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CODA MAGAZINE

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**JANE
BUNNETT**

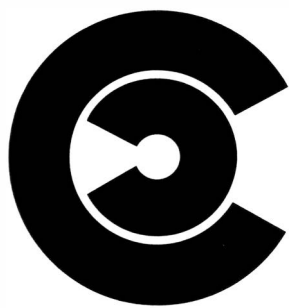
FEATURING GUITARISTS
**SPENCER BAREFIELD
& JOE MORRIS**

PLUS VIOLINIST
MARK FELDMAN

IN REVIEW
**ITALIAN MUSIC
MUSIQUE ACTUELLE
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PLUS THE 1995
WRITERS CHOICE





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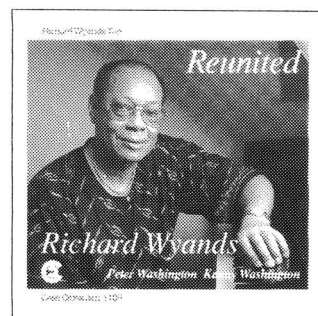
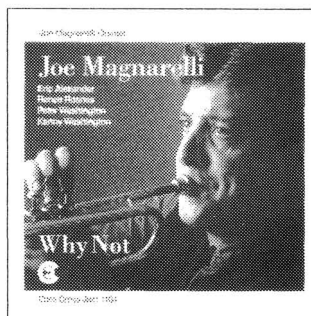
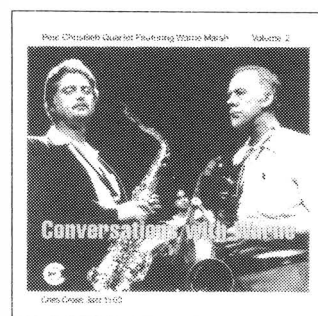
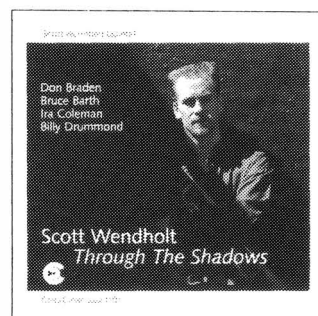
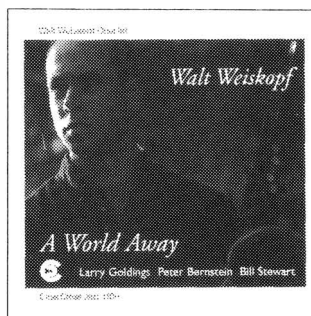
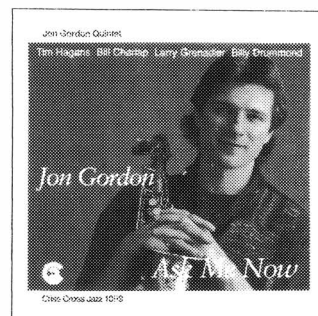
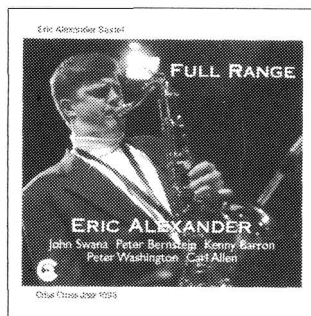
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AROUND THE WORLD

COMPILED BY
JOHN NORRIS

CANADA

SUMMER FESTIVAL ROUND-UP:

Contrary to what was promised the **CORNWALL** Jazz Festival never got off the ground. Lack of funding felled the ambitious event.

However, festivals on a smaller scale continued to brighten up the summer scene. **MONCTON**, New Brunswick's three day event in early July, was bolstered with an influx of Toronto headliners while **TORONTO**'s own Beaches Festival gained some credibility with Ernie Andrews on stage for a set with **Bill King's All Stars**.

Coda editor Bill Smith was wearing his performer's cap at **HORNBY ISLAND**'s Joe King Ball Park for a six night festival of "New Jazz" with guest performers **Tony Wilson, Francois Houle, Catriona Strang, Victor DeBoo, Rob Armus** and Joe Williamson.

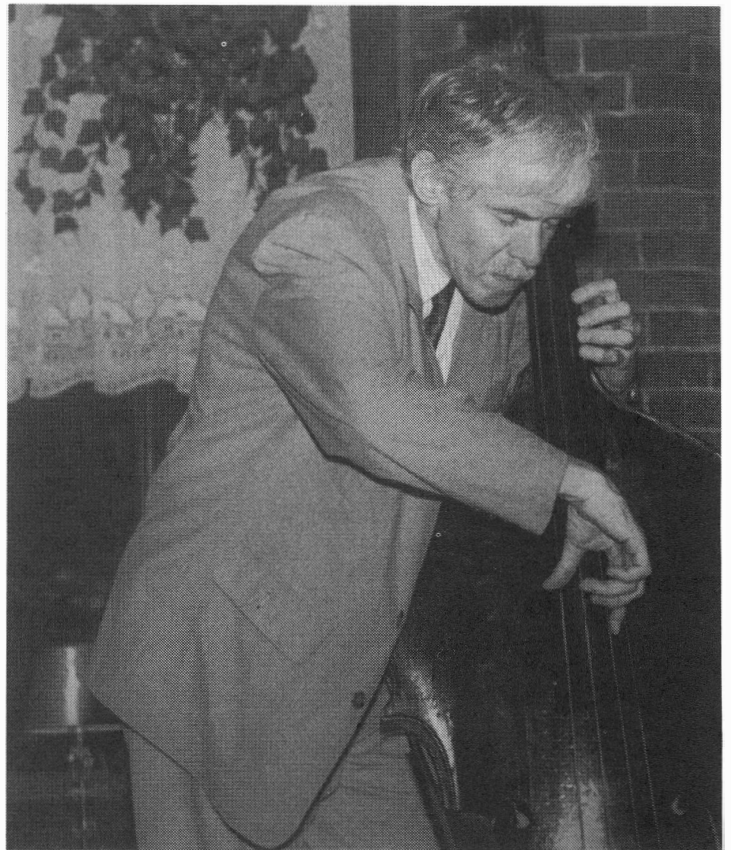
The West Coast has, as usual, been very active. Among the many presentations the highlights have been the **D.D. Jackson Trio**, vocalist **Elizabeth Fischer** with **Talking Pictures**, Jay Clayton & Fred Hersch, and the Dave Douglas String Group featuring Mark Feldman. All these events took place at the Glass Slipper in **VANCOUVER**. A number of these artists also appeared in **VICTORIA** and **EDMONTON**. The jazz societies of both those cities were responsible for the presentations. The Coastal Jazz & Blues Society in Vancouver now have one more way to communicate with them. Their e-mail address is cjbs@mindlink.bc.ca

Across the border in **SEATTLE** the **earshot festival** presented a two week festival which included the Joe Lovano trio, Bert Wilson, Keith Jarrett trio,

Joe McPhee, Myra Melford, Walter Norris, Geri Allen, Carla Bley with Steve Swallow and the Wayne Shorter Septet.

Drummer **Barry Elmes** relinquished his long-standing gig with Moe Koffman. Barry Romberg is his replacement and debuted with the quintet in October at the Judy Jazz Bar in Toronto... University of Toronto faculty members Alex Dean, Kirk McDonald, Mike Murley, Roy Patterson, Mike Malone, Phil Nimmons, Don Thompson and Gary Williamson are all involved with the monthly, free evening concerts at Walter Hall on Wednesday nights this winter.

Ontario regional jazz series take place this winter in Markham and Peterborough. St. Andrews United Church is the **MARKHAM** venue with



DAVE YOUNG Photograph By Barry Thomson

the **Don Thompson Quartet** on stage in October, followed in November by vocalist Alex Pangman with the Credit River Jazz Band. The Kim Hunt Band performs February 24th and **Bernie Senensky's** Trio is booked for April 27th... The **PETERBOROUGH** concerts are sponsored by the Kawartha Jazz Society. **Oliver Jones** opened the series in September and the Kieran Overs Nonet performed in November. The Mose Allison Trio will appear on January 21st.

CALGARY's Jazz Focus Records has new piano trio recordings available by Dado Moroni (Insights) and Jessica Williams (Inventions). New **Justin Time** releases include Jane Bunnett's "Rende-Vous Brazil Cuba", "The Maritime

Jazz Orchestra" with special guest Kenny Wheeler, and Dave Young's "Two By Two" — duets with Oscar Peterson, Tommy Flanagan, Cedar Walton, John Hicks and Mulgrew Miller... Bill King's **Radioland Records** has released "From The Heart" — a tribute to Oscar Peterson by Canadian pianists Wray Downes, Mark Eisenman, David Restivo, Bernie Senensky, Don Thompson and Bill King... **Guitar Archives** (PO Box 36055, 10991 #1 Road, Richmond, B.C. Canada V7E 3E6) has issued a two CD set of Lennie Breau performances with Dave Young, from June 14th, 1983. They were recorded at Bourbon Street in Toronto... **Victo** has released "Nomad" by sound sculpturist J.A.

Deane... **DSM** (5422 Avenue Duquette, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H4A 1J6) is a new Canadian label which has a new quartet recording featuring saxophonist Dave Turner... There are new self produced CDs issued by Montreal saxophonist Mike Allen and B.C. vocalist Lily Ann MacDonald... New fall releases from **Sackville** are Don Menza/Pete Magadini Quartet "Live At Claudio's" in Montreal and "The Back Room Romp" by Keith Ingham/Harry Allen Septet.

AROUND THE WORLD

AWARDS & PLACEMENTS

Geri Allen will receive the 1996 Jazzpar Prize... **Francy Boland** received the Freedom of the City of Namur in a ceremony which took place June 30th... **Glenn Horiuchi** received a California Arts Council Artists Fellowship... **Joseph Jarman** has signed with The Integrated Arts People... **Gerry Mulligan** was the first artist in residence at North Texas University to be sponsored through the Glenn E. Gomez Artists Endowment in Jazz Studies... The New England Foundation for the Arts third annual Achievement in Jazz Awards have gone to **Archie Shepp** and **Attila Zoller**... **Mal Waldron's** 70th birthday was celebrated with three concerts in Antwerp. Max Roach, Jeanne Lee and Steve Lacy were guest performers... The Library of Congress has acquired **William P. Gottlieb's** jazz photographs taken between 1938 and 1948. Gottlieb's book *The Golden Era Of Jazz* has been reissued and revised and there will be a 1996 Jazz Calendar using his photographs.

EVENTS & PROJECTS

Chicago's **Jazz Record Mart** relocated to 444 North Wabash Avenue last May after 32 years at its old location... Two Jazz South sampler CDs are now available from the Southern Arts Foundation. They showcase Southern jazz artists. A catalogue is available from 181 - 14th Street NE, Atlanta, GA 30309-7603, U.S.A.... The 11th Jazz Times Convention took place November 15th-18th at New York's Loews Hotel... The **Thelonious Monk** International Jazz Guitar & Bass Competition was held in Washington in November... Charles Carlini hosted a series of jazz workshops this past fall at Smalls, 183 West 10th Street in New York. Jack Wilkins, Pat Martino, Ted Dunbar, Tal Farlow, Sal Salvador, Vic Juris and Joe Diorio were the musicians... **Total Music Meeting '95** was held in Berlin in November and featured Butch Morris' systems of instant composing and conducted improvisation... Darmstadt, Germany's Jazz Institute has a computer index of articles published in periodicals available at the institute. More information is available from them at Kasinostrasse 3, D-64293 Darmstadt (fax 06151-132918). Vernel Bagneris and Morton Gunnar Larsen's Jelly Roll concluded a long run at New York's Kaufman Theater in July and then headed for Europe with appearances at the Oslo Festival and a series of one nighters in England.

BOOKS & VIDEOS

Jazz Photographs Of The Masters contains portraits of 200 major jazz musicians photographed by Jacques Lowe with commentary by Bob Blumenthal, Cliff Preiss

and Martin Johnson. It's a Fall release from Artisan Books... Gene Lee's biography of **Woody Herman** was scheduled for a November release by Oxford University Press... Bill Milkowski's life of bassist **Jaco Pastorius** has been published by Miller Freeman Books... new reference books published by Greenwood Press include Ross Laird's *Tantalizing Tingles* — a discography of early ragtime, jazz and novelty syncopated piano recordings 1889-1934. *Song Finder* is a title index to 32,000 popular songs in the State University of Louisiana's Song Books.

The *Blues Buyer's Guide* contains over 800 summaries of 500 CDs by blues artists. The summaries come from reviews in various publications. The guide sells for \$12.98 and is available from 22 Howard Street, Melrose, MA 02176, U.S.A. (or call 1-800-704-1520)... The June 23rd, 1995 issue of Goldmine contained an exceptionally detailed account of **John Coltrane's** recordings by William Ruhlmann... The world of improvisation is discussed in each issue of *Rubberneck*. Send three IRCS to 21 Denham Drive, Basingstoke, Hampshire, England RG22 6LT for a sample copy... **Leo Records** has begun a newsletter circulating news of the label's activities and its featured artists. New releases include recordings by Robert Dick (Worlds Of If), Mark Feldman with Michael Jefry Stevens (Haiku), Joe Morris (Vertigo), Anthony Braxton & Abraham Adzinyah (Wesleyan), and another Sun Ra Arkestra CD (Second Star To The Right) which is a Salute to Walt Disney.

Yank Lawson in Jazzbeat: "It's hard to say about improvisa-

tion. You can't learn to do it. You either can or you can't. It's a matter of hearing. When you hear music you have to hear something else that goes with that form. How do you write poetry? You can't go to school to learn how to write poetry. You can learn to punctuate and spell, but you can't learn to improvise. There's a counterpoint that's going on underneath, you either hear it or you don't, but everybody hears it differently, which is what makes it interesting". **Abdullah Ibrahim** in Toronto's Eye: "Listening to Kippie, Monk, Ellington, being in that environment and actually playing the music — those are our colleges. You can have a master's degree in jazz, but the real question is: are people going to listen to what you play?".

View Video's "40 Years Of MJQ" was filmed in Stuttgart during the period when Mickey Roker subbed for Connie Kay. It was filmed live with backing from the "lush sounds of a full string orchestra"... *View Video's* version of "In The Key Of Oscar" comes as two videos and has added additional performances to the original Canadian production.

RECORDINGS

Trumpeter Guy Barker is the latest UK musician to receive major label attention in the U.S.. "Into The Blue" is his debut **Verve** date... There's more European music on Christian Escoude's "Cookin' In Hell's Kitchen", while Verve's hot shots — Roy Hargrove, Stephen Scott and Christian McBride — rework Bird's music in "Parker's Mood".

Bassist Leon Lee Dorsey joins the ranks of leaders with his

Landmark CD "The Watcher"... The Mingus Big Band recorded "Gunslinging Birds" for **Dreyfus Records** while on tour in France in 1994... "The Charm" is the T.S. Monk Band's third CD for **Blue Note**... "European Songbook" is the Vienna Art Orchestra's new recording on Verve... "The Reclamation Project" is Ralph Peterson's Fo'tet debut date for **Evidence Records**. Tana/Reid and Carmen Bradford also have new releases on the label... New from **hatArt** is the Dave Douglas Tiny Bell Trio "Constellations"; upcoming is the sequel by Ray Anderson/Han Bennink/Christy Doran titled "Cheer Up"... Veterans Britt Woodman, John LaPorta and Joe Wilder combine their talents on **GM's** "Playing For Keeps"... **Accurate Records** continues its documentation of the Boston scene with recordings by the Henry Cook Band ("Dimensional Odyssey") and guitarist Garrison Fewell's "Are You Afraid Of The Dark?".

Drummer Bert Dahlander was a fixture of the U.S. scene for many years. He is now back home in Sweden part of the time and has begun recording himself with some of his favourite musicians. His CDs are available from P.O. Box 6095, Parachute, CO 81636, U.S.A.... **Gramavision** has released the Clusone Trio recording "I Am An Indian", and the Bill Frisell Trio "Live" in Seville Spain, 1991. "Just Before The Dawn" is the title of Marty Erlich's recent **New Worlds Records** release... British pianist/composer Michael Garrick's second release on **Jazz Academy** is an ambitious affair. It's a 2 CD set of original music performed by a large orchestra. The label's initial release showcased Michael's skills in a piano trio

setting. Mail order source for these CDs is J.A.R., 20 Waterside, Biberry Chase, Eaton Bray, Bedfordshire LU6 2SE, U.K.... "Hydra" is saxophonist Andy Laster's new release on **Sound Aspects**... Saxophonist Paul Vornhagen's "Mercy" can be found on **Schoolkids Records**. "Deja Yuk" is a new solo piano CD by San Francisco based Larry Vuckovich (P.O. Box 17081, San Francisco, CA 94117, U.S.A.)... Music in the style of Tommy Flanagan can be heard on "Flanagania" by Japanese pianist Hisayuki Terai... A Swedish Tribute to Duke is a 2 CD set containing the music performed in 1994 by the Swedish Jazz Group during the Ellington Conference. All but two of the pieces are original compositions, commissioned for the occasion, by noted Swedish jazz writers. **Svensk Music** has also issued a CD of compositions by Gunnar Svensson — better known as a jazz pianist.

RE-ISSUES

"The Complete Miles Davis At The Plugged Nickel" on **Columbia/Legacy**, finally hit the street in August in its CD configuration, while **Mosaic**

Records lp version came out some weeks earlier... **Atlantic Records'** John Coltrane box set contains many previously unissued performances as well as the various sessions already on lp/CD.

Blue Note's **Connoisseur** series continues to roll with CD reissues of dates by Grant Green, Bobby Hutcherson, Hank Mobley, Wayne Shorter and Lee Morgan. Also issued the "Complete Aladdin Sessions of Lester Young".

DA Music has reissued on Black Lion Albert Ayler's "Goin Home", Earl Hines "One For My Baby" and Bud Powell's "Strictly Confidential"...

Denon is now recycling the Arista/Savoy 2 lp sets on single CDs (and minus a few titles). Just out are CDs by Don Byas, Howard McGhee, Red Norvo and Pee Wee Russell. Denon is also recycling (in MS 20-bit transfers) for the second time replica versions of the original Savoy lps from the 1950s. The first release includes 3 Charlie Parker compilations as well as Lee Morgan, Paul Bley, MJQ, Joe Wilder and Cannonball Adderley dates. The sound is clean with a fuller mid-range. However, it remains to be seen

how many people will

continue repurchasing the same music. MCA (Impulse), EMI (Blue Note), Polygram (Verve), WEA (Atlantic), BMG (MCA) and Fantasy are all playing the same game with listener's pocketbooks.

Dizzy Gillespie's three Big Band studio dates for Verve in the mid 1950s are now out on a 2 CD set. **Polygram** has also combined Gary McFarland's "How To Succeed In Business" with Bob Brookmeyer's "Gloomy Sunday" on a single CD. Other Verve 2 CDs include Ben Webster's string dates "Music For Loving" and the Earl Hines/Coleman Hawkins/Roy Eldridge "Grand Reunion" date from the Village Vanguard in 1965 which was originally on Limelight. There are extra takes of the issued tunes on the "Max Roach 4 Plays Charlie Parker" CD which features Kenny Dorham and Hank Mobley. Also reissued is Randy Weston's 1973 Polydor date "Tanjah". Hopefully the Paris date from a few years earlier which produced two glorious lps for Polygram will surface one of these days. **The International Association Of Jazz Record Collectors** has issued a CD of rare Oscar Pettiford recordings — both studio and live dates between 1953-1960. □

PASSING NOTES

Guitarist **JIMMY RANEY** died May 10th... Trumpeter **PERCY HUMPHREY** July 22nd... Guitarist **LAURINDO ALMEIDA** July 26th... Bandleader **LES ELGART** July 29th... Vocalist **EARL COLEMAN** July 12th... Pianist/Composer **MARTY PAICH** August 12th... Pianist/Organist **WILD BILL DAVIS** August 17th, and Saxophonist **JOHN GILMORE** August 20th. Drummer **KANSAS FIELDS** died in Chicago in early August.

JOHN GILMORE

Photograph By Gerard Futrick

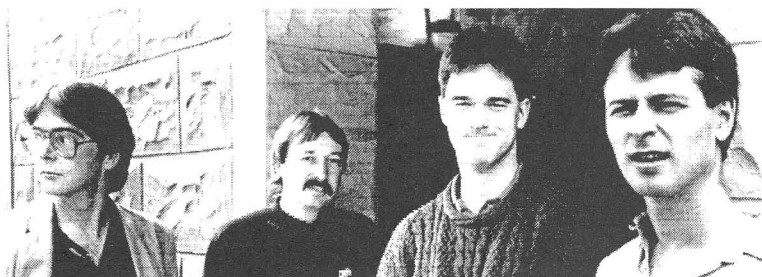


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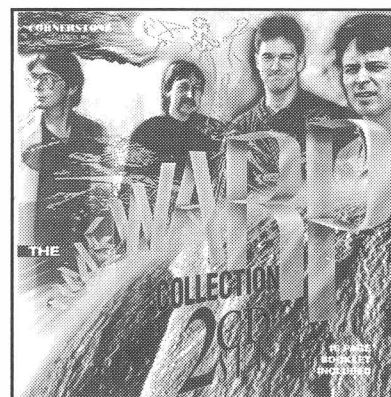
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SPENCER BAREFIELD

A SILLY SEASON

GUITARIST Spencer Barefield's first appearances and recordings came with Roscoe Mitchell's ensembles in the early seventies. Since that time, he has continued to perform and record with Roscoe as well as with Lester Bowie, Oliver Lake, and many others.

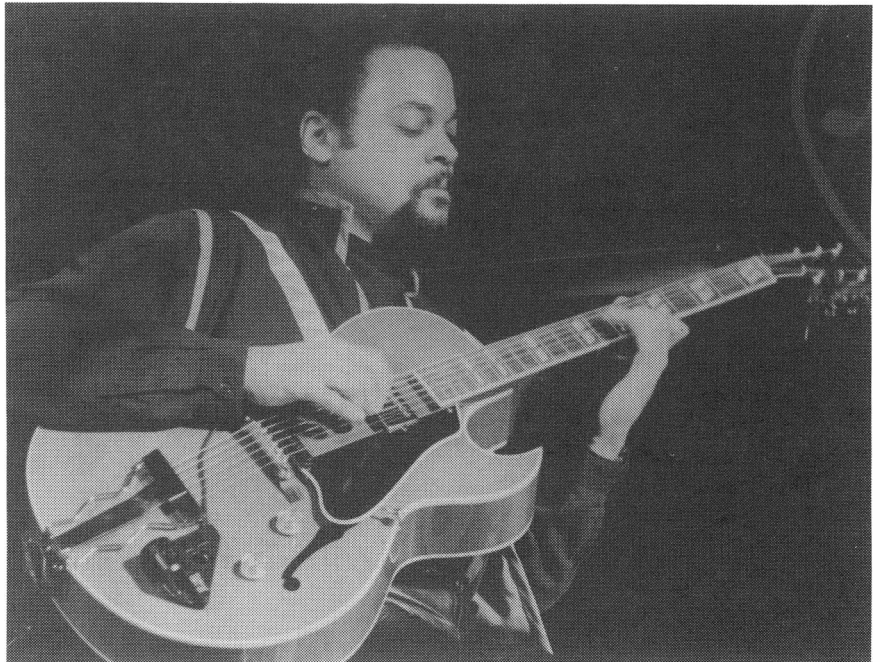
At the time of this interview, the spring of 1995, he was working on a solo recording and a live duet recording with David Murray. Among his performances were a series of duet concerts with Lester Bowie and with Richard Davis, and a concert in San Francisco with cellist Regina Carter. He works with a string sextet which includes bassist/cellist Jaribu Shahid and Carter. He also produced a series of performances at the Montreux Detroit Festival which were sponsored by the Creative Arts Collective. Apart from his busy playing schedule, he has begun teaching at the University of Michigan, in their expanding jazz program and faculty, which includes Reggie Workman.

Spencer is a founding member of the Creative Arts Collective and was the singular founding member of its establishment in Detroit in 1978, an organization that for years was the backbone of the creative music scene in Michigan. The quality of this organization and the opportunities that it has presented for many diverse creative musicians can't be emphasized enough. For Detroit, this organization is what the A.A.C.M. (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) is for Chicago, or the B.A.G. (Black Artists Group) represented in St. Louis.

The C.A.C. provided concert situations for some of the young musicians that have recently risen out of Detroit: players like James Carter and Regina Carter whose musical approaches can be partly attributed to their C.A.C. experiences. The C.A.C. also brought in veteran artists to mix and perform with local or regional players.

Recently this scene has been drying up and is being threatened with elimination all together. We discussed reasons behind these problems as well as what it takes for Spencer to stay creative and keep his residence in the Detroit area. Our conversation began with the current status of the Creative Arts Collective.

SPENCER BAREFIELD: It's been extremely difficult keeping it alive lately, primarily because of the changes that



have been made in arts funding with the new administration at the state capitol in Lansing. It seems that the philosophy has been to save our European heritage and screw everything else. There's only been token support. I call it the High Society Conspiracy. I got the idea to call it the High Society Conspiracy from the Groucho Marx movie, *A Night at the Opera*. At the beginning of the movie, you see the lady that's supposed to represent the upper class and she's looking for Mr. Driftwood, who's Groucho, and she's saying: "Where is Mr. Driftwood, I've paid him to get me into high society." She has to have her proper credentials. Groucho walks in and says all you have to do is give a \$200,000 contribution to the New York Opera Company and you're in. And that's exactly the way it works today. If you live in Michigan and you want to be part of high society you don't go out and make a large donation to a jazz organization. In fact that can get you kicked out of high society. If you get a chance to look at a letterhead of the Detroit Symphony or the Detroit Institute of Arts, you're going to find a list of everybody who's anybody. And how did they get there? Well in the forties it was \$200,000 and in the nineties, it's \$2,000,000. You have to bring them seven figures annually and you can have your name on the letterhead and you can then make all of the proper high society connections. There's something called matching funds, and the bottom line to government funding is the more you get from the private sector, the more you get in government funding. So the richest get the most and the poorest get nothing. The Republican philosophy has been to increase the matching fund requirements.

FROM A CONVERSATION WITH MIKE JOHNSTON

THAT'S THE WAY it's working now for the Michigan Council for the Arts. It was completely wiped out in '91 and all grants were cancelled. After a storm of controversy Governor Engler (of Michigan) reinstated the council under the auspices of the department of commerce. But this really hurt the small organizations because the only programs left were for something called Arts Organization Development. We (the Creative Arts Collective) were one of the first organizations to get into the program and when Engler got elected one of the first things he did was cancel the program. At first you're given a small amount of money to generate a plan for three years of actual artistic funding. What organizations found after the first year of funding was that they were expected to generate around a ten to one ratio in matching funds, and it's supposed to increase each year. The reality of the arts world is that funding is going down each year, and is at an all time low in the nineties. So that leaves Jazz in particular, which is often aligned with blues music, as the only art forms to have originated in this country, out in the cold. When it comes to any kind of indigenous art, art that is uniquely American, that's about common people, this conspiracy set up has basically eliminated funding. The irony, still, is how much money goes into funding European heritage. Don't get me wrong, I have no problem with maintaining European art forms, but don't forget about the artists among your own citizens.

The organization that my program is in (Arts Organization Development) has a three year limit to it. Each year, as the ratio of matching funds goes up, we haven't been able to meet the amounts, so our level of funding goes down. The year Engler was elected, C.A.C won the Governor's Arts Award with the series (ongoing for 13 years) that I had at the Detroit Institute of Art. It was really just a joke to get this award. It's like, "you're the best we have. Sorry we don't have any money for you." As a result of that there has been a tremendous loss of Arts institutions and artists that have had to move out of the area for lack of funding.

Am I right to assume that that's why people like Tani Tabbal, James Carter, and Regina Carter have moved to New York.

YES, IT'S NOT a coincidence. Right when my series ended, which was one of the only places where they could present their own music, and experiment with different instrumentation and ensembles, it all fell apart. We also brought in artists from outside of the region to collaborate with. There are a couple of other Jazz concert organizations that have pretty much been wiped out. Jazz is now back to once a year at the festivals and whatever the clubs can support. But the pay level is way, way lower. So yes, I think a lot of the young talented musicians moved out of here fast.

That fortunately is working for them because the industry is focused right now on the twenty something's. Once you're out of your twenties your existence expires. You can't get a recording date anymore. The attitude of the industry is to clone as many Wynton Marsalis' as they can.

In the eighties, with the coming of the compact disc and the Wynton Marsalis marketing experiment, the idea was developed that it's easier to sell jazz to young people if young people are playing it. Wynton was really the first marketed jazz artist. I think the fact that he was also a classical musician legitimized him in ways that he couldn't have been otherwise. Other companies see that this formula works so they adopt it too. This coincided with the end of vinyl. So the companies adopted an attitude to some degree that artists like Richard Davis, Freddie Hubbard, and James Moody can just drop dead. And Re-issue all of their classic recordings on CD. By the mid-eighties someone noticed that in the Downbeat critics poll, all of the winners were the same people that won in '59, and some of the musicians were dead. And this was all because of reissues. So at this point, it was hard to do recordings. Also around this time, Polygram was the main distributor of foreign labels, and all of the best new American jazz is on foreign labels. So when they decided to stop importing labels like Black Saint and Enja they became more scarce than they already were.

And the good US independent labels like Nessa and India Navigation got caught in limbo trying to switch over to CD because of limited funds.

AND THE FEW good stores that still stock the foreign stuff are struggling and a lot of the big chain stores seem to be wiping out the smaller ones. As a result, the selection of music gets narrower and narrower.

So I see it as this strong right wing thing that is destroying the Arts. I think it's at a point now that it's scary. A lot of the artists that became visible are now invisible again. Many are surfacing in Europe. People wonder what ever happened to Blood Ulmer, David Murray, or Oliver Lake. Well, they're all over in Europe.

I've been touring with Lester Bowie this past year and he gets top notch gigs all over the world. But I haven't seen even one gig in the United States. That's an interesting point in itself. But Europe is starting to turn right wing and also. A lot of the governments in Europe are in financial trouble, so they are starting to cut back in arts funding as well. It's much more conservative now than it was. As far as Eastern Europe goes, the cold war is really a hot war now, and the world seems nearly oblivious to this. It keeps getting worse all the time.

Are these cut backs part of the reason that you have turned to teaching?

YES, a lot of the older creative players are teaching. Reggie Workman is, Braxton is full time, George Lewis, Roscoe Mitchell, Richard Davis, James Newton, Kenny Burrell and the list goes on.

I feel fortunate that I'm able to teach because it's helping me get through lean times. It's odd at school talking about all of the black composers: Bird, Monk, Diz, and Ellington, when there aren't any black students. And there are precious few female students too. That's one of the rougher aspects of teaching for me — to not feel like I'm selling out to institutionalized racism.

I think it's interesting that a lot of the leading people in the field are beginning to teach. In the long run it's going to help increase the awareness of the truth of music. Because if you turn on the radio the jazz stations are playing the twenty somethings for the most part. And those people are only playing or rehashing the jazz of the fifties. So it's gotten to be a really silly season.

Do you find basing yourself in Detroit a handicap?

I FEEL it's limited me in terms of getting recognition. I've always been too stubborn to go to New York. In New York, I find there's a farcical thing going on, where you have the international media paying most of the attention to what's going on there as being all that's going on. And I've always felt that if you seriously check out Detroit, Philadelphia, and

Chicago, you hear stuff that really wipes out the New York scene. And I mean wipes it out. It's no wonder James Carter went to New York and destroyed all of the horn players, because he's one of the first twenty somethings that really has something to say. He's not an imitator. It was said that here's something that Wynton Marsalis and Lester Bowie agree upon — that James Carter is great. Not many players can touch James. He's playing more saxophone than most of the older cats, let alone the younger ones. As far as James goes, it's nice to see somebody who deserves some recognition, get it for a change.

So I guess I just feel it's important to try and stay in Detroit. If you look at the history of Jazz, it seems like the best music came from different regions. It may end up in New York, but it seldom originates from there. Right now, if you think about it, instead of talking about Joshua Redman, the media should be talking about bands like Edward Wilkerson's 8 Bold Souls.

It also seems with the major magazines, if you're not advertising, you're not getting the press. When Polygram stopped handling small and import labels and shipping promo discs, it seems like almost overnight, there was no radio play, no articles, and no more appearance on many record store shelves. It's like someone dropped a bomb on the Vanguard of music. □

A Silly Season has been culled from a much longer interview, which was conducted by Mike Johnston who is a bassist and photographer living in Mount Pleasant, Michigan.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARBARA BAREFIELD

DISCOGRAPHY

AS A LEADER

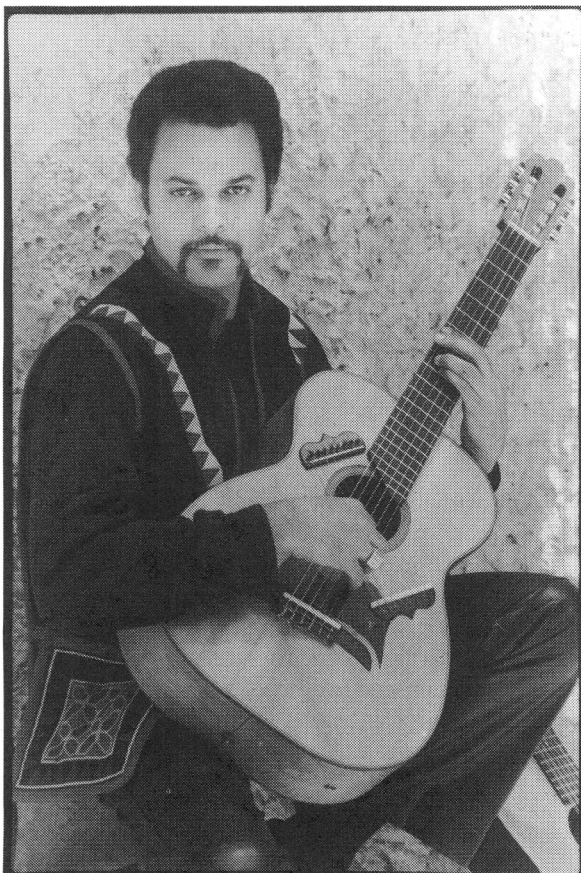
BAREFIELD/HOLLAND/TABBAL - Transdimensional Space Window (1981) - *TransAfrican Records 001*
BAREFIELD/HOLLAND/TABBAL - Live At Nickelsdorf Konfrontationen (1984) - *Sound Aspects 007*
SPENCER BAREFIELD - After The End (1987) - *Sound Aspects 030*
BAREFIELD/LAKE/CYRILLE - Live At Leverkusener Jazzstage (1989) - *Sound Aspects 039*
Spencer Barefield - Xenogenesis 2000 (1990) - *C.A.C./Xenogenesis 002*

WITH ROSCOE MITCHELL SOUND ENSEMBLE

Roscoe Mitchell Quartet (1975) - *Sackville 2000*
3 x 4 Eye (1981) - *Black Saint 0050*
Snurdy McGurdy (1980) - *Nessa n20*
Sound & Space Ensembles (1983) - *Black Saint 0070*
Live In Detroit (1988) - *Cecma 1010/11*

COLLECTIONS

MOTOR CITY MODERNISTS - Montreux Detroit Collection - Volume 3 (1983) - *Montreux Detroit Records 001*



MUSIQUE ACTUELLE

A DIARY OF NEW MUSIC
BY **DAVID LEE**

GEORG GRAEWE

CHAMBER WORKS 1990-92 • Random Acoustics RA 003

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VICISSETUDES • Random Acoustics RA 002

FRISQUE CONCORDANCE

SPELLINGS • Random Acoustics RA 001

(P.O. Box 0251, 53552 Bad Hoenningen, Germany)

FRANK GRATKOWSKI & GEORG GRAEWE

PHOTOGRAPH BY RAINER KUERVERS



IF WE as that was the first thing that struck me about these Random Acoustics CDs. Each CD comes inside a pastel-coloured card envelope, starkly typeset and printed in one colour, the title and artist on the front, technical information on the back, unfolding to reveal a photograph and liner notes — plus a CD that's easy to slide out of this straightforward cardboard sleeve, a real relief when you're used to prying CD's out of plastic jewel boxes and wondering whether the box or the CD will be the first to snap. So the packaging is very user-friendly, and the CDs look simple and tasteful, like well-designed chapbooks. Something to think about, especially when you've sifted through a stack of the usual CD visuals — blurry amateur photographs, gaudy full-colour artworks by the band or their friends, or really quite decent six-foot-tall paintings that, like so many things, look rotten when they're shrunk to five inches and stuck in a square plastic box. That this is a short-run production is attested to by the Gratkowski / Graewe liner, illustrated by an actual Agfa print stuck onto the inside.

I was first introduced to Georg Graewe's work through a large group of his at the Coastal Jazz Festival a couple of years ago. At the time, the music seemed problematic in its insistence that, although the improvisers were allowed to improvise, structural control was absolutely in the composer's hands, so that the overall effect was a compositional framework that seemed very loose, but was ultimately very confining.

This effect is at work on only one of these recordings, *Chamber Works 1990-92*, as it is the only one of the three that features composition, but in this case the result, on repeated

listenings, is if less accessible, no less beautiful than the music of its companion CDs. At first one misses the group dynamic that is the essence of improvised music; but if some of that has been sacrificed to the composer's vision, and if the emotional highs and lows of free improvisation have been evened out, these qualities are replaced by a symmetry that is curiously soothing without compromises to tonality or rhythm.

Despite the outposts established by hundreds of composers from Ellington to now, the frontier of composing for improvisers remains untamed. One could speculate that many of the

devices that make, for example, Barry Guy's work in this area so satisfying — the stately repeated figures in minor keys, the retrenchments to small improvising groups, the passages where individuals solo over "jazz" chord changes or rhythms — would be rejected by Graewe as too obvious. His minimal liner notes tell us little about how the music is actually composed, but whatever the structures, they seem to work with the players, not against them. I was especially struck by Phil Minton on *15 Duets*, the interplay between Michael Moore's clarinet and Ernst Reijseger's cello on *Variations Q*, and the tuba of Melvyn Poore on *Flavours A* — the nature of Poore's instrument tends to keep him in the background of larger groups, but in a trio with Phil Wachsmann (violin) and Graewe on piano he sounds fantastic.

Vicissetudes is an album of improvised duets between Graewe on piano and alto saxophonist Frank Gratkowski. This is fast-moving improvised music from a virtuoso pianist and an alto saxophonist with great tone and technique. Anthony Powell once wrote that happy marriages are impossible to describe and in the same way, much as I enjoy this music, I cannot find much to say about it. The players stay, for the most part, in their instruments' normal ranges; tempos tend to be fast and energy is

high; the audience (recorded live at LOFT, Cologne, 1992) is enthusiastic, understandably.

However emotional intensity steps up a notch when we turn to Frisque Concordance, Graewe's quartet with John Butcher tenor and soprano saxophones, Hans Schneider bass and Martin Blume drums. Sometimes musicians just play a lot because it's a gig, sometimes they know what the right notes are but can't quite hit them, and sometimes everyone seems to hit all the right notes. This last is true of this live recording, which echoes throughout with that ferocious restraint which is one of Europe's great contributions to improvised music. In general the entire quartet plays all the time, the most outstanding accomplishment in this regard coming from Butcher, who pulls back an ordinarily "lead" instrument to play washes of sound in a backgrounding effect when he is not jabbing into the sonic foreground with his highly extended saxophone technique. It's no coincidence that my reaction to this CD is that I haven't heard such powerful small group improvisation since News From the Shed played in Vancouver — a group that included Butcher along with John Russell, Paul Lovens and Phil Wachsmann.

I am grateful to these Random Acoustics CDs for introducing me to musicians of whom I knew little, or hadn't heard at all — Schneider, Blume, Gratkowski and a terrific trumpeter, Horst Grabosch, on *Chamber Works*.

The CDs share a common logo, a photograph of two men which, since it's only a quarter inch high, I've had a hard time deciphering. They are doing something together and one at a time I rejected the alternatives: is the activity medical; sexual; musical? — finally deciding that it must be all three. If someone could tell me I would be grateful, but in the meantime I've decided that the two men are on a plane; the one on the left has been sickened by movie soundtracks and muzak, and his partner is saving his life, the appliance that curves between them conveying a loving infusion of Frisque Concordance.

BARRY GUY • THE LONDON JAZZ COMPOSERS' ORCHESTRA

PORTRAITS • Intakt CD 035/1994 (2 CD's)

(Intakt Records, P.O. Box 468, CH 8024 Zurich, Switzerland)

A JAZZ ORCHESTRA is distinguished as much by its players as by its leader (ask any leader). It's interesting to compare *Portraits* with the LJCO's first recording, *Ode* (Incus 6/7). Although recorded 21 years apart, the sessions have in common instrumentalists Barry Guy, Evan Parker, Paul Rutherford, Howard Riley, Trevor Watts, Paul Lytton and Marc Charig, whose sounds are so powerful that it's hard to imagine that they haven't imparted, not only a consistency of sound to the LJCO oeuvre, but an ongoing impetus from their own explorations that has surely contributed to the orchestra's growth and development.

The sheer instrumental power of the individuals is one of the band's greatest strengths as well its composers' greatest compositional challenges; whereas classical orchestras are made up of musicians who have been schooled in making their personalities blend, their tones even, their intonation consistent, in order not to screw up the composers' concept, the best jazz orchestras are made up of musicians who have learned how to get *themselves* across in any setting. When such an organization does work — the Ellington orchestra is the classic example — there is, as in the LJCO, a certain grandeur just from getting all these players with great tones playing together. Call it a jungle or a forest, it's a forest of big sounds — and god help the poor classical section player who ever wanders into this forest.

Some of the smaller groups that emerge throughout *Portraits*, such as Iskra 1903 (Rutherford trombone, Phil Wachsmann violin, Guy double bass) offer in some way a capsule edition of the orchestra; in fact the perfection of their improvisation, the group alternation of tension and release, throws a new light on the binding effect that composition is directed towards in the LJCO.

The influence of Mike Mantler's Jazz Composers Orchestra recordings was felt very strongly back in 1972. It is no longer noticeable, and as both composers and improvisers have grown, both the composed sections and the completely free sections are more focused and personal. This incarnation of the LJCO benefits from the presence of a tuba (Steve Wick) which once heard, makes you wonder, as with Gil Evans, how an orchestra can do without it. I can think of no record I've heard this year that is more rewarding on repeated listenings, or which demands repeated listenings more, in order to comprehend all its facets.



TRIBUTES

PRIMA MATERIA • PEACE ON EARTH • Knitting Factory Works 158
(74 Leonard Street, New York, N.Y. 10013, U.S.A.)

PETER BRÖTZMANN/FRED HOPKINS/RASHIED ALI

SONGLINES • FMP CD 53

(PO Box 100227, D-10562 Berlin, Germany)

SPLATTER TRIO & DEBRIS

PLAY ANTHONY BRAXTON - JUMP OR DIE • Music & Arts CD 843

(523 Coventry Road, Kensington, CA 94707, U.S.A.)

ONE OF THE MOST REVEALING statements in jazz is unprintable: Miles Davis' response, in the late 50s, to journalists asking why he did not play any of Duke Ellington's tunes at a Newport tribute to Ellington. Miles knew a lot about the spirit of music, the motives of the composer, the nature of performance — and he knew how much of himself he could afford to give away, and that if he aimed his music at a listener who would understand that, then Ellington would understand that, too. The press, however, did not.

As a tribute to John Coltrane, *Peace On Earth* takes on a special lustre from the drum colours of Coltrane's colleague Rashied Ali. Also from the excellent Joe Gallant and William Parker, in a two-bass setup that Coltrane, Albert Ayler and even Ornette Coleman used with equal success. The horn players are effective — Louie Belogenis on tenor and Allan Chase on soprano and alto — with guest artist (on two tracks) John Zorn imparting atonal alto ornamentation welcome not only for its brightness against the modal backdrop, but for the cheekiness it brings to a highly gnulective atmosphere. The music might be more fun — hence more inspirational, which seems what they intend — if Prima Materia left Coltrane's personal concerns private — a quote "I want to be a force for good" is slathered all over the CD itself — and simply approached his repertoire as a master musician's compositions, to be interpreted in their own way. But the appeal here seems to be that, as George Lewis once said, if you put on the skin of the lion, for a moment you will become the lion.

If the Brötzmann CD is not a "tribute" to a particular composer as are the other two recordings, it is packaged as the pioneer tenor saxophonist's ode to the jazz tradition and the song form. Steve Lake's liner notes seem to commit him, albeit hesitantly, to this concept, but at least they offer ample amounts of the sort of humour an "in the tradition" project needs if it's going to avoid stuffiness:

"Peter has been muttering for years about his image as The Loudest, The Heaviest Free Jazz Player Of Them All hanging over him like a curse — without, it must be said, doing much to rectify the picture... Fred Hopkins and Rashied Ali, employing subtle persuasion of their own, guide him to other areas... One admires the attempt — and his willingness to make himself this naked — but there can be no denying that the terrain negotiated exposes, sometimes painfully, the boundaries of his technique... some listeners will feel a profound sense of relief when, mid-set, Brötzmann builds up the intensity level with trademark slurs and smears of sound, and intonation — the old bugaboo — ceases to be an issue."

With friends like these, who needs enemies, and Brötzmann is allowed a rebuttal that Prima Materia would no doubt find provocative: "I hope it is not blasphemy to contradict Coltrane when he speaks of a 'common reservoir.' It has never existed. I think each has his own..." Indeed the bugaboo hanging over this recording is less the saxophonist's technique — few instrumentalists are more certain of what they are doing — than the packaging of

this particular trio as a throwback to the jazz ballad form. Lake is overstating the case that this recording is a departure for Brötzmann. Brötzmann, Hopkins and Ali play like they always have, and only if compared to European free music does the result seem relatively "jazzy," the difference being, in fact, only the bassist's tonal centres and rhythmic figures, more consistent than the prevailing European style as well as being essentially Hopkinsesque.

Although that might be enough to convince some listeners that this is not free jazz, but the regular kind, if it weren't for the album's notes and packaging, I would have had no inkling that this is a newer, nicer Peter Brötzmann. Indeed given the collaborative nature of the trio, the idea that this is even "Brötzmann's band" seems to stem not from the music, but from marketing — if FMP can be accused of such a thing.

This said, there's nothing solemn, misleading or controversial about *Jump Or Die*, in which eleven musicians take exactly the right approach to the music of Anthony Braxton — which is not just to play the music, but to make it their own. Indeed except for the occasional familiar head and some passages of Braxtonian saxophone playing, the sound is totally fresh and original. This is a collaboration between San Francisco's Splatter Trio and the Boston group Debris, with guests Tom Plsek (trombone), Gregg Bendian (percussion) and Randy McKean (reeds). The drumming is generally non-jazz, only an electric bass is used, and a couple of the pieces include some intriguing mandolin playing by Gino Robair — so don't hold your breath waiting for echoes of Dave Holland and Barry Altschul. Much of the improvising is very free and open, and the textures range from a bare-bones reeds/percussion & mandolin duet (*Composition 74C*) to the dense nine-piece *Compositions (120D + 90) + (23C + 133)*. The music sounds so good that one envisions young jazzers, whose idea of adventure is to play *Ramblin'* as a straight blues, sending away for Braxton charts so they can play some genuine contemporary music. No kidding! □

JANE BUNNETT

WITH
JAMES KEAST



Jane Bunnett has had a remarkable seven years. Her six albums released since 1988 have sided her with the music's strongest and most unique talents; a list that includes *In Dew Time*, with Dewey Redman and Don Pullen, and *Double Time*, a duet album with eccentric pianist Paul Bley. In the last year, she has toured Europe and Cuba, and recorded four new albums, three with Cuban musicians, and another piano duet album, her third, this time with Don Thompson, caught live at the Berlin Jazz Festival. This past summer, she took some time off — which for Jane included a cross-country Canadian tour, and doing some more writing. When she sits down to think about this recent activity, her reaction is understandable: “No wonder I’m so tired.”

Bunnett's first musical endeavour was classical piano, in which she achieved her Royal Conservatory grade 10 before she quit, a result both of tendonitis and the decision — after seeing Charles Mingus live in San Francisco — to seriously pursue jazz.

“I studied piano really hard; I was playing eight or nine hours a day. I had worked myself up to a fairly high level, and was doing little concerts and stuff. When I came back from San Francisco I was very serious about studying jazz; I realized I wasn't going to be a classical pianist. To play that kind of music, you need a good ten or fifteen years of really solid training. I was getting technique it takes piano players ten years to get in two or three years, and I did a lot of damage [to my hands] because of that.”

Was it an automatic decision to become a musician? At what point did you say I'm committing to this?

“From an early age I was interested in any form of art that was an emotional expression. I didn't really think about performing for people, I just thought ‘I want to play music with other people’, and I thought I would end up teaching. After four or five years of doing that, I started thinking about maybe one day having a group. I didn't really think about writing music, I was just learning standards, listening to other people, listening to the greats play, and thinking ahead about maybe writing music.”

“I was very lucky to meet my partner and husband Larry [Cramer], and he just had an incredible record collection. I

started formulating ideas with him, listening to records, and we went to New York together several times. We had like-minded tastes, and went to see lots of shows. Just had a really exciting time listening to music. As I continued to do that, I was just formulating my own ideas about the direction I wanted my music to go.

“I sought out musicians, and found a place that had jazz workshops. One of the teachers was Jane Fair, Al Henderson from Time Warp was teaching there, and Frank Falco, a great jazz pianist. So there was a great staff, and there were like-minded people learning about the music; we used to have great jam sessions, and I became very absorbed in this other thing.”

Our meeting was not entirely a happy occasion, however. Two weeks before we spoke, her long-time collaborator and friend, pianist Don Pullen died of cancer, and naturally, her thoughts often turned to him as we looked back on her work so far. How did Pullen end up playing on her first album.

“He was someone I had loved for a long time. His solo Sackville recording was something that I had really loved, and listened to for a long time. When I was working on my own compositions, and Larry was working on some stuff as well, we heard him in our music and so we made the phone calls.

“He was curious that I, as a young person, was very eager to play with him. I came out of the blue, it wasn’t like I was hanging around the scene in New York, I was a newcomer, and very eager. But he was incredibly encouraging, a very kind person, and heard how he would sound on our music, and had faith that it would work out. And we had a great time. For me it was a real stepping stone to do that recording. It felt pretty adventurous.

“Don Pullen for me was just an inspiring person to work with, and be a friend of, because the music was so important to him. There is such a depth to all of these musicians that I’ve worked with.”

Three years ago, Bunnett received a Canada Council grant to study the music of Thelonious Monk in Europe with friend and soprano sax inspiration Steve Lacy. She and Larry Cramer have since been splitting time between Paris and Toronto.

“Our time in Europe was really eye-opening. To play jazz music, you really have to think internationally. To play jazz at home, we have the festivals, and a few clubs across Canada, but it’s extremely difficult to make a living. You have to think about creating a market for your music outside of Toronto — that’s what we’ve been doing. We’ve made inroads in France, we’ve done three different tours through Europe, Australia twice, and played a lot in Cuba. It’s like a game of Monopoly where you just fill in the pieces, and try to get your music heard in various markets, take your records and sell them when you can, and keep meeting musicians. It’s all worth it for the chance to meet like-minded people to make music with.

“We’ve been in Europe for three years now, and things have changed pretty quickly, with a lot of art cutbacks and so the times are a little tougher there, especially in France. It’s not the great jazz Mecca that it was. It’s hard, a lot of musicians are feeling it. You have to really enjoy the music, the music has to really mean a lot to you. I’m talking about people who have been doing it 30 or 40 years.”

The opportunity to work with Lacy was a golden one — he had inspired Bunnett to pick up the soprano sax, a beautiful instrument sadly lacking in heroes for aspiring musicians.

“The soprano came about from hearing a Steve Lacy record of Monk music, I think it’s called *Evidence*, I just loved the sound of the soprano sax. I’m not too sure if I saw Jane Fair playing first, but they happened at around the same time.”

Fortune smiled upon Bunnett while attending York University in Toronto. “I had an alto sax, but I didn’t have a soprano. But in the first couple of months of school I fell on these portable stairs at York. Someone pointed out to me that I might be able to get money for that. So I called, and they didn’t want me to go to court. They asked me ‘how much will you settle for’, and I figured out how much a soprano sax would cost me, like \$752, and I asked for exactly that much, and bought a soprano.

“I had heard Coltrane, and I had heard Sam Rivers, but I don’t think they hit me like Lacy’s sound did. He didn’t play then with as much of a minimalist approach as he developed later on, but there was an elegance to the way he played the instrument. And just his sound — he had a very robust whole sound on the instrument.”

But there are fewer heroes for you as a soprano and flute player, than other horns?

“If you think about the history of tenor, you could just go from A-Z, it’s incredible. But with the soprano, because it’s such a new instrument and also for big bands it’s often just a doubler, you cut out a certain economic bracket if you decide to just focus on that one instrument. At the same time, you have to see that Lacy was a key figure in many groups because of the inroads that he did make on the instrument. The personality, the voice that he gives to the horn. That to me is inspiring. Especially with flute, it’s difficult just to play with a drummer and be heard on flute. Recording in a studio is a different matter, but live, you just don’t have the microphones for it. And it’s hard to say to a drummer, can you play quiet? Their reaction is ‘Where’s the tenor... I wanna wail!’” [Laughs]

In addition to recent time spent in Europe, Bunnett and Cramer have also spent a lot of time in Cuba, where they have made friends, and recorded a couple of albums. One of those was Bunnett’s fourth album, and her first foray into Cuban music, *Spirits Of Havana*. She has mentioned several times in the past that she was interested in following up some Latin music, a passion that she has pursued vigorously in conjunction with other straightforward jazz.

"I had been playing in some salsa bands in Toronto, but really the first trip to Cuba, from the moment of getting off the bus and hearing the music, that was it. 1986 or 87 was the first time, I think. The first trip was just two weeks, but we had such a great time that we turned around and went back two months later, again, and spent another couple of weeks. And every year we've gone back. The first time we just went for vacation, but you can't help but play.

seems to be some strong interest in having us play there. Our idea is when we go, we can do some workshops with musicians, some teaching, some instrument repairs, and see some of the country."

Have you noticed a radical change in Cuba since you started going?

"From the first time that I went there, there were certain things that struck me, such as the tourist apartheid. I always felt a little separated from that because I was a musician. Going to Cuba as a tourist, it's not obvious what you have to offer. When you're a musician, it's obvious, it opens the door, you're invited into people's homes, you're invited to jam sessions. I felt very welcomed on my first trips there, and still do.

"Cubans couldn't have US dollars at that time, and since I had US dollars there were things that I could do as a tourist that they couldn't do. At that point, Cuba was still being supported by the Soviet, so there was not the problems that there are now, or even worse, than there were two or three years ago. I don't want to get so political, but Castro didn't make certain preparations for when the Soviet pulled out. Four or five years ago it was hard to go there, but we continued to go because we had so many friends. It was hard because you knew that people were starving — it was illegal for them to have US dollars, and there was nothing you could buy with the peso, the land wasn't producing and they didn't have the tools to work the land. Things were rotting in the fields, trucks would break

down and food would rot. Cuba was not for Cubans any more, it was only for tourists. They seemed to want to put a barrier between you and your friends, but it's amazing, Cubans are incredible people; they've managed to keep their spirit, and pride together.

"But our last trip there, things were really changing quickly. Musicians are now able to work as free agents, they don't have to go through the government agencies any more. They can work for themselves, work outside the country, work for US dollars, and be able to buy food with US dollars. The incentive is changing with Cuba, people are starting to think about not leaving, about working outside the country and coming back to live well. I think this is going to be good in the end. There was a time when people were just defecting like crazy. The government was getting paranoid about letting anyone out of the country. But now they're seeing musicians leave, come back with some money and put it back into the country. It is open for corruption for sure, but things are improving."

After *Spirits Of Havana*, Bunnett returned to her roots, and the result, *The Water Is Wide* is in many ways her strongest



"To Cubans, music is extremely important. I guess it's the same thing in Africa. Everyone is involved in the music; if they don't play, they're a listener or a dancer; it's central to their life, unlike North America. In Cuba people are very critical of what good music is. The rhythm is very important.

"We've been eighteen or nineteen times now. In 1990 I went with Don Pullen to play, the following year we recorded *Spirits Of Havana* there. I'm quite actively involved in Cuba, and I'm in the process right now of setting up an association to bring Cuban musicians outside of Cuba to produce concerts with them in various places. Also to bring other musicians to Cuba to play. In December (1995) I'm going with my two repairmen from Toronto to tour around Cuba and fix people's instruments. There's an incredibly high calibre of musicianship, but the instruments are in atrocious condition. Sometimes there are very simple things that need to be done, they need to be repadded for example, but they don't have any supplies.

"I did an interview with a South African music magazine called Two-Tone, and we're interested in doing the same thing in South Africa as well. I haven't been yet, but there

work to date — it highlights not only her playing skills, but also the remarkable development of her songwriting. But coming on the heels, as it did, of the Cuban project, it surprised some listeners.

"That record came about because I was asked to curate an event at Harbourfront [a performance centre in Toronto] on Women in Jazz, and I was trying to think of some women performers. I was thinking about women vocalists, and both Jeanne [Lee] and Sheila [Jordan] came to mind because they're really musicians first. They're really involved in the music, and have been from the start. They've never been known as the chick singers. I tried to combine that with the focus of the record being a return to the original influences that got me into jazz. It tried to reflect on the influences that I had, Mingus, Ellington, Roland Kirk — to return to those.

"It felt like after the Cuban record, I had to. The Cuban record got an incredible response for me in Europe, in a different market, and I just felt it was important for me to follow it up with a jazz record. I don't see myself as Miss World Beat. I wouldn't want people to perceive *Spirits Of Havana* as a flavour-of-the-month thing. Cuban music is very important to me, and I'm trying to study it as I play, but my focus is jazz, and it's important to keep developing that voice. I can't get away from the fact that I grew up in North America, and I will never be a Cuban musician.

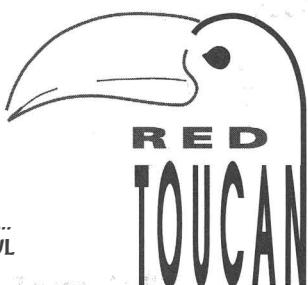
"The interesting thing is that we are trying to tap into the same roots of Cuban music that also exist in jazz. It's not a style — for the Cubans involved in it, that music is a way of



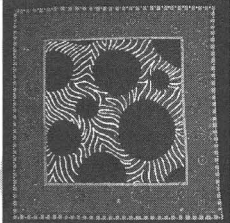
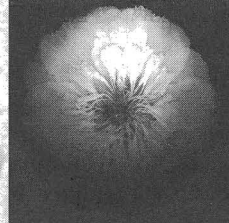
life in the same way that jazz is for some of the great jazz musicians. It's not something that they do on the side, then go back to their lives. The music reflects who you are. I hope there is something that ties all these records together. They're totally different voices, but they're all brilliant musicians.

"I think right now jazz is more popular than it has been in the last few years, but I don't think that's necessarily for the right reasons. I think a lot of the time the musicians themselves turn people off by not respecting the audiences that come out to see them. If you go out to see a group and the music has not been thought through, if the conditions in the club are bad, and there's just an uncaring attitude to the people that have come out to hear the music, I think it turns people off. You just hope that everybody involved is giving 100 percent, and has a respect for themselves and other individuals, and that they are honest in their intentions with the music. If you get caught up in that stuff you just go nuts."

Justin Time has released *Rendezvous Brazil/Cuba*, which highlights Bunnett's new interest in Brazilian music, and how it merges with the Cuban music she loves. World Pacific/Blue Note is putting out *Jane Bunnett And The Cuban Piano Masters*, with Jose Maria Vitier and Frank Emilio Flynn. The piano duet with Don Thompson, called *Live From Berlin*, and a fourth Cuban album have yet to find good homes, but until then, we can be sustained by the immense musical pleasure that Jane Bunnett and Larry Cramer have already provided us. As Jane says: "Little did I know that it was going to be a long, long road." □


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PIANO ENCOUNTERS

Compact Disc Reviews By

JERRY D'SOUZA

DAVE BRUBECK • JUST YOU JUST ME • Telarc CD-83363

ABDULLAH IBRAHIM • ANCIENT AFRICA • Sackville SKCD2-3049

McCOY TYNER TRIO • LIVE AT SWEET BASIL • Evidence ECD-22106-2

JESSICA WILLIAMS • ENCOUNTERS • Jazz Focus JFCD005

KENNY BARRON • WANTON SPIRIT • Verve 522 364-2

LENNIE TRISTANO • CONTINUITY • Jazz Records JR6CD

MIKE HENNESSEY • SHADES OF CHAS BURCHELL • In & Out Records IOR 7025-2

GEORGE SHEARING QUINTET • THAT SHEARING SOUND • Telarc CD-83347

ERROLL GARNER • THAT'S MY KICK & GEMINI • Telarchive CD-83332



SONNY DALLAS, NICK STABULAS, WARNE MARSH, LEE KONITZ & LENNIE TRISTANO

PHOTOGRAPH BY HAROLD ROBINSON

Communication is the art of the performer. Blessed are they who can clasp the listener in a bond forged of emotion. A concert is quite the perfect setting and when these images dance in the mind while listening to a recording, the link becomes stronger. And so it is with Abdullah Ibrahim, resplendent and majestic in flowing gown, with his band Ekaya at the Jazz Yatra in Bombay, a poet and visionary who could be imperious as he stood and yelled "Stop!" at a soloist who failed to notice his cue and had carried on. Or the affable Kenny Barron casting a spell, first as part of Chico Freeman's band and then as leader of his own, showing a becoming sense of humour when slipping in an unrehearsed "thwacker" on the piano much to the amusement of his players. Then there was McCoy Tyner, at the Chicago Jazz Festival, leading his resplendent big band and, in

Toronto, Jessica Williams who came across as a woman of truly beautiful spirit.

Dave Brubeck who left a concert trail in India was missed but there are amends made as he sets up an intimate setting with *Just You Just Me* (Telarc CD 83363). Brubeck plays with shapes in his mind, giving the tune the contours he seeks on the piano, the flow of his spontaneity smooth with each ivory piece falling into space. The mosaic is colourfully patterned and never cloying, a niche that a solo performer can easily slip into. In the edifice Brubeck builds come the lilting effervescence of *Strange Meadowlark*, the shot of blues he injects into his *Tribute To Stephen Foster* and the Portuguese melody of *Briar Bush* which beguiles with its permutations. A quiet night of triumph for Brubeck whose grace is as hypnotic as it ever was!

There is a different tangent to Abdullah Ibrahim's solo strut as he harkens to the roots of *Ancient Africa* (Sackville SKCD 2-3049). Clusters of whoosh and whirl are tempered by plateaus of calm as he dissects several moods. The lyrical flow of *The Aloe And The Wild Rose* quickly explodes into dense dynamics while on the title tune a bubbling brook of rhythm rises to spread the splendour of its hues. Surprisingly and delightfully, the melody on this track, moves into a beat that is closely knit to the fabric of the folk music of Goa in India! Colourful and vibrant, Ibrahim rides high.

Two clubs from across the border bring in artists whose approaches are as electrifying as they are different. The McCoy Tyner Trio appears *Live At Sweet Basil* (Evidence ECD-22106-2) with bassist Avery Sharpe and drummer Aaron Scott abetting the pianist. The

two-disc set features extended performances which gives the players room to stretch, intertwine and kick out the jams. Coltrane's *Crescent* burns with roiling phrases as Sharpe zip spans the rhythm in tandem with Scott's accents. *Monk's Dream* escarpes a cragged intensity, Scott taking a more linear line on his solo while *Round Midnight* has Tyner channelling his phrases into pithy propulsion. And for quieter and sublime times comes *Don't Blame Me* where the cool shadings of the journey take a turn on the road for a swinging traipse before calm descends and then evaporates into a warm sunny sky. The craftsmen come across with each beat of the pulse.

Jessica Williams Encounters (Jazz Focus JFCD 005) with Leroy Vinnegar and Mel Brown at Atwater's in Portland, Oregon turns out to be a heady brew. Williams who goes beyond the realm of conviction builds her bridges with elan and imagination. This comes through not only in her use of the piano strings which she plucks and strums on her composition *The Sheikh* to give it a sensuous, haunting quality but also in the way she moulds her lines. They can cut across like shards in her enticing interpretation of *We See* or come out in swinging surge as they do on *Berkshire Blues*. The latter finds Vinnegar of the walking bass line whoop and whoom around the theme. Brown cannot be ignored. Just listen to him converse with Williams on *If I Were A Bell* and delight in the wit he can bring to his playing. Once again Williams comes across as a revelation. It's high time the world noticed.

Kenny Barron lets his *Wanton Spirit* (Verve 522 364-2) soar with Charlie Haden and Roy Haynes on a program that shifts into high gear right from the time he plinks the first note. Barron's musicality moves across a broad spectrum and even as he calls the shots Haden and Haynes respond with alacrity. In doing so the trio set up an energetic date that bristles even in the quieter moments. The take-off comes on the hard surge of *Take The Coltrane* with Barron stamping the melody with authority and a zest that scintillates. The reflective *Sail Away* is downright gorgeous with Haynes brushwork

enhancing the mood. Without going all down the album it is worth stopping and taking notice of *Madman* on which Haynes thunks it hard opening the trailway for Barron's snaking lines as Haden pumps up the rhythm. Tune in and keep an ear on!

Continuity (Jazz Records JR6CD) for **Lennie Tristano** first comes in the shape of a quartet and then in that of a quintet with the latter cooking better than the former. Both are culled from live dates at The Half Note in New York. The quartet springing from 1958 jumps in midway through *Continuity* (how is that for being right on with the title!) but does little to sustain interest. Happily *She's Funny That Way* rings in interesting changes as Warne Marsh is breathy and rounded on the tenor, opening the slot for Tristano to deep shade his textures with complex chord structures. With Lee Konitz adding the second sax for the quintet (Paul Motian being the other durable and the cohort for a torrid bit of swapping with Tristano, on what is far greater than the sum of the implications of *Background Music*), the sound gets fuller and the playing more animated. All to the good and more pointedly in the slamming bop of *Subconscious Lee* a tumultuous and breathtaking enmeshing of the ensemble.

The **Mike Hennessey** Chastet is actually a quintet but is called a chastet because it is named after Chas Burchell for whom the album *Shades Of Chas Burchell* (In & Out Records IOR 7025-2) is also named. Alright! There is plenty of good, listenable music in here made all the more pronounced because of the empathy between the players. Hennessey gets high on the notes with *Blues On My Mind* rapid chord changes essaying the mood as Geoff Carter dips in with burning sax. The leader's composition *Gaby* sings lightly, the air wafting coolly by, stirred by the brushwork of Al Merrill. And as they go *Hanging Loose* with the blues yowled and wailed upon by the sax, they show that there is room for a placid cove in their ministrations because *You've Changed*. The Chastet does not inveigle itself into areas too deep, but the paths chosen to explore are verdant, rich in hue and spurred by trenchant passion.

The New **George Shearing** Quintet with Neil Swainson on bass, Steve Nelson on vibraphone, Louis Stewart on guitar and Dennis Mackrell on drums is good enough reason to listen to **That Shearing Sound** (Telarc CD-83347). Shearing continues to be polished and precise, traits that are manifested in the gently swinging *I Hear Music* on which Swainson gets the pulse ticking, a little *Girl Talk* on which he coozies up to Nelson (who, praise be, is discovering his own voice with each passing day) for an absorbing conversation, and without the least hint of *Consternation* harmonizes a toodling tune on which Stewart shows his penchant for clean, precise runs. The shape of the outfit may change but Shearing still fits snugly into the soul of jazz.



McCOY TYNER
PHOTOGRAPH BY GERARD FUTRICK

Erroll Garner propels the pulse on *That's My Kick & Gemini* (Telarchive CD-83332) which as the title makes apparent contains two original albums on one CD. Garner reaches into the deep, bristling with explosive energy on *Gemini* takes to the harpsichord to deliver delectable permutations with Mangual *When A Gypsy Makes His Violin Cry*, shifts *Blue Moon* into the stratosphere and heralds *The Shadow Of Your Smile* with the deft motifs of his right hand and the emphatic punctuations of the left. There are 19 tunes in all, each marked with the Garner imprint making this a worthy addition to any collection. Communication is the art of the blessed. □

BREATHING

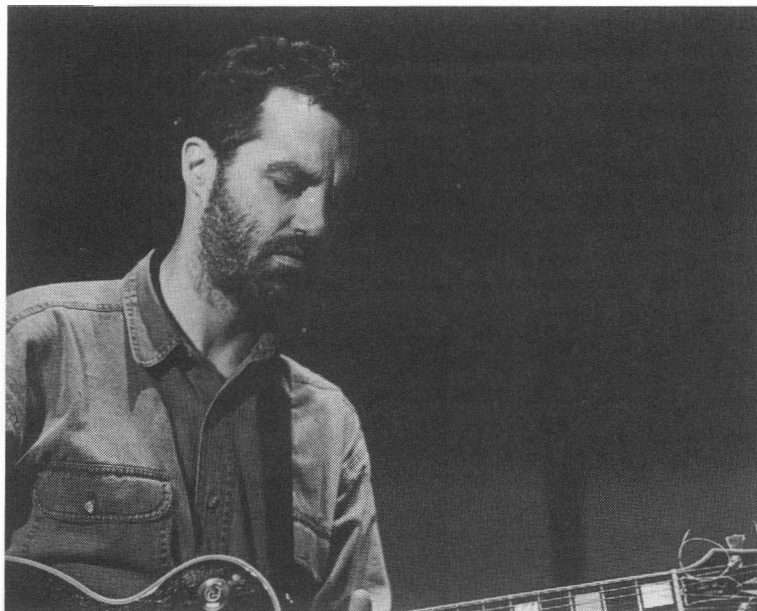
GUITARIST

JOE MORRIS

INTERVIEWED BY **LUDWIG VAN TRIKT**

LUDWIG VAN TRIKT: *How do you live up to the hyperbole that has greeted your playing?*

JOE MORRIS: Part of it I don't pay any attention to. I do like some of the reviews that say I'm original, and that I have an infinite conceptual style. I try not to box myself in as a player. My goal all the way down the line is to have my own music.



I have always associated you with the Boston jazz scene.

I DON'T KNOW what the Boston jazz scene is, and I guess I've never been a part of it. I just live in Boston. I have lived in New York City, for a while, but other things in life have led me back to Boston. My influences are much more rooted in New Haven than they ever were inspired by Boston. I came up in New Haven when Anthony Davis, George Lewis, Leo Smith and Gerry Hemingway were all there. I didn't play with them because I was younger than they. But I got turned on to the A.A.C.M. while I was in New Haven. I knew Michael Gregory Jackson and all this helped me develop my approach, and I then further developed it in Boston.

Perhaps it was that your music came out during a time when several bands emerged from Boston, giving the appearance of a scene.

THERE ARE PEOPLE here who inter-relate, who play in each other's bands and on each other's records. It's just like in New York City where just because you know someone it doesn't mean that musically things are going to gel. One of the things that does make Boston lively is we have all decided that you don't have to move to New York to remain creative. I kind of yelled at people about that a long time ago, and I'm glad people now think of Boston as having a scene. Even though it might not be there. There is no one particular idea that people have about playing. If anything they have every possible idea.

When I first heard of Joe Morris, it was never as a sideman. I've

always known you to be your own leader.

MAINLY I'VE PLAYED with Lowell Davidson as a sideman. Whenever I play with someone else they want me to be a bebop player. I have played with Dewey Redman, Butch Morris, and even Cecil Taylor. For me the best reward is for me to lead my own band.

Even though the artists you mentioned are on the vanguard, you mean to tell me that they still wanted you to play bebop?

DEWEY REDMAN wanted me to play bebop. The other things were closer to my own conception. My own thing is best expressed in my own group, because I like to write. I like my compositions to shape my improvisations or give me structure for my improvisations. I never really felt as though I could do that as a sideman.

Most of the recordings have been in a trio context.

I HAVE BEEN really aggressive about the trio thing for a long time. At this point I have a lot of other things I'm working on. Quartets, quintets, and an electric band called Racket Club, which is a six-piece band. I probably wouldn't have self-produced another trio record, but the fact that Soul Note wanted it out meant that the trio recording was the next thing in line. I recorded a quartet recording with Jackson Krall, William Parker and Rob Brown for Leo. It shows my chordal playing more so than my linear playing. My trio has always emphasized my linear playing. I try to have a repertoire of styles so as to avoid sounding the same every night.

One of the things that has been noted about your playing is you seldom play chords and almost never comp. Is that a deliberate decision?

YEAH, IN THE TRIO definitely. One of my gripes about the guitar is that it doesn't know if it wants to be in the foreground or the background. I think it kind of suffered when it was the lead instrument, because it didn't have a firm identity. My idea is to treat my instrument like an alto saxophone or a violin. It would be a solo voice concerned with having a broad kind of inflection and a broad rhythmic attack. A really complex intervallic and melodic structure to it. Not to, on the one hand, play behind somebody then take solos. I've restricted it to the way I use it intentionally.

When I listen to your sound, it is a very clean sound. You don't seem to use any of the distortion that characterizes post-modern guitar playing, even in the jazz realm where you have Bill Frisell or James Blood Ulmer. Your playing is a more traditional sounding approach.

I PLUG MY GUITAR right into the amp. It's interesting because Blood Ulmer plays right into the amp, although he might use one special effect or two. He has a sound from the way he tunes his amp, where he might get a little more buzz. I find that if I start off with a clean thing, then I concern myself with a more varied inflection. If I start with a lot of distortion, or if I use devices, then my sound is dependent on what the devices can do more so than what my fingers can do. For me the real challenge is to have real freedom and real possibilities for my fingers. In a way it's a pure technical kind of way of playing. Rather than go to the store to buy a new sound, I want to be able to play a new sound. Even my extended techniques are done with a pick or my fingers, nothing else.

In addition to emerging on the scene as a wholly original artist, you also came out playing on your own Riti label.

LET ME TELL YOU a little story about why I self-produced my own record. For years in Boston I had people tell me I should play like John Scofield. Then I had people tell me I should play like James Blood Ulmer. I didn't do any of those things even though I think they are both great. I said "Gee, why would I want to play like them?" Then in the course of two months, I got to play in front of both those guys in Europe, and they thought my thing was good and it was different. They both said, "Why don't you make a record?" Since no one else was saying these things, I decided to make my own record. **Wrap Around** was recorded in 1982 and realized in 1983. It was exactly what I wanted to do at that moment. Unfortunately, it's on lp (vinyl). If it were on CD, people could see the documentation of the evolution of my playing over the last twelve years. They would see the progression and the range. I've tried to do a lot of catch up for the guitar. Really concentrating on the avant-garde sound, if you want to call it that. I wanted to show the influence of the saxophone and the music of Cecil Taylor on the guitar. I wanted to articulate those things. I, of course, now have my own ideas. The name Riti, which I used for the record label, comes from a one-string African fiddle. At one point in my thinking I dwelled on the notion of tradition and roots. What was the source of jazz guitar? I came to the idea of the blue notes and West African string music. Not just lute music or things that were the early banjo sound, but music on the Riti. This music had a very guttural sound, which was tremendously beautiful. At the same time, I was working with Lowell Davidson, who really challenged me about my technique and my playing of too many notes. He told me once, "I guess you should continue to go on playing, although I don't know why". He goes on to say, "Just don't bother coming over here to play." I went home and decided that I needed to do something else. I had been resisting doing prepared guitar and all this other kind of stuff, which seemed liked it would be the solution. What I did was try to get that Riti sound, and I did. Using this sound with Lowell Davidson changed my music a great deal. It opened things up for me. That's why I named the label Riti.

*What are the bottom line figures on doing independent projects, such as **Wrap Around**?*

I PUT ALL OF MY OWN money up front. Actually I had a good friend, who is very supportive of my music who loaned me \$1,000.00. I paid her back over the course of the year in little bits at a time. I believe it cost me \$3,000.00 to make that record, what with mailings and all.

Did you make any money on this project?

NO, I STILL HAVE SOME COPIES. The reality of this music is the interesting part of this. The fact that you can make records and people can be interested in them, but it's almost impossible to sell them. It's really part of the intrigue of the whole affair.

What route did you use. The independent jazz distribution system in North Country, Rounder?

ROUNDER WOULD NEVER deal with me. North Country and NPS, yes. I've always been the kind of guitarist who fell between the cracks. I don't do prepared guitar, which a lot of people were doing then. So I didn't fit in with the downtown guys. I wasn't playing like John Scofield or Pat Metheny, so I didn't fit in with that crowd. All of which I'm very happy about. The trend has never been in my favour. I think it's changing. People are beginning to see the hard work I do on the instrument is pretty exciting.

Do you do your own managing?

YES, OF COURSE. Although, I still have a day gig.

You cited the alto saxophone and violin as having more influence on your playing than fellow guitarists?

THE GUITAR sort of jumped out of the window in 1956. If it weren't for Jimi Hendrix in the 60s, I don't think anyone would have played it. A lot of what people do on the guitar is either Hendrix or John Cage. The Cage influence is shown by the table top guitar, etc. In jazz there are some great guitar players, but I don't think they have dealt with the innovations of Eric Dolphy or Jimmy Lyons. Ornette Coleman has had guitar players in his band, so I think his genius has been dealt with. A lot of the really compelling innovations that occurred in jazz which weren't Modal music... say innovations with odd intervals. These things didn't really adapt themselves to the guitar. So, I've tried to concentrate on being able to speak on the instrument with that kind of range and with real breath in my playing. When you play it's real easy to use scales and fill in the space. But when you listen to a saxophonist who might employ circular breathing, the phrase ends when their breath ends. They get to a certain pace or cadence. Have you ever noticed how a crowd will react to a certain something in a player's phrasing. What they are nodding their heads to is the last breath that ends the phrase. I tried to work that kind of breathing into my playing. The cry of the saxophone is something familiar to most listeners, whereas the guitar tends to be very dull. I've tried to give the guitar that crying sound. Phrasing is very dependent on those two elements, i.e. breathing, a crying sound. A lot of time you hear guitar solos, and they just don't know when to end. It just keeps going, and there is no shape to the phrases. Beyond that I want to play on the energy that the great saxophonists play. If Anthony Braxton is able to play one of his pulse track pieces with wicked 8th notes and still be right inside it, I also want to be able to do that. Those are imperative kinds of things. When there are certain rhythm tracks, people start playing a lot, every instrumentalist should deal with it. This will help the technical advancement of the instrument and the general experience of playing and listening. □

PHOTOGRAPH BY GERARD FUTRICK

NOTES FROM THE GOLDEN GATE

A BAY AREA NEWS UPDATE BY
BENJAMIN FRANDZEL

THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA has emerged as a vibrant centre for improvised music, with as wide an array of approaches as players, and a range of venues for schools of thought to commingle and evolve. There's hardly enough room to profile every worthy artist or event in town, but here are some highlights.

One of the most exciting events of the summer was the eight-day Eddie Moore Jazz Festival at *Yoshi's*, in Oakland. The festival was sponsored by Jazz In Flight, an all-volunteer organization that brought in some rarely heard out-of-town performers like **Dave Burrell** and instigated some wonderful music by bringing local artists and visiting musicians together. Cellist **Kash Killion** augmented his energetic Killion's Millions with a transcontinental quartet of violinists: Sandy Poindexter, Michael White, Michael Ward, and Billy Bang, while the night before, New York's **Steve Berrios** joined some of the Bay Area's finest percussionists for a night of Afro-Cuban music, both traditional and new.

Jazz In Flight also administers Children In Flight, a free program for area children to learn about African music traditions, and an increasingly important resource in the age of ominous funding cuts. Yoshi's itself maintains a policy of hosting big-name acts five nights a week and using the other two to spotlight local musicians. Their bookings seem to be growing more and more adventurous.

Asian Improv arts remains a vital presence in Bay Area cultural life, and co-sponsored last May's 14th annual Asian-American Jazz Festival at the Asian Art Museum in Golden Gate Park. The Concert Of A Thousand Cranes: A 50th Year Commemoration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, offered some of the most committed, moving music I've heard in a long time. After a performance of Japanese court music by the San Francisco Gagaku Society, an all-star 12-piece ensemble playing both Asian and Western instruments was joined by guest trombonist **George Lewis**, whose year-long residency at Oakland's Mills College made for a valuable presence in the Bay Area. Following drummer **Anthony Brown's** intense *The Setting Sun / Ichikoku-Cho*, and kotoist **Miya Masaoka's** kaleidoscopic *24,000 Years Is Forever*, bassist and festival director **Mark Izu's** gracefully designed *Hibakush!* (*Survivors*) ended, in a moment that seemed both miraculous and inevitable, with a healing song of the native American Karuk people. The cumulative effect of the music was genuinely stunning.

In more recent Asian Improv events, pianist **Jon Jang** premiered his *Island: The Immigrant Suite No. 1*, October 8th at the Cowell

Theatre. Jang's octet emphasized percussion, colour, and gorgeous melody, and the music was beautifully integrated with Genny Lim's incantatory poetry. Also premiered was saxophonist **Francis Wong's** *Diaspora Tale No. 1 (For My Parents)*, which achieved a similarly fine effect.

The concert was sponsored by *Koncepts Cultural Gallery*, which has been an important presenter of creative performances since 1984. Koncepts is without a permanent home these days, but has found a regular roost at the *Pro Arts Gallery* in downtown Oakland, where their monthly Wordsongs series of poetry and music continues, an outgrowth of the annual Jazz In Tongue festival. As various events are in the planning stages these days, call (510) 451-5231 to check what's new in town.

Several local labels have been increasingly active in recording and promoting new music, and San Leandro's *Rastascan Records* continues to sponsor the *Dark Circle Lounge* on Tuesday nights at San Francisco's Hotel Utah. Rastascan's most recent release is *Wavelength Infinity*, a Sun Ra tribute to benefit the Arkestra. In a similar vein, the label sponsored a July tribute to Anthony Braxton at Yoshi's, with a live recording expected.

An important new venue is *Beanbender's*, a collective that presents Wednesday nights of new music courtesy of the *Berkeley Store Gallery*. The room is spacious and has fine acoustics, and the three partners in the enterprise have been especially active in bringing in improvisers from around the U.S. and beyond. This has led to some thrilling music from L.A.'s **Vinny Golia** and **Nels Cline**. Beanbender's welcomes inquiries from interested performers. Call (510) 528-8440 or e-mail plonsey@sunra.berkeley.edu.

The most recent concert I heard at Beanbender's featured separate and combined sets by the **Splatter Trio** and the **Rova Saxophone Quartet**, a group that continues to animate the local scene with regular concerts and collaborations. Last April brought their wonderful Art Of The Improvisers concert with many of the most creative players in town, and on December 6th the group will offer a 30th anniversary performance of John Coltrane's *Ascension* at the Great American Music Hall, featuring, among many others, original participant **John Tchicai**.

San Francisco lost a vital venue last July when a bizarre accident led to the closing of **Radio Valencia** in the Mission District, and the end of a three-year series of Sunday night improvisation. Two fire trucks answering separate calls collided with each other at the restaurant's intersection, sending one crashing right through the front window. Major injuries were miraculously avoided, but the boards remain in place where a doorway to the great music once stood. An August benefit at the Paradise Lounge featured **Glenn Spearman** and **Marco Eneidi's** 22-piece Creative Music Orchestra, which has been barnstorming around the Bay Area. No announcement has been made yet, but hopes are that the restaurant may re-open by year's end.

One last venue that must be mentioned is the **Stork Club** in downtown Oakland, which presents all kinds of creative music. Future updates will follow. □

Spirits Of Romance: Recent Italian Recordings

REVIEWED BY STUART BROOMER



ITALIAN INSTABILE ORCHESTRA • PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERTO MASOTTI/ECM RECORDS

In 1984 the Milan studio of architect Ettore Sottsass designed a stereo cabinet.

It's about two metres high and over a meter wide, mounted on short pillars with a matching clock on top. It's a riot of laminated materials and colours: near-fluorescent shades of pink for the oak-grained shelves and green for the bird's-eye maple on the back, sides, doors and pillars. The curved wings on the sides and thick slanted wooden uprights to hold lps are yellow — it's an avant-garde receptacle for a discarded technology.

The Sottsass stereo cabinet is *different* and so is recent Italian jazz. The music shares the playful, joyous, excessive combinations of shape, colour, material and scale of Memphis architecture and furniture.

At its best the music, too, is deliberately eclectic in a way that is entirely positive.

The Italians have one of the strongest musical cultures of Europe, and there are features of that culture that shape these musicians' approaches to jazz and improvised music. It is, after all, the only country in which opera is popular music and film music is high art. This music enjoys linear development to the point of valuing melody and sometimes even to the point of narrative. It's almost always about voice and about orchestra. Sometimes people talk and the musicians sing, but the instruments almost always do. The instruments that often

stand out are alto saxophone, trombone, and strings, played with big, expressive sounds.

Whatever their numbers, from the solo trombone with electronics of Giancarlo Schiaffini to the 33 member Orchestra Utopia, the Italians play in a vital tradition of orchestral music. As a result, this music often sounds both polished and alive, a trick that few can manage. The eclecticism and the orchestral quality are related. Many of these musicians cultivate different instrumental voices as a

tonal palette until individual players have multiple musical personalities. Consistency is not necessarily a virtue. Eclectic to the point of being *after* history, Italian jazz is often post-modern in ways that the term can seldom be applied.

While the Italians have been called the most classical of European improvisors, the term is used loosely. They are the most romantic. The Dutch may be wittier, the French more refined, but the Italians are the most comic and the most lyric. >>>>

ITALIAN INSTABILE ORCHESTRA

Skies Of Europe • ECM 1543

Most of the players to be discussed here are among the 18 members of the Italian Instabile Orchestra in which the cream of Italian improvisers put *together* their differences, and that's an essential idea for the way both the orchestra and Italian improvised music work. The aesthetics of exclusion seem alien to them.

The orchestra's self concept is large enough to include the megaphone noise vocals of founder and trumpeter Pino Minafra and the symphonic visions of bassist Bruno Tommaso and pianist Giorgio Gaslini. The reed section somehow unites the elemental free jazz of Mario Schiano, the virtuoso flights of Gianluigi Trovesi, the lyric sweetness of Eugenio Colombo, the multiphonics of Carlo Actis Dato, and the mainstream drive of Daniele Cavallanti.

Here the Orchestra plays two long suites written by their senior members: *Il Maestro Muratore*, by Tommaso, and *The Skies of Europe*, by Gaslini, active since the fifties. Each piece has distinct movements within which soloists, duos, and sub-groups improvise. The orchestral parts range from fanfare to "swinging big band" and are very well executed. The music is effectively knit together by the rhythm section, which includes the percussionists Tiziano Tononi and Vincenzo Mazzone, and by the "string section," which is independently the Italian String Trio. The seven brass players, including Minafra and Schiaffini, give great depth and glossy breadth to the orchestra's collective sound.

Gaslini dedicates his segments to Duchamp, Kandinsky, Marlene Dietrich, Satie, Fellini, and Antonioni, then dedicates the whole piece to Ornette Coleman. That should give a clue to the eclecticism. The segment dedicated to Dietrich is a saxophone quartet in the style of Kurt Weill in which each saxophonist "breaks" in his distinctive way.

A remarkable co-operative project, the Instabile Orchestra only hints at the range and quality of Italian players. A certain innate problem inheres in a group with

the talent of the Instabile, and that's simply how to use it. The improvising gifts of the 18 players often appear as isolated and brilliant bursts within a panorama. Their individual depths have to be heard elsewhere.

MARIO SCHIANO

Original Sins 1967/70 unreleased
Splasc(h) CDH 502.2

MARIO SCHIANO ET AL.

Unlike • Splasc(h) CDH 309/2

MARIO SCHIANO / JOELLE LEANDRE / PETER KOWALD

Tracks • Le Parc 512-2

Alto saxophonist Mario Schiano has been playing a version of free jazz since the sixties and remains committed to improvisation. His playing is a gnarled, hard-bitten, minimalist affair. He eschews eclecticism, virtuosity, refinement of tone, and freedom of line in ways that are almost unpatriotic.

Original Sins collects several previously unreleased tapes from 1967 to 1970. These are of primarily historical interest now, adding to our picture of the spread of mid-sixties New York-style free jazz. It's less original (and perhaps sinful) than what was then taking place in London and Berlin. Schiano's essential approach then was a free jazz that was blues-based and minimalist, with a loose but steady beat. If he could stay within the interval of a third or a fourth for extended periods, he did. The blues-based tonality links him to players like Donaldson and McLean, though without the artifice of bop. He had a fondness for extended reed squeaks (McLean's *Let Freedom Ring* comes to mind) and his work suggests several early free jazz altoists, including Byron Allen, though it's risky finding too many trace elements in a music that's boiled itself down to so little. Schiano is a player of character and determination, and the CD provides early glimpses of Schiaffini and Tommaso.

What I've just written about *Original Sins* can be reread in the present tense about Schiano's recent work. He has stuck to his simple and tortured line, taking it into

contexts where its derivations lose meaning and it acquires a certain formal force. He is the organizer of an annual festival of improvised music in Rome, and *Unlike*, drawn from the 1990 event, features him in several settings. A quartet with Maarten Altena, Paul Lytton, and guitarist Jean-Marc Montera gets the most time. The traditional difficulty of mixing amplified and acoustic instruments arises: Montera tends to obscure the rhythmic subtlety that Altena and Lytton generate. When Schiano finds himself in the company of international non-referential abstractionists — Parker, Schlippenbach, Leandre, Lovens — he sticks to that blues-rooted modal-minimalist line, honking that honk, squeaking that squeak, until they're all playing the tortured abstract blues.

Far more successful is *Tracks*, taken from another festival, Musica dele Ombre, the 1993 International Silent Film Festival with Live Music. It's a trio performance with bassists Kowald and Leandre that originally accompanied a screening of Sergei Eisenstein's *The Battleship Potemkin*. It's interesting to listen to music when an integral visual narrative is missing. Such is Schiano's almost structuralist style that the bassists are more inventive and varied than he is, but this is dense and interesting music. While he may be overshadowed by more fluent musicians — Trovesi, Actis Dato — Schiano remains the soul of Italian improvisation.

DANIELE CAVALLANTI

with Dewey Redman • *Times For Peace*
Splasc(h) CDH-412

NEXUS

Free Spirits • Splasc(h) CDH-421/2

Milan-based saxophonist Cavallanti and drummer Tiziano Tononi, co-leaders of the band Nexus, are the most strongly oriented toward American jazz traditions. They are frank in their emulations, including American guests and sometimes turning their recordings into tributes.

On *Times for Peace*, the Cavallanti quartet is joined by Dewey Redman in the most conventional session among these discs. It's set in a post-Coleman/Coltrane

mainstream, with a fine version of Monk's *Reflections* and Cavallanti originals that are sometimes tailor-made for Redman, including *Quiet Dew* and *Moods For Dewey*. Cavallanti is a direct and potent tenor player. He doesn't sound overmatched with Redman, who plays well if not with the fire he sometimes has. Many of the finest moments come from pianist Stefano Battaglia who contributes a couple of stunning solos and constantly challenges and enlarges the proceedings. The most arresting track is the last, Tononi's *Summer Folk Song*. It's powerful, incantatory music in which the two strong tenors roll back and forth over one another's lines, almost indistinguishably.

Nexus is a sextet on *Free Spirits*. That and changes in instrumentation make the difference between small band and orchestra. Joined here by trumpeter Herb Robertson, they pay homage to the Charlie Haden/Carla Bley **Liberation Music Orchestra** with Tononi's *La Grande Aurora Rossa*, a half hour suite on revolutionary themes. Three other long pieces are dedicated to Mark Dresser, Donald Garrett, and Bob Moses.

What's interesting about the Nexus tributes (previous efforts include one to Albert Ayler) is that the notion of a personal voice, one of the strongest drives for their "originals," is largely absent. When Cavallanti is playing with Dewey Redman, he often sounds *like* Redman. Here he adds Gato Barbieri and Archie Shepp.

Cavallanti is hardly alone in this. The strongest soloist in Nexus is altoist Gianluigi Trovesi, who is often imitative without being derivative. With more blowing room than he gives himself on his own records, he manages to sound almost Dolphy-ish on one track, then like a double of John Tchicai on another. That's as unlike as two musicians playing the same instrument in similar idioms can be.

Nexus isn't just paying tribute to Haden and Bley. It also assumes the individual and collective styles of those great early sixties bands with Shepp, Tchicai and Roswell Rudd — the early Jazz Composers Orchestra, the New York Contemporary

Five, the New York Art Quartet, and the Shepp sextet that recorded *Four For Trane*. So, committed as they are to the Americans, the members of Nexus are closer to their countrymen in their eclecticism. Robertson stands out by being stylistically consistent and comparatively restrained. Nexus uses its influences well. One of the joys of their sources was the level of interplay, and Nexus emphasizes this. It would be refreshing if some young American musicians updated and upgraded their source material to this level.



MARIO SCHIANO PHOTOGRAPH BY COSMO LAERA

GIANLUIGI TROVESI & GIANNI COSCIA

Radici • EGEA SCA 050

GIANLUIGI TROVESI OCTET

From G to G • Soul Note 121231-2

Trovesi appears in an utterly different light on *Radici*, a series of duets with accordionist Coscia in which he forsakes his saxophone to concentrate on his clari-

nets, from bass to soprano including his exceptionally beautiful alto. Trovesi possesses a wonderful lyricism, a singing clarity drenched in expressive folk sources, and it is most apparent in this simplest of settings. This would be an unlikely recording for anyone but the Italians (in fact, many of these CDs would be unimaginable from another source). The two play deeply felt, tuneful, and delightful music.

Trovesi's own octet bears only slight relation to Nexus. The leader's compositions often suggest Coleman, Dolphy and Giuffrè (*The Train And The River* particularly), as do his fleet reeds, but the octet is close to a Commedia del Arte version of jazz, or jazz as carnival: the music goes through mood and style swings every couple of minutes, through various styles of jazz and concert music, and folk and dance musics as well. At first this is distracting but eventually becomes a defining characteristic. At the 1995 Toronto festival, its North American debut, the octet was a secret festival all by itself.

The octet's resources are substantial. A front line of trumpet, trombone, and Trovesi's reeds is supported by a drummer, a percussionist, cello and two basses. That may suggest Coltrane-like

power and density, but the results are very different. One bass and cello are used sparingly as a kind of mini-string section, as is the mini-percussion section provided by Fulvio Maras. Trovesi's tuneful themes are passed from section to section in an orchestral way, and there is more emphasis on composition than improvisation. The CD ends with a tune called *Hercab* that resembles nothing so much as a Dixieland version of Mingus' *Fables Of Faubus*.
 >>>>

PINO MINAFRA

Sudori • Victo CD034

Trumpeter Pino Minafra contributes strong trumpet playing and much humour to the Trovesi Octet, including his rapping (and rasping) megaphone vocals, and “didjeridoo” (actually a length of industrial plastic pipe), talking and playing the trumpet at the same time, and giving a megaphone introduction of the band at the CD’s conclusion. He brings the same arsenal to his own sextet, *Sud Ensemble*, but otherwise the trumpeter’s band is a looser and wilder affair, its sound thickened by the occasional synthesizer of pianist Giorgio Occhipinti and the Brotzmann-level density of saxophonist Carlo Actis Dato.

Minafra’s themes touch on hard bop, bossa nova, Miles’ moorish modal, and tango in elastic forms that stretch to accommodate his own lyrical trumpet (he manages to cover Davis, Art Farmer, and Maynard Ferguson) and free collective blowing. A highlight is *Au Fond, Je Suis Un Africain Du Nord*, that starts out in hard bop/funk

territory, then accelerates to levels of screaming intensity with Actis Dato blasting over repeated ensemble figures. Bizarre style shifts within pieces are common, but their formation is more relaxed than with Trovesi.

GIANCARLO SCHIAFFINI

Edula • Pentaphon CDS 068

CARLO ACTIS DATO

Urartu • Leo CD LR 220

These two solo CDs represent different avant-garde traditions. Trombonist Schiaffini operates in part within a European compositional tradition. He uses live electronics extensively to create percussion and echoes of himself, sometimes turning himself into a trombone section. The music is very spacious and the sense of voice is strong, even with the electronics. It’s a beautiful record, and demonstrates as well as any could the orchestral and structural sensibilities of the best Italian musicians. With just his trombone and his hardware, Schiaffini’s an orchestra.

Actis Dato, on the other hand, is a strong exponent of current improvised saxophone music. He aims for the density of Parker and Brotzmann, achieving it on baritone and tenor saxophones and bass clarinet. The style is especially startling on the low-pitched horns, and Actis Dato sometimes uses circular breathing to create an unrelenting wall of noise in which there is no space at all.

As unlike as they are, the CDs resemble each other in that each is more accessible (even *musical*) than the style to

which it might be consigned. Schiaffini couldn’t be further from the clinical chill that often infuses such music, his trombone as warm as an operatic baritone. Dato mixes his sound pieces with dance tunes and perhaps the most “out” versions of *Round Midnight* and *Autumn Leaves* on record. When he pops his keys and sings through his horn, he sounds like he’s conducting ethno-musicological field trips on himself.

MEDITANGO • CD Onyx 001

ITALIAN STRING TRIO

From Groningen to Mulhouse
Splasc(h) CDH 416-2

Bassist / composer Bruno Tommaso is one of Italy’s most durable and talented musicians, and he’s responsible for some of the most surprising CDs I’ve heard recently.

Meditango, produced by the Onyx Jazz Club and listing the club’s 250 members as producer, is a delight, a sextet devoted to variations of the tango and led by Tommaso. Eugenio Columbo, on flute and saxophones, is outstanding, but everyone in the band plays with a grand orchestral sweep, summoning up all the traditional passions of the tango, and doing so with an almost impossible elegance. The others — pianist Ramberto Cammarughi, violinist Adele Madau, trombonist Roberto Schiano, and drummer Ettore Fioravanti — *aren’t* in the Instabile Orchestra, suggesting a tremendous talent pool. Unlikely to have any wide distribution, the record is well worth seeking out (Onyx Jazz Club, Via Duomo 10, 75100 Matera, Italy).

The Italian String Trio — Tommaso, violinist Renato Geremia, and cellist Paolo Damiani — play rare music — rich, melodic, and expressive — that is hard to classify and harder to want to. Anyone seeking improvised School of Vienna aleatorics will have to look elsewhere. Italian concert violinists have a tradition of huge, emotive sounds, and Geremia applies his to a different collection of idioms, from folk songs to swing, transmuting with rugged virtuosity every memory you might have of Italian restaurant violinists. A single

BRUNO TOMMASO PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN



theme — *La Canzone Di Re Ludovico*, a folk tune adapted by Tommaso — appears three times, and it's invested with great power. Elsewhere Damiani seems to interpolate the Beatles' *Norwegian Wood*, but it goes on long enough to become a major theme.

**BRUNO TOMMASO
VITTORINO CURCI**

Nux Erat • C.M.C. 9934-2

**ENRICO FAZIO
VITTORINO CURCI**

Favola • C.M.C. 9921-2

These orchestral works consistently break new ground in the wedding of improvisation with orchestration, using the form of loosely linked suites arranged around narratives in which orchestral and solo, written and improvised parts complement one another. The form places significant responsibility on the improvising soloists to reform the complex of verbal and musical materials, and the results here are impressive. Both of these pieces include passages that recall the pre-harmonic music of Europe, and there are strong elements of the ceremonial. With fewer soloists and more developed solos, they're more satisfying than the work of the Instabile Orchestra itself.

Tommaso's *Nux Erat*, with the 33 piece Orchestra Utopia, is a kaleidoscope of voice (scat creeps into what sounds like a meeting in a village square) and orchestra textures, with Trovesi, Minafra, and Evan Parker as soloists. The title translates as *Nuts Forever*, and the text, by poet Vittorino Curci, is a history of the town of Noci ("Nuts") where the Europa Jazz Festival, organized by Minafra, is held annually. Tommaso composes and conducts with one foot in folk dance and the other in chaos, and the music elides from one form to another or intercuts and stacks them. The solos are inspired, with subtle transitions between the two reeds. Minafra plays a solo that sounds like a slide whistle in almost canine range.

Another bassist/composer, Enrico Fazio, has also collaborated with Curci on a piece for voice and orchestra. *Favola*, or *Fable*, however, restricts itself to a spoken

narrative. Fazio employs a much smaller ensemble — just 11 musicians — and emphasizes reed textures with alto and soprano saxophones, bassoon and oboe. It's beautifully spare writing, often suggesting music of the late renaissance and some of Stravinsky's chamber works. Soprano saxophonist Sergei Letov establishes an air of profound gravity with his opening solo.

In 1913, when Puccini was still composing some of the last great works of the nineteenth century, the Futurist Luigi Russolo published "The Art of Noise" and debuted his orchestra of buzzers, snorters, shrillers, gurglers, shatterers and bursters. Futurism enjoyed violent public confrontations, but now, some 80 years later, many Italian musicians see nothing incompatible in pursuing multiple directions, whether it's lyricism and noise, the medieval and the modern, the composed and the improvised.

What I think is most engaging and distinctive about the best of these recordings is that the music doesn't sound alienated in any sense. It's in touch with a variety of roots, both native and foreign, and it takes pleasure in melody and harmony without sounding bored or boring. The musicians enjoy reading when they're reading, improvising when they're improvising, playing "inside" when they're "in," and "outside" when they're "out." Some seem to like rules because they like breaking them. The most interesting of them make music that is joyous and witty and passionate in ways that are both old and new. A few of them — Minafra, Trovesi, and Actis Dato — might even become popular. They make time sound different.

Notes: An article in Coda, July/August 1991, discusses other Italian musicians of note, among whom the pianists Stefano Battaglia and Enrico Pieranunzi are especially worth seeking out. □

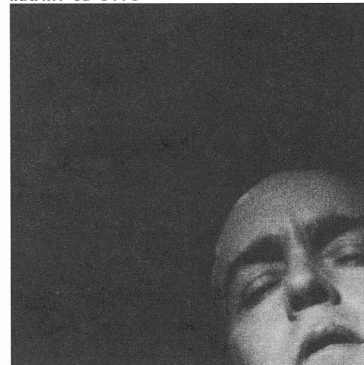
Some of these recordings may be available from:

ON THE VERGE, 215 Stewart Street, Peterborough, ON, Canada K9J 3M6 or **NORTH COUNTRY**, Cadence Building, Redwood, NY, U.S.A. 13679

**Dave Douglas'
Tiny Bell Trio,
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MARK FELDMAN

A PROFILE BY ROBERT HICKS

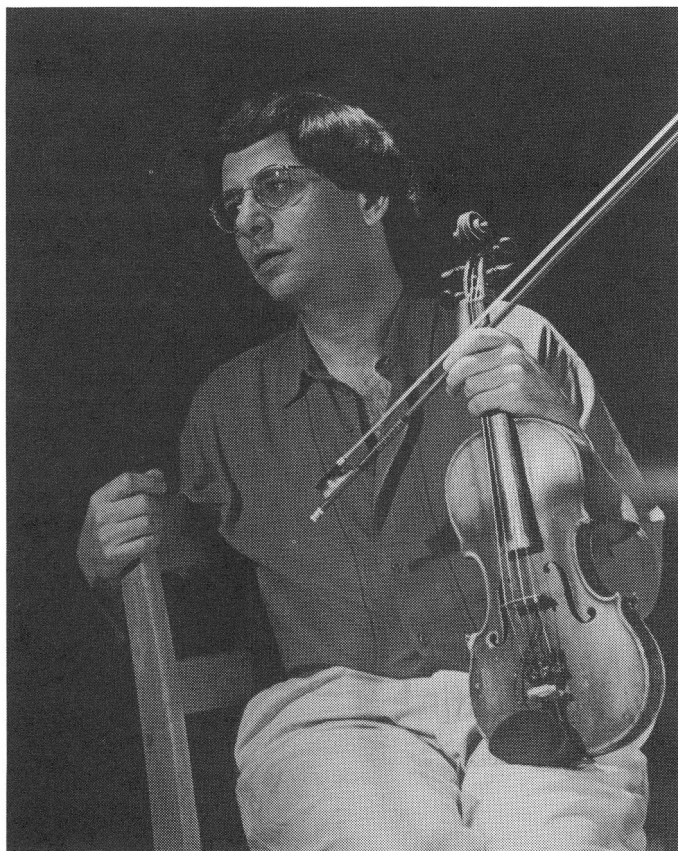
"It just seemed natural. I was 18 and looking around for someone to play with. Chicago's full of taverns. There was still live music in those days in all the taverns even if it was just on the weekends. All the corner bars had bands. You could make a lot of money. Back in those days, it was just the easiest way to go," he recalls.

From his days working in Chicago bar bands, violinist Mark Feldman has had to adapt to a variety of music styles. The raunchy pulse of R&B, the lyrical depths of the blues, the jump action of rockabilly — all have crossed his bow. In the '80s, he dug into country swing in Nashville with Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash, George Jones, Loretta Lynn and Ray Price. After Feldman moved to New York in 1986, downtown improvisers Walter Thompson, Herb Robertson, Mark Dresser and Hank Roberts embraced him, and studio work placed him alongside the Manhattan Transfer, Diana Ross, Carol King, Bette Midler and They Might Be Giants.

All the attention from musicians has won Feldman critical acclaim of late as well. Two years running, he's been atop the Talent Deserving Wider Recognition category for violin in Down Beat's Critics' Poll. His new recordings range from work with Muhal Richard Abrams on New World, Dave Douglas String Group for Soul Note, Ned Rothenberg on New World and a second recording with New and Used on Knitting Factory Works to a live recording (probably on Tzadik) with the Arcado String Trio, featuring new member Ernst Reijseger, who replaces Hank Roberts on cello, and The Tango Kings, co-led by Gil Goldstein and Finnish pianist Irro, for Big World Records. He still works with the Anthony Davis Quartet and during the week of this interview was performing at Sweet Basil in New York with the Billy Hart Sextet.

His first outing as a leader, *Music For Violin Alone* on John Zorn's Tzadik label, is both lyrical and classically astute. Lacking are the quirky turns of thought, interpolations from styles that mark his diverse background and the dry wit that enlivens his live performances. "Musically, maybe there's more challenges playing solo. Then there's the other side. It was less challenging because I didn't have to deal with other musicians. It was harder in some ways and easier in others. I try to keep a rhythmic, visceral quality to the music that's different from classical music, I wanted a really focused recording. I didn't want fifteen minute pieces of free improvisation where one thing led to another. I wanted things to be super clear. I make statements of vocabulary and techniques for the violin. Each piece focuses on one or two ideas at a time," explains Feldman.

Feldman performed solo in Canada in the fall but has no plans to lead his own ensemble, preferring the demands of working under others' leadership. The Tuesday after our conversation, Feldman left New York for dates in Germany with Trilock Gurtu, Pharoah Sanders, Victor Bailey and Jean-Paul Bourely. Two gigs with the Hendrix Tribute were set for



Cologne and stints with Karl Berg followed in October. He's worked recently with Mark Helias' Attack The Future and plans to tour with Dave Douglas. In December, Feldman performed in duo with Richard Teitelbaum at New York's Merkin Concert Hall.

A new duo date with pianist Michael Stevens has been released on Leo Records. Another project with composer Klaus König's big band on *Time Fragments* (enja) complements *Eric Dolphy Suite* (enja) with the Double Trio, which combines the personnel of the Arcado String Trio with the Louis Sclavis Trio de Clarinet.

Feldman's working on film scores too. He recently joined Phillip Johnston for *Music Of Chance* and he performed with the Orchestra of St. Luke's on a Japanese film with a score by Gil Goldstein. Last year, he played on Oliver Stone's *Natural Born Killers*. And before that, he played solo on David Mamet's film *Things Change*.

If that's not Herculean enough, in the past Feldman hit the European circuit as a guest soloist with the WDR Big Band and with the Bern Sinfonetta. He toured Germany with the

Radio Orchestra of Koln. Broadway's even heard Feldman on Anthony Davis' score for Tony Kushner's play *Angels In America*. Opera audiences got clued into Feldman via Davis too on *X: The Life And Times Of Malcolm X*.

Violin wasn't his first choice for an instrument. Initially, he wanted to play concert harp, but that wasn't available, so somebody stuck a violin in his hand. Starting to take lessons at age 9 in a public school program in Chicago (where he was born on July 17, 1955), Feldman gravitated to private study with George Swigart and later took lessons briefly with Adai Ghertovicki and David Baker. His first tour was with Symphony of the Stars.

"It was a full symphony orchestra that was totally amplified with flash boxes and laser light show. We'd play all the music from the movies like *2001*, *Star Wars*, *Close Encounters*, and *The Planets* by Holst, so it was all outer space music in a Hollywood vein. William Shatner would come out and read this monologue and we'd play behind him," recalls Feldman.

Performing with bar bands in Chicago after high school in lieu of college, Feldman hit the circuit of C&W, Rockabilly, Western Swing and Folk gigs until he met Buddy Spicher (whom he dedicates *4 Spiker* to on his solo debut) in Chicago at one of Nashville fiddler's workshops.

"I went to the workshop. At the end, I started to talk to him about some jazz things. He got interested in that and said, 'If you ever come down to Nashville, I'll help you break in.

About six weeks later, I drove down there and got a room in Motel Six," recalls Feldman.

His first job was in the Nashville Symphony. TV work followed with the Country Music Association. Side trips to Louisville, Kentucky placed him on gigs with late jazz guitarist Jimmy Raney (who played with Woody Herman and Stan Getz) and then he began to hit the road with Loretta Lynn and Ray Price.

"I was just trying to make a living. I got a lot of experience about what it's like being a professional musician, especially during the recordings. The road is rough and there are a lot of weird attitudes. It was pretty hard. I'm glad I was young when I did it," he says.

New York brought Feldman into vastly different circles, which have placed him on recordings with Karl Berger, The Chromatic Persuaders, John Zorn, Marilyn Crispell, Don Byron, Guy Klucevsek, Phil Haynes, Bobby Previte, Ray Anderson and Tim Berne. Jazz had always been a part of his experience. Nashville gave him the opportunity to play it some and trips to Memphis introduced him to Lou Donaldson, Chick Corea and Phineas Newborn, Jr., but Feldman wasn't really satisfied with the culture or music of the South, so he took a summer off in 1985 to attend a Banff clinic in Canada where he studied with Dave Holland, John Abercrombie, Dave Liebman and Kenny Wheeler. That turned him around, so he "just picked up and moved to New York." □

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All Stories Are True • Cadence Jazz 1057



KENNY BURRELL PHOTOGRAPH BY GERARD FUTRICK

If there's a connecting thread to be found among all the releases at hand, it's a quality of re-invention, a belief in the possibilities inherent in established forms. The most successful recordings here demonstrate that music, like all living things, is kept alive by its ability to re-combine in new ways, to tap into its genetic code and find previously unimagined combinations to keep its blood flowing, its spirit growing, and its pulse beating.

The other common thread through these releases is the presence of the guitar in each of the featured groups, and one guitarist who has served as a connecting thread through the last five decades of the music like no other is **Kenny Burrell**. Burrell may well be the most recorded of all jazz guitarists; he is certainly the most consistent player on his instrument in the post-war period, always delivering the same understated eloquence. Both then and now, there's an unfailing inventiveness to his playing that demonstrates an implicit faith that in the language of jazz there will always be new possibilities.

Two CDs from a valuable new series of reissues on the Savoy label, released under the aegis of its new owner, Nippon Columbia, help to show why Burrell's phone hasn't stopped ringing for forty

years. On both dates, the young Burrell displays the qualities that have distinguished his playing ever since — the elegant virtuosity, the incisive rhythmic sense, and the dark, compelling tone. With a quietly confident mastery, the guitarist offers solos that feel fresh and spontaneous yet seem to be born fully formed. It's hard to imagine Burrell choosing a note or phrase that is in any way inappropriate, and yet there's always a relaxed creativity that keeps his playing interesting, i.e., he simply makes the choices he makes because they're the best ones to be made at any given time, in any given tune.

Burrell also tends to make the right choices in his musical colleagues, and on *Monday Stroll*, his laid-back swinging finds an ideal foil in several members of the Count

Basie rhythm section — bassist Eddie Jones, Gus Johnson, who replaces Kenny Clarke at the drum kit for two tracks, and Freddie Green, whose steady strumming, with its flawless voice-leading, has influenced Burrell's rhythm playing ever since. Burrell also shares duties as primary soloist and composer with the Basie band's great tenor and flute player, Frank Wess. It's a fitting match, in that Burrell's phrasing has always been that of a wind-player, with a willingness to breathe between his well-shaped statements that eludes many guitarists. Wess concentrates on the flute here, and his dazzling efforts surely mark him as one of the greatest jazz practitioners of this instrument, particularly up to the mid-50s date of this recording. On tenor as well, Wess must be counted as one of the most overlooked players of his generation, and hopefully the reappear-

ance of recordings like this will bring an overdue historical awareness of his talents.

The compositions stand out as much as their performances — sly, ingratiating Wess tunes like *Monday Stroll* or *Woolafunt's Lament* and the elegant bop tune *Wess Side* are memorable, along with Burrell's loping *East Wind* and a beautiful *Over the Rainbow*. Brilliant solos abound, as in Burrell's work on his own blues, *Southern Exposure*, beginning with rhythmically pointed blues figures, and gradually progressing to extended, florid passages. One senses Burrell's interest in approaching the guitar with a horn player's fluidity and grace, in one solo both emphasizing and then transcending the guitar's essentially percussive nature.

An equally appealing album from the same period, recorded eight months earlier, is *Kenny Clarke Meets the Detroit Jazz Men*. This time, Clarke propels a group that includes Burrell, Tommy Flanagan, Paul Chambers, and Pepper Adams on baritone sax. These four future giants, still young newcomers, are clearly inspired by Clarke's sweetly driving rhythms, his unequalled sense of pulse. Burrell, for example, in his always gentle way, is more fiery than on the session with Wess, Adams seems to be joyfully discovering his own mastery of his under-utilized horn, Flanagan's sparsely elegant style is already well in place, and Chambers swings and drives the band with the same power that would soon establish him as one of the great bassists. Throughout, the group is paced by Clarke's amazing sense of accent, the uncanny ability to discern the upcoming high points or breaks in the phrases of any of the soloists. You'll hear his unifying commentaries upon Burrell's heated phrases during *Cottontail* and upon Adams' supple variations on the theme of his own *Aphothegh*. Both of these albums' covers contain some careless errors among the composer credits (Pepper Adams didn't write *Cottontail*, nor did Oscar Hammerstein and Jerome Kern collaborate on either *Over the Rainbow* or *Afternoon in Paris*!), but as is the case with all the Savoy reissues reviewed here, the tapes have been remastered with impressive clarity and an appealingly warm sound.

Jump ahead to the nineties, and the same qualities that made Burrell a sought-after young player now mark him as a master: there's still a quiet fire burning beneath his playing, so much so that there is perhaps even more drive to his work at this point, and the distinctive tone has grown darker and fuller over the years. On *No Problem*, he has found a perfect match in pianist **Ray Bryant**, the date's leader. Like Burrell, Bryant is a deeply soulful, harmonically imaginative, intelligently pithy soloist, and a master blues player. And in his case, there's a strong gospel influence behind his expressiveness. The excellent, versatile rhythm section of drummer Kenny Washington and bassist Peter Washington enters into a dialogue with Burrell and Bryant that produces a stimulating, beautifully planned and executed album. The music is well chosen, and is designed to bring out the group's strengths — one piece by Burrell, a couple by Bryant, tunes by Horace Silver, Duke Jordan (the irresistible title cut) and Charlie Christian, and a handful of pop-based standards. The two lead players swing in such flawless tandem, as on the head to Bryant's *No*, *Two* or Silver's *Come on Home*, that solos hardly seem necessary, the groove they build is so satisfying in itself. This quality makes the fresh use of the familiar language of the solos, along with some particularly inventive chord substitutions, seem all the more new. There are plenty of lively touches here, like Bryant's striking double-octave solo on *A Taste of Honey*, and there's a generosity of spirit that comes through in Bryant's playing, whether in the heart-breaking richness of his ballad performances, or in his rollicking, boogie and gospel-based playing on the uptempo cuts.

Another player of Burrell's generation who has gone the distance is **Charlie Byrd**, whose *Midnight Guitar* comes from the same series of Savoy reissues. In his own quiet way, Byrd has been an innovator on the jazz guitar. He was one of the first, and remains one of the only players to utilize the nylon-string classical guitar as his instrument — Ralph Towner and Spencer Barefield are perhaps the only other major players to follow — and in the next decade, he was one of the principal musicians involved in introducing Brazilian music to North Americans. And

just as the Burrell/Clarke reissues in the Savoy series are terrific examples of the bluesy hard bop that dominated the era, Byrd's record exemplifies several strong currents of the '50s. With his classical training (he had studied with Segovia), contrapuntal playing, even when soloing, and his writing of a three-part suite like *Blues for Night People*, Byrd's work brings to light the era's preoccupation with wedding the harmonic innovations of bebop to more advanced, sometimes classically-inspired compositional structures. His choice of the gentler acoustic instrument over the electric, the sparse trio format, and drummer Gus Johnson's use of brushes throughout also demonstrate a certain affinity with the West Coast "cool" playing of the times, despite his location across the country in Washington, D.C.

None of which is meant to reinforce the common misperception of Byrd as a light or "easy listening" musician; it's no accident that his group's drummer here is a Basie alum, or that the band is driven by bassist Keeter Betts, who did the same for the Adderley brothers. One listen, and it's clear that Byrd's devotion is, above all else, to the blues. But his approach is an original one, and before jumping into Frank Wess's *Blues My Naughty Sweetie Gave To Me* or the *2:00 AM* movement of the suite, he rolls out a pair of gorgeous solo intros that draw freely from flamenco, and adds a touch of Villa-Lobos to the intro and tag of his *Blue Prelude*. For anyone more familiar with Byrd's best-known guise, that of bossa nova-populariser, this will offer an exciting surprise, whether you're a fan or have never been drawn in by Byrd's approach.

Byrd and Burrell's great contemporary, Wes Montgomery, has been gone for nearly thirty years now, but his influence has been felt, to a varying degree, by most of his contemporaries and most of the jazz guitarists who have appeared since his death. The presence of his style in the playing of so many other musicians is a certain kind of homage in itself, but guitarist Royce Campbell, an old Montgomery disciple from Indianapolis, has assembled an all-star cast of guitar greats dubbed *Project G-5 for A Tribute to Wes Montgomery*, the third in a series. The program is a mix of classic Montgomery

compositions, favourite standards that stood out in the guitarist's recorded versions, and a Campbell original, *Wes*. It's unfortunate that Campbell is less known than the luminaries who answered his invitation — Tal Farlow, Herb Ellis, Jimmy Raney and Cal Collins — for he proves to be their equal in skill and creativity. Many of his performances are among the album's highlights, including a moody *Body and Soul*, an energetic *Four on Six* with the always inventive Farlow, and his playing on *Besame Mucho*, which develops from a subtly stated theme to a solo in which he turns up the heat with the pacing of a real master. The Montgomery tunes generally fare the best: there's Raney's tough, bluesy soloing on *West Coast Blues*, and plenty of fireworks between Campbell, Farlow, Ellis and Collins on the concluding *Naptown Blues*.

Despite the list of guitarists who share the marquee, and the solid playing of bassist John Clayton and drummer John Von Ohlen, I'm tempted to say the real star of this date is organist Mel Rhyne, Montgomery's early recording partner, whose laid-back, unadorned playing creates an irresistible groove that never quite takes hold on the half of the album on which he's absent. Happily, because a group of mature artists is assembled here, there's little aping of the Montgomery style as an intended appreciation, only the sort of personal flights of imagination that make *Wes* such an enduring figure. This album is nowhere near as essential as any of the great Montgomery recordings, of course, but it's a pleasure to listen to, and as a showcase for such distinctive and recognizable musical personalities, it's a fitting tribute to one of the greatest of guitarists.

Concord Jazz continues its tradition of recording great guitarists with the aptly titled *Burnin'*, the latest release from Philadelphia's **Jimmy Bruno**. Bruno is a harmonically adventurous, brilliantly virtuosic player, and this CD has many high points to recommend it. Framed by his spectacular soloing on *The Eternal Triangle* and *That's All*, Bruno's wonderful sense of swing animates his own warm *A Rose For Peg* and lovely solo readings of *Love Is Here to Stay* and *Central Park West*. This recording does have its limitations, though, and Bruno's approach — fre-

quently ornamented melodies, lots of unaccompanied introductions, and only a few solos for the fine Philly team of bassist Craig Thomas and drummer Steve Holloway, threatens to become monochromatic after a while. Next time around, and I hope there will be many more, I'd like to hear Bruno give the rhythm section a little more room to stretch out, and I think he'd sound marvellous in tandem with a vocalist. It would also be great to hear him go head-to-head with a horn player, pianist, or, as he has done so beautifully live in Concord's Jazz Guitar Collective with Howard Alden and Frank Vignola, another guitarist.

Nick Brignola and the *Endangered Species*, a quartet apparently from upstate New York, offer a creative approach to improvised music that deserves far greater attention. Brignola has a wonderfully vocal approach on alto, bari, and soprano saxes and clarinet, his playing enlivened by a broad variety of inflections, bends, slurs, overblowing, and speech-like phrases. Guitarist Chuck D'Aloia is an original who, like Brignola, really speaks through his instrument. His playing is often built on tart, bluesy phrases that can quickly burst into extended harmonic essays, and shows his rock influence with a biting, reverb-coloured sound, some well-chosen distortion, and a poetic use of the volume pedal. Drummer David Calarco, perhaps the group's most inventive composer, and bassist Rich Syracuse are both full of feeling, pay plenty of attention to tone colour and dynamics, and move the band through unusual rhythm schemes that grow from a blend of blues, rock, funk and many different strains of jazz. The group's trio of composers share a common lineage in the Shorter/Hancock/Hutcherson school, but their deepest sensitivities are towards each other's personalities.

This band displays the kind of strong collective identity and tight, sympathetic playing that can only come through a great deal of working together, and has developed an originally conceived mix of genres that never wears its eclecticism on its sleeve. This is the kind of exceptional music that the major labels and the jazz press all too often ignore: four skilled instrumentalists, three of whom are tal-

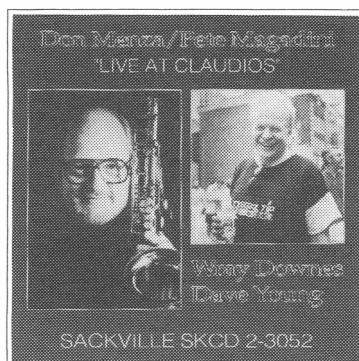
ented composers, always in tune with each other and the mood of a given piece. This is well worth hearing, but may be hard to find, so please note that the band lists its management: Priam Music, 11 Meadowview Dr., Troy, NY, 12180, or call (518)279-3617.

Guitarist **David White's** *All Stories Are True* is a compelling and original collection of music performed by a first-rate ensemble — Tim Armacost on tenor, Valery Ponomarev on trumpet, drummer Victor Jones, and bassist Calvin Hill. The disc is made up solely of White's compositions, which mix odd meters, bop lines, ostinatos, dissonant counterpoint and surprising chord progressions to create an ongoing creative friction that animates each of these intriguing pieces. White's influences are diverse, but he recombines them in a manner that is both uninhibited and lacking in self-consciousness. There are many unusual structural decisions, such as following the dancing, Ornette-like lines that open *Integration* with an expansive drum solo. And there's a very thoughtful use of dynamics, texture, and, with a consideration that seems almost shocking in light of the chops-heavy playing that dominates so many recordings, silence.

Alongside the leader's probing intelligence, Ponomarev's expansive lyricism especially stands out, and the entire ensemble's ability to negotiate White's challenging structures with great musicality is impressive. The players seem to sense their solos as aspects of a broad, spontaneous composition, often integrating elements of a tune's theme into their own individual statements. White also contributes two acoustic guitar pieces, the enigmatic *The Yearning* and the folk-like *All Stories Are True*. Both White's playing and writing reveal an advanced musical intellect at work, one that knows the rules well enough to bend or break them depending upon aesthetic necessity. In every piece, White weaves the music through a latticework of influences, letting it breathe organically in the broad spaces between conventional modes of making music. □

Benjamin Frandzel is a West Coast writer and musician who lives in San Francisco.

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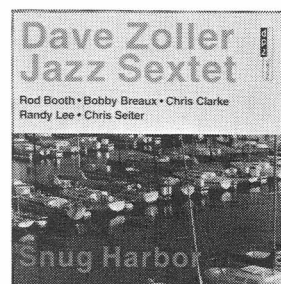
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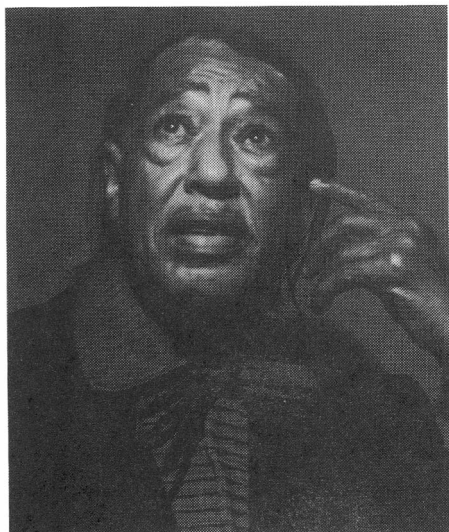
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 PAUL BLEY • Sweet Time • *Justin Time*
 D.D. JACKSON • Peace Song • *Justin Time*
 TEDDY GRACE • 1937-40 • *Timeless*
 RANDY WESTON • Marrakech In
 The Cool Of The Evening • *Verve*

LAURENCE SVIRCHEV
 VANCOUVER • BRITISH COLUMBIA

FRANÇOIS HOULE Trio
 • Schizosphere • *Red Toucan*
 STEVE LACY • Revenue • *Soul Note*
 TALKING PICTURES
 • Ciao Bella • *Red Toucan*
 GREGG BENDIAN
 • Definite Pitch • *Aggregate*
 ALI FARKA TOURE / RY COODER
 • Talking Timbuktu • *Rykodisk*
 RANDY WESTON • Splendid Gnawa Master
 Musicians Of Morocco • *Verve*
 HUGH FRASER • Red And Blue • *Boathouse*
 BEN WEBSTER • Soul Of... • *Verve*
 EARL HINES • Grand Reunion • *Limelight*
 DUKE ELLINGTON • Far East Suite -
 Special Mix • *RCA Bluebird*

SPIKE TAYLOR
 HALIFAX • NOVA SCOTIA

MATTHEW SHIPP Quartet
 • Critical Mass • *213CD*
 RENE LUSSIER • Le Corps
 de L'Ouvrage • *Ambiances Magnetiques*
 PINO MINAFRA • Sudori • *Victo*
 ELLERY ESKELIN • Jazz Trash • *Songlines*
 DAVID S. WARE • Cryptology • *Homestead*
 STEELWOOL TRIO
 • International Front • *Okka Disc*
 STEVE COLEMAN & Metrics
 • Tale Of 3 Cities • *Novus*

DON BYRON
 • Music For Six Musicians • *Elektra/Nonesuch*
 GERRY HEMINGWAY
 • The Marmalade King • *hatART*
 CHARLES GAYLE • Unto I Am • *Victo*

KATE HAMMETT-VAUGHAN
 VANCOUVER • BRITISH COLUMBIA

ABBEY LINCOLN
 • The World Is Falling Down • *Verve*
 ARETHA FRANKLIN
 • Aretha Sings The Blues • *Atlantic*
 DORAN / STUDER / MINTON / BATES /
 ALI • The Music Of Jimi Hendrix • *VeraBra*
 JEANNE LEE / RAN BLAKE
 • The Legendary Duets • *Bluebird*
 JIMMY SCOTT • All The Way • *Warner Bros*
 JONI MITCHELL
 • Turbulent Indigo • *Reprise*
 LATCHO DROM
 • Film Soundtrack • *Caroline Carol*
 ME'SHELL NDEGÉ OCELLO
 • Plantation Lullabies • *Maverick*
 TALKING PICTURES
 • Ciao Bella • *Red Toucan*
 THE ANGSTONES
 • The Hills Are Alive • *Canal*

STEVE VICKERY
 VANCOUVER • BRITISH COLUMBIA

BARONDOWN
 • Raised Pleasure Dot • *Avant*
 RUTHERFORD / WACHSMANN / GUY
 • Iskra 1903 • *Maya*
 EVAN PARKER / BARRY GUY
 • Obliquities • *Maya*
 EVAN PARKER
 • 50th Birthday Concert • *Leo* (2 CDs)
 JOE MORRIS / ROB BROWN
 • Illuminate • *Leo*
 GERRY HEMINGWAY
 • The Marmalade King • *hatART*
 ERROL PARKER Tentet
 • Remembering Billy Strayhorn • *Sahara*
 TALKING PICTURES
 • Ciao Bella • *Red Toucan*
 DEDICATION ORCHESTRA
 • Ixsha • *Ogun*
 BLUE NOTES
 • Legacy/Live In South Afrika 1964 • *Ogun*

UNITED STATES

PHILLIP ATTEBERRY
 TITUSVILLE • PENNSYLVANIA

TONI TENNILE / MATT CATINGUB
 • Things Are Swingin' • *Purebread*
 LUCY ANN POLK
 • Lucky Lucy Ann • *V.S.O.P.*
 TERRI RICHARDS
 • I Cried For You • *Mastermix*
 CHET BAKER
 • The Best Of Chet Baker Sings • *Capitol*

DAVE McKENNA • Easy Street • *Concord*
 NAT KING COLE
 • Just One Of Those Things • *Capitol*
 OSCAR PETERSON • At The Stratford
 Shakespeare Festival • *Verve*
 CHARLIE PARKER • With Strings • *Verve*
 DAVID SILVERMAN
 • I Have Dreamed • *Chase Music Group*
 JOE WILDER
 • Alone With Just My Dreams • *Evening Star*

ELLIOT BRATTON
 BROOKLYN • NEW YORK

KENNY BARRON • Wanton Spirit • *Verve*
 SONNY FORTUNE
 • A Better Understanding • *Blue Note*
 ANDREW HILL • Complete Blue Note
 Sessions, 1963-66 • *Mosaic* (7 CDs)
 LEE MORGAN • Leeway • *Blue Note*
 BHEKI MSELEKU • Timelessness • *Verve*
 NICHOLAS PAYTON
 • From This Moment • *Verve*
 MAX ROACH
 • It's Christmas Again • *Soul Note*
 WAYNE SHORTER
 • The All Seeing Eye • *Blue Note*
 JIMMY SMITH • Damn! • *Verve*
 BEN WEBSTER / HARRY CARNEY
 • Music For Loving • *Verve* (2 CDs)

AARON COHEN • CHICAGO • ILLINOIS

FRED ANDERSON / MARILYN CRISPELL
 / HAMID DRAKE • Destiny • *Okka Disc*
 ANTHONY BRAXTON • Charlie Parker
 Project 1993 • *hatART* (2 CDs)
 DAVE DOUGLAS
 • In Our Lifetime • *New World*
 JOE McPHEE / PAUL PLIMLEY /
 LISLE ELLIS • Sweet Freedom-
 Now What? • *hatART*
 MISHA MENGELBERG Trio
 • Who's Bridge • *Avant*
 LOUIS MOHOLO • Viva-La-Black
 Freedom Tour 1993 • *Ogun*
 EVAN PARKER / BARRY GUY
 • Obliquities • *Maya*
 HENRY THREADGILL
 • Makin' A Move • *Columbia*
 STEELWOOL TRIO
 • International Front • *Okka Disc*
 VARIOUS ARTISTS • Wavelength Infinity:
 A Sun Ra Tribute • *Rastascan*

JOHN CORBETT • CHICAGO • ILLINOIS

GERRY HEMINGWAY Quintet
 • Slamadam • *Random Acoustics*
 MISHA MENGELBERG Trio
 • Who's Bridge • *Avant*
 EVAN PARKER / BARRY GUY /
 PAUL LYTTON
 • Breaths & Heartbeats • *Rastascan*
 EVAN PARKER / BARRY GUY
 • Obliquities • *Maya*

POLWECHSEL

- Polwechsel • *Random Acoustics*

DEREK BAILEY

- Incus Taps • *Organ Of Corti*

ELLERY ESKELIN • Jazz Trash • *Songlines*

JOE McPHEE / PAUL PLIMLEY /

LISLE ELLIS • *Sweet Freedom-*

Now What? • *hatART*

CHRISTIAN MUNTHE

- muntmunt • *Blue Tower*

NEW KLEZMER Trio

- Melt Zonk Rewire • *Tzadik*

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN V

COLUMBIA • SOUTH CAROLINA

AFRO-BLUE BAND

- Impressions • *Milestone*

NANCIE BANKS Orchestra

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DOC CHEATHAM & SAMMY PRICE

- Duets & Solos • *Sackville*

KAHIL EL' ZABAR's Ritual Trio

- Big Cliff • *Delmark*

ART PEPPER • The Complete Village

Vanguard Sessions • *Contemporary (9 CDs)*

KRAKAUER TRIO

- Klezmer Madness • *Tzadik*

RICH HALLEY

- Umatilla Variations • *Nine Winds*

VINNY GOLIA Quintet

- Against The Grain • *Nine Winds*

THE NEW KLEZMER TRIO

- Melt Zonk Rewire • *Tzadik*

THE KLEZMATICS

- Jews With Horns • *Xenophile*

DON BYRON

- Music For Six Musicians • *Elektra/Nonesuch*

JOE GIARDULLO

KINGSTON • NEW YORK

JOE MORRIS

- Symbolic Gestures • *Soul Note*

JOE McPHEE / PAUL PLIMLEY /

LISLE ELLIS • *Sweet Freedom-*

Now What? • *hatART*

STEVE COLEMAN

- Def Trance Beat • *BMG*

JEROME BOURDELLON

- Jerome Bourdellon • *Khokhot*

DON BYRON

- Music For Six Musicians • *Elektra/Nonesuch*

BAIKIDA CARROLL

- Door Of The Cage • *Soul Note*

MINO CINELU / DAVE HOLLAND /

KEVIN EUBANKS • World Trio • *Intuition*

FRED ANDERSON / MARILYN CRISPELL

/ HAMID DRAKE • *Destiny* • *Okka Disk*

MYRA MELFORD Extended Ensemble

- Even The Sounds Shine • *hatART*

MICHEL DONEDA

- Ogooue-Ogoway • *Tranes Europeenes*

ROBERT HICKS

ELMHURST • NEW YORK

ELLERY ESKELIN • Jazz Trash • *Songlines*

HENRY THREADGILL

- Carry The Day • *Columbia*

ORNETTE COLEMAN & Prime Time

- Tone Dialing • *Harmolodic/Verve*

DAVID MURRAY Big Band

- South Of The Border • *DIW*

PHILIP GLASS

- La Belle et la Bete • *Elektra/Nonesuch*

JOSEPH CELLI

- Video Ears Music Eyes • *O.O. Discs*

JAVON JACKSON

- For One Who Knows • *Blue Note*

KENNY GARRETT • TrilogY • Warner Bros

JOE LOVANO • Rush Hour • *Blue Note*

JOHNNY GRIFFIN

- Chicago, New York, Paris • *Verve*

MIKE JOHNSTON

MT. PLEASANT • MICHIGAN

ROY CAMPBELL Pyramid

- Communion • *Silkheart*

ANTHONY BRAXTON • Charlie Parker

Project 1993 • *hatART (2 CDs)*



EVAN PARKER PHOTOGRAPH BY BILL SMITH (JUNE 1995)

GERARD FUTRICK

READING • PENNSYLVANIA

JOHNNY GRIFFIN

- Chicago, New York, Paris • *Verve*

DON BYRON

- Music For Six Musicians • *Elektra/Nonesuch*

FRED ANDERSON / MARILYN CRISPELL

/ HAMID DRAKE • *Destiny* • *Okka Disk*

MISHA MENGELBERG Trio

- Who's Bridge • *Avant*

JAMES CARTER

- The Real Quietstorm • *Atlantic*

8 BOLD SOULS • Ant Farm • *Arabesque*

ERROL PARKER Tentet

- Remembering Billy Strayhorn • *Sahara*

BAIKIDA CARROLL

- Door Of The Cage • *Soul Note*

LISLE ELLIS • Elevations • *Victo*

ANDREW LAMB

- Portrait In The Mist • *Delmark*

ROY HARGROVE / CHRISTIAN

McBRIDE / STEPHEN SCOTT

- Parker's Mood • *Verve*

EARL HINES • Grand Reunion • *Verve*

JOE MORRIS / ROB BROWN Quartet

- Illuminate • *Leo*

CLAUDIO RODITI

- Free Wheelin' • *Reservoir*

SUN RA • Sound Of Joy • *Delmark*

BENJAMIN FRANDZEL

SAN FRANCISCO • CALIFORNIA

MIYA MASAOKA • Compositions &

Improvisations • *Asian Improv*

MADELAINE EASTMAN

- Art Attack • *Mad Kat*

FAMOUDOU DON MOYE

- Jam For Your Life! • *AECO*

JOHN SANTOS & The Machete Ensemble

- The Machete Ensemble • *Xenophile*

JOHN COLTRANE

- Stellar Regions • *Impulse*
- LISLE ELLIS • Elevations • *Victo*
- PETER BROTZMANN / HAMID DRAKE
- Dried Rat Dog • *Okka Disc*
- CHRIS MCGREGOR's • Brotherhood Of Breath Memorial Concert • *ITM*
- KAHIL EL' ZABAR's Ritual Trio
- Big Cliff • *Delmark*
- REGGIE WORKMAN
- Cerebral Caverns • *Postcards*
- STEELWOOL TRIO
- International Front • *Okka Disc*
- MASTER MUSICIANS OF JOUJOUKA
- Joujouka Black Eyes • *Le Coer Du Monde*

DAVE McELFRESH • TEMPE • ARIZONA

- KIP HANRAHAN • All Roads Are Made Of The Flesh • *American Clave*
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- Caravan • *Polydor*
- MARINA LIMA
- A Tug On The Line • *World Pacific*
- SHANE MacGOWAN & The Popes
- The Snake • *Warner Bros*
- VAN MORRISON • Days Like This • *Polydor*
- MILTON NASCIMENTO
- Clube Da Esquina 2 • *World Pacific*
- HENRY THREADGILL
- Makin' A Move • *Columbia*

WILLIAM MINOR

PACIFIC GROVE • CALIFORNIA

JESSICA WILLIAMS / LEROY VINNEGAR

- Encounters • *Jazz Focus*
- WILLEM BREUKER Kollektief
- Overtime/Überstunden • *NM Classics*
- TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI Jazz Orchestra
- Desert Lady/Fantasy • *Columbia*
- CHARLIE HADEN & HANK JONES
- Steal Away • *Verve*
- CHARLIE HUNTER Trio
- Bing, Bing, Bing! • *Blue Note*
- ROVA Saxophone Quartet
- & TERRY RILEY • Imbas Forasnai (Chanting The Light Of Foresight) • *New Albion*
- KARRIN ALLYSON • Azure-Té • *Concord*
- PARTNERS IN TIME (Igor Butman, Louis Scherr, Victor Dvoskin, Tony Martucci)
- Equinost • *Intersound*
- DAVID FRIESEN / CLARK TERRY / BUD SHANK • Three To Get Ready • *ITM Pacific*
- GARY BURTON & MAKOTO OZONE
- Face To Face • *GRP*

DICK NEELD

MENEMSHA • MASSACHUSETTS

- DOTTIE DODGION • Sings • *Arbors*
- EDDIE HAZELL • One For My Baby • *Eden*

DICK HYMAN

- From The Age Of Swing • *Reference*
- KEITH INGHAM New York 9
- Volume 1 & 2 • *Jump*
- REBECCA KILGORE & DAN BARRETT
- I Saw Stars • *Arbors*
- JUNIOR MANCE Trio
- Blue Mance • *Chiaroscuro*
- KEITH NICHOLS
- Henderson Stomp • *Stomp Off*
- ED POLCER All Stars
- Jammin' a la Condon • *Jazzology*
- DICK SUDHALTER
- After Awhile • *Challenge*
- BEN WEBSTER / BUCK CLAYTON
- Ben & Buck • *Sackville*

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- CHRIS POTTER • Pure • *Concord*
- JORGE PARDO Y CHANO DOMINGUEZ
- 10 de Paco • *Milestone*
- JAVON JACKSON
- For One Who Knows • *Blue Note*
- JAMES CARTER
- The Real Quietstorm • *Atlantic*
- IVO PERLMAN • Soccer Land • *Ibeji*
- RACHELLE FERRELL
- First Instrument • *Blue Note*
- BENNY CARTER
- Elegy In Blue • *MusicMasters*

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- FLETCHER HENDERSON
- Tidal Wave • *Decca*
- BEN WEBSTER / BUCK CLAYTON
- Ben & Buck • *Sackville*
- DUKE ELLINGTON • The Far East Suite-Special Mix • *RCA Bluebird*
- BENNY CARTER
- Elegy In Blue • *Music Masters*
- DIZZY GILLESPIE • Complete RCA Victor Recordings • *RCA Bluebird*
- RED NORVO
- Fabulous Jam Session • *Stash*
- OSCAR PETERSON / BENNY CARTER / CLARK TERRY
- The More I See You • *Telarc*

SCOTT YANOW

LOS ANGELES • CALIFORNIA

- JOHN COLTRANE • The Complete Atlantic Recordings • *Rhino/Atlantic* (7 CDs)

JAMES DAPOGNY

- Hot Club Stomp • *Discovery*
- MILES DAVIS • The Complete Live At The Plugged Nickel • *Columbia / Legacy* (8 CDs)
- DUKE ELLINGTON • Complete Capitol Recordings • *Mosaic* (5 CDs)
- JOE LOVANO • Rush Hour • *Blue Note*
- BUELL NEIDLINGER
- Blue Chopsticks • *K2B2*
- ART PEPPER • The Complete Village Vanguard Sessions • *Contemporary* (9 CDs)
- PRIMA MATERIA
- Peace On Earth • *Knitting Factory Works*
- STATESMEN OF JAZZ
- American Federation Of Jazz Societies
- CARLA WHITE • Listen Here • *Evidence*

TEX WYNDDHAM

MENDENHALL • PENNSYLVANIA

- BIG MAMA SUE KRONINGER & FAST EDDIE ERICKSON • A Party Of Two • *Red Hot Mama Productions (cass)*
- GEORGE MASSO & DAN BARRETT
- Let's Be Buddies • *Arbors*
- KEITH INGHAM New York 9
- Volume 1 • *Jump*
- LUCKEY ROBERTS & RALPH SUTTON
- The Circle Recordings • *Solo Art*
- SOUTH MARKET Street Jazz Band
- Strike Up The Band • *DC*
- KENNY DAVERN & DICK WELLSTOOD
- Never In A Million Years • *Challenge*
- EDDIE CONDON's Band
- The Doctor Jazz Series, Vol. 5 • *Storyville*
- WILBER DE PARIS • An Evening At Jimmy Ryan's With The Rampart Street Ramblers • *Jazz Crusade*
- OPHELIA RAGTIME ORCHESTRA & MORTEN GUNNAR LARSEN • Echoes From The Snowball Club • *Piano Mania*
- HOT TOMATOES DANCE ORCHESTRA
- 'S Wonderful • *HT*

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AMSTERDAM • HOLLAND

CHICO O'FARRILL

- Pure Emotion • *Milestone*
- GUUS JANSSEN • Lighter • *Geestgronden*
- JEROME HARRIS • Hidden In Plain View
- New World/Countercurrents
- JOHNNY GRIFFIN
- Chicago, New York, Paris • *Verve*
- GLENN FERRIS • Flesh & Stone • *Enja*
- MARK FELDMAN
- Music For Violin Alone • *Tzadik*
- TERENCE BLANCHARD
- Romantic Defiance • *Columbia*
- STEVE BERESFORD
- Signals For Tea • *Avant*
- RAY ANDERSON / CRAIG HARRIS / GEORGE LEWIS / GARY VALENTE
- Slideride • *hatART*
- ANDREW HILL • Complete Blue Note Sessions, 1963-66 • *Mosaic* (7 CDs)

JAZZ FROM CANADA

A Regular Feature by SCOTT YANOW



The dozen CD's covered in this article help to define the modern mainstream (with a touch of the avant-garde) that is to be found in today's Canadian jazz scene. Actually there is nothing strictly Canadian about most of this music, but on the other hand on a whole these performances certainly hold their own against comparable recordings by Americans and Europeans.

JOHN STETCH

Carpathian Blues
Terra Nova 9007 (65:03)

Pianist John Stetch and his excellent quartet (tenor-saxophonist Seamus Blake, Jesse Murphy or Ugonna Okegwo on bass and Jordi Rossy or Gene Jackson on drums) start off their Terra Nova set (available from Box 455, Sunland, CA, U.S.A. 90141-0455) by jamming on a couple of common chord changes (*Carpathian Blues* and *Phun Toon* which sounds like *The Preacher* with an added bridge), displaying their individual approaches to fairly basic material. As the program progresses the music becomes more original without losing its enthusiasm and passion. Whether it be the parade rhythms of *Inuit Talk*, a lyrical

Stetch-Blake duet on *Ocean Floors*, Cedar Walton's *Bolivia*, the driving *Baba Bakes* or a dissonant *Oleo*, all of the eight selections heard on this well-rounded set are quite enjoyable. Both John Stetch (who displays touches of Herbie Hancock and Chick Corea) and Seamus Blake have managed to find their own voices within the tradition without sounding stale or predictable. It should be very interesting to see where they go from here!

BRIAN BUCHANAN

Avenues
Jazz Focus 002 (56:47)

Philip Barker originally started the Jazz Focus label to record the great American pianist Jessica Williams but fortunately

he has also documented a few impressive Canadian musicians. Brian Buchanan, a talented modern bop-based pianist based in Calgary, is featured in three different settings on his CD. Six songs (four originals, Nat Adderley's *Old Country* and a swinging version of *I'm Getting Sentimental Over You*) have Buchanan leading a quintet with flügelhornist Bob Tildesley and Phil Dwyer on tenor. Two originals and Carlos Ward's particularly memorable *Pettiford Bridge* utilize a quartet with Buchanan and Tildesley and there are also a pair of duets (*My Foolish Heart* and *All Of You*) performed by the pianist and bassist Ken Coffey. In general the music ranges from straight ahead to post bop, all of it chordal based but none of it derivative. Highlights include Tildesley's trum-

JOHN STETCH - BRIAN BUCHANAN - DAVE YOUNG / PHIL DWYER PAUL BLEY / JANE BUNNETT - N.O.W. - ART ELLEFSON - J.M.O.G.

pet solo on *Pettiford Bridge*, some excellent tenor playing by Dwyer on *I'm Getting Sentimental* and a cooking version of *All Of You*. This fine release is available from *Jazz Focus*, 2217 23rd St., S.W. Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2T 5H6.

DAVE YOUNG / PHIL DWYER QUARTET - Fables And Dreams *Justin Time 53-2 (57:03)*

This CD features a quiet quartet that is often filled with inner tension and low-volumed heat. Guitarist Rob Piltch (whose tone is sometimes reminiscent of the late Jimmy Raney's) engages in close interplay with bassist Dave Young while Phil Dwyer contributes lyrical tenor solos along with some moody piano (sometimes sounding a bit like McCoy Tyner) and drummer Michel Lambert is tastefully supportive. Five of the nine songs are group originals while the other pieces (including an abstract *All Of Me* and a rather passionless *Fables Of Faubus*) almost sound like new compositions; the closing tenor-bowed bass duet on *Whims Of Chambers* is most memorable. Even if the music on this session is not all that unique, the well-played set should satisfy most jazz listeners.

PAUL BLEY / JANE BUNNETT Double Time *Justin Time 58-2 (46:43)*

Paul Bley learned long ago what it took many other avant-garde musicians (particularly saxophonists) years to realize, namely that it is not necessary to play free improvisations at a consistently ferocious level; one can improvise freely with lyricism, melodies and an inventive use of space. Throughout his often-fascinating duet set with Jane Bunnett (the latter is mostly on soprano but also plays some of her very individual flute), Bley is very much the leader, setting the atmosphere and the groove (when there is one). Other than *Music Matador* (which was written by Prince Lasha and Sonny Simmons 30 years ago), all of the 11 selections (which range in length from 41 seconds to eight minutes) were composed by Bley and / or Bunnett, much of it improvised on the

spot. Generally the performances are concise enough not to overstay their welcome with the most memorable tracks being Bunnett's scalar (a la Steve Lacy) *B&B On The Rocks*, the ballad *Foolishly*, and the delightfully overcrowded and constantly evolving *Green & Brown*. This is stimulating music that is subtle enough to reward repeated listenings. (These two releases are available from *Justin Time*, 5455 Rue Pare, Suite 101, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H4P 1P7)

NEW ORCHESTRA WORKSHOP - Now You Hear It *Nine Winds NWCD 0151 (66:02)*

Although the title of New Orchestra Workshop makes it sound as if one large ensemble was featured throughout the CD, there are actually six adventurous and sometimes overlapping groups interpreting 11 selections from 1991. Lunar Adventures (during their two numbers) performs some free bop improvising with a steady pulse and highly individual solos by tenor-saxophonist Coat Cooke and the rockish guitarist Ron Samworth; the contributions of bassist Clyde Reed and drummer Gregg Simpson should not be overlooked. Roger Baird & MuseArt matches the leader-drummer with the potent team of pianist Paul Plimley and bassist Lisle Ellis. Plimley (one of Canada's great jazz treasures) uses percussive chords on the floating *Blues Out* a bit like Cecil Taylor circa 1960 while Ellis and Baird follow his every move; this track is the standout of the release.

Altoist Bruce Freedman (supported by bassist Clyde Reed and drummer Buff Allen) is lyrical on two fairly free ballads. Paul Plimley and Clyde Reed follow by engaging in three concise and explorative duets before one of Vancouver's most intriguing groups Garbo's Hat (a trio with singer Kate Hammett-Vaughan, saxophonist Graham Ord and bassist Paul Blaney features Hammett-Vaughan's warm voice on *Ossisil's Topic* and indulges in some odd sound explorations on *New Directions*. This consistently interesting disc concludes with Ord, Blaney and drummer Baird (along with percussionist

Jack Duncan and Joseph Dana on shakuhachi) improvising on the long and wandering *Extra Bar*. All in all, **Now You Hear It** allows listeners to hear some of the more advanced musicians active in Vancouver in 1992. (Available from *Nine Winds*, P.O. Box 1082, Beverly Hills, CA, U.S.A. 90213)

ART ELLEFSON As If To Say *Sackville 2-2030 (64:42)*

Art Ellefson is a tenor-saxophonist with a sound and style on the tenor that is reminiscent of Don Byas, Lucky Thompson and Benny Golson. It took a little while for this listener to get all that interested in his Sackville CD for the first three songs seemed overly dry and lacked strong melodies or much drive. However, Ellefson's enthusiastic soprano on *Motion Notion* seemed to have woken up the session (is it programmed on this release in chronological order?), and from then on plenty of heat is generated.

Ellefson is featured with a pianoless quartet comprised of his son Lee Ellefson on guitar, bassist Russell Botten and drummer Buff Allen. The joyful tenor-guitar duet on *Unframed*, the sly *Up Down Some Blues*, a cooking *Almost Will Be Mine*, the swinging and bluish *Meat Draw Blues* and a five-minute unaccompanied tenor solo (*Mellonova*) are five good reasons to acquire this release despite its slow start.

LABARBERA / SWAINSON / THOMPSON - JMOG *Sackville 2-2031 (56:59)*

Tenor-saxophonist Pat LaBarbera, pianist Don Thompson, bassist Neil Swainson and drummer Joe LaBarbera team up on this Sackville CD for a set of originals (two apiece from the saxophonist and Swainson and three by Thompson). The music is generally modal-based with Pat LaBarbera showing the influence of John Coltrane. In fact, were it not for the sophistication of Swainson's bass playing, much of this session could have taken place in the late 1960's instead of 1992. >>>>>

JMOG stands for Jazz Man On The Go since each of these musicians is talented enough to be constantly in great demand. Despite their conflicting schedules, the quartet meshes together quite well with the impressive interplay between Thompson and Swainson, alert support by Joe LaBarbera and passionate playing from his older brother giving the band a strong identity. The compositions of LaBarbera and Swainson tend to be quite serious so Thompson's *Elk The Mooche* (an abstract *Moose The Mooche*) is a welcome change of pace. Fine music.

BERNIE SENENSKY

Wheel Within A Wheel
Timeless 410 (69:27)

On his *Timeless* release pianist Bernie Senensky teams up with three well-respected American players (Bobby Watson on alto and soprano, bassist Ray Drummond and drummer Marvin 'Smitty' Smith) and he is not shy about using their talents. Watson in particular often steals the show, sounding quite at home with the modern hard boppish repertoire (six Senensky originals, one apiece by the altoist and Drummond, *Soul Eyes* and Herbie Hancock's *Eye Of The Hurricane*). From the opening Tristanoish blues *Bop-Be*, and the hard-driving bossa-nova *Lolito's Theme* to Watson's own *Wheel Within A Wheel* (funny that Senensky should pick the saxophonist's lone composition as his title cut, Bobby Watson is in top form.

Although Bernie Senensky is often heard here in a supporting role, his diverse originals set the moods for the session and his subtle solos are quite enjoyable in their own right. The music is consistently creative and full of enough surprises and strong improvisations to make this an easily recommended set.

ALEX DEAN

Kathryn's Waltz
Unity 139 (74:59)

If any proof were needed that the legacy of the Jazz Messengers is still alive, this

CD could serve as evidence. The muscular tenor Alex Dean and his sextet actually stick (with the lone exception of *Skylark*) exclusively to new originals but the group's playing (particularly on *My Pal Al*, *Marshall Law* and *Nommo*) often fits securely in that style.

Of course that is not a bad feature, particularly since the musicians (which also include trumpeter Mike Malone, pianist Mark Eisenman, bassist Kieran Overs and drummer Barry Elmes), are not copying their predecessors. There is a dash of Coltrane (in the soprano playing of Dean and the modal comping of Eisenman) on the title cut and Stanley Turrentine's cries appear in the versatile Dean's solo during *Sosumi* but in general the players revitalize the tradition within its boundaries; Dean even stretches it a little during the intense *Nommo*. Art Blakey fans will be pleased.

ROBIN SHIER

Suburban Groove
Unity 140 (53:31)

Trumpeter Robin Shier went about recording his hard bop quintet the correct way, after a tour rather than before. Because he wanted to capture the band sounding the way it played in concert, he had the musicians (Patric Caird on tenor, pianist Miles Black, bassist Rick Kilburn and drummer John Nolan) perform the same seven-song set (six of his originals plus *Skylark*) four times and then simply chose the best versions to use on the CD. Although none of the musicians possess strikingly original sounds, they are all strong soloists who can swing without using clichés. Shier's compositions may lack any memorable melodies but they seem to light a fire under the players, resulting in some fiery improvisations.

KIERAN OVERS

Shape Shift
Unity 141 (63:34)

Unlike many of the other CD's covered in this article which rely heavily on group originals, the compositions heard in bass-

ist Kieran Overs' *Unity* release (available from 17 *Gatwick Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4C 1W2*) often have strong melodies and fresh chord changes. This is a particularly strong and well-planned set. The first four selections (highlighted by the opening blues *Mr. B.G.* and the ballad *3/4 Nancy*) feature a quintet with the bassist-leader, trumpeter Kevin Turcotte, the light Tranish tenor of Kirk MacDonald, pianist Brian Dickinson and drummer Bob McLaren. Bill Evans' sensitive *Re: Person I Knew* has Overs and Dickinson in a trio with guitarist Ted Quinlan, *Shape Shift* adds Quinlan to the original quintet and the final three numbers (a couple of picturesque originals along with Harold Mabern's hard-driving *There But For The Grace Of...* features Turcotte, MacDonald, Dickinson, Overs, drummer Jerry Fuller and the reeds of Alex Dean and Pat LaBarbera.

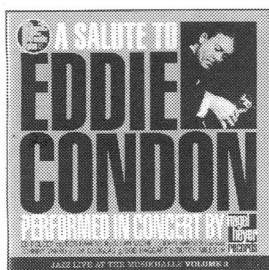
From start to finish, the highly recommended *Shape Shift* keeps up the momentum and tells a full story through its thoughtful improvisations and logical ensembles.

STEFAN BAUER

Coming Home
ZYX Music VIL 1002 (61:36)

Although recorded in Germany for a German label, this recording features the Winnipeg-based marimba and vibraphonist Stefan Bauer. With assistance from tenor-saxophonist Matthias Nadolny (whose odd tone takes a bit of getting used to), bassist Tim Wells and drummer Thomas Alkier, Bauer performs 11 group originals, quirky music that builds on the hard bop idiom by throwing in some unexpected twists. His style (particularly on marimba) recalls Bobby Hutcherson in his early inside/outside days and although the material is mostly pretty moody (with *Jo Ann* and the adventurous *Mondnacht* being highlights); the humorous *Peter's Joke* (which is really *I Got Rhythm* with some Monkish quotes) and a few hyper pieces give the date some variety. An interesting outing. □

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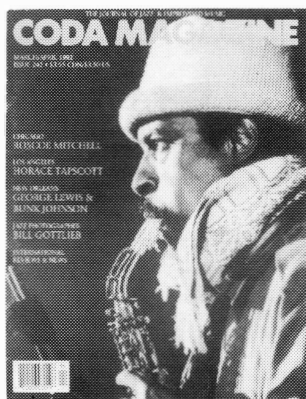
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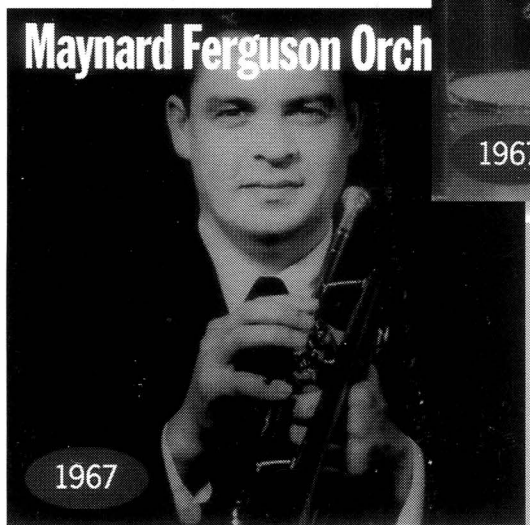
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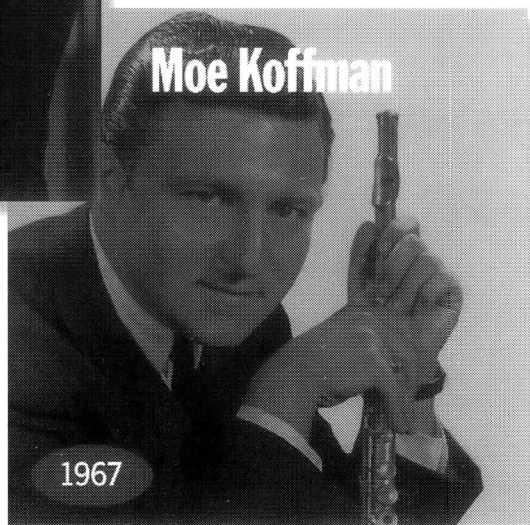
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