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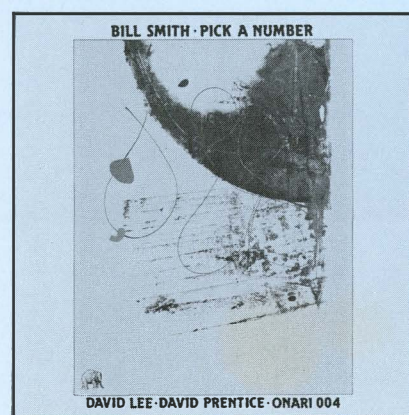
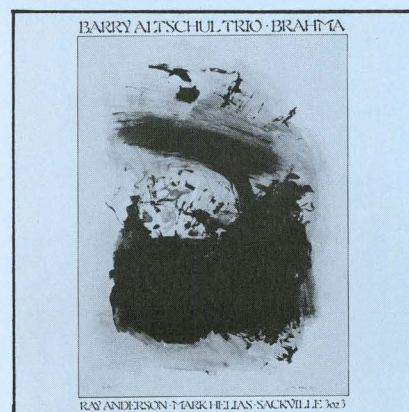
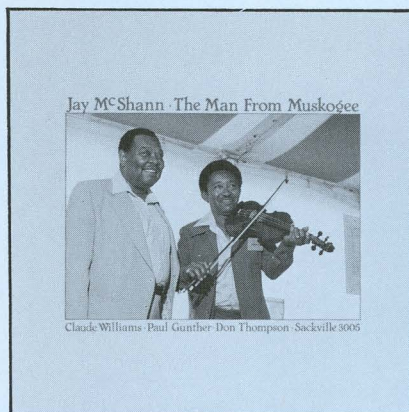


THE JAZZ MAGAZINE \* ISSUE NUMBER 175 (1980) \* \$1.50

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BY BILL SMITH



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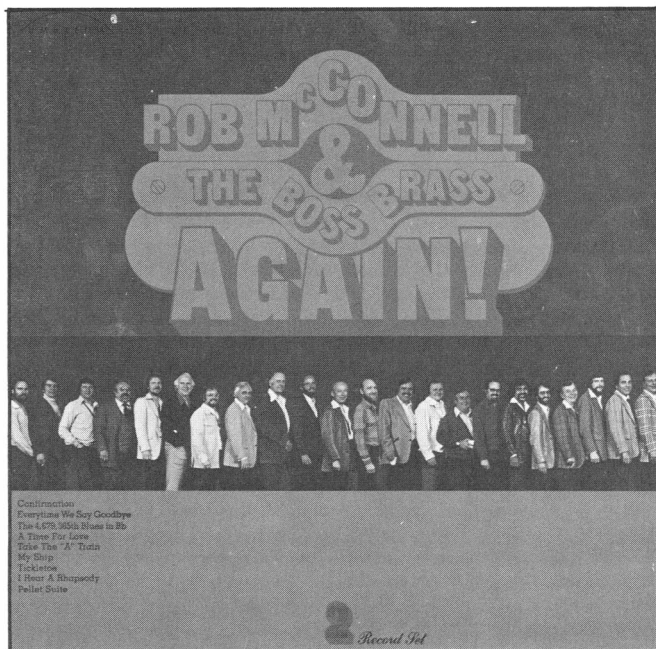
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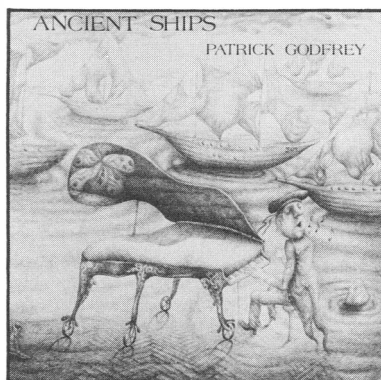


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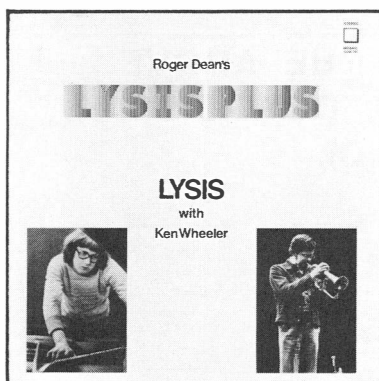
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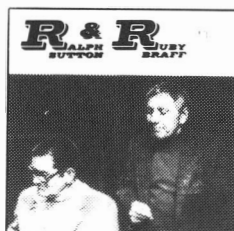
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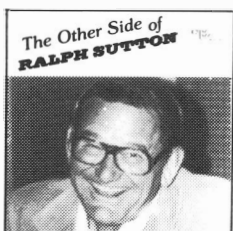


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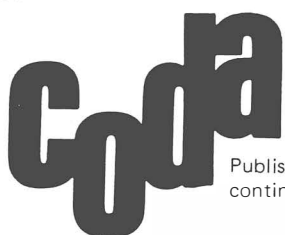
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BILL EVANS  
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Pianist Bill Evans died in New York on  
September 15, 1980, at the age of 51.



AN INTERVIEW WITH

# ANTHONY DAVIS

BY BILL SMITH



**BILL SMITH:** Two of the pieces you played at the concert this afternoon in Toronto, one was called *Beyond Reason* and the other was called *Anthem For The Generation That Died*, both about death. Do you have some kind of preoccupation about death?

**ANTHONY DAVIS:** Yes, because I'm young and some of my friends are young and we don't realize how close it is to us. I felt it was something I really had to deal with. It maybe changed my outlook about what I was doing, because you can't rely on having an unlimited time to do what you're going to do. You only have a certain amount of time on the planet and you don't know how much it is.

**Bill:** A lot of the titles to your pieces are quite dramatic in some way — verbally dramatic, I mean. Is the music that you play descriptive or theatrical in some way?

**Anthony:** I always think of titles after I write the music. A lot of times I try to think of titles that are evocative, that will do something to the listener, so it's not just something like

"AB-74" or whatever. Because what I want to do is approach people on all different levels. So that if someone listens to my music and they look at a record of mine and see a title, they can get something out of the title. That's my view, maybe other people, like Braxton, have different ideas about it. I want to say something with my titles (I think Braxton is saying something with his titles, it's an interesting, different idea). So that people who deal with words, who are more comfortable with words (because a lot of people are more comfortable with words than with music) might find it easier to get into the music, if they have an idea or concept to think about that they can tie the music into. Anything I can use to get the listener to check out my musical ideas I think is great.

Some of my music is about painting — like the Kandinski piece. I'm thinking of doing a collaboration with a painter, Dennis Cardin, where I was inspired by a Picasso show I went to see in Paris. The idea is that if he did a

study towards a painting, then I would do a study around that. Then he would listen to what I had done musically in response to his first step and then he would do another step and I'd write music to that step and then he'd listen to that and do another step in the painting and then I'd do another piece of music. And we might get to the final thing and I'd put the final thing on a record and that would be the record. That's one idea I have, that would be a more developmental idea. I'm always interested in different ideas.

I once had a lesson with Roland Hanna and he said, "When you play the blues, you should always tell a story." Because when I was playing the blues I was always thinking about all the different substitutions and dumb shit that I was going to put on the blues, and I wasn't playing the blues.

So those kinds of things are happening. Sometimes I tell a story with the music, sometimes it can be narrative and sometimes it's dramatic in a sense. I like music to be



dramatic because I think sometimes people cop out, and they're frightened about making music dramatic. I don't think Beethoven was frightened of making his music dramatic, and I don't think Duke Ellington was frightened of the dramatic in his music. I don't think music is some precious little thing, so delicate that you can't have other thoughts while you're listening to it. I'm really interested in trying to get people into my musical ideas in any way that I can. So if they like dance, I'd be interested in doing something with dancers too. That would be very exciting to me.

**Bill:** So you think that there are real possibilities for interdisciplinary art....

**Anthony:** I think it is, but often what happens is too undisciplined for my tastes. A lot of the stuff that's done is not done on the right level. It's not done as seriously as the music. That's why I think some people were turned off from it. Theatre and music, or dance and music. Because the idea of a dancer just coming out and moving to the music, I think that's dumb. That, to me, is really stupid. I'd really be interested in working with a choreographer seriously. If they want to be serious about it, I'm really serious about it. I've had dancers approach me about, for example, the music from the "Of Blues And Dreams" record, of using the suite and of using characters from Debbie's novel and using dancers in it. I'm interested in other projects too. That's something I'd really like to do, but it has to be done at the right level. And the people who do the dance have to be as involved in dance and as involved in choreography as I am in the music I do.

**Bill:** Over the last two years you've received a lot of press in jazz magazines all over the world. Has this been because you've moved to New York City?

**Anthony:** I think in part that's been important. I think also because I started making a real, conscientious effort to play my own music. And I was in some groups that allowed me to play in Europe for the first time, that was really important. And getting to play in situations that showcased a broader range of my talents, because I think a lot of people had an idea of how I played, which wasn't all that I could do, because I've worked in a lot of different situations.

Coming to New York was important because I got to work in a lot of situations, so someone might hear me play one kind of music with one person and another kind of music with another person. That's what it was about for my first year in New York, and that's when I got most of my press coverage. Since then it's been more about doing my own music. But the press always goes in cycles. In New York you're the new boy in town, so you get the press for a while, usually for about a year, and then it slacks off and somebody replaces you because that's how it works. I was a novelty act.

But now what it's about is trying to present my own music. I've done some records, and I'll be developing that, so for a while it might be, "Oh, there's Anthony Davis playing that music again." You never know.

My first year here, I played with Leroy Jenkins, Barry Altschul, Oliver Lake, Rashied Ali... and each of those groups had completely different concepts. It was just different things within the music I wanted to be in. I didn't have to do bebop gigs or something like that. And I'm not putting down bebop, so if anyone reads this, don't think I'm putting down those

players, who are playing well. For those players it's their life. But for me it's not my life. It's not what I'm involved with. So I can do it, but it would be wrong for me to really do it.

I did some playing with singers, so some people got to hear me play standards with singers. That was interesting, but now I feel like I have to concentrate on doing my own music, to put the burden on myself and develop.

**Bill:** Are there lots of opportunities for you to perform?

**Anthony:** There are more and more. Especially for my group with James Newton. We're doing a lot of performances in Europe as a quartet, but most of our performances have been as a duet. I think there will be more work in the States later — I hope. It's very hard right now to play your music in America, because America is caught up in fashion all the time. And I don't think I'm known enough in America to really play constantly. I don't have records that have been available all over the States enough yet. I think that takes a while.

It takes longer in America because in a way it's more diverse than Europe, and less controlled. In Europe everyone knows everyone else. If you make an impression in Germany at one concert, then all the promoters might be at that concert. So somebody in Italy might hire you for a concert because you played in Germany. While in the United States, if you played a concert in Boston, they probably haven't heard you in Amherst, Massachusetts, which is so close by. There's less of a community of promoters. So you have certain agents that might control certain kinds of things, but they're usually a very devious lot.

I think the agents deal mostly in clubs, which I'm not so interested in. Because again that control aspect is a lot easier. If the club owners don't change every year, et cetera. But I should be able to play in colleges. And I've done concerts in community centers, because every small town has some kind of concert hall. So I would really be interested in doing a lot more playing in the States, but I think it's going to take a lot of time. And a lot of organization, because it just isn't organized at all. I think it will happen, because I've met someone in San Diego who's interested in arranging stuff for us in California. We need someone in Maine who wants to organize concerts for us. And so on. If we can get a community of people who are interested in promoting the music, and they all know each other, and they all talk to each other about what's really good, then maybe something can happen like that.

I like performing in different situations. I like doing very large concerts, and also smaller, intimate gatherings like I did here, art galleries. I really like having communication with the audience, and not necessarily having a large audience all the time, I like to be able to talk to the people.

Recently I did something at the University of Pennsylvania where I lectured in the first set: after each piece I went into a whole rap about how I wrote it, how it was structured, how I improvised and what I was trying to accomplish with it; what goals I had in mind when I was playing. I really tried to make them understand what the whole process of improvisation and playing our music is about, to make them feel what it was about. I played *Of Blues And Dreams* first, and asked them what they felt was going on. Then I started talking about how that piece of music was put together and what I was trying to do in it. Also talking

about the spiritual aspects of music, and about what kind of influences were at work, about the importance of the whole tradition of the music in anything you play, that's something I tried to get them to realize. To really think about when they hear music.

So I did a set like that, and then I just played for the second set.

I would like to do a whole solo piano thing like that. I'm really willing to talk about the music. Some people are not. They don't want to say anything — the music should speak for itself. They think it takes away from the mystique, the mystery of the music. I think there's enough mystery in the music itself, that we shouldn't be scared to talk about it. I don't think anyone can steal a musical idea from me. Sometimes people are too uptight about stuff like that, so I decided that it was a drag.

You can't really teach someone to improvise. You can give them the tools and give them a way to try to make them think. They have to develop their own thinking in that way. I don't like being aloof. I don't like the idea of my art and me being completely separated from the audience. That's one thing I really want to break down, and I think it's one of the problems the music's image has had in America, that not enough artists have been willing to do that. Often we've held our music aloof, because we were so worried about our music being taken seriously. We thought, "Oh, they're not treating our music on the same level as classical music, or Western European music." And that's all true, but you can't be traumatized by that to the extent that you lose sight of your real goal — which is to bring music to people, and try to move them with your music.

Trying to get them to understand more about you with music. I'm not going to lose sight of that at all. I'm able more and more to see the advantages of the position I'm in now, as opposed to having that aura of Western European music, which I don't really want. I don't want to have the status of a European musician. That whole elite thing, to me, just reinforces that idea of the artist being isolated and separated from people, and I don't think that's positive at all. Going to a concert hall to hear Horowitz play Chopin — even though Horowitz is great, fantastic — with everyone all dressed up, and you applaud and after an encore everyone goes home. To me that's not enough.

So now, I've come full circle to the point where I don't really want the kind of aloofness that, say, a western European musician has. Culturally I think that's alien to our music. And it's alien to our ultimate goals, which I think go far beyond what a classical musician tries to achieve when he plays Beethoven, Chopin, Bach or something else.

**Bill:** Because of hearing you with New Delta Ahkri, I began to realize that actually there were a lot of players in the Connecticut area. Everybody always thinks about New York and Chicago and they don't really think about other places. I presume that Leo Smith was a major motivator in this particular movement in Connecticut, publicly.

**Anthony:** Well, Connecticut is very funny, because it was very factionalized. I think Leo was important to me and to some other people, but I'm not sure he was as important to other musicians in the area. For example Rick Rozie, the bassist who plays with me, never played with Leo. And Jay Hoggard never really did stuff with Leo. I think that happens in a lot of different scenes, that it becomes sort of faction-



ed into different allegiances among the musicians. And that was the one thing about the Connecticut scene; there were a lot of people doing different kinds of music, that were not always compatible. In a way I was lucky, because I sort of bridged the gap with a lot of the different musicians there — because I played in bebop situations and I also played with Leo and I also did other kinds of things. I played with Rick and Jay and other people, but of course the most important thing happening was with Leo, with New Delta Ahkri. We also did large-group concerts in New Haven at times. Leo was the one big representative of one sort of faction of the music in Connecticut. But they weren't always compatible factions. But I think that now they have an organization, the C.M.I.F. — Creative Musicians Improvisors Forum — which I'm not in.

**Bill:** Presumably before this you had other experiences with people like George Lewis, Jay Hoggard and others. Could you tell us a little bit about that period?

**Anthony:** George Lewis was at Yale until 1974. We were originally in the same class together. I first met him at a jam session with Archie Shepp's band. That was in my freshman year there. With Byard Lancaster and Sunny Murray. I played and George played. He had recorded it, and it was the first time anyone had ever made a tape of my playing. George kept saying, "come and hear it, it's really good." So finally we got together, and we started playing together and did stuff with just the two of us. I had already had a group started there with Allen Jaffe, the guitarist, and some horn players. George became involved with the band and eventually it was called Advent. Wes Brown was playing bass and Gerry Hemingway was on drums. That was prior to my involvement with Leo Smith, and at that point George and I were really involved with late-Coltrane music. So a lot of what we were playing was really influenced by Coltrane, by Charles Mingus, by the Art Ensemble, by Muhal Richard Abrams, by Roscoe Mitchell. We did a few Muhal compositions, some of Henry Threadgill's pieces, Roscoe's pieces, Joseph Jarman's pieces, but primarily we did our own original compositions. It was a really great learning situation; we rehearsed three times a week for two years.

**Bill:** Was your connection with the Chicago players because of George?

**Anthony:** Because of George and Leo, and also, at that time, Marion Brown was living in Connecticut. I met Leo and Marion at the same time. So I did some things with Marion Brown too.

Then my parents moved to Iowa City, Iowa. So I was living in Iowa during the summer and I used to come to Chicago. So I met Muhal and a lot of other people there. But essentially my path through the thing was with George and Leo.

**Bill:** Was that a great thrill for you, as a freshman to play with Archie Shepp and Sunny Murray? That sounds kind of frightening to me.

**Anthony:** It was a fantastic thrill. I was really excited. I didn't really know how to play too much at that point. I was really playing fourth chords. I remember Byard Lancaster always liked to play *Somewhere Over The Rainbow* and I didn't know the changes, so I just played fourth chords and I played a solo. I remember that my hands hurt because Sunny Murray was playing so loud. I said oh wow, how can I get the piano that loud? And now

when I hear Sunny, I don't think he plays loud at all.

**Bill:** It's just that your power ratio has changed.

**Anthony:** But at that point I didn't know how I could do it. I just couldn't do it, I was overwhelmed. But that was my first experience really playing. I learned how to play the music in college.

**Bill:** You were a music student at Yale?

**Anthony:** Yes, but I learned everything about playing this music, really, on my own and playing with other people. If anything, what the school experience does is give you the strength to overcome it. Because Yale always put obstacles in our path. For example, Advent could never get a practice space at the university, because they said we weren't a student organization. So I got it to be a student organization. I was really into using everything, so I became a student organization... and I

still couldn't get practice space. I got kicked out by the Blue Notes, a women's singing group. And I was constantly getting in trouble with my practising, because at that period I was practising between five and six hours a day. I would play the piano, which was right near the dining hall, and then the guy who was the head, or the master of the college at Yale said that my playing gave him headaches and would I please stop. And I said, "Well, I have to practise." So I kept doing it. The next day they posted new hours, which were always hours when I practised, saying that you couldn't practise at the piano during those hours, because you disturbed people going into the dining hall or people in the library. So, I said, cool, I noticed the hours and they didn't say from 2 to 6 in the morning. So I started practising from 2 to 6 in the morning, and then they passed a rule about that too.

photograph of Anthony Davis and son by Bill Smith





I think George and I both had a bizarre ongoing battle with the Music Department at Yale. At first I was trying to fight to get our music accepted as serious. That was really important to me. At that point I wasn't ready to do any work for them in traditional music until they accepted me as serious and accepted the music I wanted to study as serious. So at first I was trying to get credit for studying the music I was studying anyway. Then I gave it up for a while; I was a philosophy major, english major, math major, I had different majors and then I left school for two years. When I came back I realized that I would never get that so I might as well just study what they had there. So I studied theory and composition, and that was very interesting. But by then I was much more confident in the fact that I was going to be a musician. I had already recorded a couple of albums, I knew that I was going to do that

and I knew that I was learning that on my own. So I was better prepared to study other kinds of music: Gregorian chants, Italian renaissance music or something completely different, or only superficially related to the new music I was playing. I found it interesting, and it influenced me in different ways later on when I felt freer to accept it; when I wasn't so sensitive about the fact that they were saying that this was real music and what I was doing wasn't real music. It's still something that bothers me, but I felt I could learn from them even though they were prejudiced.

**Bill:** According to the kind of idea popularized by some American music institutions, universities with music programs were actually responsible for all these great jazz players. But talking with various musicians indicates to me something quite the reverse, that the Texas State Lab Band et cetera plays only a small part in real American improvised music, that it's not training musicians to be creative but to be session men or something.

**Anthony:** Well, Yale always had the idea that they would never teach you how to do anything as low as a skill or as low as a craft, or as low as something that you could actually use right away. It had to be something more intellectual. So you could never get a credit at Yale for playing the piano, you would get it in composition, or by studying music theory or music history. It's totally opposed to the pragmatic approach. Some other schools like Berklee are much more pragmatic, dealing with problem-solving, like how do you play on this change or something like that, which I found kind of boring, and not really creative at all. I went there to observe it for a day or so.

But in general I think you'll always find that people who are creative always have battles with schools. It's just set up that way, schools, and colleges especially, are set up to create a kind of tension and a battle.

**Bill:** Would a professor feel intimidated by a student who had creative energy that went beyond the normal student thing? Does that interfere with them?

**Anthony:** Sometimes, if the situation is such that they have certain frustrations, perhaps about having wanted to pursue their own performing career, and felt a sense of failure at doing the teaching aspect instead — sometimes that happens. There's always a tension that you find in a school situation.

But the advantage of Yale was that there was a community of students and it was very powerful then. George Lewis was there and Allen Jaffe and I were there, and Jay Hoggard and Wes Brown were at Wesleyan; that was really important because we could meet and work together on our music. One of the main things I got out of school was essentially just those associations. I find that now I'm meeting people in New York who I knew there, who were involved in other arts and we're getting more interested in collaborating on different kinds of things. From my generation, in that period, a lot of people went into the arts. I think we were the tail end of the 1960s and our thoughts about what we were going to do in life... I think our class was probably the last that had some kind of different concept about what they were going to do with their careers, rather than just become lawyers or professionals. A lot of them did but I think what was significant was that there was a lot of political turmoil at that time. During my freshman year there was the Bobby Seale trial and the school was

shut down. We were all involved in the Black Panthers and we had the strike, so there was a lot of political activity, and people were really thinking seriously about what the role of the school was, and what your role was in relation to it, and about what you would do afterwards. Also in relation to Yale, and universities in general, being elitist. I was always very sensitive about that idea of elitism. We were very suspicious of schools. I think that was a very favourable environment for creating people who wanted to try and do different things — not the school itself, but the fact that everyone had doubts about the institutions.

**Bill:** Would I be right to assume that Yale would indicate that you were not in any financial difficulties?

**Anthony:** Yes, I'm from a middle class background. My father is a professor, at that point he was a professor at Penn State, in Afro-American Studies and English. So I'm really from an intellectual, academic environment. Still I had partial scholarships and stuff, because Yale's expensive. Essentially my whole family's background has been from an academic world — that was something very important too, that I had to come to grips with. During that period, because of all my doubts, I felt a little ashamed of the idea of coming from an academic family rather than coming from, say, an urban situation or some other situation. At one point I felt it almost to be a disadvantage because we were all trying so desperately to be black. Now I really feel at ease about it. I think that being black entails the whole spectrum of experience. And that comes out in my music, too. The more free I feel about myself the freer I feel about what I can do musically.

**Bill:** Often I find that the information that some players received when they were young was very limited to a certain zone. For example some players such as Anthony Braxton and Julius Hemphill, their early influences were popular music that they heard on the radio. Does the fact that you come from a different social background mean that you had a different kind of music and art presented to you?

**Anthony:** I think somewhat. My father could have been a professional musician. He was a classical pianist and a violinist. So I was exposed at a very young age to all kinds of classical music. As well as that, he knew Art Tatum and was a real follower of Art Tatum's music, and of Erroll Garner, and other pianists, so I've been listening to Art Tatum and Erroll Garner records since I was 5 or 6 years old. I feel very fortunate in that. My father was really pleased that I finally went into music, especially into creative music. It's something I think he would have liked to have done too, but at that point in time, at that point in history, it was important for him to go into the academic world — and I'm proud of what he's accomplished in that world.

**Bill:** He was a powerful force in your life, obviously.

**Anthony:** Oh, very powerful, and I've come more and more to appreciate what he's done. At one point in my life I couldn't understand what I would perceive as hypocrisy in the sense of having to deal with a lot of the white people in the academic world who I thought were complete phonies, racists and I couldn't see how he could stand being in the same room with them. But he understood that you had to stay in the same room with people to get what you wanted ultimately. I look at him as being a supreme diplomat, but I wasn't sophisticated



enough then to understand what being a diplomat was about. I just thought it was pretentious and pompous and elitist, I thought all the trappings and pomposity were ridiculous, I thought, you don't have to dress like this or act like this, you don't have to talk about all this stupid stuff you talk about at cocktail parties, but then I realized what it really was; what he was trying to achieve by doing it.

That made me appreciate a lot about the whole complexity and variety of experience that we all share, and how important it is not to categorically dismiss someone. For example, when someone looks at a musician and says his music is "European", or "Why is this black musician from this urban ghetto doing this, playing music that's close to Stockhausen" or so it's called. I look at that and I think that people who say that are very insensitive to what someone is trying to achieve, and how he's trying to deal with his experience. Especially when black people, and black writers and black critics say that, I think it's really irresponsible and narrow-minded.

**Bill:** A lot of your music deals in very organized centres, even the improvisation deals with very organized concepts. In this time of "new creative music" or whatever terminology — the idea of "free jazz" is very far removed from what you're thinking about.

**Anthony:** Yes, in fact I would say that what I'm doing is totally different, even opposed to the concept of what I could call "free jazz". In a way I don't know if it ever really applied. I think "free jazz" was a bad term for the music anyway. I think "jazz" as a word is another problem, but the word "free"....

**Bill:** How about "freely improvised music" then.

**Anthony:** I think that the more you improvise, the more organized it has to be and the less "free" you are. The more open the situation, the more you have to control, and you have to be aware and really try to focus your mind and your thoughts on almost minimizing the materials that you use. I'm sort of getting away from the minimalist idea now, and trying to use a lot of contrasts and a lot of different kinds of development. A developmental and thematic form, I call it. I'm working a lot on thematic development. But that comes from the fact that I had mental exercises that I did when I practised that involved mainly trying to play a figure on the piano, and then play for a while, and be able to go back and play the same figure five minutes later; I've really tried to do that. It's something I've worked on and I have a whole system of development using motifs; trying to remember motifs in a pattern and trying to repeat what you've played before because I've always thought that that was important — to really be able to compose on the spot, so that there are no artificial barriers between what's written in the music and what's played. My ultimate goal is that when somebody hears the music, that it just sounds like one piece of music, and there's no big division between what is on the page and what is actually heard.

**Bill:** It's a long way from the "jazz" tradition of playing the head and then improvising and then playing the head again. So that you are more influenced, perhaps, by great American composers such as Duke Ellington and Cecil Taylor.

**Anthony:** Very much influenced by them. And Leo Smith. But I believe that there's a real integrity in tunes which people sometimes ignore when they look at composers and compo-

sitions. It's not really easy to write a beautiful tune, or a short piece of music like Charlie Parker could write *Cheryl*, a blues head, 12 bars, which I think is a perfect composition that I think Webern would have trouble matching (he's known for short compositions too). It's a different kind of discipline than writing a longer-range composition. It's something that I've developed too, sort of. Duke Ellington is another example of this: he wrote long-term compositions as well as short tunes.

I think that what I'm doing is similar in the sense that I've always been able to write tunes, it's something I've always felt I could do. At certain points in my career I used to feel embarrassed about it and thought I didn't want to write tunes, I wanted to write compositions. So I would go and write compositions. Then I wouldn't compose for a while because I was trying to force a composition, trying to impose that on myself, when all these ideas for tunes were just always coming. And they're still coming, because I've recently written two or three new tunes as well as compositions. Now I feel very comfortable with that and I think I develop all the time. I think there's always new things to do with tunes as well as with long-form composition.

**Bill:** I think I would be right in assuming that in this period, the people you play with — like James Newton, Pheeroan Ak Laff, Rick Rozie, Abdul Wadud, Leroy Jenkins — all these kinds of players that you've played with in the last year or so are very much involved with an idea of improvising as a group, quite away from the bebop tradition, of soloists being accompanied and so on. Do you have some thoughts about the advantages of the movement into group improvisation?

**Anthony:** It doesn't reduce people to functioning as a role. For example I don't function as a member of a rhythm section when I play. I used to always hate that, when anyone said, "oh, rhythm over here" or "this is the rhythm part". I'm really insulted by that kind of thought. When we play our music the bassist is at least as important as the flute or the trombone. In a way, it's a crime to be locked into functionality with respect to how a certain instrument should function in a group. I think functionality should only appear with regard to particular pieces. The composition and the composer should determine how a musician is to function, and not some stereotype or prior idea or format on the music.

**Bill:** Could this be why bebop music became so stylized? In this period of music, every group sounds different. Then, lots of groups sounded the same, perhaps because they were playing in such a tight zone.

**Anthony:** I don't think that's true of the great artists, of Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Charlie Parker, the Clifford Brown/Max Roach group with Richie Powell, not of the people who thought creatively within those groups. They didn't look at it as a limitation, because bebop at that point wasn't viewed in the narrow framework that it is now, as some musicians today look at it. They look at bebop more in terms of calling out *I Remember April* or something like that. And that, to me, is really sad, that's not really bebop, that's not the essence of the music. The essence of the music to me has always been to play the compositions of the masters: Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker, Charles Mingus, Tadd Dameron, Bud Powell... I could go on. There, the forms are not so conventional; it's not always thirty-two bars or

twelve bars. The whole structure varies from piece to piece and from composer to composer and that's a whole different matter. That's one reason I think it's valid to write tunes, for example. In my music, I'm interested in changes again. When I write tunes now, I'm writing with changes in mind again, because to me the post-Ornette generation is just as stylized as the bebop generation in the sense that they're relying on a bebop format, without the piano. Playing a head, then soloing without changes is little different from playing with changes, if the piece is not developed in a unique kind of way. That's one thing that I think is liberating now, that we are able to look back and develop changes and playing harmonic progressions in a fresh and different way because we don't feel as restricted, we're not imposing that format on the music.

**Bill:** Based on what you're saying, I would have to think that you recognize Thelonious Monk as the great genius of bebop music, because he had already set the standard that you're talking about, in his own time.

**Anthony:** Oh definitely — and Parker too. As composers they're very interesting. In a way they had opposite concepts. When Charlie Parker writes a piece like *Cheryl*, which is a real masterpiece, the idea is a beautiful line in which he doesn't repeat anything, he never goes back to the same thing with the head if you analyze it. Monk uses fewer materials, and the whole thing is how he repeats different materials and how he sets up surprise. Because a lot of times you can't have surprise unless you have repetition. If you have A, then B, and you repeat A, then B, then repeat A and then a C comes along, that can be funny, and that's where the surprise can come in. Monk has such an incredible grasp of using repetition and using rhythmic repetition and creating suspense and creating surprise. It's a kind of wit in music that I always admire. I think the other great master is Charles Mingus; one of his pieces might be a thirty-two bar tune, like *Orange Was The Colour*. But he changes the form, so it's arranged in eleven bars, eleven bars and ten bars. Charles Mingus is a complete master of form. What he does a lot is extend a section of a piece and when you think it's a bridge it just keeps going and extends and then you're at the end. I always found that a beautiful way of writing a tune. That's why I think that whole "tune" aspect of writing a piece is still here.

**Bill:** Partly why I mentioned Monk is that I think as a pianist you are influenced stylistically by Monk in some ways. The element of surprise; the listener doesn't always quite know what the next thing is going to be. You had said to me before that you were not so interested in playing solo piano concerts but that's beginning to change. What made you change your mind about that?

**Anthony:** I love solo piano playing now because I'm fascinated by how I can make all the distinctions break down between what my writing is and what my playing is. So I can use written materials and really create with them. I really like that creating on the spot with things I've written. It allows me to improvise in a developmental way. I like the freedom of not playing with someone else because I can really choose how I want to develop the piece right on the spot and go where I want to go. I can get a certain kind of subtlety in harmony, et cetera, that I wouldn't necessarily get otherwise. Because I think that what I play is



photograph of Anthony Davis by Enrico Romero



definitely tonal music, and in what I'm doing there are definitely wrong notes.

So when I play my new compositions I'm really trying to develop the music thematically, using materials that are already in the written composition. And when you do that well enough it's hard to tell what is written and what isn't. I feel I've just recently made a breakthrough in developing different ideas that are present in a piece.

A new composition I have, *After A Dream* is a short written piece, but it has five or six different modalities implied in it. What I call modalities, in a sense that there are different kinds of textures implied, different rhythms, different keys, different feelings, different touches. All sorts of different ways by which you can relate to the piano. The piece is very short, but as I develop it I can re-order it. I can use one section of the piece as a sort of bridge between different improvisational ideas. Now what I'm trying to do is almost like if someone presented you with an analysis of the music that was played, and what you're playing is realizing

the analysis. It's almost as if what was written is an analysis of what was played and what you do is realize it.

Toronto, November 11, 1979. Thanks to David Prentice for transcribing the original tape of this interview.

#### ANTHONY DAVIS DISCOGRAPHY

##### As leader:

Song for the Old World India Navigation 1036  
Of Blues and Dreams Sackville 3020  
Past Lives (solo piano) Red Records VPA 134  
(soon to be released: a new solo piano record on India Navigation)

##### As co-leader:

Crystal Texts, Anthony Davis/James Newton Duo Moers Music 01048  
Hidden Voices, Anthony Davis/James Newton Quartet. India Navigation 1041  
With Barry Altschul:  
Another Time, Another Place Muse 5176

##### With Anthony Braxton:

Wildflowers (w. various artists) Douglas

With Marion Brown:

Vista Impulse

With Chico Freeman:

Kings of Mali India Navigation 1035

With Allan Jaffe:

Soundscapes Kromel

With Leroy Jenkins:

The Legend of Ai Glatson Black Saint 0022

Space Minds, New Worlds, Survival of America Tomato

With Oliver Lake:

Life Dance of Is Arista

Shine Arista

With George Lewis:

Shadowgraph Black Saint 0016

Homage to Charlie Parker " " 0029

With James Newton:

Paseo Del Mar India Navigation 1037

With Leo Smith and New Dalta Ahkri:

Reflectativity Kabell

Song of Humanity "

Wild Flowers (w. various artists) Douglas



# THE 360° MUSIC

360° — The Circle. Complete and Open. The Beaver Harris-Don Pullen 360° Music Experience is an advanced, hard-swinging band with a desire to play "all the music:" the title of their first album was "From Ragtime to No Time." The aim of the 360 is "a complete musical experience," built on the strengths of the tradition: swing/rhythm/percussiveness, improvisation, and group involvement.

"Rhythms suggest melodies," says Beaver Harris, founder of the 360. Indeed, the entire current edition of the 360 can be thought of as a rhythm section. Unlimited sound power comes from the horns of Hamiet Bluiett (baritone sax), Ricky Ford (tenor sax), and Ken McIntyre (alto sax, oboe, bass clarinet, bassoon, and flute). Don Pullen plays the piano as percussively as anyone. Bassist Cameron Brown and Beaver Harris have blended rhythms together for several years now, together having stoked the fire of Archie Shepp's music. Francis Haynes is a master of the steel drums, and has been important in the development of the instrument.

The Beaver Harris-Don Pullen 360° Music Experience is a contemporary, yet experienced, band, with direct links to the energetic music of the 1960s. The years have matured, but not diminished their energy. Beaver Harris, born April 20, 1936, in Pittsburgh, vibrates the energy and enthusiasm of someone half his age. The drums demand strong physical requirements, and Beaver brings to them the credentials of an athlete. He played professional baseball on a major league level with the Negro Leagues during the 50's, and considers his development in music and sports to have been intertwined. "I'm sure that baseball enabled for me to learn complete body-mind control," explains Beaver. "In athletics you have to pre-conceive of a

situation and solve it in your mind prior to it happening. If a right-handed batter is up, and you're playing third base, you tend to move to the right to cover the third base line. It's the same way in the music. You've got to pre-conceive of a situation, whereas you are constantly composing and creating and inventing at any given second. It takes a lot of body-mind control." Team play is also crucial in both athletics and music, especially in the 360. "Everybody contributes. Everybody can be part of a whole." For the 360, that includes the audience.

I had an opportunity to speak with the two co-leaders of the 360 in a visit to New York City. I had hoped to hear the 360 during that trip. The engagement, however, was cut short by a club owner who apparently could not deal with the intensity of the music. In this interview, you'll hear Beaver Harris and Don Pullen talk about that experience, which sadly underlines the fact that there is still strong resistance to this music, even in these days of a supposed "jazz upsurge." Despite this negative occurrence, Don and Beaver spoke about the 360 like the music itself: positive, spontaneous, and direct.

**BEAVER HARRIS:** The 360° Music Experience started in 1967. I always thought about getting something together that could involve a complete musical experience. But I also knew at that time that I would need more experience. So I kept that idea and controlled it, and I went on to play with many other people. The first job was with Sonny Rollins, on to Albert Ayler, Archie Shepp, and Cecil Taylor. Albert Ayler was to me, the most important horn player of the 60s. Archie Shepp was the most determined horn player of the 60s, a highly political and

intelligent man. Cecil Taylor was the most abstract of the 60s; he combined his academic training along with his personal upbringing and created a great music. Sun Ra understood the unity and the connecting point between Fletcher Henderson and John Gilmore. Even Don called me for a gig years ago, in the early sixties up in Harlem. I think Milford Graves had something to do, so he called me. I had never met Don before, but I had heard about him. So I worked with Don that time and I also remember hearing something then. That's a good feeling when you can say, I'm going to keep this in my ear so some day maybe I can gain something and we can just naturally run into each other, and that's what happened. One night I called Don and I asked him to work at the Tin Palace with the group, and he did. I have a way of doing things — I know not to approach a person with something until they feel good about what they're about to do. We worked together and we've been working together ever since.

**DON PULLEN:** Between that first meeting and the next time we played together was many years, about ten years.

**BH:** You see what I mean? So I give everything time to develop. At that time I had been working with people like Grant Green, Larry Young, up at Well's, Minton's and different places up in Harlem. You see, when I came to New York I never came to be a bebop musician or a classical musician, I came to play music. I knew from my past experience that if you narrow yourself down to one concept, you miss something and you have to go back and gain that. I started from the Bronx and I walked from club to club with my great big bottle of support, just sitting in, and I'd put on my bitter thing pretending I was really evil, but I was pretending. I needed that to break through and get the courage to get on the stand because everyone was playing. That experience enabled me to learn how important it is to think completely as a whole thing. I remember like even a couple of years after that time, in the early sixties, I used to go back up into Harlem, and once in a while I would see Don playing organ, playing for singers, and I said, damn, this cat is really gonna have so much together. This may sound farfetched and like some bullshit; but I knew that we would play again. I knew that what he had in mind at the time and what I had in mind at the time would carry us into some new horizon. But at that time I wasn't ready to commit myself to anything that powerful because I didn't feel that I had enough experience. I knew I had to sit down and practice and study. It turned out to make sense for my own development. The 'avant garde' was not a thing that made me feel legitimate. The fact that I'd played with everyone and wanted to study and learn more gave me the incentive to grow.

I tried different people in the band. As a matter of fact, the first job with the 360 was in Washington at the Corcoran Gallery with Jackie McLean, Ron Carter, Roland Alexander, Grachan Moncur, and they called it "the new thing." They said this would be the new thing for the sixties. That was funny, here I was just getting

Beaver Harris



# EXPERIENCE

something together, and it couldn't be that together and it wasn't together that much. From playing with everyone I had a choice to select from different great players to represent the 360 but I didn't want people to think that I was closed off from working with others. I wanted to have really more time in with people before I really projected anything. Now, I feel that we're ready, with people around me who are on the same par — Don, Hamiet Bluiett, Ricky Ford, Francis Haynes, Ken McIntyre, Cameron Brown.

**KEN STEINER:** It seems like all you cats are kind of out of the sixties, well except for Ricky.

**DP:** Ricky's the baby.

**BH:** Well you see, you just said "out of the sixties." Now, I was born in 1936. The sixties was just the time that I decided to come to New York. Maybe if I had come here in the fifties, I could still be where I'm at now, because it's not when you get here, it's how you shape yourself up in terms of growth and playing with other musicians. So we were out of the sixties, we came here in the sixties, but it could have been any time.

**KS:** When I said "out of the sixties," that's when most people became aware of you, your first records came out in the sixties, and I think people tend to associate you with the music of the sixties.

**DP:** But you know there are very few musicians playing now that came through that period. A lot of them dropped by the wayside. Some got strung out, some lost their minds, and there are very few survivors. That was a very difficult period, even though it was productive in a sense that those of us who were really dedicated stuck with it. It wasn't a matter of *whether* it was going to happen; we were determined that it *was* going to happen. Music was being played everywhere. A whole bunch of cats. A cat could pick up a horn and start screaming, hollering.

**BH:** The thing is that we all came up in a period where the people away from the art and the artists felt the same way about change. In other words, they made our dreams legit dreams, because everyone for some reason wanted freedom. So it was a legit evolution.

**DP:** The music fit the times. It was a period of unrest. People wanted change, a new lifestyle. Usually the music is ahead of the social and political advancement, anyways. The music in the sixties reflected the mood of the people at that time.

**KS:** How do you think 360° reflects the time of now? It's a different time.

**DP:** Yeah, it's a different time. We are products of every day that we really live. This is 1980, so we still have bigger and better dreams for the 80s and the 90s and for as long as we live. I listen to some of the music that I made in the 60s and I feel a different kind of texture. So now this is 1980 and some of the music I did in the 70s I can also see then how it reflected what was happening with me and what was happening socially in the country. For '80, I have no idea what's going to happen. The only thing I do know is that we will grow, we will continue moving, the music will continue

to move, we're going to be more successful, and we're going to realize some of the dreams that we have. That's definite. We can't hustle backwards.

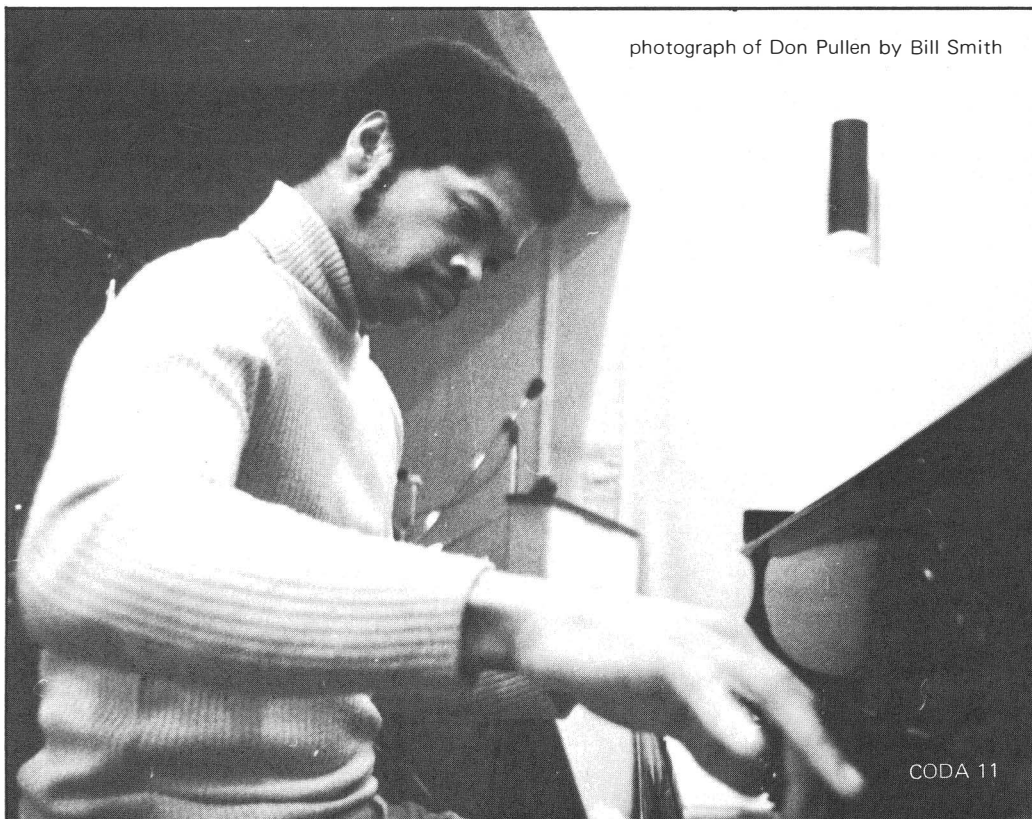
**BH:** That's funny. The other night I had to take a taxi from this club and for some strange reason the taxi driver was Herman Wright, the bass player from Detroit. We played with Sonny Rollins. We had Herman Wright, Grachan Moncur, and myself. And Newk. And we went to Chicago and Dizzy came in. He was working at the London House and Dizzy played piano. Dizzy kept telling Sonny that "This will be the group. This will be the group of the 60s." Now check this out, this is what I mean -- it's not about a decade, a period, or anything, in terms of freedom. What I mean by the 60s by everyone being attuned to the cry of freedom, is that the people and the musicians all did think about this freedom, but since then I've also seen some of it slip back to a time where people put up with and went along with things, and we're not willing to go along. We're still willing to make a change. For instance, working in that club is an example of the change we're talking about. In the 60s we would have all said this club should have a dressing room, a decent place for the musicians to be able to relax in. Evidently the musicians that had worked in there prior to our going in there had never complained about that, because when I went to the union they said they had never had a complaint about that. The cry for freedom now is almost like the cry for freedom before the 60s. But it's muted, and we're not going to be muted. So our music will have to remain as free and go on to even higher levels of development. One reason I used the name 360° is because I had read someplace where the circle is man's relationship with his founder. In other words, that's the complete

turnover in evolution. Continuously getting back to that infinite little dot, that is 360°. You swing into a freedom. You keep swinging back into that circle. You keep going out and out and you come right back. If you notice, that's where all art comes from. The circle. Then they derived the square, the triangle, the angles. That's only deriving from something that has the complete cycle with reality. I'm sure that the word 'swing' is somewhat involved with that evolution of going around that cycle. Astrology is based on that. They have the twelve houses in between this circle. From the way that someone explained it to me is that each house represents a certain time and a certain sign--

**KS:** -- a different phase of experience.

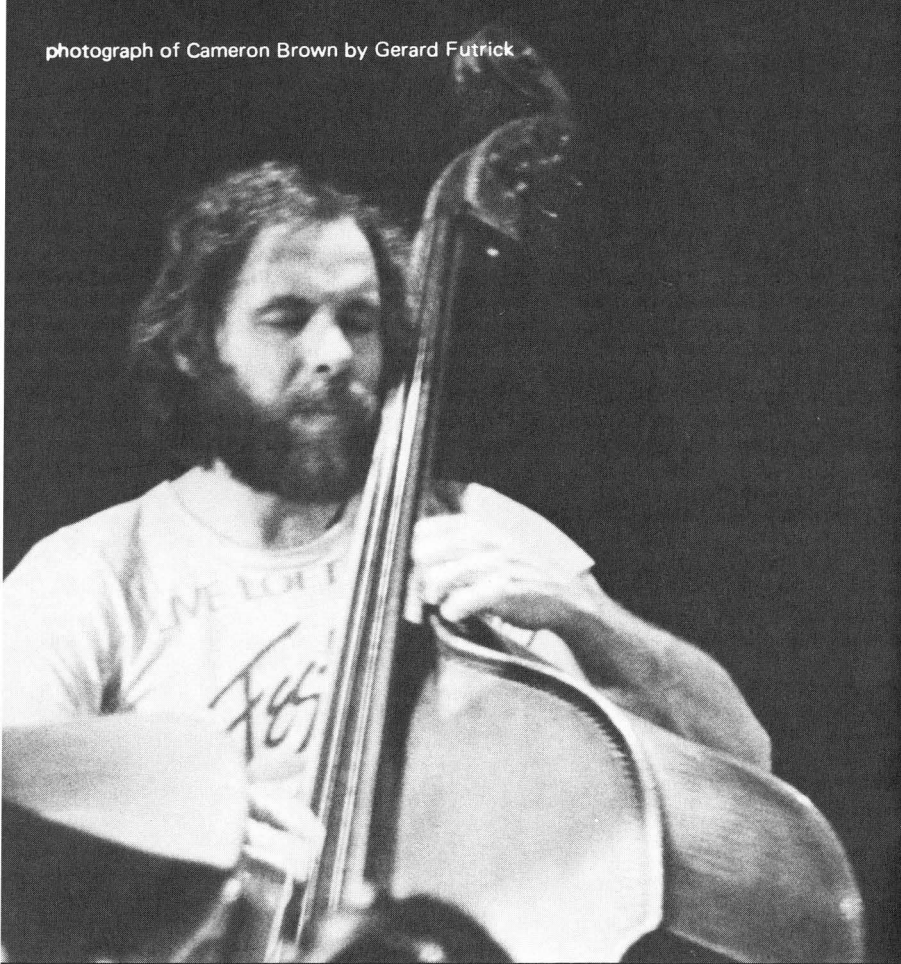
**BH:** Right, but you notice in each house there are shortcomings, which brings about the human experience -- where none of us are perfect -- but the zodiac is to give you a chart and an idea of how, when you reach that Aries time, you should be able to correct the mistake you made in that time as you swing around that zodiac. Because you always get back to the same point. We still have the same problems that we had in the 60s, the 50s, but we can't stop fighting for those rights. I remember Don, on the way to the gig the other night, the first night we had played this tune *Nycaumongus*, and it wasn't anything odd to our following. Then we played *Land Of The Pharoahs*. It wasn't odd to our following but it was odd to the clubowner. I'm saying -- and this is funny -- here's this man who had said to me his club is based upon a local clientele where people should be able to come in and pick up a chick and right away that made me feel, that carries me back to times when ...pick up a chick? So I remember asking Don, "Listen, maybe we

photograph of Don Pullen by Bill Smith





photograph of Cameron Brown by Gerard Futrick



photograph of Francis Haynes by Tom Terrell



should play another side of the book on the next day," and Don said, "No, we're going on with the program." That was the answer. That's what I mean -- it takes two heads and more than just my singular thinking, because I wasn't thinking of pleasing but I was thinking of trying to keep that pressure off my back so that I could perform. I knew on the second night played so hard there was anger coming out. I didn't know how to channel that anger.

**DP:** Also you see, once you start bending like that -- we know that the music we play is good. We rehearse it and perfect it as best we can. Now if we're going to do that and expend all that energy and go to the club and have that cat tell us we can't play what we do, we're defeating our own purpose.

**BH:** What the guy didn't know is that in our book we have music that will go from Ragtime to Notime. But we're not going to be told what to play. I was thinking about starting at another page in our book, and then maybe going out, not changing up. We could never change, but this cat should have had sense enough to know that you can't hire a bunch of so-called advanced people and tell them what to do, because along with our being here to perform, we're giving him something that, being world travellers, this man will never get sitting at that club.

**KS:** One thing that's impressed me about this band is that people who supposedly have an attitude against what they've been told is 'avant garde jazz,' people who've never heard music like this, get really turned on by it. If someone labeled it 'avant-garde' they may not be able to get into it. There's a finger-popping quality to the music.

**BH:** You can finger-pop to anything. That starts when the doctor slaps the baby on the behind, that's when rhythm starts. When he screams, that's when melody starts. So each person carries their own personal rhythm. Through having our own association to reality within our own music, we can let people be natural around us. People that are not attuned to this will try to put us into a category. They'll say you are avant-garde, you are jazz, you are bebop, and we're none of this. We are just human beings trying to express, and channel some of this nervous impulse, and make something beautiful out of it. Just think, we could have been other things that would be a detriment to this society, but we're not. We're artists. I'm sure you could walk up to Picasso and say, "Why don't you just draw a house because the people here like to walk in and out of a door, they don't want to walk into a cloud." That's what it was like. I'm saying, don't tell people what to do. When you hire them you should have enough insight. When you say to me, "Jazz to me is..." you're telling me what music isn't, because you're relating jazz to not having a dressing room, to treating people like they're a slave, and this will never happen.

**DP:** Not with me, anyways. I'll go home. I know my way home too well.

**BH:** The sad part is this. There isn't any one place that we can count on working in this country. But that should give young people an incentive to really be something, because here we are, in the prime of life, really struggling to make it possible for the youth to have someplace to express their energy without it being controlled by people with less energy. Club-

owners, we find in New York City, act like we're crazy when we ask them to tune the piano. I know one club over on the East Side where the piano has ten keys not working. And there's a musician doing the booking, who's supposed to be an advanced musician and an advanced writer, but there are ten keys not working on the piano and a pinball machine in the middle of the floor. So that's what I mean - we've got to change all of this. I'm looking for a nice church to play in. Don's father is a minister. I'd like to play with the choir. We can all play with the choir, and play our music. Not only on Sundays. We can play it when we have the time and they have the time in the church, just play concerts at the church. We played a thing for the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia conflict. We had 4,500 people at St. John Divine Church, only about two weeks ago. We had never played for that many people. A 90 per cent black audience -- we've never played for that kind of clientele.

**KS:** Was that a political rally?

**BH:** Everything's political.

**KS:** Political in the narrow sense.

**BH:** This was so that the original name will not be honored and respected instead of the contrived name, Rhodesia, as opposed to Zimbabwe. We have that same struggle. It's not like we're looking for political things to argue about. You can see we have them right at the club.

**DP:** In Europe we've played for twice that many, 10, 15, 20,000 people at one gathering, but that was a first for us in this country, which is where it all started. It's ironic that we have these huge audiences in Europe and small ones here, but now I think, as I mentioned earlier,



photograph of Hamiet Bluiett by Gerard Futrick



people are usually a little behind the artist, and it's also the artist's responsibility to make his work easily understood by the public, but not in a sense of lowering the music. And you can't educate them if you only give them what they know.

**BH:** That's right. They take it for granted, that's what has happened. The music came from this country, and most or all of the great artists came from Harlem, the Bronx, or Brooklyn, in terms of being New York-derived musicians. But do you know right now you can go up to Harlem and I doubt you can find one jazz club. And do you know why? Not because the incentive isn't there. It's because the music establishment is constantly taking from the source and giving it to its own environment to do something else by it rather than to educate. So, for people being underprivileged and deprived of opportunities to have it here, why should they leave their communities to go and hear what they are naturally a part of? We have a commitment to our own personal audience, and we're willing to do this, but we also know that we've got to have it where we can play in different sections, not only in the Village and Upper Manhattan.

**DP:** Like when people come out, they know Beaver Harris, they know Don Pullen, they come to hear us. They expect us to *play*. No shortcomings, no excuses. We've got to always go back to the community to give it to them. In the meanwhile, we're always bringing people out of the community, making them feel safe to come into our present environment, only for them to find our present environment isn't as good as the environment in Harlem. They can't keep switching up on us. In Europe we get the

V.I.P. treatment, but then the Europeans are more aware of their own being. In Europe you have ruins, a history that's dated back to early times. America is made up of all immigrants.

**KS:** Many who are cut off from their roots.

**BH:** And they try to make it possible for us not to maintain our roots. When you get away from your roots then you feel somewhat like you're above a certain faction of yourself. We've always had to be in tune. It comes from the church, from the affairs we've always had in the community. If black people wanted to be self-righteous and prejudiced, it would be very easy for us to be that way because we have a culture within a culture that's been there since year one. Since we know what we are in a sense of being world travellers, we also try to maintain a dignity and pride and pass it on, but we've reached a point now where we can't stop asking for what's rightfully ours -- that is, the right environmental situation in which we can come up with fresh and new ideas.

**KS:** What's coming up this year?

**BH:** George Wein's trying to get something together in Holland. We're also doing Newport.. At Town Hall, the 27th of June, opposite the World Saxophone Quartet. We're going to have our steel drum choir -- we have a choir of seven steel drummers that's a monster -- perform in the "Tribute to 52nd Street." We also play at times with an African rhythm section led by Coster Massomba from Brazzaville, that's another important facet of what we're trying to do. Jazz being basically an American derivative, we've taken people from all over the world and made them feel free and relaxed in this so-called American derivative because we know that we are also coming from other places. So when you

can have that kind of mentality -- like you said earlier, most people get away from their roots -- we're maintaining that. We've brought in a sitarist who has never played this music before. When we would rehearse we wouldn't write notes for him. He would ask me for the time of day, then he would write a raga because of the time of day. And then we'd have this African rhythm ensemble and whenever I wanted them to all play free I'd say, "Zulu" and they'd play free. We're trying to get into the real international thing, as opposed to being called the World Champions and only representing America. Going back to the native thing, they had more freedom in ancient music than most of the bands today.

**KS:** In ancient times people were more intuitive. They had to use a fuller part of themselves. In the 360°, that's something you're trying to get back to, in a modern setting?

**BH:** Yeah, and the first step is to get the best musicians available.

**KS:** Well, you've got them.

**BH:** And don't think that we don't know it. And we want to keep it that way. We're shooting at a lot of things. Each one can do things on his own. That's fun, but it's almost like anything. Why take away one part of a great experience and make that part happen, when you can have the whole experience? We're just doing what is natural, and it's hard to get across.

**KS:** You see yourselves as the two co-leaders, or nucleus of the 360° Music Experience?

**DP:** We are co-leaders. The idea for the 360°, of course, was Beaver's. I've been assimilated into it.

**BH:** Well, Don had been working on the



photograph of Ricky Ford by Gerard Futrick

same thing -- totally improvised music based off of the ancient instruments and ancient concept -- sound power rather than compositional power. The compositional power does exist, but it's not a main ingredient. Milford had done something that was based on the same thing. Now we have something that's working in that direction together. With having cats like we have, that can happen. And then to have people available all over the world, that can happen.

**KS:** How does that co-leadership work out when you get up on the stage?

**BH:** Well, I get on one half and Don gets on the other half and we put the rest of the guys in the middle. That's a hard question.

**DP:** There's no conflict.

**KS:** Is there a center of direction for the group?

**DP:** The way that happens within the 360° is, for instance, if I write a tune I will probably lead and conduct throughout the length of it. The same with Beaver, or the other guys. We don't have a strict formula because all of us feel equal. We don't really have sidemen. I don't think we can call anyone in the group a sideman. I don't think they would want us to call them sidemen. So everyone feels equal to the other, each member of the group. Each one can take charge. And there's no orders to be given. Sometimes you'll work with groups where you've got a bandleader that's a slave-master, slavedriver. I immediately go home. I know when to go home.

**KS:** How'd it work out with Mingus?

**DP:** I had no problem with Mingus until the very end, when I left. I stayed with him almost three years and he never bothered me. And then the first time he was sort of like nit-picking, and I let it pass, and he did it again in the same week and I said, "That's it. You don't

get the third strike on me."

**BH:** That's funny because I have an opposite-type story to tell about working with Sonny Rollins. I remember in my mind I had this thing planned where -- this will show you where ego it at -- I thought I was going to take this new music to Newk, right? So I said, okay, I'm going to play all his music but still each night I'll add something to his group and its freedom. But he would always call a tune that would make me scuffle like mad even to keep up with it and all those thoughts of adding something new would disappear right away, and finally I had to disappear. You can think that you're playing something so hip and new -- and it is -- but then you've got to realize it is coming from something that is hip and new and original. So that's why we have freedom in the band. We play each cat's compositions, and each person can take leadership in terms of presenting his compositions, we'll all listen, compare notes, and play. And that's the fun about this group. There isn't a set formula, but we have different formulas. We can play forever because of our formulas. Right now I was counting the tunes. We have almost close to 50 tunes to play and I've never played in a band with that many.

**KS:** What do you mean by formulas?

**BH:** In other words, if we segue from one tune to another. If we start with *Land Of The Pharoahs* and we want to go into *Negcaumongus*, what we'll do instead of stopping is we'll set up a pattern which will enable the musicians to instantly react to that formula and go into the next tune without saying it.

**DP:** Sometimes we don't know what we're going to play next, but it might just occur. A lot of times everyone's thinking of the same tune to play next, which is good, and you can

only do it with musicians of that caliber. Miles used to do it years ago, just play one long set, go on from tune to tune, but his was more set up. Ours is looser than that. We might not know what's going to come next. Someone will musically suggest this is the next tune.

**BH:** It's been happening and it's fun when it's like that. It keeps everything fresh and it keeps you really digging in, learning, studying, and respecting. We're not ever thinking selfishly like it should go my way, Don's way, or Bluiett's, Ken's, Ricky's, Cameron's, or Francis'. Anything can pop up. What I like about this is that when we rehearse we argue, and get into things you wouldn't believe. Half the time it's a battle. I've seen Don walk out four or five times. And all of a sudden, things will happen just like (snaps fingers). I can relate that to when I played ball. We played our best games in the locker room in terms of arguing. People never had a chance to see that. We'd get mad just by sitting next to each other dressing. I'd look at the cat and say to myself, "well this jive...." and then on the baseball field we'd have a combination working together like precision movements. And that's the same thing that's happening in this band. Also, it proves a thing about getting up. Some people can't understand this part of getting up to perform. They think you put on automatic drive, like you were on a plane or car or whatever. We've got to channel that energy. The only way to do that is to really be open and express everything within yourself. If you feel like something's wrong, let's talk about it. It's through talking about it you create new avenues to create. We're not saying it's "my way."

**DP:** It's not what I'm going to do, but what we're going to do.

**BH:** It's teamwork.

**DP:** Yeah, teamwork.



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# DAVE BURRELL

INTERVIEW BY ROGER RIGGINS

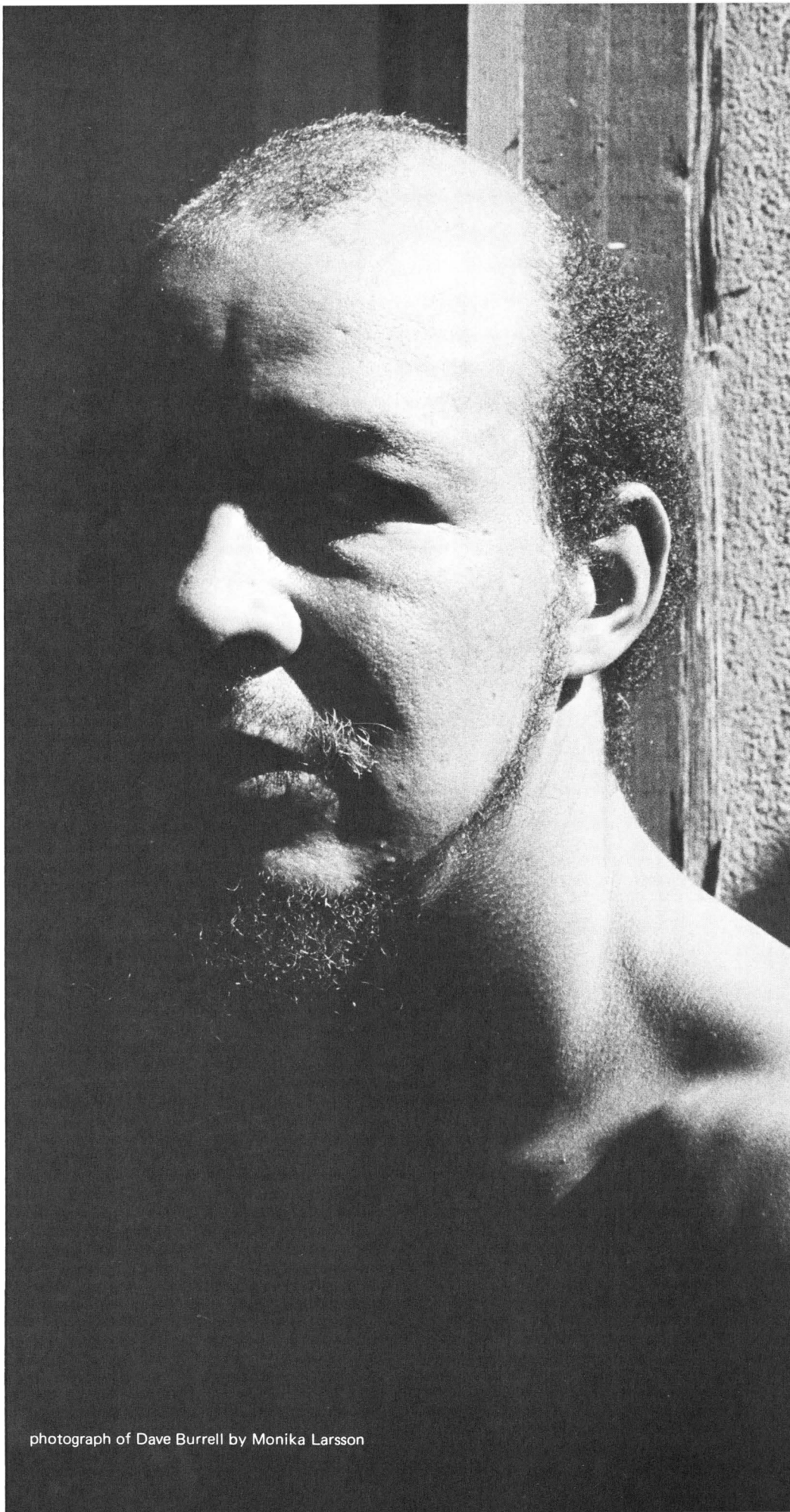
Improvised music hasn't spawned many men who have been able to revolutionize its content by uplifting the peculiarities of a single instrument i.e., it seems as though through every phase of the music you can count the truly innovative spirits using only one hand. When thinking of the scene today this is especially true because innovation is no longer looked at solely in terms of the instrument one plays, but is more tied to the conceptual frame in which one has chosen to work. Historically speaking one might think of Charlie Parker on one hand and Albert Ayler on the other as two instrumentalists who made their particular methods of attack mandatory prerequisites for others who followed and played the same instrument.

Yet in the last twenty years this feature of forming innovative currents in the music seemed to have reached a stalemate; during the later 1960s players had about exhausted the singular capabilities of their respective instruments and were in desperate need of a new setting in which the music could be arranged (and it should be said here that members of the AACM created the only lasting alternative to this dilemma).

Although authentic innovators have indeed been few in this music (or any music for that matter) they are even fewer, on a purely instrumental level, once you depart from a landscape populated by horn players and percussionists (and although the bass has had its share of great men it has only recently been as fertile, in terms of significant innovation, as have the gardens where reedists and percussionists dwell).

Pianist/composer Dave Burrell figures significantly in all this for several essential reasons. The most important of which might be the fact that when the pianist was making his way through the artistic Bohemia of New York, the musical revolution of that time had about junked the piano as a liability to the energized resourcefulness of the music being made — he had to actually *make a place for himself* in the musical proceedings. The only consistent guideline to the uplift of the peculiarities of the instrument was through the exhilarating work of Cecil Taylor. After Taylor one could think of Don Pullen and to a lesser degree Stanley Cowell as two pianists who were working through the same problems of the period. Yet it has only been Burrell, Pullen and Taylor who have actually been able to, as Cecil once said about himself, "...expand the realm of the piano..." and feel rhythmically assured in the process of doing so.

Unlike Taylor and Pullen, Burrell — when he's most interesting — is very flowing, almost romantic, with his dissonances. He is Rashied Ali instead of Art Blakey or, better yet, Sunny Murray instead of Elvin Jones. There's a grace and a passion in his playing that is beautifully felt on such early offerings as Marion Brown's "Three For Shepp" and on his own "High". This way of seeing is further revealed today, as



photograph of Dave Burrell by Monika Larsson



the pianist attempts to establish a conceptual setting to work out his musical thinking (attempts which were apparent as far back as 1969 with the ill-fated recording of his opera, "La Vie De Boheme" on BYG/Actuel Records). Today Burrell is delving deeper into operatic forms, very much akin to Scott Joplin in this regard, in an attempt to grasp the terminal essence of his contribution. His latest recordings, "Black Spring" with poet LeRoi Bibbs (Marge Records, Paris) and "Windward Passages" (solo piano, sketches of the music for a "jazz" opera, on Hat Hut) attest to the searching eclecticism of the pianist and his admirable effort to finish in this thing as more than just a minor figure.

**ROGER RIGGINS:** You first appeared on the scene during the mid-1960s when the so-called "energy school" was holding court here in New York City. What was that period like for you and what relationship does it have to your present musical perspective?

**DAVE BURRELL:** The '60s were my formative years. I had just gotten out of Berklee School of Music [now Berklee College of Music] and I had come into the city with the idea of playing with the people who were the most interesting to my then-developing style. I was always looking at the John Coltrane Quartet as my idol group... so out of that group of people I got familiar with Pharoah Sanders, Archie Shepp and Marion Brown who, at that time, had just come from a rehearsal for "Ascension". I had a first-hand talk with Archie about what John [Coltrane] was doing with so-called "free-jazz" and with the "Ascension" record date that was then going to be recorded live at the Village Gate. So I thought I would attend that concert and find out what was going on.

In Boston, we had played "free-jazz" in the dormitories and practice rooms as something that was kind of quote "...let's go out now." And the only record that was being promoted that really had anything to do with anything free was "Out To Lunch" by Eric Dolphy. Other than that the hot thing to listen to — if you were really serious — was "A Love Supreme". So I was very much a disciple of McCoy Tyner, and I wanted to build up my technique so I could accompany a horn player who was going to take liberties with modal progressions and "go out" as well as play the inside. Yet I was equipped to do "inside" music, and found out that everyone who I just named was doing a little of both, but mostly it was a period of excitement and discovery, and people really wanted to stretch their instrumental resources, so there wasn't too much conventionally-oriented playing happening.

Marion Brown wasn't using a pianist but when we talked and went over some things he hired me for my first gig. Right after rehearsing with Marion, I went around to the Village Gate and listened to the "Ascension" recording session. It was then that I was formulating a direction that was to make me an avant-garde pianist — which was really only because, in public, there wasn't anyone to really play bebop with. Among my group of associates on the Bowery and Second Street, where I was living, no one was into bop at that time.

During this period I started talking with Stanley Cowell about how we were going to survive and what we were going to do as pianists in groups that weren't hiring pianists too much. In this period you would see McCoy sitting at the piano, sometimes for over half an hour,

because it seemed like if he played it wouldn't be appropriate. Stanley and I were concerned about the new rules which were being formulated in the '60s and we both decided that we would play the heads along with the horns, so we got deeply into the melodic aspects of this highly emotionally-charged music.

The first group after Marion's to give me something of a deeper history was a group of Grachan Moncur's that Marion was also playing in, that had followed a sort of post-bop group he had assembled that had Tony Williams, Wayne Shorter and Herbie Hancock in it [the "Some Other Stuff" band, recorded on Blue Note records] before me. Grachan had a lot of charts written out during this period by Herbie Hancock, and I finally went around and met him and he encouraged me and told me different things about the music. In this group (Marion Brown, Bob Cunningham and Beaver Harris — and, at times, Gary Bartz) we played compositions that had a lot of changes, and some that didn't have a lot of changes. I felt very good about playing in this band but we didn't have very many gigs, so there were a lot of periods in between rehearsals where there was no work. So I looked in the direction of Archie Shepp who, at the time, had asked me if he could rehearse over at my house because of the piano. After hearing that rehearsal at my house — the Ellington music with Jimmy Garrison, Roswell Rudd and Grachan Moncur — I said, "Boy, I'd like to be a part of that group." But Archie either wasn't using a piano at all, or he was playing piano himself in the arrangements.

By 1969 I had joined Archie's group and went to North Africa to the Pan-African Festival. At that point I knew exactly what I wanted to do... and that was to be totally at home in all the periods of jazz. I had just started really composing. I found that while I was in a furious rhythm section with Sunny Murray and Alan Silva, the percussionist and bassist with Shepp's band in Algiers [the other member was Clifford Thornton], when we came out of an energy section, playing the next pretty ballad section would really be a challenge, because you had to save some kind of control in order to be pretty behind the horns for the next section. On the other hand, you had to really play under them and still give them a direction and an energy level; if you didn't you wouldn't be heard, nor would you really be playing *with* the drummer. I finally built something up with Sunny that was similar to what McCoy Tyner and Elvin Jones had... that kind of rapport.

**RR:** How did the UJIT (The Untraditional Jazz Improvisational Team - 1965) figure in all of this?

**DB:** The group of my own, that was working in the lofts for private parties and sessions, was a group that we thought would come out and do something... actually we went to Philadelphia a couple of times.... The band included Byard Lancaster, Bobby Kapp and Sirone (then Norris Jones). I think the first thing we did was "West Side Story" because I wanted to study Leonard Bernstein's composing. I love his composing and I love the music from "West Side Story". So we worked on that music in a medley and recorded it for Alan Douglas (note: Burrell wanted to use Byard Lancaster and Pharoah Sanders on the date but the producers felt that since it was his first date it should be a trio). What happened with the group was that although we were living together, Bobby Kapp, Byard Lancaster and myself, with Sirone com-

ing over all the time — it got to the point where we were all pulled into different bands because of lack of work.

**RR:** You've been doing quite a few solo piano concerts abroad of late — as well as recording several solo albums. What prompted you to explore the solo piano situation?

**DB:** I think that I was always interested in solo piano since I heard an Ellington solo piano record when I was a teenager. I had looked around at different festival line-ups and saw where there was a festival in France with Phineas Newborn and Keith Jarrett playing solo. I called the festival people to ask if I could be on the year after with my trio and they said they couldn't pay for a trio and I said, why don't I try to work the solo thing into my style. It's really a challenge to play alone too but, looking at it from a practical standpoint, there just weren't that many gigs for me as a pianist with a group in Europe during that trip.

So I did the solo concert and everyone loved it. So I thought — great! All my new material that I'm working on can be performed as a work in progress and I won't have to show it to anybody else... since I'm not finished with it yet and don't know how I want it to sound when I add horns, for example. So why not work on it alone and get some concrete ideas and then arrange it for small group or orchestra. And that's what I'm doing with my jazz opera ["Windward Passages" - Hat Hut].

What has happened from the solo concerts is that I get a chance to hear the good and the bad parts of what I'm doing with my own compositions. So I'm in a better position to arrange my material for my Detroit group of Marcus Belgrave (trumpet), David Thomas (bass) and Roy Brooks (drums).

**RR:** Hearing you as a member of the Dewey Redman Quartet recently at the Tin Palace was quite a treat. It's a totally different feeling one gets from your playing than with your previous work with Archie Shepp's band. How do feel about working with Dewey's band and will it continue?

**DB:** I love to play with Dewey, Ed Blackwell and Mark [Helias] and I have talked to Dewey about more things and he wants to continue. The only problem we have is getting gigs where they're paying enough money for the quartet. We're both sort of booked-up until the end of the year but we did make arrangements to play in Switzerland when we'll both be playing in the same concert.

I like his writing and phrasing and it was great to fit into something after just one rehearsal and feel like you're contributing. And, of course, the honor of playing with Edward Blackwell was just overwhelming.

**RR:** The German composer Stefan Wolpe once said that: "One has to practice one's art with a knowing sense of its radical nature." Looking at this from an improvisational standpoint — since so-called "Jazz" music is by nature a thoroughly radical form in itself — what particular radicalisms has your work undergone throughout the years and further, what seems to be the most perplexing problem continued involvement with the form has uncovered?

**DB:** I think that radicalisms in my approach to playing are being discovered as I get my clarity and maturity together as I feel I have done in recent years. It's basically from what I practice and how I practice. I have a multiple conception in that I believe that sound and rhythm together, with some sort of balance,



Students are searching for answers about time, phrasing and technique. And there is a great deal of information in the written and performed music of bebop and the work of Armstrong, Ellington and all the way back to Scott Joplin. Any serious "jazz" musician playing something new would be better all around if he studied the technical history.

The iconoclasm of the 1960s have seemingly blossomed into a broader range of possibilities for those musicians who came of age during that time. Yet, one wonders. For a man who played in three of the best bands of the '60s (Marion Brown's quartet, Pharoah Sanders' "Tauhid" aggregation and the never-recorded Untraditional Jazz Improvisational Team) it seems more than strange that he would turn to the doors of "order" in an attempt to save not the "degree" of his creativity but the "way" of it... with players, no less, who have already melted into the graffiti-scribed dormitories of conformity.

As it is, however, Burrell's latest two recordings are worth a close listen — especially the one with poet Bibbs, it tells us all something that we really need to know. And as always, time will tell.

## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY: DAVE BURRELL

### with others:

MARION BROWN	
'Ju-Ba-Lee'	Fontana (Holland)
'Three For Shepp'	Impulse
PHAROAH SANDERS	
'Tauhid'	Impulse
NOAH HOWARD	
'Live at Judson Hall'	ESP
ALAN SILVA	BYG/Actuel
'Celestial Communications Orchestra'	
SUNNY MURRAY	
'Homage To Africa'	BYG/Actuel
GRACHAN MONCUR III	
'New Africa'	BYG/Actuel
BEAVER HARRIS	360 Degree Records
'From Ragtime to No Time'	
'In: Sanity - 360 Degree Music Experience'	Black Saint

STAFFORD JAMES	
'Stafford James Quartet'	Horo
ART ENSEMBLE OF CHICAGO	
'Free Jazz Meeting in Baden-Baden'	EMI
ROSWELL RUDD	
'Inside Job'	Arista
'Wildflowers Vol. 3' (1 cut, solo)	Douglas
ARCHIE SHEPP	
'Jasmina: A Black Woman'	BYG/Actuel
'Blase'	" "
'For Losers'	Impulse
'Body and Soul'	Horo

### under his own name:

'High'	Douglas
'La Vie De Boheme'	BYG/Actuel
'Echo'	" "
'After Love'	America (France)
'Dreams'	Trio (Japan)
'Only Me'	" "
'Questions & Answers' (w. Stanley Cowell)	" "
'Teardrops for Jimmy' (solo)	Denon (Japan)
'Lush Life' (solo)	" "
'Round Midnight' (solo)	" "
'Black Spring' (solo w. poem by Leon Bibbs)	Marge (France)
'Windward Passages' (solo)	Hat Hut
'No Fools No Fun' (w. Sam Woodyard)	Horo

is a beautiful experience during a presentation. Which means, too, that I'm deliberately getting away from single notes and looking at the piano as a percussive instrument... very much influenced by the work of Mr. Cecil Taylor in this regard.

I found that when I had a recording session of my own in Paris back in 1969, when I used Archie Shepp, Sunny Murray, Grachan Moncur and Clifford Thornton on my record "Echo", that if we were going to say it all, it seemed the best way to present my technique and radical style would be to use a two-note pattern (on the tune *Echo*) that was just developed throughout a twenty-minute period.

During the same period, on the other side of that record (tune entitled *Peace*), I wanted to experiment with different scales. I had been given a book by Pharoah Sanders that had eastern scales, so I studied that. I started the piece with the major scale because it's the most recognizable and then expanded into a variety of things. Soon after with those two conceptions on that album I went a little further with chord progressions and how to end phrases with different cadences. This took me into all the piano players of the '20s, '30s, '40s and '50s, emphasizing people like Jelly Roll Morton, Thelonious Monk and Bud Powell. It seemed that while I searched for new cadences and harmonies and different shaped forms I looked not only to the eastern scales but to the European opera writers like Puccini.

I remember one night at a friend's apartment falling asleep listening to the opera "La Boheme" and hearing some Coltrane in there. There was this really pretty floating melodic line that had a certain bass movement that was similar to a Mingus, or Ellington in the cadence. And I saw it as being in a similar category.

I found when I played the music of Puccini that I liked it so much that I wanted to do a jazz arrangement of the opera, which I did for BYG/Actuel Records.

**RR:** Pianist/composer Andrew Hill said once during an interview in a noted music magazine that: "...if you're called a jazz artist, you're locked into a certain pigeonhole. The word 'jazz' is like a curse because it leaves no area for advancement...." How do you feel about that statement?

**DB:** I think that he's right about that on a couple of levels, because the word "jazz" does mean all those things and then, too, it means something glorious, something worldwide that's full of a lot of good. But with me, I'm fighting not so much to change the category, but more to improve the conditions in jazz.

With regard to the jazz tradition, the question is not whether you're playing what came before or not but it's what you have to offer. What you have to offer yourself comes from a combination, a very delicate combination of homework into the old masters, and then taking the sum total of that knowledge and testing it with your own music.





## 6TH INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL \* BERNE, SWITZERLAND APRIL 29 - MAY 3, 1981

In conjunction with Swiss Air, Coda Magazine is organising a tour to the opening festival of the 1981 European season. The festival takes place in the picturesque town of Berne, Switzerland in the springtime and is dedicated to the presentation of the music's living legends. Sammy Price, Wild Bill Davis and Ralph Sutton have appeared at all five previous festivals and the music has grown in magnitude with every succeeding year.

The basic tour will last for one week, but participants have the option of staying longer in Europe. Departures will be from Toronto, Montreal, Chicago, Boston and New York and the basic price for the trip will be approximately \$1,100.00 in Canadian funds. This will include all transportation, accommodation in a first-class hotel, breakfast and tickets to all festival events.

Your hosts for this trip will be John Norris and Jim Galloway. Detailed brochures will be available soon, along with the confirmed line up of artists for 1981. It can be safely assumed, however, that many of the headliners from previous years will be returning to Berne in 1981.

If you are interested in joining us in Berne, write **today** for a brochure.

Jim Galloway's impressions of the 1980 festival will give you a better idea of the special ambience of this event:

"Festivals — they sprout all over the place, some for right reasons, some for wrong. As a result of love and enthusiasm, two of the right reasons, on the part of a group of Swiss jazz-lovers and businessmen (or should that be jazz-loving businessmen?), the Berne Festival has evolved over the past five years into one of the leading European jazz events. The guiding light and President of the Festival is Hans Zurbrugg, a competent amateur musician and a very professional businessman, and under his guidance it has become one of the friendliest and best organised events of its kind.

"This Festival leans almost exclusively to the traditions and roots of jazz and presents a highly successful series of concerts each evening in the Kursaal, an attractively laid-out concert hall in the old part of the city.

"Characteristic of the proceedings was the second night of the Festival — "Piano Night: From Ragtime To Swing". Now when you're talking about an evening that presents the talents of Dick Wellstood, Jay McShann, Teddy Wilson, Earl Hines, presided over by Sammy Price, you know there has to be some good music going on. Wellstood rose to the challenge of playing solo piano throughout his entire set, whereas McShann, Wilson and Hines all chose to play with bass and drums. Wellstood's set was made up of interesting and unusual material — if there is one thing predictable about Wellstood, it's the fact that he is unpredictable — and brilliantly played in the informal and very personal fashion that marks his performance.

"Jay McShann and Teddy Wilson simply don't know how to play bad piano. Each provided an entertaining and enjoyable set. McShann's rolling, Kansas City-style of piano is always a joy to hear, and his singing voice has a depth of quality that is all-too-often overlooked in the enjoyment of his easy-going personality. Teddy Wilson played a selection of standards which have become associated with him over the years. Host for the evening, Sammy Price treated us to a majestic slow blues, charged with emotion.

"The fourth night of the festival was billed as a "Jazz Band Ball" and, as the name suggests, swung back towards the traditions of the music with, first of all, a set of swing standards from Budd Johnson and Earl Warren on tenor and alto, with Larry Dale, guitar, Cliff Smalls, piano, Leonard Gaskin, bass and Oliver Jackson, drums. This was followed by an "All Star" session featuring "Wild Bill" Davison, Pee Wee Erwin, George Masso, Johnny Mince, Ralph Sutton, Jack Lesberg and Gus Johnson barrelling through a set of jazz standards, being joined by this writer for part of the set. The band, with its freewheeling "Condon-style" approach, earned an enthusiastic response from the audience. The horn players all made strong statements and the rhythm section gave just exactly the right kind of support to make things happy out front. The evening was wrapped up by the DRS Big Band and Peanuts Hucko.

"Gala Night" featured the Lionel Hampton Big Band. They produced a spirited, enjoyable concert which also featured a 'reunion' between Hampton and Teddy Wilson, playing numbers associated with the Benny Goodman quartet.

"The evening concerts were complemented by a number of daytime sessions. The Saturday afternoon presentation of "Born To Swing" featured Jimmy Slyde and Mama Lu Parks (with her Jazz and Soul Dance Ensemble) strutting their stuff while the Sunday morning session at the Kornhauskeller was again presided over by Sammy Price, whose 'father-figure' image made its presence felt and heard throughout the Festival. This Sunday get-together is a remarkable event. Hundreds of people jam themselves into the centuries-old building and enjoy brunch and an informal jam-session which seems to epitomise the spirit of this whole affair. It was followed by the emotion-packed Gospel Concert presented by Delois Barrett-Campbell and the Barrett Sisters, which didn't leave too many dry eyes in the Church.

"Reviewed in perspective, the 1980 Berne International Jazz Festival was highly successful, and a very friendly gathering. It is, in fact, one of the most enjoyable, from the point of view of the performer, that I have attended. In five years it has grown to be a major date on the international jazz calendar, but in doing so it has not lost its intimate, friendly but well-organised qualities. It's a good one, and Zurbrugg and his team are to be congratulated for organising an event not only popular with the paying public (all this year's concerts were sold out) but for making things as pleasant and comfortable as possible for audience and musicians alike". — *Jim Galloway*

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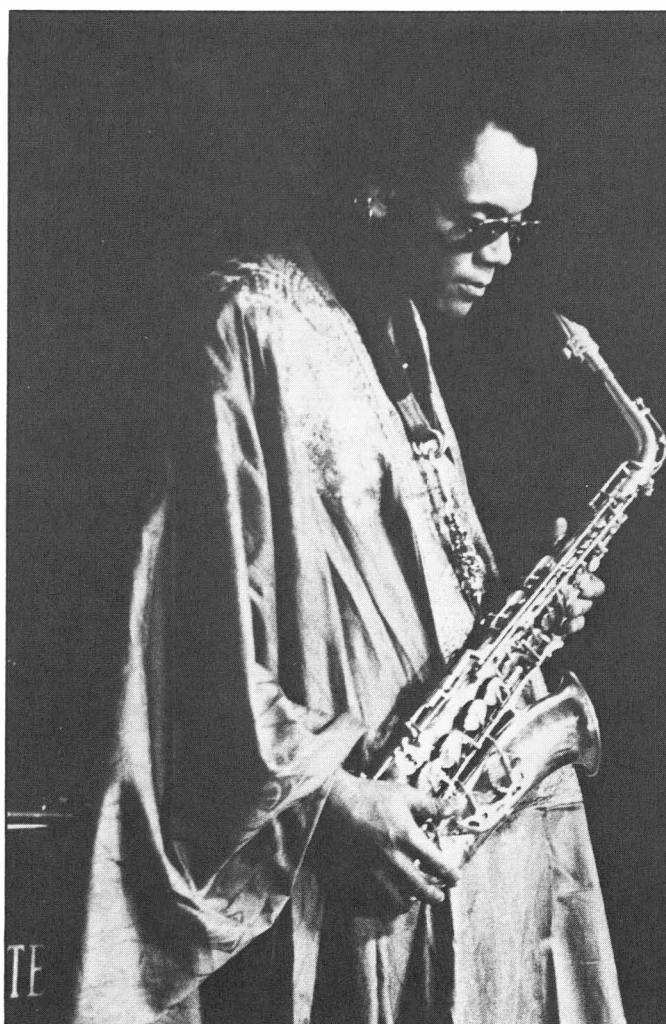
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Father of the Folk Blues	CS	9217
<b>HUMES, HELEN</b>		
Talk Of The Town	C	33488
<b>HUNTER, ALBERTA</b>		
Amtrak Blues	JC	36430
<b>JARRETT, KEITH</b>		
Expectations	PG	31580
<b>JOHNSON, ROBERT</b>		
King Of The Delta Blues Singers, Volume 1	CL	1654
<b>MAHAL, TAJ</b>		
Happy To Be Just Like I Am	C	30767
Ooh So Good 'N Blues	C	32600
Mo' Roots	KC	33051
<b>MONK, THELONIOUS</b>		
It's Monk's Time	CS	8984
Monk	CS	9012
Solo Monk	CS	9149
Mysterioso	CS	9216
Straight No Chaser	CS	9451
Underground	CS	9632
<b>ROACH, MAX</b>		
The Freedom Now Suite	JC	36390
<b>RUSHING, JIMMY</b>		
Mister Five By Five	C2	36426
<b>SHAW, WOODY</b>		
For Sure	FC	36383
<b>TATUM, ART</b>		
Piano Starts Here	CS	9655
<b>VARIOUS ARTISTS</b>		
I Remember Bebop	C2	35881
<b>YOUNG, LESTER</b>		
The Lester Young Story Vol. 4	JG	34843
The Lester Young Story Vol. 5	C2	34839



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# RECORD REVIEWS

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## KENNY DREW

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**Ruby My Dear**  
**SteepleChase SCS-1129**

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Kenny Drew has been consistently making fine music for some time now and this record only serves to further affirm his great worth, both as a pianist and as a composer. Perhaps, in fact, it demonstrates that Drew sure can write more than he does, so high is the level of quality in his two compositions recorded here. Recorded in 1977, presumably in Copenhagen, this music has within it a great deal of beauty and deserves to be heard - one wonders why SteepleChase sat on it till now.

Besides the title tune, which Drew does in a decidedly un-Monk fashion, there are Drew's two originals, *Bassment* and *Ending*, plus a highly anonymous Latin/samba thing, *Gentle Rain*, and Austin Wells's *Sunspots* which sounds perilously close to *Love for Sale*, at least here.

Drew is impressive throughout, playing with a tremendous and kind of funky drive on *Bassment* in particular, a piece which shows just how interesting Drew's writing can be. The piece, with its essentially simple changes and tricky accents reminiscent of Rollins's *Strode Rode*, is the kind of thing that deserves to be standard repertoire. *Ending* is Drew at his most sensitive, with its lyrical melody containing a short modal passage that offsets the rest of the theme. Drew's reading of *Ruby My Dear* respectfully interprets Monk's most lyrical of compositions and finds another dimension to the piece. Instead of Monk's achingly slow ballad broodings, there is in Drew's version an airy delicacy — a different mood entirely from Monk's, but a valid one nonetheless.

The trio format suits Drew well, according him support without confinement, allowing him to demonstrate something of his wide range of moods and materials. David Friesen and Clifford Jarvis here play aptly and within the idiom with the subtlety and restraint required for what must be an essentially supportive role, yet never are they merely pedestrian. Friesen in particular gets a lot of space to blow on Drew's originals and Drew refreshingly never lays out, but accompanies Friesen's solos. This is not just three musicians — it is a *trio*.

The only unsatisfactory track is the undistinguished *Gentle Rain*, which sounds perhaps a bit too cocktailish next to the more emotionally committed real music that all the other tracks contain. Drew is such a highly gifted and accomplished musician that without powerful or challenging material he runs the risk of sounding facile. Fortunately, for the main part of the record this is not the case.

— Julian Yarrow

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## DEXTER GORDON

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**Landslide**  
**Blue Note LT-1051**

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This is the second collection of previously unissued material by Gordon from his Blue Note contract of the early 1960s. Unlike "Club-

house" (which came from a single session), the music contained here was recorded on three separate occasions: *Landslide*, the title cut, is an unissued bonus from the generally satisfying "Dexter Calling" date, and also features Kenny Drew, Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones. It's a brisk romp but is a little rough around the edges which may account for its non-appearance originally.

*Love Locked Out* and *Serenade in Blue* were recorded in May 1962 with Sir Charles Thompson, Al Lucas and Willie Bobo. They are characteristic Gordon ballad features over a sympathetic but subdued rhythm section. Trumpeter Tommy Turrentine joins the group for *You Said It* but the best moments come from Gordon and Thompson.

Side two features Gordon with trumpeter Dave Burns and a rhythm section of Sonny Clark, Ron Carter and Philly Joe Jones. All three selections (*Blue Gardenia*, *Six Bits Jones*, *Second Balcony Jump*) were recorded on June 25, 1962 and the music is cohesively organised and there are some outstanding moments from Gordon. Sonny Clark is particularly good on

*Second Balcony Jump* but the rhythm section doesn't have the sparkle of the later session when this tune was redone ("Go").

Dexter Gordon enthusiasts will be pleased with this release but this music is secondary to the originally released Blue Note LPs — most of which are still (somewhat surprisingly) available in the U.S.

— John Norris

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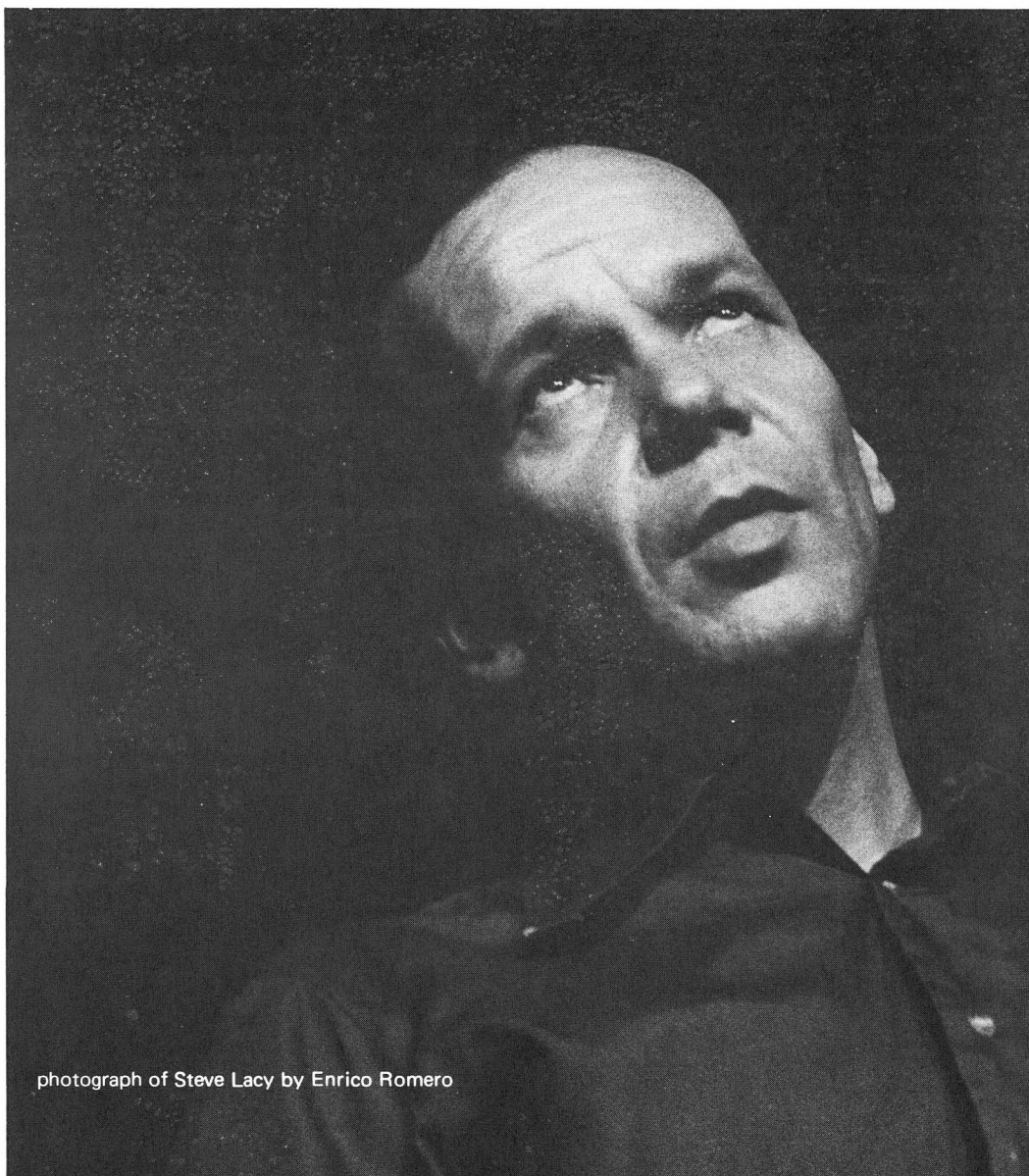
## DEXTER GORDON

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**Great Encounters**  
**Columbia JC 35978**

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Unlike some of his contemporaries, Dexter Gordon isn't trapped in a BeBop time warp or the incessant Charlie Parker wake perpetuated by imitators. He surges forth, full of fresh ideas and immense power, as exciting today as he ever was, particularly when he has the right inspiration from musicians of similar stature. Dexter is known for his 'locked horn' combat with fellow tenormen such as Wardell Gray, Booker Ervin, Gene Ammons (there are also re-



photograph of Steve Lacy by Enrico Romero



ports of late-night battles with the likes of Ben Webster and Don Byas in Copenhagen). This device, unless performed among equals, can lead to musical shambles and/or tedium. But on a good night and with the right foil, Dexter is never better. His encounter with Johnny Griffin at Carnegie Hall on September 23, 1978 must have been one of those nights, judging from these surging sounds.

The tenormen square off with *Blues Up and Down* (a Gene Ammons-Sonny Stitt signature) going from one feverish exchange to another until, near the end, they sound like one horn, so identical are their improvising lines — true empathy in every sense (yet this same number, played by Dexter at the recent Newport Jazz Festival, without the right foil, sounded trite and uninspired). A less frantic Gordon original *Cake* is a confection for these two hornmen to dig their teeth into and savor every morsel — a feast for tenor fans.

The flip side records an encounter of a different sort — the result of a meeting Gordon had with singer Eddie Jefferson at the Village Vanguard after a gig. Dexter, who admires Jefferson

for his unique style of singing, which he calls a 'lost art,' invited Jefferson to record for this album. The titles chosen are *Diggin' In*, a Gordon original, and *It's Only a Paper Moon*, associated with Lester Young.

Gordon's horn complements Jefferson's lyrics in a sort of mutual admiration society whose warmth extends to an unusual performance, sadly to be an epitaph for Eddie Jefferson, killed six months later in Detroit. For this session Dexter's regular quartet was extended to sextet with Woody Shaw and Curtis Fuller. A quartet number, Monk's *Ruby My Dear*, is the cherry on the icing of this well-balanced, fully satisfying jazz treat. — *Al Van Starrex*

## GUNTER HAMPEL

Oasis  
Horo HDP 33-34

Gunter Hampel, vibraharp, flute, clarinet, bass clarinet; Jeanne Lee, voice

*Oasis/Wellspring, Op. 341/Opus 169/Communication/two excerpts from The Jamaican Suite/Couplet*

Hampel and Lee have approached a cross-cultural synthesis with high levels of originality, developing a fluidity in melodic improvisation that is confluent with their ideas of music and ritual as spiritual transducers (explicated in interviews with Hampel and Lee in *Coda's* double issue, 164/165). Surprisingly, the first extensive documentation of Hampel and Lee as a duo has only been realized after more than a decade of uniquely close collaboration and on a label other than Hampel's own Birth Records. As Hampel and Lee have traversed an immense territory together, it is not surprising that an acutely sensitive interaction permeates every second of "Oasis." The impact of dynamic variation and the apposition of sound and silence are continuously maximized. Compounded by the array of orchestral textures they can produce, Hampel and Lee use these qualities to create an absorbing environment through which the healing and liberating properties they feel are intrinsic of music are conveyed to the listener.

The music on these two discs eases and enlivens. *Opus 169* combines a lilting melody with a strongly syncopated rhythm to brace an effortless flow between Lee's scat and Hampel's shimmering vibraharp. The title piece finds Hampel deftly letting the mallets and the sustain pedal work together in elongating phrases and opening spaces for Lee to develop with richly fecund phonics. The graceful pentatonics of *Communication* are underscored by Hampel's soaring flute and Lee's piercing high notes and tongue-flutterings. The thickly textured excerpts from Lee's *Jamaican Suite* echo Lee's recent work with Andrew Cyrille and Jimmy Lyons on "Nuba" (Black Saint BSR 0030): Hampel's bass clarinet on the first excerpt is strong-blooded and his flute on the second excerpt hovers closely beside Lee's voice. *Communication* is a crisp vamp that frames out-

standing unaccompanied passages by Lee and Hampel on vibes. Lee works off the phrase "every transition spirals upward," which is the operative aesthetic throughout the album.

— *Bill Shoemaker*

## JAPAN

STEVE LACY  
Torments (Solo in Kyoto)  
Morgue 01

TOSHI TSUCHITORI  
First Solo  
D.Y.M. 001

MILFORD GRAVES  
Meditation Among Us  
Kitty 1021

These three Japanese imports, two of which are premiere recordings on new labels, do not reveal any stunningly new information about the participants (except for percussionist Tsuchitori, who is a new name to me); instead they serve as comfortable reassertions of policy, old friends — which, unfortunately, includes some of the familiarity and predictability which old friends provoke.

The Lacy solo dates from 1975, and is especially interesting in that it falls, stylistically, somewhere between the freely conceptual format with which he began his solo career (e.g. the pieces with radio accompaniment) in 1972 and the rigid, scalar theme statements from 1976-77. "Torments" finds the soprano saxophonist in excellent voice. His tone is exceedingly full-bodied and fluid, given weight by the fact that he tends to do most of his linear improvising in the instrument's middle register here — so much so that *Zeal* sounds like it is played on an alto — though there are some of Lacy's characteristic upper register forays as well. At least two of the pieces suggest programmatic content; *The Owl* features squeaky bird sounds and a woody, non-metallic timbral ambience. *Zeal* might be a pun on 'seal' since the insistent squeals so resemble the language of sea mammals — and Japan is the country which most infringes on the rights of whales, dolphins, and seals. Elsewhere, Lacy articulates some lovely motifs — not melodies, per se, but intervallic fragments — which break out of his thematic meandering almost at random; half-heard echoes of outside sources — a forgotten song from the 20s, Jelly Roll Morton's *Buddy Bolden*, a classical aria, a bagpipe drone and jig. Unfortunately, there is not a great deal of diversity evident on "Torments;" the themes are typically disjunct and the tempo is often plodding, which makes this record more important for the knowledgeable Lacy collector rather than the novice.

Toshi Tsuchitori's vocal and percussion recital takes a great deal of its sense of pace, flow, and detail from the traditions of Zen and Kabuki performance. The music is, for the most part, very slow moving, nearly static in parts, and without any thematic complexity. Subtle understatement and nuance are the key words here. The first and third of the unnamed



improvisations are for voice; in the initial instance beginning with a single held tone which eventually resonates through the body and mouth cavity and creates a slow vibrato and crescendo, seguing into eerie overtones and wails. The overtones return on the second example, given over to matching the voice with the drone harmonics of a bowed gong. Tsuchitori's percussive capabilities are not given free rein in this program; both of his performances for full drum kit are emotionally restrained, and his rhythms are not the polyphonic fabrics of Africa but, as might be expected, grow out of the simpler, staid, ceremonial Japanese rhythms. One suspects that much of the music's thrust is obtained through the gestural immediacy of its physical instigation, just as much of the depth and meaning of Kabuki or Zen chants is lost without the visual theatricality of the moment. At times Tsuchitori obtains some pleasing timbres out of his kit — especially some uncharacteristic brittle sounds obtained through rim shots, wood on wood and wood on metal effects — but on record, without visual stimuli, the result more often than not is overly simplified and monochromatic.

Though Milford Graves is a master at unaccompanied percussion, "Meditation Among Us" finds him in the company of Tsuchitori, tenor saxophonist Mototeru Takagui, alto saxophonist Kaoru Abe, and trumpeter Toshinori Kondo. Together they produce a continuous ensemble sound reminiscent of 1960s loft sessions. The horns survey the post-Ayler spectrum of effects in triplicate, under which Graves and Tsuchitori dovetail their clattering accents. *Together* and *Moving*, which takes up all of side one, is the more cathartic of the two compositions, while side two's *Response* offers a wider range of moods and timbres. Here Graves's African vocalese and bass drum ostinato is contrasted with Tsuchitori's Japanese vocal and percussive flurries. Halfway through Graves shifts to piano and presents a lush, expansive, arpeggiated canvas for the horns.

All three records are available from Bellows Records, 214 E. 11th St. no.3A, New York.

— Art Lange

## STEVE LACY

Eronel  
Horo HZ 11

*Eronel / Thelonious / Like Blue / Epistrophy / Ba-Lue Bolivar Ba-Lues-Are / Ask Me Now / Skippy.*

This record, a solo soprano saxophone recital of Thelonious Monk compositions, confirms Steve Lacy as some kind of "grandfather of the new music" — things go so fast that he has, by now, been active in several generations in the evolution of improvised music — and celebrates the ageless character of Monk's tunes.

The liberties Lacy takes with these pieces, some of which have become jazz standards, are those of a virtuoso free improviser working with material of infinite elasticity — not a solo player playing the head, "going out", then playing the head again, but imaginative thematic improvisation of a very high order — bearing in mind the player's prerogative to take the music to his own secret places.

There has been a population explosion of Steve Lacy records in the last few years and

this is one of the best — well-recorded, well-conceived, well-performed. And for those whose ears can comprehend most "jazz" but have not yet found pleasure in newer improvised forms, this record, aside from its innate virtues, could well be a point of access.

— David Lee

## HANK MOBLEY

Thinking of Home  
Blue Note LT 1045

Mobley's prolific recording activities have failed to sustain his career in music and it is some time since he has performed in public. He was a key member of the original Jazz Messengers as well as functioning as featured sideman with Horace Silver and Miles Davis.

This session was recorded in 1970 and shows that Mobley was well prepared for the occasion. All of the music was composed by him and it ranges from the provocative three-part suite (*Thinking of Home, The Flight, Home At Last*) to the rhythmic lilt of *Justine* and *Talk About Gittin' It* — both of which could easily have propelled Mobley along the same path as Lee Morgan and other Blue Note stalwarts.

Woody Shaw has some fiery moments and Eddie Diehl's guitar work is sensitive to the changing moods of the music and he enhances particularly the latin-tinged treatments of *Home At Last* and *Talk About Gittin' It*. Cedar Walton, Mickey Bass and Leroy Williams are a fluid, propulsive rhythm section who give the horn players a comfortable cushion for their improvisations.

But it is the consistency and warmth of Hank Mobley's tenor playing which makes this LP so successful. There is a high degree of creativity both in his playing and the way in which he arranged the original material for this distinctive LP.

— John Norris

## WILLEM VAN MANEN

BVHaast 027

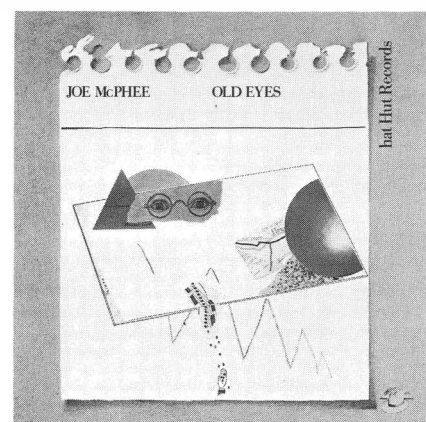
As a veteran of Willem Breuker's Kollektief and a wide variety of Holland's best improvisatory ensembles, trombonist van Manen has not lacked a forum for his rambunctious, witty stylings in the past; this disc, however, plants him firmly in the spotlight and allows us a broader view of his talents than we were previously given.

Of the nine pieces, eight are van Manen originals, and for diversity he has altered the instrumentation from track to track, performing four pieces solo, two in duet with pianist Misha Mengelberg, and three in a trio with bassist Harry Miller and drummer Martin van Duynhoven.

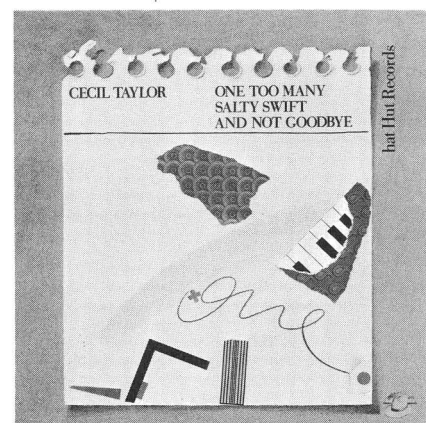
The trio cuts are the most innately physical, with van Duynhoven fuming and sputtering in the background while Miller and van Manen alternate lead statements and accompaniment. *Dice* is taken at a blistering pace, and the trombonist's attack is reminiscent of George Lewis at his most feverish. The bluesy *Tussen Nues en Lippen* is taken at a gallop, and *For Jimmy K.* features Miller's sterling arco work in addition to van Manen's Knepper-inspired puckishness.

The duets with Mengelberg are less visceral, and more conceptually structured. The two

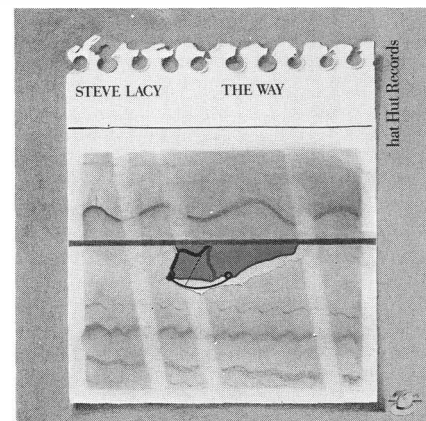
# hat Hut Records



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  
SALTY SWIFT AND NOT GOODBYE HH3R02  
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



play Monk's beautiful *Pannonica* straight, with the pianist articulating Monkish harmonies and timing as van Manen intones the melody. Mengelberg then outlines the chords for van Manen's discursive solo, after which van Manen returns to the melody while the pianist wanders outside of the tune's chromatic boundaries. '*S Avonds kouder als Buiten*', on the other hand, is a parody of a Kurt Weill or Tin Pan Alley tune, with exaggerated melody turns, chunky robotic chording, and incongruous juxtaposition of 'inside' and 'outside' episodes.

In his solo performances van Manen reveals a debt to Albert Mangelsdorff -- though what trombonist has escaped Mangelsdorff's overpowering influence? Van Manen is not a copyist, however, and even in a piece like *Stukke Straight Plus*, where he creates a Mangelsdorffian vocalese through lip movement, growling, overblowing, and especially mute manipulation, van Manen is able to retain his own identity. *Stukke Straight Plus* is the most fully-formed of the solo pieces, displaying a bluesy undercurrent which at one point blossoms into a call-and-response dialogue, and a fine linear invention which avoids fragmentation even when van Manen alters timbre or dynamic levels. *Velvet* is a rondo-like series of variations off of a recurring riff, while *Wah-Wah* and *Plunger* are self-explanatory studies in a trombone technique. — *Art Lange*

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## RED NORVO

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**Live at Rick's  
Flying Fish 079**

This record, recorded live at Rick's Cafe Americain in the summer of 1978, is essentially one of those 'all star' dates that never quite lives up to its potential. In this case it's not the lack of fireworks that usually happens, but a lack of overall structure as a record. There's a lot of fine, sometimes breathtaking music here, but too often the tunes are overlong and tend to deteriorate into long exchanges of 'fours' and slightly frantic riffing. The music is here -- it does happen, but there is some dross. This is the type of record that makes one wonder if the three minute limit of the 78 era was so bad after all.

The musicians do deliver though, particularly Buddy Tate who plays here with astounding energy and conviction. His solo on *Undecided* is outstanding, as he offers, mingled in with his own highly exciting figures, tantalizing little quotes from Lester's classic *Doggin' Around* solo with Basie, and underlining the fact that both tunes use the same changes. And as if that weren't enough, they end the piece with a reference to Goodman's big band version of the tune. There are some delightful moments here.

The ballad medley features Urbie Green on *I Can't Get Started* and Tate on *Polka Dots and Moonbeams* (not *Everything Happens to Me* as stated on the sleeve) extensively, for about four minutes each, and for once the interest is completely sustained. Both leave one wanting more, which is the way an artist should always leave his audience -- too little is better than too much, for it makes one buy the next record. Green is magnificent, imaginative and original in his solo of a ballad that has been done so many times that he could easily have fallen into the trap of being intimidated by other famous versions. Tate is characteristically rhapsodic

and impassioned, as intense on the ballad as he on the uptempo tunes. Dave McKenna, Steve LaSpina, and Barrett Deems lay down a suitably tasteful and discreet background.

Elsewhere Red Norvo plays with the style and distinction he has always had, still managing to make the vibes sound something like the xylophone he made his name on. His unaccompanied duet with Dave McKenna on *Just Friends* works well and is adventurous without being in any way disjointed or scrambled as such things often are. McKenna chooses to use his Bebop persona throughout and ignores the rest of his vast range of styles. McKenna is the musical equivalent of a character actor; he has a variety of guises that he can slip into at will.

There is some good music on this record, after all, these are top musicians. Perhaps a little more organization and attention to detail would have made it a more cohesive effort overall. It might have been a good idea to take this one-time band into the studio while the chance existed. — *Julian Yarrow*

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## ANITA O'DAY

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**Live at Mingos  
Emily Records 11579**

**Live in Tokyo  
Emily Records 9579**

To say that Anita O'Day is singing better today than ever before is something of a cliché. But she is. Maturity steeps her intonation, worldliness (or just experience) permeates her delivery. And what emerges, like good wine, makes you feel warm inside, as it obviously did for audiences at the performances from which these two discs evolved. Recorded in Japan, they are representative of the best of latter-day O'Day.

"Live at Mingos," a Tokyo club, has a slight edge over "Live in Tokyo" -- which is more of a 'performance' that needs to be seen to be fully appreciated (and for which the crowd sounds hardly compensate). In the intimacy of a club like Mingos, Anita really flourishes, whipping up old favorites like *I Cover The Waterfront*, *Stardust*, *The Very Thought of You* and *Sophisticated Lady* with new flavorings, like a cordon bleu chef with leftovers. Accompaniment on all these sides by John Poole's Trio (Poole, drums; Merrill Hoover, piano; George Morrow, bass) gives total support.

"Live in Tokyo" is only slightly less effective because of its stress on performance, with Anita dishing out a repertoire of mostly standards she's been using on international tours. Tunes like *Exactly Like You*, *S'Wonderful*, *They Can't Take That Away From Me*, *I Get a Kick Out of You* and Jobim's *Wave*, her theme. Anita's way-out rendition of *Sweet Georgia Brown* -- different from anything you may have heard by anyone else -- is alone worth this record. But, true pro, Anita puts those finishing touches to every tune that, despite her bows to Billie, Ella, Sarah and a few others, make these tunes unmistakably Anita O'Day's.

— *Al Van Starrex*

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## PIANO: THE BOP TRADITION

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**RED GARLAND  
Feelin' Red  
Muse MR 5130**

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**TOMMY FLANAGAN  
Ballads & Blues  
Inner City IC 3029**

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**DUKE JORDAN TRIO  
Lover Man  
SteepleChase SCS 1127**

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**HORACE PARLAN  
Blue Parlan  
SteepleChase SCS 1124**

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**McCOY TYNER  
Passion Dance  
Milestone M 9091**

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This review brings together recordings by some of the senior pianists still playing in the 'bop' idiom - Red Garland, Tommy Flanagan, Duke Jordan, Horace Parlan - together with the work of a somewhat later pianist whose style may be seen as growing out of the 'bop' idiom, McCoy Tyner.

The pianist who seems to have changed least (if at all) is Red Garland. As he floats lightly through the single noted theme statement of *I Wish I Knew* one is taken back to the original Miles Davis Quintet, whose tonal qualities owed so much to Garland. The 'organ' voicings of the two handed chords that Garland now as then moves through so delicately and lightly are still his trademark, and this trio recording could pass for one of the many he made for Prestige and Riverside in the late fifties and early sixties. Bassist Sam Jones was with Garland on some of these earlier recordings; and he and drummer Al Foster get that tight, bright, lifting effect so characteristic of that period. Todd Barkan's full and excellent liner notes quote Jaki Byard: "Red Garland's piano playing was, and still is, a vital link between what Art Tatum and Bud Powell were doing and the styles of almost every other contemporary pianist now on the scene, including Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, McCoy Tyner, Bill Evans, and many others." His work had a lot in common with a lesser, but perhaps more innovative player, Ahmad Jamal. Like Jamal, Garland did not try to duplicate the work of the rhythm section: he played with it as a foundation; though, unlike the earlier boppers, he did not aim to set up a rhythmic tension between his line and that of the rhythm section. This was characteristic of the happier, less tense music that 'bop' developed into in the fifties.

The tunes are just right. Richly chorded versions of *The Second Time Around* and *You Better Go Now*, along with more sprightly favorites from the repertoire - *It's All Right With Me*, *On a Clear Day* and *Cherokee*. If you like Red Garland, you'll like this.

Tommy Flanagan was heard on countless records in the fifties. In the sixties, Time or Newsweek ran a brief story on him as everybody's favorite accompanist. He was present superbly in that role on records as diverse as Rollins's "Saxophone Colossus" and Pee Wee Russell's "Swingin' with Pee Wee" (both on Prestige). He accompanied Ella Fitzgerald for a decade; and the contention of the album notes that his "consistency is remarkable" is nothing but fair. In 1977 he made a trio recording with Elvin Jones and George Mraz - "Eclipse" (Inner City 3009). Here he follows it up in a duo with George Mraz. Mraz is one of my favorite bassists of his generation, superior (I feel) to his European comperes Niels-Henning Orsted Peder-



sen and Miroslav Vitous. His delicate tone and unostentatious fluency suit him well as a partner for the always immaculate Flanagan. On *Blues for Sarka* he plays the melody statement arco with the ease and lyricism of a tenor saxophone. He and Flanagan get a particularly good interplay on the 'bop' pieces *Scrapple from the Apple* and *Birk's Works*, where they achieve a springy brightness. Of all the pianists reviewed here, Flanagan is the only one whose work reminds one at times of Powell. But his music is open and happy, whether on the sprightly *Blue Twenty* or in the ballads *They Say It's Spring* and *With Malice Towards None*. There is, admittedly, a harmonic predictability in Flanagan's playing - as in that of most players; but this is a delightful album that grows on one.

I first heard Duke Jordan playing the introductions to Charlie Parker's *Embraceable You* and *Out of Nowhere*, and I suppose I am destined to feel that he never did and never will play better. The lovely singing intonation that he had in those days is still with him, and is captured on this record - much better, in fact, than on "Flight to Denmark" (SteepleChase SCS 1011) so highly praised in *Coda* when it

appeared a few years ago. It was the first of a growing series of records Jordan has made for SteepleChase. We hear him this time with the same accompanists as Red Garland - Sam Jones and Al Foster. With Jordan, an early bopper, there is more interplay with the rhythm section than we find in Garland's playing. His subdued, relaxed renderings are full of subtle harmonic alternations with the melody. Best are the 'bop' classics - a pensive *Lover Man* and *Out of Nowhere*, which is not taken at the Parker ballad tempo, but at the relaxed middle pace that Jordan gave it (as *Sans Souci*) with Art Farmer in 1955 (Prestige). Jordan is an essentially melodic, single note pianist. There is little attempt, as there is with Garland, to get variations of pace and tension in the chorded passages. He is one of the remarkable lyric pianists in jazz, and it is good to hear him as often as we do, after a very sparse recording career during most of his life.

While Garland, Flanagan and Jordan are masters of 'bop-derived' piano improvisation, none of them, save Garland in his chording, has been particularly concerned to explore at all deeply the possibilities of the piano as an instrument. The basic routine is to state the

theme, improvise on it, and then restate it. The piano is a vehicle for improvisation, in which the single noted and chordal sections are kept largely separate. However, Horace Parlan, although he came along in the 'funky' hard-bop period, today often approaches his material as something to be given an orchestral treatment on the piano. This is notably true of the rich and sedate version of Charles Mingus's *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat* that opens this record. Parlan, who came to notice with Mingus in the late fifties, gives powerful and rewarding renderings of his own *Cynthia's Dance*, and of tunes by several of his contemporary piano masters: *Night Mist Blues* by Ahmad Jamal; *Firm Roots* by Cedar Walton; and Thelonious Monk's *Monk's Mood*.

On *Monk's Mood* he performs the difficult task of making Monk's music his own while still keeping it sounding like Monk's music. He doesn't get trapped into playing a series of Monkish licks, and he doesn't destroy the character of the music by 'playing the changes.'

A lot of the richness and interest of the album comes from the superb contributions by Wilbur Little on bass and Dannie Richmond on drums. Great accompanists when needed, they become part of a diverse and always changing performance. This is a very satisfying record, with no weak tracks. If you want to put your hand into your pocket for one of these records, this is the one.

McCoy Tyner, on "Passion Dance," plays three pieces by himself (including the title piece) and two by John Coltrane - *Moment's Notice* and *The Promise*. In these performances, recorded in July 1978 at a concert in Tokyo, he doesn't sound very different from the McCoy Tyner who played so important a part in seminal recordings like "My Favorite Things" (Atlantic) or "Out of this World" (Impulse). Eighteen years in fact separate this record from the formation of the Coltrane Quartet - nearly as long as the time between Oliver's *Dippermouth Blues* and the Parker/Gillespie *Groovin' High*.

Tyner, in his fleetness, continues the tradition of fast fingering that was the sine qua non of 'bop' piano playing; and he laces his improvisations with a continuously surging plethora of notes on the faster tracks. In conception, his music follows that of his mentor, John Coltrane. As on *Moment's Notice*, the theme is stated and then becomes the basis for extensive improvisation on a simplified chord pattern related to it. Tyner is a dedicated artist, and his repertoire here reflects his more 'prophetic' side. His playing is brilliant and engaging, yet his performances are overextended and tend to be repetitive. In fast tempo with the rhythm section (Ron Carter and Tony Williams) he is as limited as Garland: single noted passages alternate with passages of massive chording. Playing solo, he seeks some of the potential power and richness of his instrument; but he is all sonority and tension, with too little change of mood or direction for the length of the performances he gives. In this music of mounting energy, he doesn't get the inner interest of detail that Coltrane could achieve.

Jordan, Flanagan, Garland and Parlan belong to a generation whose ranks are thinning. They are still in their prime and play with an assured authority that the now aging mainstreamers often no longer command. Now is the time to listen to them, while we still can.

— Trevor Tolley

photograph of Tommy Flanagan by Jorgen Bo





extended soprano improvisation on record. His first recording of the Massey composition is memorable for a number of reasons, not the least of which is Shepp's incisive projection of African materials in a social context that is distinctively American. Without the large ensemble and chorus of the first version (Impulse AS 9212), Shepp has ample room to reshape the material; his reading of the theme is almost jaunty; there are early references to *Caravan* and belly-dancing music; a thorough cross-cutting between African and American materials connects the spirit of the Sahel and West Africa to that of New Orleans, Chicago, and 52nd Street. Such connections are the heart of the tradition and Shepp never fails to pump blood into them. — **Bill Shoemaker**

## SUN RA ARKESTRA

**Unity**  
**Horo HDP 19-20**

Sun Ra, keyboards; Michael Ray, Ahmed Abdullah, Akh Tal Ebah, trumpets; Danny Davis, Marshall Allen, Danny Thompson, Elsie Omoe, James Jackson, John Gilmore, woodwinds; Craig Harris, Charles Stephens, trombones; Vincent Chauncey, french horn; Emmett McDonald, bass horn; Richard Evans, bass; Luqman Ali, Thomas Hunter, drums; Artaukatun, Eddie Thomas, percussion; June Tyson, Arkestra Unit, vocals.

*Yesterdays/Lightin'/How Am I To Know?/Lights/Yeah Man/King Porter Stomp/Images/Penthouse Serenade/Lady Bird—Half Nelson/Halloween/My Favorite Things/The Satellites/Rose Room/Enlightenment.*

Presumably, the Thomas Hunter credited with engineering these concert recordings is the same Thomas Hunter who is credited as a drummer. If so, the less-than-perfect sound quality of "Unity" is more than excusable. Though the flutes are sometimes only barely audible and Sun Ra's keyboards are occasionally blaring, Hunter has caught the indelible spirit of the Arkestra in rare form. As "Unity" is perhaps the hottest album by the Arkestra in some time, it is hoped that Hunter regularly records the Arkestra and that more material of this caliber

will find its way onto discs.

"Unity" is roughly divided between Sun Ra originals and compositions of varying importance from the traditional repertoire. Ra's background with Fletcher Henderson is well represented; *Yeah Man* swings incessantly, fired by John Gilmore's clarinet and tenor sax; originally used by Henderson as a springboard for Coleman Hawkins, *King Porter Stomp* is used here as a vehicle for fine soloing from all sections of the Arkestra; *Rose Room* is distinguished by the guitar-like sound of Ra's rocksi-chord, which melds very well with the solos by Gilmore and Ahmed Abdullah, one of the finest trumpeters in the Arkestra's history. The ensemble work on Ellington's *Lightin'* retraces the antiphonal structures that are a cornerstone of Ra's approach to composition and arrangement. Ra's skill as an arranger is again in evidence, as there is an effective change in pulse between Danny Thompson's jaunty baritone solo and Gilmore's more heated paces on clarinet. Like Hamiet Bluiett and the late Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Gilmore's ability on the clarinet has been overshadowed by his prominence on his principal instrument. The *Lady Bird/Half Nelson* medley gives Gilmore and Michael Ray, another fine trumpeter, plenty of space to develop hard-edged, bop oriented contours. Gilmore and Ray are a formidable front line on Ra's quartet recording, "New Steps" (Horo HDP 25-26).

Ra's compositions maintain a close orbit to the jazz tradition. The cadences of *Satellites* run a historical gamut from Henderson onward, providing a strong backdrop from altoists Danny Davis and Marshall Allen. Trombonist Craig Harris takes advantage of the only solo afforded him on the album to exert an energetic presence. *Images* has a head full of boppish flash that sets up smoking solos by Abdullah and Gilmore. Only on *Lights* and *Halloween* does Ra steer the Arkestra into deep space, fueled by Gilmore's solos and Ra's own keyboards. These brief shuttles exemplify the basis of Ra's art — to connect the numerous tendrils of the tradition and fashion the future of the music from them.

— **Bill Shoemaker**

## LOUIS SMITH

**Prancin'**  
**SteepleChase SCS 1121**

Louis Smith, trumpet, flugelhorn; Junior Cook, tenor saxophone; Roland Hanna, piano; Sam Jones, bass; Billy Hart, drums.

*One for Nils/Chanson de Louise/Ryan's Groove/Prancin'/I Can't Get Started/Fats*

Unlike many of the current mainstream American jazz labels, which over the past few years have either developed into geriatric clubs or concentrated on vapid, banal jazz, the SteepleChase label recently has been quietly releasing works by some first rate artists, and in the process is making an important contribution to jazz. SteepleChase, and, in particular, its producer Nils Winther is to be congratulated for its good judgment in recording musicians who have been shamefully neglected, such as Walt Dickerson, Buck Hill, Sheila Jordan, Andrew Hill and Johnny Dyani. The album under review here, only the second by trumpeter Louis Smith since 1960, is a welcome addition.

"Prancin'" puts Smith at the helm of a vigorous quintet composed of fine veteran players, among them Junior Cook with whom Smith played in an unrecorded version of the Horace Silver Quintet in the late fifties. For the most part, this is a joyous, upbeat hard bop blowing session; the tunes, with the exception of the standard *I Can't Get Started*, are all composed by Smith, whose arrangements for the unit are seldom complex, but they are never predictable, either, and like many notable hard boppers, he shows a strong predilection for structure and contour. Though this is Smith's show from start to finish, everybody gets a fair share of blowing space here.

In this thoroughly enjoyable album three cuts are particularly pleasing. *One for Nils* is a spirited dedication to the album's producer. Here Smith's beautiful, clean, singing tone is displayed to good advantage. Smith's style, as evidenced in his solo, derives from Clifford Brown and Fats Navarro, and like his precursors he tends to stay in the middle register with only brief excursions upward. On *Chanson de Louise* Smith proves himself to be a lyrical ballad player and composer of the first order. Featured on flugelhorn, Smith manages to extract every last ounce of beauty from this well crafted tune; as well there is strong supportive work from Hanna and Cook. With the title tune *Prancin'* Smith and his cohorts manage to do what few current groups rarely ever do; to play bebop that still sounds as fresh and alive as it did thirty years ago. This is no small feat when one considers that most of the bebop music heard these days sounds, as Hamlet might have said, "weary, stale, flat and unprofitable."

A great deal of credit should go to Billy Hart, whose crisp, hard-driving percussion work brings an urgency and sensitivity to the rhythm section. This LP proves, if any proof be needed, that Hart is one of the premier jazz drummers on the scene. Jones anchors the proceedings with a big sound and impeccable timing. His two solos (*Ryan's Groove* and *Fats*) are a paradigm of melodic economy.

If you miss the Blakey, Silver, Roach groups of the fifties, treat yourself to this LP. This is infectious music that improves with each listening, and as usual, the production and recording are exemplary.

— **Cel Azzoli**

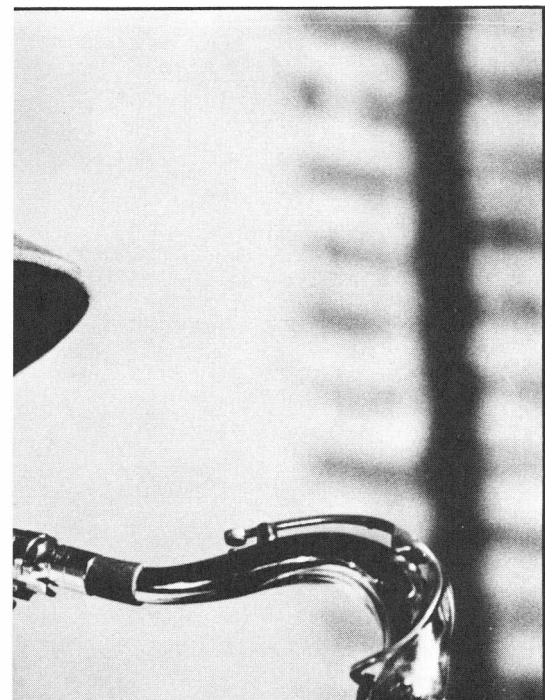
## REISSUES

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

## DEXTER GORDON

**Move**  
**Spotlite 133**

Side one opens with alternate takes from Gordon's 1947 Dial sessions (Spotlite 130 has the original takes) — *Mischievous Lady*, *Lullaby in Rhythm*, *Chromatic Aberration*, *It's the Talk of the Town*, *Ghost of a Chance* and *Sweet and Lovely*. The balance of the LP *doesn't* feature





Gordon but does showcase the early tenor sax stylings of Teddy Edwards. *Blues in Teddy's Flat* was made on December 4, 1947 at the Gordon session which produced *Ghost...* and *Sweet...* Jimmy Rowles is the pianist. Edwards is also heard in four 1945 selections with Howard McGhee (*Intersection, Lifestream, Mop Mop, Stardust*) which have also been reissued on Queen Disc 039. They were originally on Philo/Aladdin. Earl Coleman sings *Guilty, Yardbird Suite, A Stranger in Town* and *As Time Goes By* with Fats Navarro's band but there isn't much solo space. Two instrumental takes of *Move* were recorded the same day (November 29, 1948) and both Navarro and Max Roach are in blistering form. All selections were originally from Dial except for the McGhee titles. Top quality idiomatic bebop (except for Coleman's vocals). The Gordon titles were once on Polydor 582.735 and *Blues in Teddy's Flat* was on Onyx 201.

#### GENE ROLAND/CHARLIE PARKER

##### The Band that Never Was Spotlite 141

Two newly issued sessions featuring Charlie Parker! But the sound is often marginal. Side two contains the most dynamic music. It's an airshot from the Three Deuces in March 1948 with Bird's regular band of the time: Miles Davis, Duke Jordan, Tommy Potter, Max Roach. Side one is even more obscure. It's a rehearsal tape of a Gene Roland big band which apparently never performed in public - at least with this personnel! Parker is featured on *Stardust* (two excerpts and one take) as well as in some parts of *It's a Wonderful World* and thirty seconds of an unknown tune. Al Cohn, Jimmy Knepper, and Zoot Sims are also featured in this documentary curiosity. There's some wonderful Bird from the Three Deuces - if only the sound was better.....Charlie Parker collectors will be enthralled.

#### VARIOUS ARTISTS

##### Jazz Off the Air Volume 2 Spotlite 145

The Shrine Auditorium is the location for most of the music on this LP. Side one features Art Farmer, Art Pepper, Bob Cooper, Teddy Edwards, Hampton Hawes, John Simmons and Chuck Thompson. The group (known for some

reason as the Kenton All Stars!) play *Perdido* and *The Great Lie* and there are excellent solos from all concerned. This was a Gene Norman "Just Jazz" presentation and the final music from that date is an extended version of *Cherokee* by Erroll Garner. Dave Lambert's scat singing and Teddy Edwards's tenor sax are also featured. An edited version of this tune was issued on Crown 5008. The Benny Goodman Quintet was at the Shrine on December 27, 1947. From that concert comes the closer - seven minutes of *I Never Knew*. It's a showcase for trumpeter Ernie Royal who plays with impressionistic intensity and tenor saxophonist Wardell Gray - unfortunately the broadcast faded out in the middle of his solo. B.G.'s quintet is also featured on *Stealin' Apples* and *WMGM Jump* (=Bedlam, =Stoned). Wardell Gray and Goodman have solo spots. Gene DiNovi takes an aggressive solo on *Apples* while Basie is the featured soloist on *WMGM Jump*. These come from a New York broadcast of September 17, 1948.

This release captures the excitement and creativity of that time and sound quality is excellent.

#### AL HAIG

##### Meets the Master Saxes Volume Three Spotlite 143

Voice of America transcriptions are the source for the material on side one. *Donna Lee* and *East of the Sun* come from a Birdland performance of September 3, 1951. Kai Winding is the leader of the group but he and Red Rodney are only heard on the first title. Zoot Sims is the "master" sax and he solos eloquently and characteristically. Kai Winding was also present at a December 24, 1949 Carnegie Hall concert featuring Stan Getz with Haig, Tommy Potter and Roy Haynes. The quintet tackle *Always* and *Sweet Miss* while Getz is featured on *Long Island Sound*. All three of the Getz titles are also on IAJRC 20.

Herbie Steward opens side two with four tunes (*Medicine Man, Passport to Pimlico, 'Tain't No Use, Sinbad the Sailor*) which were recorded originally for Roost in 1950. Jimmy Raney is the featured guitarist and he shares the spotlight with Haig and vocalist Terry Sharpe in the final four selections. *Haig 'n' Haig* and *Talk a Little Bop* were reissued on Mainstream 56025 in the 1960s but *Always* and *Bopelbaby* have not been on LP. All these titles derive from a Sittin' In With session from late 1948. The broadcast material on side one contains the stronger music but this is a pleasing addition to the earlier volumes showcasing Al Haig's piano with some of the great saxophonists of his day.

#### VARIOUS ARTISTS

##### Cool Wailin' Spotlite 135

A unique vocal style developed with bebop. Eddie Jefferson and Joe Carroll are probably the best known exponents of this "hip" style which originated when lyrics were written to follow the contours of famous jazz solos. Eventually the style encompassed straightforward songs sung with the harmonic nuances of the new music of that time. This collection consists of unissued material or else very obscure recordings. Joe Carroll sings *I Don't*

*Want Love* and *Gambler's Blues* with Howard McGhee (1970); Kenny Hagood tackles *Bye Bye Blackbird, But Beautiful* (2 takes) and *Let There Be Love* with the Joe Sample trio (1967); Hagood is also heard in concert with Al Haig, Tommy Potter and J.C. Heard interpreting *I'll Remember April, Gone With the Wind* and *Oop-bop-a-da* (1948); Babs Gonzales and the James Moody band are featured on *Sugar Ray* and *Cool Whalin'* (originally on Babs 6402/3 - May 1952); Eddie Jefferson salutes Bird and Pres in *Bless My Soul (Parker's Mood)* and *Beautiful Memories (I Cover the Waterfront)* - and these interpretations pre-date by a few years (1949-50) his better known work; Frankie Passions, a totally unknown singer, is heard singing *Especially to You* and *Nobody Knows* with instrumental support from a quintet which includes Charlie Rouse and Thelonious Monk (late 1950s); finally Earl Coleman sings *Searching Blues* and *Nightingale* (1948).

This LP is an invaluable historical addition to the small handful of collections dedicated to this distinctive vocal concept. Sound and music are both of high quality. — John Norris

#### RECENT RELEASES

BUCK HILL		
'This is Buck Hill'	SteepleChase	1095
DOUG RANEY		
'Introducing Doug Raney'	" "	1082
SHIRLEY HORN w. Buster Williams, Billy Hart		
'A Lazy Afternoon'	" "	1111
BOULOU & ELIOS FERRE		
'Pour Django'	" "	1120
LOUIS ARMSTRONG 1961/2		
'Louis Armstrong's All Stars'	Storyville	4012
JAMES SPAULDING		
'plays the legacy of Duke Ellington'	" "	4034
BOB BROOKMEYER		
'Back Again' w. Rowles, T. Jones....	Sonet	778
LIONEL HAMPTON/SVEND ASMUSSEN		
'As time goes by'	" "	779
JOE MALINGA'S MANDALA		
'Tears for the Children of Soweto'	Canova	113
(Canova Records, Vazerolgasse 1, CH-7000 Chur, Switzerland)		
WAYMON REED w. Jimmy Forrest, Tommy Flanagan, Keter Betts, Bobby Durham.		
'46th and 8th'	Artists House AH 10	
(Artists House, 40 West 37th St., New York, N.Y. 10018 USA).		
BYARD LANCASTER	Bellows	801
'Documentation: the end of a decade'		
(Bellows Records, 214 E. 11th St., # 3A, New York, N.Y. 10003 USA).		
STEVE LACY Quintet		
'The Way'	Hat Hut	2R03
DAVE BURRELL solo piano		
'Windward Passages'	" "	2R05
HIROSHI FUKUMURA w. S. Watanabe		
'Hunt Up Wind'	Inner City	6067
BENNIE WALLACE w. e. gomez, d. richmond		
'live at the Public Theater'	" "	3034
DAVID FRIESEN/JOHN STOWELL		
'Other Mansions'	" "	1086
PONY POINDEXTER	" "	1062
TERUMASA HINO		
'May Dance'	" "	6065
ERNIE KRIVDA Quartet		
'the glory strut'	" "	1083
THE BLUES UNION'	Lunar # 2	
(Lunar # 2 Recordings Int. Productions, 1533 Westheimer, Houston, Texas).		
FILHARMONINS BRASSESEMBLE & ARNE DOMNERUS SEXTET	Four Leaf Clover	5044

photograph of Charlie Parker courtesy Savoy Records





TABARUZAKA  
 'Emphasis on Jazz' " " " 5048  
 (Four Leaf Clover, Jarnvagsgatan 20, 172 35  
 Sundbyberg, Sweden).  
 PHEEROAN AK LAFF SOLO PERCUSSION  
 House of Spirit "Mirth" Passin' Thru 4238  
 (Passin' Thru Records, P.O. Box 653, Cooper  
 Station, New York, N.Y. 10003 USA).  
 JOY SPRING jazz quartet  
 'Just for the Record' Joy Spring 004069-230  
 (available from Flying Disc Records, c/o Will  
 Bartlett, R1, Box 48C, Sebago Lake, ME 04075).  
 'ETHEREAL' Thrust 3402  
 (Thrust Records/Max Productions, P.O. Box  
 36163, Cincinnati, Ohio 45236 USA).  
 CHARLIE BYRD  
 'Sugarloaf Suite' Concord 114  
 KENNY BURRELL  
 'Moon and Sand' " 121  
 L. SUBRAMANIAM  
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 MIKE WOFFORD TRIO  
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 St., Apt. 3, New York, N.Y. 10003 USA)  
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 BILL EVANS  
 'We will meet again' Warner Bros. XHS 3411  
 CANAL STREET JAZZ BAND (Norway)  
 'Hot Sauce' Herman 1002  
 (available from Bob Erdos, 549 Fairview Ter-  
 race, York, Pa. 17403. \$8.50/\$9.50 overseas)  
 CLIFFORD JORDAN & the magic triangle  
 'On Stage vol. 1' SteepleChase 1071  
 NOLAN HATCHER/CRAIG NUTT  
 'Dinosaur Time' Say Day-Bew 3  
 (Say Day-Bew Records, 2816 Seventh St., Tus-  
 caloosa, Alabama 35401 USA).  
 PERRY BECHTEL  
 'Plectrum Banjo' Banjar 1785  
 (Banjar Records, Inc., Box 32164, 7440 Uni-  
 versity Ave. N.E., Minneapolis, MN 55433 USA)  
 FREE MUSIC COMMUNION Fremuco 10003  
 'Communion Structures No. 11-23'  
 SENTIMENTS/SYNTHESIS  
 w. A. Blythe, D. Murray, O. Dara.... Ra 101  
 (Ra Records, P.O. Box 94, Bowling Green Stn.,  
 New York, N.Y. 10004 USA).  
 THE WIDESPREAD DEPRESSION ORCH.  
 'Boogie in the Barnyard' Stash 206  
 (Stash, Box 390, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11215 USA)  
 DUKE JORDAN w. NHOP, Billy Hart.  
 'Change A Pace' SteepleChase 1135  
 MUHAL RICHARD ABRAMS  
 'Spihumanesty' Black Saint 0032  
 DAVID MURRAY w. Hopkins & McCall  
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 ROLAND YOUNG  
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 TERRY SAUNDERS SEXTET  
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 STEVEN FEIGENBAUM / TOM SCOTT  
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 Spring, Maryland 20906 USA).  
 SOLAR PLEXUS  
 'Earth Songs' Inner City 1087  
 GARY GUTHMAN  
 'Moonchild' Intercan 1003  
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 GARY WOFSEY  
 'Mel' AMBI MG 1520  
 LEIF JOHANSSON'S ORCHESTRA  
 'Jo-Jo' Metronome MR-306  
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 LEE KONITZ NONET w. Knepper, Hart....  
 'Yes, Yes, Nonet' SteepleChase 1119  
 JIMMY RANEY & DOUG RANEY  
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 DAVID SEWELSON & the 25 O'Clock Band  
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 WAYNE HORVITZ  
 'No Place Fast' TFYM 001  
 (Theatre for your Mother, 88 East 3rd Street,  
 #17, New York, N.Y. 10003 USA).  
 LARRY YOUNG  
 'Mother Ship' Blue Note LT-1038  
 THE JAZZ CRUSADERS  
 'Live Sides' " " " -1046  
 NOLAN HATCHER / CRAIG NUTT  
 'Dinosaur Time' SDB-3  
 (Say Day-Bew Records, 2816 Seventh St.,  
 Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401 USA)  
 HORACE TAPSCOTT with the PAN-AFRIKAN  
 PEOPLES ARKESTRA  
 'Live at I.U.C.C.' Nimbus 357  
 (Nimbus Records, Box 205, Santa Barbara,  
 California 93102 USA).  
 HERB ELLIS AT MONTREUX  
 'Summer 1979' Concord CJ-116  
 BUD SHANK - BILL MAYS  
 'Explorations: 1980' " CC-2002

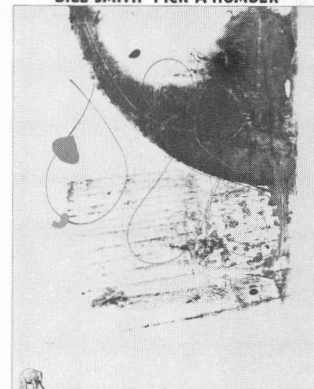
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CANADA



**TORONTO** — The Canadian National Exhibition has lasted a long time. Now there is concern: attendance dropped sharply this year and there were adverse comments about both the content and style of the two-week event. None of this is really relevant to the jazz listener or musician. It is true that the CNE does employ musicians in various capacities but rarely can it be said that there is anything that reaches beyond the broadest of mass tastes.

On August 27, shocked disbelief and scepticism was the reaction to the information that the Toshiko Akiyoshi - Lew Tabackin Big Band was performing at the CNE bandshell that very evening. There had been no advance publicity of any kind and even purchase of the daily newspaper revealed nothing. Only after a second, more careful check was there confirmation in the fine print of the CNE's daily schedule. Attendance at this concert was minimal (less than a hundred): disappointing for the band as well as the many supporters they have developed over the past five years. Compounding the injustice of the occasion was the interference from the American Pavilion some 200 yards away, which constantly turned up the volume of its recorded music, clashing with the sound of the Akiyoshi-Tabackin band.

The evidence of this fiasco can only point in one direction — the incompetence of the CNE and its staff. No wonder their attendance is down if this is an example of how they run their business!

Undoubtedly there were more Canadians in attendance the following night at Lewiston, New York to hear the Akiyoshi-Tabackin Band. They were the first night attraction at the 4th Annual Artpark Jazz Festival - an event which was well publicized in Toronto.

This orchestra is reviewed by others elsewhere in this issue, but it is true to say that the Akiyoshi-Tabackin Band is a marvelous showcase for Toshiko's writing and arranging, and it is one of the few bands today attempting to be creative within the larger framework of the orchestra.

The momentum of the Art Park festival continued the following night with an ad hoc ensemble of well known jazz performers. The music was casual and mildly rewarding but lacked the sense of purpose evidenced in more organised bands. Ray Bryant, Jimmy Rowser and Walter Bolden were the rhythm team with Zoot Sims and Urbie Green the horn players. Helen Humes was the featured vocalist in the second half of the program.

The Heath Brothers, Mongo Santamaria, John Abercrombie, Oregon, Oscar Peterson/Joe Pass, Betty Carter and Art Blakey were also heard during the five day event.

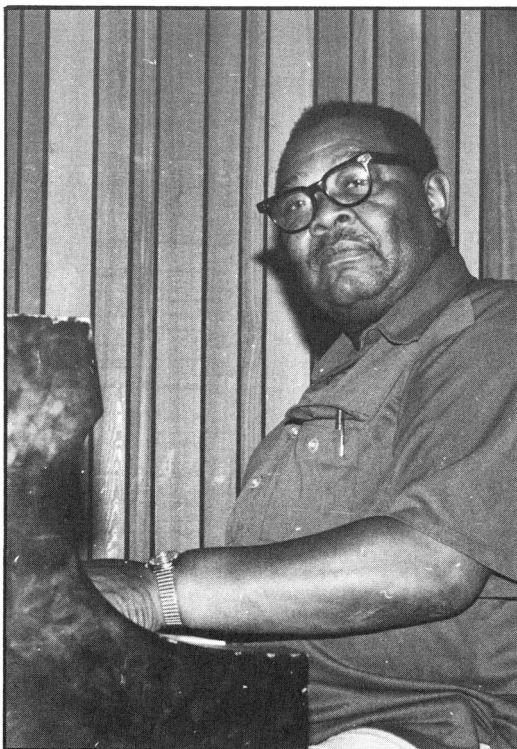
The Village By The Grange is a new shopping/residential complex in downtown Toronto which has been using music as a promotional tool. There was a summer-long weekly series of jazz groups which was terminated with the Sam Noto Quartet. Gary Williamson, Dave Young and Bob McLaren were a suitably pliable rhythm section for the soaring flights of the trumpeter. Noto was heard to even better advantage at Bourbon Street where he shared the spotlight with Don Menza. Dave Young and Terry Clarke interacted admirably with the two horn players as they interpreted many of Men-

za's interesting originals. Undoubtedly the strongest moments came when the saxophonist took off on an exploration of a standard ballad. His imagination and sensitivity is best displayed in this setting.

The Village by the Grange concluded its summer jazz series with a weekend festival where such newer voices as Ron Allen and Lorne Lofsky were heard as well as such established artists as Jim Galloway and Kathryn Moses. It began with some casual, but effective, duets between Ed Bickert and Rob McConnell. If they have the chance to develop a repertoire this could prove a surprisingly effective showcase for both musicians.

Roy Eldridge had to cancel his scheduled two-week Bourbon Street appearance and the first week was split between Joe Sealy and Teddy Wilson. This was Teddy's first Toronto appearance in some time and the large crowds attested to his continuing popularity. Kenny Wheeler took charge for the second week. He is an impressive musician whose compositional concepts and clearly articulated lines make his music very personal. Structurally, it is based on the traditions evolved through Miles Davis but his music has its own sound. Ed Bickert, Neil Swainson and Terry Clarke worked into Kenny's music and by the end of the week there was a mutual compatibility to their efforts.

Jim Hall returned to Bourbon Street for one week (his first in several years) where he was reunited with Don Thompson and Terry Clarke. This trio have worked together often and their interaction is clear. Jim Hall's music is sensitive, mostly introspective and alludes to the compositions he is playing rather than being explicit interpretations of the melody. The trio weaves a spell over the music that is hard to resist.



Jay McShann was in fine fettle for his week at the Chick 'n Deli in August. He shared the spotlight with Jim Galloway, Terry Forster and Don Vickery as they worked through a repertoire of standards, jazz tunes and the blues. McShann's rhythmic sense helps give any group he is performing with a propulsive drive and his audiences continue to grow in size and enthusiasm. This one-week appearance resulted in full houses every night. He will be back.

Basin Street brought back Betty Carter for a second successful week at the beginning of August and she was followed by the Michael Stuart/Keith Blackley group.... Cab Calloway was the headliner when "Bubbling Brown Sugar" was presented at the Royal Alexandra Theatre.... Percussionist Jim Norman presented his multimedia work "Gym Gnomon" at The Music Gallery August 20-23.... Harbourfront's third annual Fireweed Festival will held September 12 and 13. Among the featured performers were the Bill Graham Trio and Jane Fair.... Buddy Tate and Jimmy Maxwell appear at Bourbon Street October 6-18 and will be followed by Harry Edison and Lockjaw Davis.... TV Ontario (Channel 19) presents "The Music Room" this fall beginning Friday, September 19 at 9:30 p.m. The series showcases pianist Gene DiNovi as musician, interviewer and raconteur as he explores the lives and works of American popular songwriters of this century.

Stephane Grappelli makes his yearly appearance in Toronto, Thursday October 23rd at 8 p.m., this time with Martin Taylor and John Etheridge (guitars) and Danish bassist Jack Sewing. Also there will be Larry Coryell as a special guest, performing solo and with Grappelli. Tickets priced at \$8.50, \$10.50 and \$11.50 are at all Bass outlets. Grappelli will appear at Hamilton Place the next night.

English guitarist Derek Bailey and saxophonist Evan Parker are scheduled to play at The Music Gallery October 5th.... The 'Ear It Live Festival of new improvised music is taking place again this year, the following is information pertaining to this.

Recently in *Klacto* magazine there was a request for information on successful methods for flattening warped phonograph records. If any readers of *Coda* have their own answers to this problem we would be most interested in hearing from you.

For activity elsewhere in Canada, see the other columns in this section.... Bud Freeman and Ray Bryant both performed for Hugh Leal in Windsor at the end of August. They were a positive alternative to the misnamed jazz festival being presented across the river in Detroit at the same time.... Mal Waldron gave a solo piano concert September 12 at the Glenbow Museum Theatre in Calgary, presented by Jazz Calgary.

— John Norris

## 'EAR IT LIVE

The 1980 'EAR IT LIVE Festival will take place October 21-31 in the following places: The Music Gallery, Toronto; K.A.A.I., Kingston; Artspace, Peterborough; S.A.W. Gallery, Ottawa; Musee des Beaux Arts, Montreal. Information about performances can be obtained from each of these galleries. This year's performers are:

photograph of Jay McShann by Bill Smith



# D THE WORLD

Misha Mengelberg - Robert Leriche & Jean Beaudet - SONDE - Gunter Hampel & Jeanne Lee - Henry Kaiser - Maury Coles with Paul Plimley & Lyle Ellis - Three Sided Room with John Oswald, Marvin Green, Paul Hodge & Miguel Frasconi - Walter Zimmerman with Jon English & Candace Natvig - Eric Stach & Dennis Brown - this annual event is organized by The Music Gallery in Toronto, where the festival takes place October 23 to 26.

The Music Gallery  
30 Saint Patrick Street  
Toronto, Ont. M5T 1V1  
telephone (416) 598-2400

**VANCOUVER** — The Vancouver Jazz Society is now defunct. Perhaps the V.J.S. was too lofty in its ideals and not hard-nosed and pragmatic enough in its approach to deal with the harsh economic realities of a promoter's world. Nonetheless, the V.J.S. and its spearhead, Brian Nation, must be credited with persevering for nearly five years at great personal sacrifice, paving the way for other more commercial concerns. The V.J.S. was responsible for introducing many great artists to Vancouver; it always paid well (perhaps too well?) and treated the music and musicians with proper respect. Certainly, a courageous outfit that will be sorely missed.

Despite this unfortunate circumstance, local activities have recently been increasing at an astounding rate. A monthly Sunday concert series was held throughout the summer at the Western Front, including Gavin Walker's quartet, the amazing solo piano of Paul Plimley, the very ambitious Sound Energy Arkestra (a 12-piece ensemble directed by reedman Paul Cram), A-Group, and AKA, a punk jazz fusion led by guitarist Alex Varty.

Concert # 4 was actually on a Monday, August 25. It included solo electric guitarist Bill Horvitz, from New York City. Bill operated primarily in the areas pioneered by English free music guitarist Derek Bailey. Horvitz also performed some chamber-like duets with Jim Paul (an alto saxophonist from Seattle who plays there with pianist Al Hood). The Al Neil Orchestra concluded the double bill with Al (piano); Paul Plimley (vibes); Karen Oliver (violin); Lyle Lansall-Ellis (bass), Howard Broomfield (percussion); Gregg Simpson (drums); Paul Cram (reeds), Don Druick (flute) and Carol Itter (visuals). Later on, Bill Horvitz and Jim Paul sat in and still later, after most people assumed the evening had ended, Jim Paul proceeded to execute some basic renditions of classic bop tunes on the piano. Ellis, Simpson and Cram wasted no time joining in for some boppin' with the blues. That's actually an area that I'd like to hear these cats investigate thoroughly in live performance. The evening ended late with Plimley and Lyle executing some intricate piano-bass duets.

Al Neil presented VOLCANO July 10 at the PUMPS Gallery with many of the same players plus two special guests: electric guitarist Henry Kaiser from Berkeley and alto saxophonist John Oswald from Toronto. The evening included tapes, live music, visuals, sound effects resulting in a multi media overlay.

The World Music Universe Workshop with

Karl Berger was held August 2-4 at the Western Front. August 3, Paul Plimley appeared at The Classical Joint in duo and trio settings with Lyle Ellis, Paul Cram, and distinguished sitter-inners including Karl Berger (vibes) and Ralph Eppel (trombone).

Jack DeJohnette's Special Edition played the Arts Club Theater August 24. This Special Edition was Chico Freeman (tenor saxophone, bass clarinet), John Purcell (alto, baritone saxes), Peter Warren (bass) and Jack (drums, melodica and Fender Rhodes). The music was inconsistent, but when Jack settled in behind his kit the sounds began to assume awesome proportions. The man is one of the most authoritative drummers and a master of swing. Purcell, a 28-year-old native New Yorker and veteran of Chico Hamilton's band, the Rivbea Orchestra, Frank Foster's Loud Minority, and an Archie Shepp group, was very impressive on alto. His facile flights had substance; Purcell proved himself to be a more than able replacement for Arthur Blythe. Now if only Jack would leave his Fender Rhodes and melodica at home.



N.O.W. presented Mal Waldron, solo piano at the Western Front, September 14... the Hot Jazz Society presented Bob Wilber and Pug Horton Sept. 3-5... the Herb Besson Quartet is at the Red Barrel Sept. 2-13... For blues fans, Ray Charles played the Cave Sept. 9-13... James Cotton turned on the Commodore Sept. 11... B.B. King did the Orpheum, Sept. 21... Sept. 25 & 26, Muddy Waters and the Robert Cray Band played the Commodore... Whoa!!! Maynard Ferguson hit the Orpheum, Sept. 20.

Black Swan and N.O.W. present Britain's premier free improvisors, Evan Parker and Derek Bailey at The Western Front, October 11. And finally, hot rumour has it that Sun Ra will show up in early October, and Steve Lacy's Quintet later in the month. Who said things ain't what they used to be? — Ken Pickering

## 2ND ANNUAL VANCOUVER CREATIVE MUSIC FESTIVAL

In the process of becoming an annual event, this festival has expanded to include major American and European artists, as well as creative musicians from across Canada.

The Creative Music Festival will take place on the second and third weekends in November, 1980, at various locations in the city:

**FRIDAY - NOV. 7** - Soft Rock Cafe, 4th Ave.: The Bill Smith Ensemble with David Lee & David Prentice / Joe McPhee / Trio Non Troppo / Vinny Golia / & a projected saxophone trio, smith-mcphee-golia.

**SATURDAY - NOV. 8** - Soft Rock Cafe: Al Neil / Maury Coles trio w. Paul Plimley & Lyle Ellis / Bob Bell-Ralph Eppel-Gregg Simpson / John Oswald & Henry Kaiser.

**SUNDAY - NOV. 9** - Queen Elizabeth Playhouse: The Art Ensemble of Chicago

**FRIDAY - NOV. 14** - The Western Front: Udo Kasamets Orchestra / Don Druick - Julie Abbott - Howard Broomfield trio.

**SATURDAY - NOV. 15** - The Western Front: Art Lande & Gary Peacock with the Seattle Composers & Improvisors Orchestra / Vancouver Creative Music Orchestra.

**SUNDAY - NOV. 15** - The Western Front: CCMC trio / Peter Brotzmann trio with Harry Miller and Louis Moholo.

All concerts will be in the evening. For further information contact New Orchestra Workshop Society, 55 West 44th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 2V2. Phone (604) 254-8038 or 327-2837.

## VERN ISAACS

Sparks Street Mall, Ottawa  
July 3, 1980

July 3rd was a perfect day in Ottawa — sunny, calm, clear, with temperatures in the low seventies: just the weather for Vern Isaacs' Orchestra to make their first appearance on the open air stage in the Sparks Street Mall. Vern has been working with the orchestra for some months now, and they gave ninety bright, satisfying minutes of music that will be remembered as one of the surprises of the summer.

There was nothing startling about the orchestra and its music, except that it plays so well and that it was heard in a free concert in the middle of Ottawa. It consists of local musicians, and their programme included swing era standards like *Undecided* and *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*. Vern is his happiest with this kind of music, and he excelled at middle tempo: *Perdido* and *Satin Doll* were features for his stomping and relaxed tenor saxophone. There was a predominance of Ellington classics,



especially in the second set, where an extended *Don't Get Around Much Anymore* gave almost everyone a chance to solo. Bob Cleall on trumpet and Jim Ulmer on trombone played notably.

The band had no reeds, other than Isaacs, and consisted of four trumpets, three trombones and rhythm. The arrangements included writing by Vic Vogel of Montreal and Jim Seaman. *Milestones* seemed to spark the band, with its more challenging harmonies, and showed the smooth, tight playing of the brass. The trombones got a particularly lovely and well articulated sound that came across singingly in the stillness of the early July afternoon.

The concert was sponsored by the *Citizen* and Local 180 A. F. of M. It was a delightful success worth repeating. — *Trevor Tolley*

**QUEBEC CITY** — Jazz-starved for a long time, Quebec City swings again. Now, three places offer live music daily: Le Cafe Rimbaud, rue Saint-Jean, has two house bands alternating weekly, Gerard Hebert Quintet and Bruno Turgeon Quartet (telephone 692-1466).

Le Jazz Bar du Livernois, Cote de la Fabrique, has tenor saxophonist Bill McGrath's trio from Sunday to Tuesday, and books various groups for the rest of the week. The excellent Daniel Lessard Quartet opened up the place in August and it has been followed by the groups of Art Maiste, Claude Ranger, Michel Donato and Johanne Desforges, an outstanding jazz vocalist. Ron Proby and Peter Leitch are expected later in September. For more information, call 694-1736.

Le Jazze, rue St.-Pierre (near the picturesque Place Royale) has pianist Mike Taylor in residence. Guests have been tenor saxophonist Frank Lewis and reedman/percussionist Randy Ash. Monday night is amateur night and gives a good opportunity to discover local talents who, at last, get a chance to take their music out of the basement. Earl Hines will play there Sept. 24-29 and if the owners of this place don't go bankrupt afterwards, more big names should be expected. Telephone 694-1244.

We had our first international music festival, Les Murs de Sons, in August, featuring Big Mama Thornton, Koko Taylor, Ron Carter, Jack DeJohnette and Oscar Peterson to name a few. All in all, it turned out to be a financial loss for the promoters, but as far as the jazz and blues part of it went, a musical success.

The City of Quebec programmed some good music for its Summer Festival: Daniel Lessard, l'Anachronic Jazz Band and Jim Galloway. It topped the bill with a Chick Corea/Gary Burton duet.

Le Grand Theatre hosted Keith Jarrett for a solo concert on Sept. 7 and will present Stephane Grappelli later in October. Needless to say, all this lifts up the spirits of the growing number of jazz lovers in the Vieille Capitale.

Radio programming is still left far behind if one excepts CKRL FM 89.1, that features jazz music regularly in its shows and hosts the only weekly local jazz program Friday 10 p.m. to midnight (with this writer behind the microphone). We also get the daily programs of Radio Canada (10 p.m., with Gilles Archambault) and the Sunday night program belongs to Denys Lelievre from Quebec City: CBS FM 95.1.

Also, this same writer has been appointed jazz columnist for *Le Soleil*, Quebec's major daily newspaper and that is another premiere!

Any musician considering playing and enjoying the good life of Quebec City should

contact Bill Smith at *Coda* who will make sure the information gets to us. Au revoir et vive le jazz!

— *Jean-Pascal Souque*

## JAZZ CITY FESTIVAL

Edmonton, Alberta  
August 17-24, 1980

The recent Jazz City Festival in Edmonton marked an important Canadian precedent for the '80s. Under the direction of Marc Vasey and Taras Ostashevsky and the assistance of the Edmonton Jazz Society, plus a provincial government subsidy of \$100,000, eight evenings of first class blues, big band, bebop and free music were showcased. An estimated 16,500 people attended the 16 scheduled concerts, of which approximately 40% were out-of-town visitors.

Most of the concerts were held in the comfortable Shctor Theatre (685 seats). Many of the visiting musicians conducted afternoon workshops in the intimate Centennial Library Theatre (250 seats). Local groups performed at noon-time in downtown Churchill Park. And afterhours jamming occurred in numerous bars around town. In a word, it was a *real* festival of music and friendship.

The Chicago sounds were without a doubt the most exhilarating. For example, by the time the Art Ensemble of Chicago (Aug. 22) moved into a front line chorus in their first set, their historical collage had taken hold of the entire audience.

Don Moye, Malachi Favors, Joseph Jarman, Roscoe Mitchell and Lester Bowie were at once delicate, thunderous, mesmerizing, profound and hilarious. After ninety minutes of great black music the proceedings escalated into a clamorous crescendo. The signoff came with a hip strolling exit on *Charlie M.* The Art Ensemble of Chicago were one of the most singular, creative, spiritual forces of the '70s. Their performance at Jazz City proved they are entering the '80s "Full Force".

The evening before the AEC, fellow Chicagoan Jack DeJohnette and his Special Edition — Chico Freeman, John Purcell (reeds) and Peter Warren (bass) — presented an exciting program of original music. *Zoot Suite* (dedicated to Duke Ellington) has all the makings of a future jazz standard. DeJohnette's piano playing on *Pastel Rhapsody* was lush and romantic, although the group's rendition of Coltrane's *Central Park West* did not quite jell. But *One For Eric* (Dolphy) contained all the ingredients of a timeless blues.

The Sonny Rollins Quartet was everything I had hoped it to be. Most of the tunes were simple calypso and R&B vehicles for Rollins' volcanic sax playing. Although today many musicians play similar material for the purpose of commercial success, no one does it like Sonny Rollins. He is an original, and in no way has he lost any of his tremendous chops. Equipped with a gruff tone and fiery linear skills, he carved gorgeous melodies within melodies. And his gushy blowing on *My One And Only Love* reminded one that his past was never that far away.

Phil Woods was particularly polished and invigorating. He opened up with *Milestones*, and his incorporation of staccato pops, expressive honks, piercing cries and raspy intonations into his vocabulary clearly indicated a continually evolving voice. But it was the group's final number, *Shaw'Nuff* that took the cake.

The rhythm section — Mike Melillo (piano), Steve Gilmore (bass) and Bill Goodwin (drums) — cooked as one. Goodwin played a superb musical solo which displayed a strong admiration for Max Roach. Woods blew at lightning speed with ease, while maintaining a swinging lyricism throughout.

P.J. Perry is Canada's premier bebop alto player and he more than measured up to his all-star partners Pepper Adams (baritone saxophone), Lew Tabackin (tenor sax), Sam Noto (trumpet), Mike Nock (piano), Michael Moore (bass) and Bill Goodwin (drums). There seemed to be some ill will among some of the all stars on openers like *Split Kick* and *Just Friends*, but this subsided after the front line began to develop their solos. By the end the entire cast was handling *Groovin' High* with all the guts and energy the standard demands.

The Tommy Banks August 19 big band concert was a long-winded two and a half hour affair. Despite the endless arrangements, notable performances were given by Bob Stroup on trombone, John Sereda on bass, and P.J. Perry (with romantic references to Johnny Hodges) on *Moonman*.

"A Big Night of the Blues" was billed on August 18 with Edmonton's own Big Miller, Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson, Buddy Tate, and a local rhythm section — Charlie Austin (piano), John Gray (bass) and Marcel St.-Laurent (drums). Surprisingly, as many standards were performed as blues numbers, but the evening was no less enjoyable as a consequence. Buddy Tate was the bright star of the night. He strolled in and dove right into *Jumpin' At The Woodside* full steam, and followed up with a heart-rendering *Polka Dots And Moonbeams*. Special mention should be given to Charlie Austin at this concert, who was both harmonically and rhythmically daring. He might well have been used in other large group situations throughout the festival.

The only European contingent came from England as Azimuth: Kenny Wheeler (trumpet, cornet & flugelhorn), John Taylor (piano) and Norma Winstone (vocals) — and special guest, guitarist Ralph Towner. Unfortunately their concert was abbreviated as a result of scheduling problems. Their music was promising — it certainly was enough to whet my appetite.

Mike Nock played solo August 19 and demonstrated his art of warm impressionistic pastels and melodies. He performed three originals, and was followed with duets by bassist Michael Moore and guitarist Gene Bertoncini.

Joe Pass and Oscar Peterson were billed to open the festival the night before. Unfortunately Peterson cancelled out eight hours before showtime, allegedly due to a viral infection, so Pass had to go it alone and festival organizers put together an all star line-up to follow. Pass gave a tasteful presentation of standards and popular tunes which was identical to everything (even the jokes and mannerisms) he has done in Montreal on his last three appearances there.

The all star group included Pepper Adams, Lew Tabackin, Buddy Tate, Eddie Vinson, Sam Noto, Big Miller, Gene Bertoncini, Mike Nock, Michael Moore and drummer Eddie Marshall. The musical recipe was loose and free-wheeling, and in a sense it gave the 2700 fans in the Jubilee Auditorium a preview of things to come.

The Bad For Business Band, led by saxophonist Bill Jamieson, acquitted itself very well in a midday concert in Churchill Park. Most of its tunes were based on simple funk vamps which were extended by juiced up ensembles



(trombones, tuba, trumpets and saxes) and free improvisations. It is ironic that the band's name describes the local club-owners' view of their music.

There was a blues workshop by Miller, Tate and Vinson, and workshops by Bertoncini-Moore, the Concord Super Band, Jack DeJohnette's Special Edition and the Art Ensemble. After hour jams were held in local nightspots Southern Comfort, Caravan, Shadows, Bobo's, Steakboard, and Darlings.

General observations concerning the success of the festival are in order. Firstly the coordinator, Marc Vasey, not only booked a wide range of music, he also had the intelligence to provide the best environment for the musicians. Taking care of the player's needs was an absolute priority, from transportation and accommodations to equipment and sound checks. An equally important factor was the dedicated work of the Edmonton Jazz Society as a whole. No paper organization, the EJS is a very active and committed group of fans and musicians, eighty of whom took a week or two off work to volunteer countless hours of labour and assistance.

Lastly credit must be given to the provincial government. Alberta Culture had the foresight to realise that jazz is an art which, properly funded, can become a major international attraction.

It would appear that a second festival is a certainty. While the Canadian government continually decries the loss of tourist dollars, it is time it followed Alberta's example and support the finest Canadian jazz festival in recent history. Jazz fans plan a trip to Edmonton next summer!

— Peter Danson

## AMERICA

**ANN ARBOR** — This summer both the Ponchartrain and Detroit Plaza hotels had weekday early-evening jazz concerts, aimed at the downtown's affluent nine-to-fivers. The Ponch's series, called "P'Jazz", opened in mid-June with Chico Hamilton, filling out the month with Lonnie Liston Smith, Ursula Walker, McCoy Tyner and the Katelenic Kwek Band. (The mix of national and local talent, with the locals getting about a third of the slots, continued all summer). Down the street in the Renaissance Center, the Plaza Hotel's "Ren Cen Live" series leaned more towards fusion, with Ramsey Lewis, Roy Ayers, Jeff Lorber and Freddie Hubbard among those who appeared on successive Tuesdays.

We had heard the Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Orchestra (hereinafter referred to as "TALT") on several occasions, but their most recent appearance, at P'Jazz July 7, showcased the band in top form. I find TALT oddly appealing. The "appealing" is obvious enough, the "oddly" was appended only after several concerts, and some thought.

Consider, for example, Toshiko's charts. They give the band its special flavor. Yet these highly individual, highly effective arrangements are usually at bottom new lines (convoluted rather than smoothly melodic) draped over nearly prehistoric changes (*After Mr. Teng*, based on *Strike Up The Band*, comes to mind). Odd too that Lew's flute is so individual, while in his tenor playing one hears more than occasional echoes of the past. Perhaps however, this is the essence (and appeal) of TALT — a building upward on old foundations, a personal reinterpretation of past voices. At any rate,

this evening gave us a satisfying, ninety-minute set by one of the most individual ensembles now performing. Incidentally, having evidently decided that the "A" in RCA stands for Apathy, TALT now has its own label, Ascent, on which the current orchestra can be heard to advantage.

We managed to catch the Brookside Jazz Ensemble with vocalist Ursula Walker at P'Jazz on July 16. The Brookside's charts are nice, the band cohesive, competent, if unspectacular, with a nice feeling of swing. There are several good soloists, particularly flugelhornist Bob Ohicka.

Ursula Walker is something else again. She has a rich, warm, husky voice, good range, a superb sense of time. She only did four tunes, of which *My Foolish Heart* was the best, a slow ballad over which her voice floated effortlessly. On a Latin version of Stevie Wonder's *Another Star* there were different textures (vibrato, timbre) and a nice sense of squeeze and push in the high notes. Her part of the set was over too soon.

As this column is being consigned to the uncertain mails, the first-ever Detroit Montreux International Festival is unfolding (with much hoopla) in downtown Detroit. The festival (linked in various ways to the Swiss Montreux Festival) included a number of free concerts at Hart Plaza (underwritten by the Stroh Brewery Company of Detroit), and paid-admission concerts at the Detroit Plaza Hotel and Music Hall. We had planned to report on this festival in some detail in the next issue, but the festival promoters refused our request for review tickets last month (which is a review of its own).

Eclipse Jazz had a full summer of live music in and around Ann Arbor (most of it jazz), with a bandstand set up at one end of the State Street segment of the Ann Arbor Art Fair in July. Other free concerts were staged every few weeks at Liberty Plaza and at West Park (a Liberty Plaza concert in August allowed *Coda's* Ann Arbor correspondent to cross the reviewer/performer line in the fast company of Max Wood, bass and Danny Spencer, drums). Max Wood also led a quartet at the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival in late August.

The jury is still out on another local project, the Detroit Jazz Center (located at 2110 Park Avenue, just west of downtown). With guidance from John Sinclair the Center (at 962-4124) has been open about a year, offering concerts, educational programs, jazz information and live jazz every weekend at the club. However, the state and federal funds it has received can't be used for rent payments, and as a result there was a benefit concert August 17 for the center itself. The center needed \$15,000 by the end of the month to stay in existence (we should know by next issue).

Baker's Keyboard (at Eight Mile and Liver- nois) continues to be the main venue for national performers in Detroit. Local talent can be heard weekly downtown at the Soup Kitchen Saloon, at Piper's Alley in Troy, and at Dummy George's.

— David Wild

## PISA FESTIVAL

**Pisa, Italy  
June 25-29, 1980**

The 5th International Jazz Festival in Pisa was extremely successful. An often un-prepared audience (lots of tourists just passing by) proved itself willing to listen to many different types



of music. Its careful attention might be considered a bigger compliment to the musicians than any applause could express. The musicians themselves also seemed satisfied, as they usually listened, very interested, to what their colleagues were doing.

The festival opened with the duo of Carlo Actis Dato, tenor sax, and Eugenio Sanna, guitar. This start was a kind of emblem that the guitar would be one of the prominent instruments in the festival. On another day Sanna played with Richard Beswick, guitar and oboe.

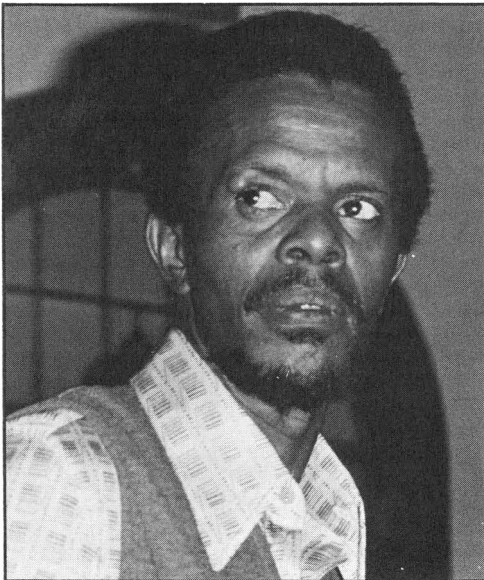
The duo Dato/Sanna was followed by Rafael Garrett, bass, flutes, voice and saxophone, playing a well-balanced set with a percussionist and another bassist.

Holland's Han Bennink, a percussionist in the largest meaning of the word, gave a more actionistic character to the afternoon. He played in duo with guitarist Derek Bailey; or rather, Bailey accompanied Bennink. I felt somewhat relieved when Bennink played solo the next evening, because I always feel pity for musicians who are reduced to secondary functions. Bailey is a totally autonomous musician; from a single acoustic guitar he is able to produce sounds that normally could only occur with a giant arsenal of electronic devices. But beside the actions and escapades of Bennink, the impressive simplicity of Bailey is hardly recognised. Bennink not only takes up all the room onstage, even using Bailey's chair when the guitarist stood up for a while, but he employed the whole space of the church, not only for theatrical effects but to produce acoustical results of its own (for example, rhythmical door-slammings). In reality, Bennink's music is as simple and logical as it can be. The repetitive part of drumming, the regular beat, is done automatically (by a metronome or a ball, fixed with a ribbon to the kettle drum and pushed from time to time), so that the musician is fully occupied with the creative part of the playing (isn't that the way any productive work should be done?).

Another kind of music was heard from Maggie Nichols, voice and Irene Schweizer, piano. Nichols presents her voice as an all-round



# QUALITY MUSIC ON NIMBUS



## **HORACE TAPSCOTT**

### **"Flight 17"**

#### **NIMBUS 135**

Horace Tapscott conducts the Pan-Afrikan People's Arkestra, a young, energetic band from Los Angeles.

## **HORACE TAPSCOTT**

### **"The Call"**

#### **NIMBUS 246**

... with the Pan-Afrikan People's Arkestra.

## **HORACE TAPSCOTT**

### **"Live at I.U.C.C."**

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instrument, including percussive characteristics, underlined by jagged movements like those of a mechanical puppet or a punk-dancer. After this duo Irene Schweizer played together with Maarten van Regteren Altena, bass and Rudiger Carl, tenor sax, a music that is highly energetic and supported by a driving pulse.

Maggie Nichols also gave a vocal workshop, with about thirty people from the audience, in which some of the musicians — including George Lewis, trombone — gave the audience an idea of their work, basically imparting the idea that individuality and the group do not exclude each other. In our capitalistic system individuality and society are felt to be natural opposites. Free improvised music shows that the development of one's own capacities with the help of a group and for the sake of a group is possible; on a larger scale, perhaps this makes true socialism an effective concept.

The biggest part of the festival was filled with music played by musicians chosen by Evan Parker, soprano and tenor sax, on behalf of the festival organization: Maarten van Regteren Altena, bass; Derek Bailey, guitar; Barry Guy, bass; George Lewis, trombone; Paul Lovens and Paul Lytton, percussion; Paul Rutherford and Giancarlo Schiaffini, trombone and Philipp Wachsmann, violin; except George Lewis, all musicians from England, the Netherlands, Italy, and Germany. In general this music can be described as the conscious manipulation of timbre and sound-effects. There were surprises and there was friction and humour.

Listening to Barry Guy is not enough; you must see him using all sorts of mallets to produce different sounds; erratic switches to the bow, playing between bridge and tailpiece, lending some momentum to the group. Wachsmann's dynamic violin playing, using a pickup and a delayer, provoked sounds somewhere between a soprano saxophone and a handsaw. Very exciting were the trombonists; their emotional, expressive patterns resembling human

voices: shrieking, gasping, screaming, stuttering, whining, whispering, belching, farting. When Lewis, Rutherford and Schiaffini played together (with Guy and Altena), the individual trombones merged into an intense unity.

Also very interesting were Paul Lovens and Paul Lytton. Both percussionists handle enormous groups of available tones and open up a world of fascinating possibilities.

The group provokes a completely different kind of musical outlet than solo playing. It demands feeling for the other group-members and the ability to listen to them. This latter ability is one of the visible qualities of George Lewis, who thought that there was not enough silence in the music. Derek Bailey, as well, was not fully satisfied, he would have preferred more different combinations to help the musicians overcome their own clichés. Besides, Bailey thought the music was "a little bit too grim."

I do not think that any of the music that these improvisors played was grim, although it was certainly not gay in the usual sense of the word. Listener reception was much friendlier than in former years. The acute attention that the music required was always blended with the musicians' visible joy of playing. In contrast to previous years, during the destructive phase of European jazz, I could still think clearly even after listening for some hours.

I do not want to neglect another European orchestra, the Democratic Orchestra Milano. Its members were extremely young, and they played an effective mixture of composed and free music. It can be described as a kind of avant garde music with integrated parts in the old big band style.

The same afternoon, Prince Lawsha played solo on flute, baritone and soprano saxophone. He improvised on themes, and constantly moved about in order to use the acoustics of different parts of the church.

A large part of the festival featured the music of Anthony Braxton. He played solo, and in a



trio with Frederic Rzewsky and George Lewis. Another piece, for two pianos, two melodions and two citharas, was played by Ursula Oppens and Rzewsky. I have rarely heard such a dry music, but Ursula Oppens played with so much engagement, glowing cheeks and shining eyes, that I envied her. Once again I learned that emotions can be created by intellectual pleasure.

The second piece was played by a large orchestra of flute, clarinets, oboe, bassoon, trumpets and trombones (Lewis and Schiaffini) conducted by Braxton. Unlike the piano composition, where people started clapping their hands before the piece had ended, the orchestra was very well-received by the audience.

The performance continued with a more traditional kind of free jazz, played by Dave Holland and Sam Rivers. As soon as Holland tuned his bass to the piano it was evident that a music totally different to Barry Guy's or Maarten Altena's would be played (sound manipulation by means of a detuned bass is part of their playing, whereas Holland wants a pure sound). It is true that when Holland started playing it was like a revelation, and Rivers' playing on saxophones and flute was very relaxing, beautiful and soft. The music is clear and smooth, there are no obstacles, no edges, and no surprises. It did not really look like work and the whole music was somehow more cultivated (Holland exhausted himself much more in his solo performance next day and I regretted very much that he had refused to play in one of the combinations of European musicians). To sum up, I would say that whereas Rivers and Holland comfort the audience, I prefer music which makes me sit up on the edge of my chair, ready for surprises. I think, these are not times to lean back comfortably and relax; not even as a question of preference, it is a necessity.

Kenny Wheeler gave only a very short impression of his work, in a quartet with Evan Parker, Barry Guy and Paul Lytton. The quartet played Wheeler's compositions, with room for free improvisation.

There are different kinds of music, and each type has its right to exist. In this sense the Fifth International Jazz Festival in Pisa was a total music meeting that gathered together some of the musicians who have helped to develop the language of music into a distinct and diverse medium of expression. — *Ellen Brandt*

## ODDS & SODS

Johnny Griffin returned to the U.S. for a 10-week tour in September, playing the east coast, the midwest and the Caribbean. His latest Fantasy album "NYC Underground" is scheduled for fall release.

Trombonist Steve Turre has joined the Woody Shaw band and alto saxophonist Gary Bartz has replaced Carter Jefferson.

In New York City, Dick Wellstood is back in residency at Hanratty's until October 18.... Roland Young performed at the Squat over Labor Day weekend.... The Brook Theater played host to Re:Vision a quartet of contemporary musicians at the end of July. Personnel is Susan Feiner (flute), Jeff Hoyer (trombone), Jay Oliver (bass) and Jackson Krall (drums).... The Lennie Tristano Foundation presented singer/instrumentalist Lynn Anderson and Connie Crothers in concert at Carnegie Recital Hall

on September 14.

Boston's Jazz Celebration concert series begins its tenth season on November 2 with Roswell Rudd's group "The Flexible Flyers". These concerts will be held at Emmanuel Church, 15 Newbury Street.... The Johnny Guarneri Trio was in residence at the Top of the Ponch in downtown Detroit Sept. 9-20. From there the pianist moved on to Bourbon Street in Toronto.... Eclipse Jazz's Third Annual Ann Arbor Jazz Festival takes place Sept. 26-28 and includes Stephane Grappelli, Oregon, Stanley Turrentine, Chico Freeman, Sarah Vaughan, Arthur Blythe and Anthony Braxton (solo).... David Wild reports that Detroit's Channel 56, WTVS, recently screened an excellent film, produced by Edward Gray, entitled "Elvin Jones: Different Drummer".

The 1980 Chicago Jazz Festival was broadcast live via National Public Radio for three nights (Aug. 29-31) from 7:30-11:30 p.m. This program spotlighted Jay McShann, Lorez Alexandria, Lionel Hampton, Stan Getz, the Art Ensemble, Earl Hines, Dizzy Gillespie, Douglas Ewart and Muddy Waters.... Barrett Deems is the guest of honour at this year's Festival of Traditional Jazz to be held November 7-9 at Chicago's O'Hare/Kennedy Holiday Inn. Milt Hinton, Bob Wilber, Johnny Mince, Billy Butter-

field, Ralph Sutton and Art Hodes are among the featured performers.

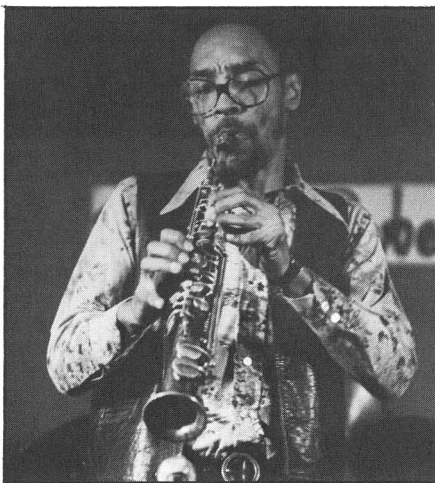
**Jazz Times** (= **Radio Free Jazz**) announces that the theme of its second convention (to be held October 15-18 at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C.) will be "Working Together For Jazz". Orrin Keepnews will be executive producer of the convention.

Wild Bill Davison was the star attraction at the July 20 session of the St. Louis Jazz Club.... Clarinetist Herb Hall made a guest appearance with the Queen City Jazz Band in Denver July 18 and 19. In September he was a headliner at the first North Carolina Jazz Festival.... This year's Telluride Festival attracted more than 11,000 people to the mountains of Western Colorado. Etta James, Betty Carter, Woody Shaw, Anthony Braxton, Herbie Hancock, Albert King and Paul Horn were among the featured artists.... Trumpeter Leo Smith and vibraphonist Bobby Naughton performed together in Richmond, Va., Greensboro, N.C. and Knoxville, Tn.... also to appear in Knoxville at the Bijou Theatre are the Art Ensemble (October 3 & 4), & David Grisman (Oct. 15). Steve Lacy's Quintet will perform November 3 at the University of Tennessee Music Hall.... Magico (Jan Garbarek, Egberto Gismonti and Charlie Haden) will be appearing Oct. 11 at the Uni-

photograph of Prince Lawsha by Enrico Romero







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**ORIGINAL RECORD LABELS, 1940.** This is a series of articles in Jazz Information, Volume One, Numbers 26, 27, 28 & 29, by William C. Love and this is the first and only published information that tells what record labels are original by illustrations and record numbers. Photographs of the record labels are included for the Paramount, Vocalion, Okeh, Columbia, Gennett, Perfect, Brunswick, Cameo, Victor, Harmony, Bluebird, Aeolian-Vocalion, Romeo, Decca and Melotone labels. If you collect original labels, you need this series.

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versalist Church, 1911 Cliff Valley Way in Atlanta, Georgia.

A new agency booking jazz artists is The Berkeley Agency, 2490 Channing Way, Suite 406, Berkeley, Cal. 94704 (415-843-4902). They represent the Akiyoshi-Tabackin band, Richie Cole, Sam Rivers, Bobby Hutcherson, Anthony Braxton, Andrew Hill, Art Pepper, Chico Freeman, John Handy, Red Rodney, James Newton & Anthony Davis, Billy Harper and Hank Crawford.... The 1981 National Association of Jazz Educators conference takes place in St. Louis January 8-11 at the Chase-Park Plaza Hotel.... The 1981 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival is scheduled for April 29 through May 10.... Curtis Dale Jerde is the new curator of the William Ransom Hogan Jazz Archive at Tulane University. Former director Dick Allen will remain with the Archive in a part-time capacity as curator of oral history materials.

Clement Meadmore is a well-known Australian sculptor/designer who has lived in New York for many years. His enthusiasm for jazz has led to the establishment of SoundAids (395 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10025). He has designed a low-mass replacement arm for many turntables which facilitates the playing of warped records and in general improves the quality of sound. He has designed record storage units which can be constructed without tools and, most interestingly, he has designed and put into production cassette storage units. Cassette storage has long been a problem and the units produced by SoundAids are by far the best solution to date. They fit in standard record shelves and can also be used as support columns for shelving, replacing bricks or other less attractive and useless support systems.

The second Copenhagen Jazz Festival was held between July 4 and 13. Events took place in various locations across the city featuring Ray Charles, Stan Getz, Dizzy Gillespie, Dollar Brand, Art Farmer, Tito Puente and Roland Hanna.... Antwerp's Middelheim Festival took place Aug. 11-16. Two Belgian groups performed each night as well as the Gerry Mulligan Big Band, Teddy Edwards, Jack Wilkins, Arthur Blythe and Hamiet Bluiett, Jimmy Witherspoon and Red Holloway.

The Bill Smith Ensemble with David Lee and David Prentice are planning to come to Europe in late June/early July 1981. Anyone interested in presenting the trio in concert can contact them at *Coda*.

From Paris, Jason Weiss reports that Chan Parker and Francis Paudras are compiling a large art-book documenting the life of Charlie Parker. Three-quarters of the book will consist of photographs, while the rest will include various documents: contracts, notes, letters, surrealist drawings, graphics. Paudras and Mrs. Parker are forming a company for other jazz-related projects, including books (the next is on Bud Powell), records and films. The Parker book, "To Bird With Love" will be out by Christmas and will be available by subscription from Francis Paudras, 6 rue de Douai, 75009 Paris, France.

The Barry Altschul Trio with Ray Anderson and Mark Helias will be in Europe for October, where they may cross paths with the Billy Bang Trio (with Wilber Morris and Dennis Charles) who will be working a similar circuit.... Since settling in Copenhagen, Thad Jones has been active fronting a new big band known as Eclipse: an lp of the band has been released by Metronome Records.... Gunter Hampel and Jeanne Lee performed at the Willisau Festival

on August 31 and then moved on to concert appearances in Austria. In October they will be in Canada for concerts sponsored by the Goethe Institute.... The World Saxophone Quartet and Cecil Taylor/Max Roach gave concerts in Bologna, Italy in September.

RCA has terminated its contract with the Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin band in the U.S. To fill the void the co-leaders have formed Ascent Records (12823 Friar Street, North Hollywood, California 91605) and released "Farewell" (ASC-1000) by the big band and a Lew Tabackin trio session with John Heard and Billy Higgins, "Black and Tan Fantasy" (ASC-1001). The albums are available by mail and will be sold at the band's concert appearances. They will also be available at some record stores, and are available from *Coda*.... Fantasy is releasing a 12-record limited edition boxed set containing all of Miles Davis Prestige material.

Blues Distributors Worldwide, P.O. Box 12538, 1100 AM Amsterdam, Holland announces the release of an lp by Sugar Chile Robinson. It's on Duo Records DR 3100.... Leo Records, 130 Twyford Rd., West Harrow, Middlesex, England has released two new records. LR 012 features a trio of Russian musicians (Ganelin, Tarasov and Chekasin) recorded live during the East Berlin Festival of 1978. LR 103 features Amina Claudine Myers with Cecil McBee and Jimmy Lovelace as she "Salutes Bessie Smith".

Arhoolie Records is celebrating its 20th anniversary and has released a package of Clifton Chenier's greatest hits: "Classic Clifton" (1082). Three more lps on Arhoolie focus on Tex-Mex music, one on cajun music, and one on old-time country music.... Choice Records are no longer being distributed in the U.S. by Inner City. They will now work directly with record stores through a manufacturer's representative. Choice are located at 245 Tilley Place, Sea Cliff, Long Island, N.Y. 11579.

Andrews Music (4830 South Dakota Ave N.E., Washington, D.C. 10027) has published four volumes of small-group arrangements of compositions by Andrew White.... "Going to Kansas City" is the title of a book of interview/remembrances by Mary Lee Hester with the surviving musicians from the period when Kansas City was a jazz mecca. Published privately, the book is available by mail *only* from the Early Bird Press, 526 North Woods, Sherman, Texas 75090. Cost is \$8.95... David Redfern's Jazz Album is the title of a book of jazz photographs taken over the past 20 years by Redfern. It is published in England by Eel Pie Publishing and costs a massive £13.95.... In addition to his new Ornette Coleman discography, David Wild is also gathering information for a new journal of commentary, corrections and additions to his Wildmusic Publications (P.O. Box 2138, Ann Arbor, MI 48106). To be known as "Disc-ribe", the first edition will appear this fall. Single issue price is \$1.50, and a subscription of \$5.00 covers four issues.... Jean-Roland Hippenmeyer (Box 93, 1211 Geneva 7, Servette, Switzerland) has published a new 230-page biography of Sidney Bechet. Written in French, it costs SFr. 48.... The first edition of World Jazz Calendar of Festivals & Events was published in June. It covers the second 6 months of 1980 and is an invaluable tool for anyone wishing to attend or perform at festivals. Its success depends on organisations forwarding the information in plenty of time. Although the deadline for the new edition has already passed it may well be possible to get coverage in the next edition. All information



should be sent to International Jazz Federation, Inc., 1697 Broadway, Suite 1203, New York, N.Y. 10019. Copies of the first edition cost \$2.00 postpaid.... Long-time collector Bill Love (publisher of Jazum Records) is preparing to dispose of his large collection through auction. If you wish to receive his mailing list write to Bill Love, 5808 Northumberland St., Pittsburgh, PA 15217 USA.

At this writing postal service in Toronto is being disrupted by a strike. As a result of this, some of our regular columns are not appearing. We regret this disservice to our readers, to the writers, and to the music, and hope that service will resume shortly.

Pianist/composer Duke Pearson died August 4 in Atlanta of multiple sclerosis. Tenor saxophonist Jimmy Forrest died August 26 in hospital in Grand Rapids while waiting to have exploratory surgery. — *compiled by John Norris*

## LETTERS

I have agreed as editor of *Coda* to print the following letter because *Coda* indeed did print an opinion which was second hand information. I should however like to point out that neither Moe Koffman or this promotion agency have a subscription to *Coda Magazine*, and the only contact it has had with us is to condemn us for an error in judgement. For the most part the established jazz fraternity of Toronto, of which Moe Koffman is a prominent member, has never contributed to *Coda* in any way, and the only time we ever hear at all from them, is when they complain. We will make every effort in the future to exclude Mr. Koffman's name from our publication, so as not to make any more errors in judgement pertaining to his validity as a jazz musician. There will be no further correspondence on this subject. — *Bill Smith*

RE: *Coda Magazine*, Issue No. 173 (1980), page 35.

I am writing in regard to your brief reference to Moe Koffman's recent tour in Australia.

This is a pure example of irresponsible reporting, writing and editing. You sum up an entire tour with second hand opinions qualified by the statement that the reporter did not actually hear Moe Koffman while the band was in Australia.

Every report that reached us, from CBC who were filming a Super Special of Moe Koffman in Australia, James Galway who attended every one of Moe's performances, the Canadian Embassy and the Australian press was of overwhelming acclaim. Enclosed are all the reviews we have received from the Australian press — all favourable. This totally discredits your reporter's claim that "by all reports they were uninteresting" and I feel he should bring forward any negative reviews, if any exist.

Moe Koffman was the first Canadian group of any kind to be invited to the prestigious Adelaide Festival and the tour did a great deal for Canadian jazz in general. As one of the enclosed articles verify, it resulted directly in feature articles and radio programs on Canadian jazz. Instead of praising Moe for increasing Canada's jazz profile, Adrian Jackson gives Moe a back hand slap based on hearsay. This is just plain shoddy and cheap.

The Australian audiences were thrilled with the Moe Koffman Jazz Quintet and he has received numerous invitations to return.

A reporter's opinion is one thing but a statement without the facts is sloppy reporting.

— *Julia Drake, publicity director*  
General Arts Management Inc.

471 Queen St. E., Toronto, Canada M5A 1T9  
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**JAZZ JOURNAL International:** Back issues for sale, each \$2.00 postpaid from Coda Publications: **February 1978:** Vol. 31, Nos. 1 & 2: Gerry Mulligan, ECM, Monty Alexander, W. Devereux. **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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129 (May 1974 - Kenny Hollon, Larry Coryell)

130 (July 1974 - Mary Lou Williams, Jimmy Rogers, Morris Jennings)

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)

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)

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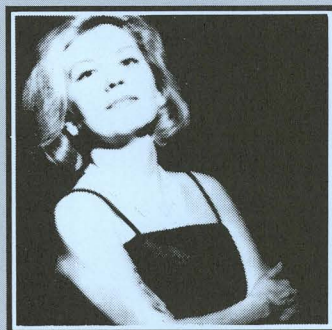
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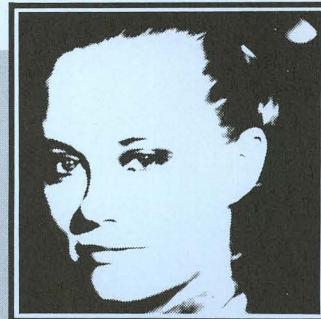


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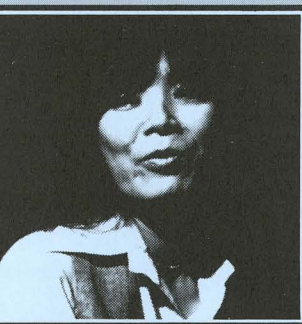


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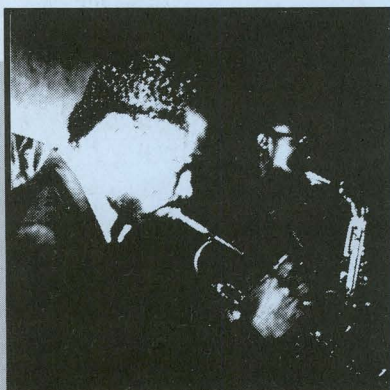




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