited McShann with drummer Gus Johnson and bassist Gene Ramey. Even so, Williams shone and aroused much favourable comment. So a follow-up visit was to be expected. This time Williams was the featured soloist, working with the guitarist Diz Disley and a second guitarist and bassist. Disley has had a lengthy career in British revivalist jazz and has lately earned fame and fortune as leader of Stephane Grappelli's accompanying trio. Promoter Robert Masters took the view that Disley's previous experience as foil to a fiddler made him an ideal companion for Williams. Nothing could have been further from the truth. Thus Williams, a Kansas City veteran known for recordings with Andy Kirk and Count Basie, was saddled with a trio hardly capable of swing and possessed of rudimentary

photograph of Milford Graves and Sven Ake Johansson by Massimo D'Amato



knowledge of Kansas City jazz and its repertoire.

The tour included a two-night stopover at Pizza Express, now London's leading mainstream jazz house, and it is the measure of Williams' triumph that he cast aside the constraints set by his accompanists and soared spiritedly aloft on a varied programme of ballads and familiar standards.

Williams has retained a lively interest in jazz developments despite his age (he's 72) and shows a penchant for attractive linear excursions on his material, while his attack, as befits his background, is forceful, to say the least.

Williams' skills are such that any anxiety that he might not sustain audience attention through three sets was soon dispelled. His sound, less astringent than that of Stuff Smith, eschews the saccharine inflections that afflict some jazz violinists and fortunately, its degree of amplification set no problems in the basement room.

Cherokee was the evening's standout: a wonderful harmonic exposition, with splendid tonal variety and a knowing nod or two to Parker's *Ko-Ko*. *Moten Swing* also worked well with the trio trying hard: Disley's concept is based on Django Reinhardt and it must be said that it sat oddly with that of Williams.

Hopefully, Williams will return soon to England but this time in faster and more appropriate company. Well-preserved and sharp in appearance, "Fiddler" Williams stands for a style of *hot* jazz violin that may be disappearing, yet which remains glowingly alive when he plays.

— *Peter Vacher*

PERCUSSION

Milford Graves, Sven Ake Johansson, Paul Lytton, Frank Perry.

**L'Arte della Percussione (The Art of Percussion)
Pisa, Italy**

February 21-24, 1980

A program involving only four percussionists was set up in order to:

(1) verify the potential of an instrument or family of instruments in an isolated context. The drums and percussions in improvised music have been freed from a supporting and complementary function. On one hand this has revealed the essence of rhythm in its relation with music and the process of life; on the other hand it has broadened the expressive spectrum of colors and tones, heading towards an absolute sound-freedom away from the generally accepted conventions.

(2) look for a common line that unites improvising musicians working with different methods in different environments (America, Germany, England) wishing to share to simply be part of a common experience.

The program consisted of one solo from each percussionist, each of them meeting the audience on a workshop basis, and also there was space for an aleatory part open to any solution. That is, each musician in the last evening performance in the theatre, might have chosen to play again in solo or play in come combination with the others. But before the incredible final concert, I must say that the four solos showcased four different yet equally exceptional musicians.

Milford Graves once again evidenced his capacity of synthesizing centuries of musical traditions, the whole drum culture, making them live in his percussive, vocal and theatrical

improvisations (he started his performance with his head inside a drum, the instrument also visually part of the body, with an effective pantomime).

Paul Lytton was more turned towards a balance of developing unorthodox techniques for his improvising and the creation of an extremely rich universe of sound through the use of electricity, and homemade tools which form his very personal kit (I would like to recommend his first solo record, that gives a very true reflection of Lytton's amazing music, "The Inclined Stick", Po Torch Records).

Sven Ake Johansson was more concerned with the dynamic possibilities of the traditional drum kit; nonetheless, he manipulates it to an extreme, although he also abandons it in order to use different objects like metal bands, or to sing and play accordian. Johansson's solo work is at its best in two records on the German label SAJ, but the impact of a live performance should not be missed, a wonderful musician.

Frank Perry played inside the cage that he built with a huge amount of gongs, bells, glass bells, and oriental percussion instruments. He gives the impression of letting them sound by themselves; he seems to look for an almost pure beauty of the sound itself, the music is the result of slight changes and slow variations and retains an almost mystical atmosphere, with few moments of intensity, and the intelligence of the improviser makes it an exceptional experience.

Each musician on one of the four days, in the afternoon program, met the people in different ways: Graves gave a lecture on Babi Music, concerning the philosophical, historical and physiological implications of rhythm, Lytton and Johansson played briefly and then dialogued with the audience, Perry illustrated some fascinating theories on music and astrology.

The final concert of the four percussionists together was much more than the sum of four individual talents. The agreement on a human level turned into an even more rewarding harmony in musical terms. During the concert (approached with caution by everyone, concerned with extrapolating from their own conceptions something to fit with those of their fellow musicians), the space available for each percussionist became larger and larger, rather than more limited, and the four seemed to have been playing together for years. Graves, who limited his action at first, found in Johansson a perfect mate for some high energy duets, Lytton was absolutely fantastic in laying a carpet of sounds that turned this concert into a beautiful, unexpected dream. I feel uncomfortable in writing about it, it had to be experienced, who might imagine a Swedish drummer throwing confetti at an American drummer during his solo, as part of a unique, arranged plan?

To date this might be the most rewarding program that the C.R.I.M. (Centro per la Ricerca sull'Improvisazione Musicale) has presented, and it will continue after the next Pisa Festival (V Rassegna Internazionale del Jazz, June 25-29).

— *Roberto Terlizzi*

ODDS & SODS

The 27th annual Newport Jazz Festival will be held June 27 to July 6, 1980, in New York City, Saratoga Springs, the Town of Hempstead

and Waterloo Village, New Jersey. The festival will feature simultaneous concerts at Avery Fisher Hall, Carnegie Hall and Town Hall as well as a Celebration of Swing at Roseland Ballroom, a solo piano series at Carnegie Recital Hall, the Staten Island Ferry Boat Ride, a weekend of jazz at Waterloo Village, and two 12-hour concerts at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. The 52nd Street Jazz Fair and a KOOL Newport Jazz Festival evening in the Town of Hempstead will conclude the festival.

"Year of the Bird - a Tribute to Charlie Parker" will be produced in cooperation with Ira Gitler, at both Carnegie and Avery Fisher Halls. Over 40 musicians will perform at both venues on Friday, June 27. Co-produced by Richard M. Sudhalter with Joel E. Siegel, "Putin on the Ritz - A Jazz Tribute to Fred Astaire" will feature Mel Torme, Stan Getz, George Shearing, Sylvia Syms and others. Rosetta Reitz is the co-producer of "Blues is A Woman" with Big Mama Thornton, Adelaide Hall, Sippie Wallace, Linda Hopkins, Nell Carter, and narrator Carmen McRae. New Audiences will co-produce an evening with Angela Boffill and a tribute to the late Eddie Jefferson with Manhattan Transfer, Jon Hendricks and Dizzy Gillespie. "Toshiko Akiyoshi and Friends", a co-production of the KOOL Newport Jazz Festival and National Public Radio's "Jazz Alive" will include Toshiko along with Max Roach, Phil Woods and the Akiyoshi-Tabackin Big Band. This concert will be broadcast live nationwide on National Public Radio.

A new venue for the Festival, Town Hall, will be the site of a major presentation of new music. Over the ten-day Festival, artists presented will include the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Beaver Harris/Don Pullen & 360 Degree Music Experience, Carla Bley Band, Oliver Lake, Leroy Jenkins, Julius Hemphill, World Saxophone Quartet, Archie Shepp Quintet and others. Town Hall will also host David Chertok's popular Jazz On Film program.

Sarah Vaughan, Dave Brubeck, Gato Barbieri, Lionel Hampton, Chick Corea, Dexter Gordon, McCoy Tyner, Gerry Mulligan, George Benson, Benny Carter, and a host of others will perform on various programs. Two performances of Jazz Latino, co-produced by Felipe Luciano, will star Tito Puente, Mongo Santamaria, Eddie Palmieri and Dizzy Gillespie. "Swinging Taps" with Benny Carter's Orchestra and dancers Honi Coles, Sandman Sims, Buster Brown, Chuck Greene and others, will spotlight the Tap Dance renaissance.

Newport Jazz Festival brochures, with specifics on the 1980 Festival, may be obtained by writing to P.O. Box 1169, Ansonia Station, New York, N.Y. 10023 or by calling (212) 787-2020. The New York Sheraton Hotel, located at Seventh Avenue between 55th and 56th Streets, is the official headquarters for the Festival. The central KOOL Newport Jazz Festival box office for all events will be located in the lobby beginning May 27.

Billy Bang's Survival Ensemble was heard in concert at Soundscape April 24 and 25. The violinist is becoming an increasing force in New York music circles and he will be heard July 4 and 5 at Alley's Bar with David Murray, Fred Hopkins and Rashied Ali.... Oliver Lake and Leroy Jenkins presented an evening of duets and solos March 25 at University Union Social Room.... Woody Shaw appeared in concert May 16 at Symphony Space Theatre.... The Jimmy Lyons Quartet were at The Tin Palace May 2-4.... Roland Young collaborated with

dancer Dianne McIntyre May 10 at Cami Hall. Dianne will also be appearing June 13 and 14 at Symphony Space in the company of Max Roach, Oliver Lake, Gary Bartz, Arthur Blythe and Hamiet Bluiett.... The Malachi Thompson Quartet gave a program of blues, jazz and gospel at the American Museum of Natural History on May 18.... George Lewis will be program director of the Creative Music Studio's summer program from July 28 to August 24.... Nomi Rosen (flute) and pianist Connie Crothers will be heard June 1 at Carnegie Recital Hall.

Pontiac, Michigan is the venue of a series of concerts of "New Music" to be held in May, June and July. The series began with a concert May 17 by Anthony Davis and reedman Anthony Holland. Holland returns June 22 for a duet presentation with guitarist A. Spencer Barefield. The final concert, to be held July 12, features the New Chamber Jazz Quintet.... The AACM presented Douglas Ewart and Orchestra Inventions in concert April 19 at Chicago's Eleventh Street Theatre.

Operation Sail 1980 is holding a Benefit Ball May 29 at the New England Aquarium in Boston. The expensive affair will feature Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Getz, George Benson and the Ramsey Lewis Trio.... Sandy's Jazz Revival in Beverly, Massachusetts opened for the 1980 season on April 5 with Bob Wilber guesting with the Widespread Depression Orchestra.... The Hartford Jazz Society is celebrating its 20th anniversary with a two-day festival to be held October 18 and 19.... Marion Brown's String Trio performed in Hartford at Real Art Ways on March 15.

Ruby Braff and Dick Hyman were featured at Cincinnati's Cuvier Press Club on April 13 in a concert presentation of the Classic Jazz Society of Southwestern Ohio.... Burlington, Iowa is the site of a week-long summer festival. Traditional jazz is part of the festivities and these take place June 21 and 22 with such bands as Gene Mayl's Dixieland Rhythm Kings, the St. Louis Ragtimers and an all-star band of mid-west musicians.... A serious attempt to restore and revive Beale Street in Memphis (once the hub of black entertainment in that city) seems to be meeting with some success. Entertainment complexes such as Blues Alley and the

Beale Street Cabaret are part of the new activity.

Bee Hive recording artist Ronnie Mathews was busy during April with club and concert appearances on the East Coast before heading to Japan for a ten-concert tour in May. Mathews' second Bee Hive album is called "Legacy" and features the pianist with Bill Hardman, Ricky Ford, Walter Booker Jr. and Jimmy Cobb. Release is expected in the fall of this year.

The National Endowment for the Arts has announced that beginning in the fall of 1980 the Endowment's Artists-In-Schools program will conduct a pilot project placing jazz artists in schools for year-long residencies. These will not be teaching positions; rather, the musicians will be available for performance/workshop/resource presentations in collaboration with the school's existing program. Larry Ridley is coordinating the program and can be reached at 37 Blenheim Road, Englishtown, New Jersey 07726 USA.

Ron Carter has disbanded the quartet he led for several years with Kenny Barron, Buster Williams and Ben Riley. New personnel will be pianist Ted Lo, bassist Leon Maleson and drummer Wilby Fletcher.

WFDU-FM, a college radio station in Teaneck, N.J. has changed its programming. Its new focus will be traditional musics of America. ...Benjamin Franklin V has hosted a radio show in Columbia, S.C. for several years which focuses on bop and modern mainstream to the present. It is called "Jazz In Retrospect" and will begin being heard by a wider audience July 1 when National Public Radio are to distribute it nationally.... Jazz Alive is still the big show on Public Radio and the summer schedule is as stimulating as ever with music ranging from Bill Holman's big band to the Globe Unity Orchestra at Moers in 1979.

Guitarist Ole Molin was recipient of the 1980 Ben Webster Jazz Award in Denmark.

The first East Lansing Blues and Jazz Festival took place April 18-20 with Son Seals and the World Saxophone Quartet as the principal headliners.... The Cape Cod Jazz Society has organized a Memorial Day Weekend festival at the Tivoli Room of Duffy's Hyannis Resort. The New Black Eagle Jazz Band, Buddy Rich, Scott Hamilton, Bob Wilber, Dick Johnson, Doc Cheatham, Vic Dickenson and Earl Hines were among those scheduled to appear.... La Grande Parade du Jazz takes place July 19-22 in Nice. There will be an All Star Band from Concord (Hamilton, Vache, McKenna), a Basie-style band under Nat Pierce's direction and a Benny Carter band with trumpeters Clark Terry, Doc Cheatham and Jimmy Maxwell. More than 250 musicians will participate in the event.

The Northsea Festival will be held in the Hague on July 11-13.... The Detroit-Montreux Jazz Festival will be held over Labor Day weekend in the Motor City at various locations.... The Verona, Italy Jazz Ottanta is being held June 5 to 8 with Julius Hemphill, Andrew Hill, Bill Dixon, Air, Cecil Taylor, Horace Tapscott and George Russell as the featured leaders. The focus this year is on composers and arrangers. Each night after the concerts there will be music at the Can Da La Scala club....

A Festival of Traditional Jazz will be held November 7-9 at the Holiday Inn, O'Hare/Kennedy in Rosemont, Illinois... A series of concerts is being held this spring in Rome under the auspices of Italian radio/TV. Artists performing have included Lee Konitz, Gil Evans, Sun

Ra, Anthony Braxton, Willem Breuker, Old and New Dreams, Memphis Slim, Chris McGregor and Albert Mangelsdorff.

Thirteen concerts recorded at the 20th annual Ljubljana Jazz Festival in Yugoslavia are now available for broadcast in Canada and the U.S. from the Broadcasting Foundation of America, 52 Vanderbilt Ave., Suite 1810, New York, N.Y. 10017. Gary Burton, Joe Henderson and Nucleus are among the featured bands.

Creative World announced the publication of "Stan Kenton: Artistry in Rhythm" by Dr. William F. Lee. The retail price of this biography is \$24.95 and is available from Creative Press, P.O. Box 35216, Los Angeles, California 90035.... **Klacto** is the name of Hawaii's jazz newsletter. It is available free from stores and clubs in Hawaii. Write Mike Bloom, 916 McCully Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96826 for more details.... "Jazz Lives" is the title of Michael Ullman's new book. There are interviews/essays with such musicians as Joe Venuti, Doc Cheatham, Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Rollins, Betty Carter, Karl Berger and Anthony Braxton. ...A selected discography of Lionel Hampton (1966-1978) has been published by Otto Fluckiger, Talackerstrasse 7, 4153 Reinach, Switzerland. The fifteen-page booklet sells for \$1.50. ...Burt Korall (2 Park Lane, Mt. Vernon, N.Y. 10552) has begun research for a book on jazz drummers. He is seeking significant information on jazz drummers — especially concerning the early pioneers. Anyone wishing to participate in this project should contact Burt Korall at the above address.

Sweet Earth Records has released a well-recorded studio effort by Sun Ra called "The Other Side of the Sun" (SER 1003). Upcoming on Sweet Earth are albums by Claudine Amina Myers, Stephen McCraven and Ed Blackwell.... Timeless Records in Holland have announced several new releases. These will eventually become available on Muse in the U.S. SJP 132 features Clint Houston with Joanne Brackeen; SJP 133 "Lionel Hampton in Haarlem"; SJP 134 Mike Nock solo; SJP 140 - David Liebman. ... Japo, ECM's subsidiary label, has four new releases - Manfred Schoof (60030), AMM 111 (60031), Om (60032), Elton Dean Quintet (60033).... The most recent releases from Famous Door are Bill Watrous in Hollywood (HL 127), Mousey Alexander Sextet (HL 130) and Eddie Miller's New Yorkers (HL 131).... New Ips from Art Pepper and George Cables are due from Contemporary Records. Also in preparation are albums by Joe Farrell, Mike Garson, Joe Henderson and Tete Montoliu.... New two-fers from Prestige/Milestone include Blue Mitchell: "A Blue Time"; Ben Webster/Joe Zawinul: "Travelin' Light" (also has some tracks from the Webster/Bill Harris collaboration), Charles Mingus: "Portrait" (two of his Mingus releases) and George Wallington: "Our Delight".

One of the most respected bass players in modern jazz, Ronnie Boykins, died of a heart attack April 20 at his home in Brooklyn.

— compiled by John Norris

A LETTER

I would like to thank you for your recent review of B1p 12060, B1p 12061, B1p 12062, and B1p 12063 in the April issue of **Coda**.

As a note of clarification in reference to the review I state the facts as follows:

In the review by John Norris he mentions that "A technical note on these reissues: much

photograph of Ronnie Mathews by Gerard Futrick



of the top end has been removed from the music on these reissues — presumably to reduce the surface noise from the original LPs.”

Although this is basically correct in reference to BLP 12060 and BLP 12061 (reissued from the original LPs), it is incorrect in reference to BLP 12062 and BLP 12063. These particular reissues were transferred from the original master tapes of the recording dates. All Dawn material to be reissued by Biograph Records in the future are from the original master tapes. The Raney & Thompson original tapes have still not turned up and that is why we used the LPs.

As to “No attempt has been made, either to augment the original LPs with extra material from the sessions — something which could have been done in the case of the Sims and Cohn LPs.” In the case of the Al Cohn and the Zoot Sims records, we have received no additional takes and/or “extra material” from these sessions that could have been included. There is a full album of Zoot Sims (vol. 2) which we have just released, plus the original album titled “Tenors Anyone?” which contains two additional sides of Zoot Sims and will be reissued soon. This album also features Stan Getz, Wardell Gray and Paul Quinichette. It would have been inappropriate to disorient the Sims material in this case since we want to stay as close as possible to reissue the Dawn catalog as it first appeared over twenty years ago.

In the future we would welcome any questions from your reviews concerning the accuracy of the Dawn Catalog.

— *Arnold S. Caplin, president
Biograph Records*

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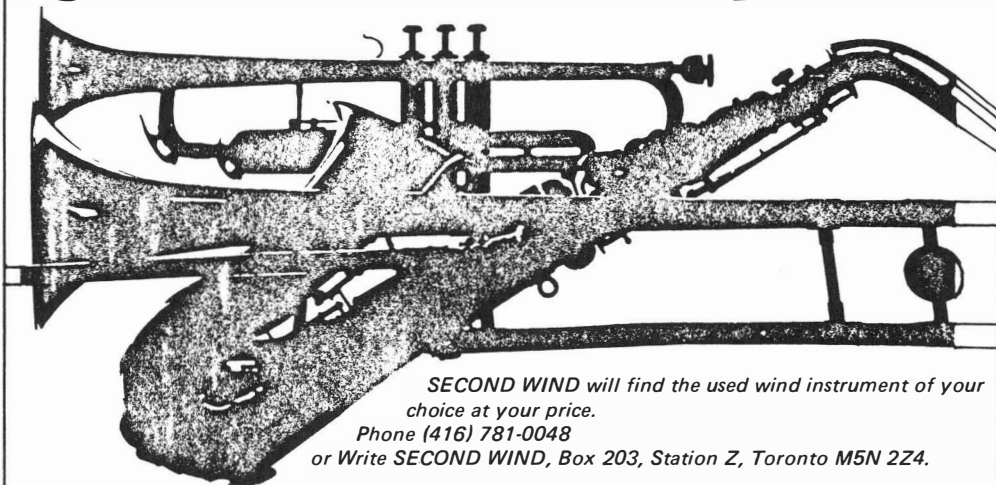
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February 1978: Vol. 31, Nos. 1 & 2: Gerry Mulligan, ECM, Monty Alexander, W. Devreux.
July 1978: Vol. 31, No. 7: Lionel Hampton, Gil Evans & Stan Tracey, George Wein.
August 1978: Vol. 31, No. 8: Dicky Wells, Bobby Wellins, New York, New Orleans Jazz.
January 1979: Vol. 32, No. 1: Albert Mangelsdorff, Akiyoshi-Tabackin, N.Y. Avant Garde.
February 1979: Vol. 32, No. 2: Shorty Rogers, Jelly Roll Morton, Readers' Poll Results.
March 1979: Vol. 33, No. 3: Al Haig, Jay McShann, Lennie Tristano.

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131 (September 1974 - Rashied Ali/Andrew Cyrille/Milford Graves, Johnny Hartman, Swing)

132 (October 1974 - Karl Berger, Jazz Crossword, Johnny Shines)

133 (November 1974 - Charles Delaunay pt. 1, Rex Stewart, Howard King)

134 (December 1974 - Julian Priester, Steve McCall, Muggsy Spanier Big Band)

135 (January 1975 - J.R. Monterose, Armstrong Filmography, Strata-East Records)

137 (April 1975 - Mose Allison, Ralph Sutton, Nathan Davis, Cross Cultures)

138 (May 1975 - Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen, Art Ensemble on Nessa, Junior Wells, Graeme Bell)

142 (Oct. 1975 - Claude Thornhill, Brew Moore)

144 (February 1976 - Art Farmer, Woody Shaw, Red Rodney, A Space Concerts)

145 (March 1976 - Betty Carter, Marc Levin, Pat Martino, Ben Webster European disco.)

146 (April 1976 - Delaunay pt. 2, Leroy Cooper, Noah Howard)

147 (May 1976 - Oliver Lake, Miles Davis)

148 (June 1976 - Harold Vick, Jimmy Heath)

150 (Sept. 1976 - Milford Graves, Will Bradley)

151 (Oct. 1976 - Don Pullen, Benny Waters)

152 (Dec. 1976 - Warne Marsh, Bill Dixon)

153 (Feb. 1977 - Steve Lacy, Marty Grosz, Mal Waldron, Blues News)

154 (April 1977 - Milt Buckner, Christmann/Schonenberg Duo)

155 (June 1977 - George Lewis, Lloyd Glenn)

156 (Aug. 1977 - Stephane Grappelli, Stuart Broomer, Moers Festival, Hot Club de France)

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WANTED by *Coda* staff: Abbey Lincoln Live At Misty - KIVA Records KV 101 (Japanese). Contact us at *Coda* Magazine, Box 87, Station J, Toronto, Ontario M4J 4X8 Canada.

WANTED: Flying Dutchman album "Giant Is Awakened" Horace Tapscott, p; Walter Savage, b; David Bryant, b; Everett Brown Jr, d; Black Arthur Blythe, as; 1969 Los Angeles. Contact Mark Weber, 1559 Shelley Ave., Upland, Calif. 91786 USA.

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INNER CITY 1071



TOMMY FLANAGAN PLAYS THE MUSIC OF

Harold Arlen, whose melodies form the basis of this Flanagan compendium, ranks alongside Ellington and Gershwin as one of the composers most respected and most often recorded by jazz musicians over a half century span. Born in 1905 in Buffalo, N.Y., he was a professional pianist at 15 (as Tommy himself would be). After working as a pit band musician in *George White's Scandals of 1928*, he began composing the following year and had his first hit with *Get Happy*, in Earl Carroll's *Vanities of 1930*.

The endless series of Arlen successes (many of them with lyricist Ted Koehler) provided popular singers and jazz musicians with a great source of material. Flanagan's choices are all long familiar. *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* was introduced by Aida Ward in a 1931 Cotton Club show for which Koehler and Arlen wrote the score. *Over The Rainbow* (1939, with words by Yip Harburg) was of course Judy Garland's timeless wonder in *The Wizard of Oz*.

A Sleepin' Bee (words by Truman Capote and Arlen) was introduced by Diahann Carroll in the 1954 stage show *House of Flowers*. *Ill Wind* is another Cotton Club show product, vintage 1934. *Out Of This World* was sung by Bing Crosby using Johnny Mercer's lyrics, in a 1945 film by the same name.

One of the most brilliant examples of Arlen's melodic sense and unconventional construction is *One For My Baby*, another Mercer collaboration, which Fred Astaire sang in a 1943 movie, *The Sky's The Limit*. *My Shining Hour* has the identical credits.

Best of all there is the exquisite *Last Night When We Were Young*, for which producer, Helen Merrill adds a vocal that is understated even by her own uniquely subtle standards. It is hard to imagine a more perfect wedding of singer, song and accompanist.

You will notice that there has been no evaluation of Tommy Flanagan. I could go into elaborate details about the bop influence discernible on the up tempos, the Tatum hints in *Ill Winds*, and so forth; but it is very apparent that Flanagan's interpretations speak for themselves. He has long been called an underrated artist; with the release of albums like this, the rating seems likely at last to draw level with the talent. For this we must thank not only Tommy himself, but also Helen Merrill, the prettiest producer, with the most tasteful of ideas.

INNER CITY 1072



AL HAIG PLAYS THE MUSIC OF JEROME KERN

There is a curious sense of history revisited, or rewritten, in the release of this album by Al Haig. More than three decades ago, in 1947, Haig was a member of the large orchestra (woodwinds, strings, French horns) conducted by Johnny Richards for a Dizzy Gillespie record session. The date was dedicated to Jerome Kern; in fact, two of the four songs recorded, *The Way You Look Tonight* and *All The Things You Are*, are found in the present Haig collection.

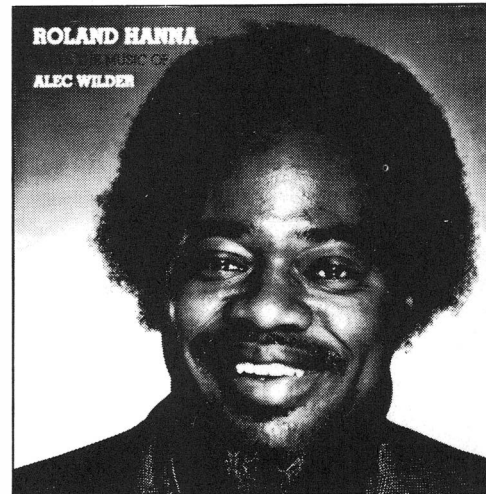
The two 78 singles by Dizzy were issued by a long-defunct company, Paramount Records, and were promptly withdrawn because of complaints from the Jerome Kern estate. Attitudes in those days were very different; any variation on a melody could be, and occasionally was, interpreted as desecration.

The present album finds Al in his element, provided with material from the long-prolific pen of Jerome Kern. A New Yorker, born in 1885 (he died there in 1945), Kern is credited as having contributed to the modernization of musical theatre. His songs were invariably imaginative, often harmonically and melodically unconventional. *All The Things You Are* (written, ironically, for a flop stage show in 1939, *Very Warm For May*) has become one of the most used of all standards in jazz circles because of its extraordinary harmonic/melodic conception.

Haig's version of *Yesterdays* (introduced in a 1933 musical, *Roberta*) finds him in a reflective mood, with fills and ornamentations that are at times evocative of Art Tatum. It is interesting that even on the up tempo pieces such as *I'm Old Fashioned*, Al bears little resemblance to Bud Powell, who was generally accepted in his day as the pace-setting bebop pianist. The supple bass work on this and other tracks is by Jamil Nasser.

It is rewarding to hear once again this evidence of Kern's very special talent, and to find his songs in the hands of an interpreter who knows just how to deal with them, how far to wander and how soon to return. No less welcome is the renewed presence of Al Haig on the recording scene, displaying the facility and good taste that has marked his work ever since those long gone days with Dizzy.

INNER CITY 1073



ROLAND HANNA PLAYS THE MUSIC OF ALEC WILDER

Sir Roland Hanna is not just an honorary nobleman like some of the Dukes, Counts and Earls who have graced the music world. In 1969, after giving a tour of concerts for charity to help young students in Africa, he was knighted by the late President William Tubman of Liberia for his humanitarian interests and activities.

Born in Detroit, Roland was a couple of years younger than another budding local pianist, Tommy Flanagan, who became one of his early influences. The son of a preacher in a Sanctified church, Hanna was exposed to rhythm and blues but soon became absorbed in classical music. Long after his career had taken off, he recommended his studies, attending the Eastman School and, later, Juilliard.

His credits in the later 1950s included stints with Benny Goodman and Charles Mingus. From 1960-63 he accompanied Sarah Vaughan, of whom he recalls: "That was a great learning experience; the time I put in with Sarah helped me to develop a style of my own."

After playing with the New York Jazz Sextet, whose members included Art Farmer and Benny Golson, he joined the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra and spent much of his time with the band for the next seven years, touring Europe, Japan and the Soviet Union. During and after that he diversified his activities with television staff work on the Dick Cavett show, overseas jaunts with the New York Jazz Quartet (the ex-Sextet), solo concerts, gigs with Zoot Sims, Dick Gibson's Colorado Springs Jazz Party and the Nice Jazz Festival. All in all, a satisfying life, both for him and for his listeners.

Hanna characterizes Wilder as an unorthodox composer whose areas span the classical and popular worlds. He has been able to fuse the elements of European and American music, creating a rare variety and diversity in his writing.

Summing up his feelings about this unique album, Roland Hanna observed, "What makes me happiest of all is that Alec Wilder really liked it when he heard it. That was a special source of pleasure to me." It now becomes your turn to share in the pleasure of Wilder and Hanna.

—LEONARD FEATHER

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