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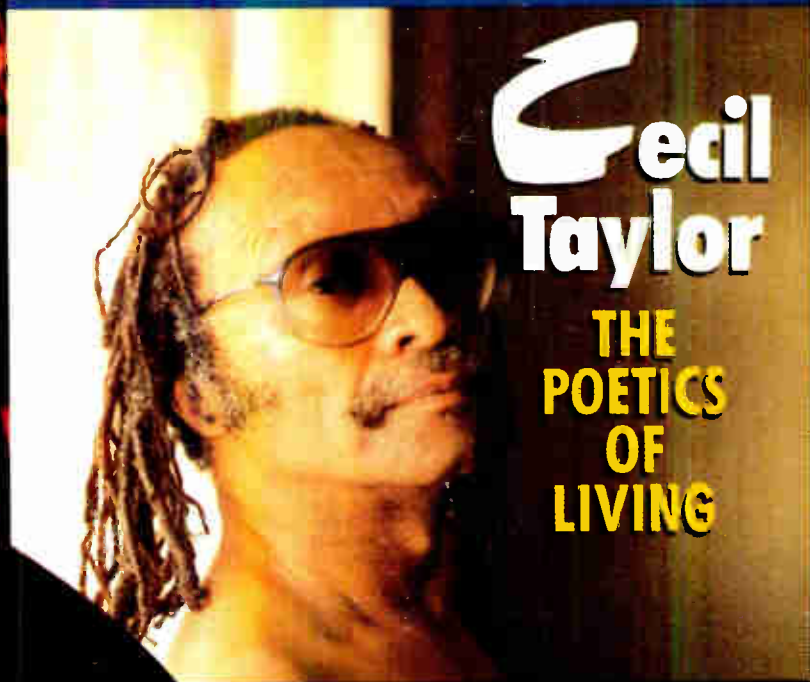


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A NEW FUSION

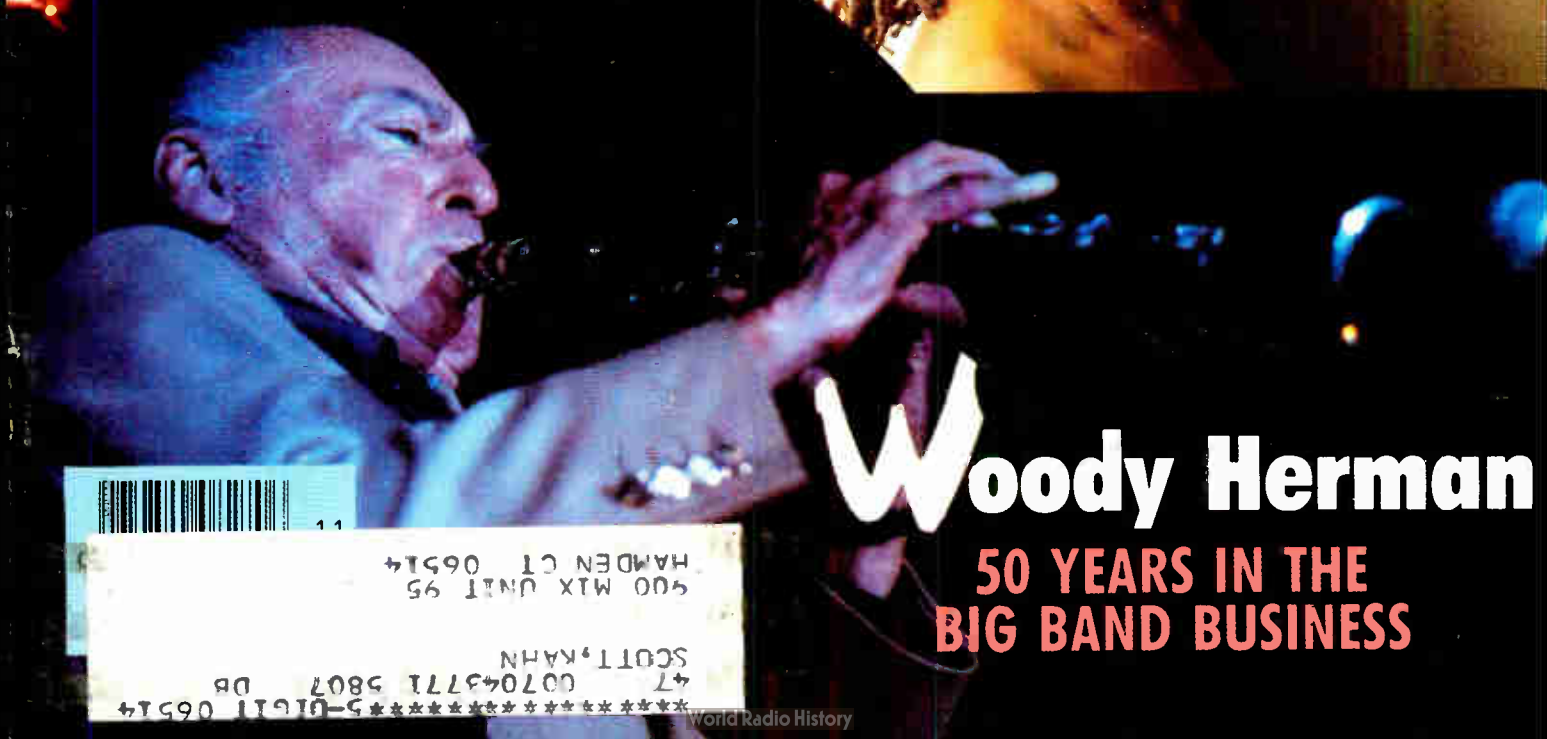
**Pierre Dorge
& The New
Jungle Orchestra**

ONE WORLD, MANY MUSICS



**Cecil
Taylor**

THE
POETICS
OF
LIVING



Woody Herman

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BIG BAND BUSINESS



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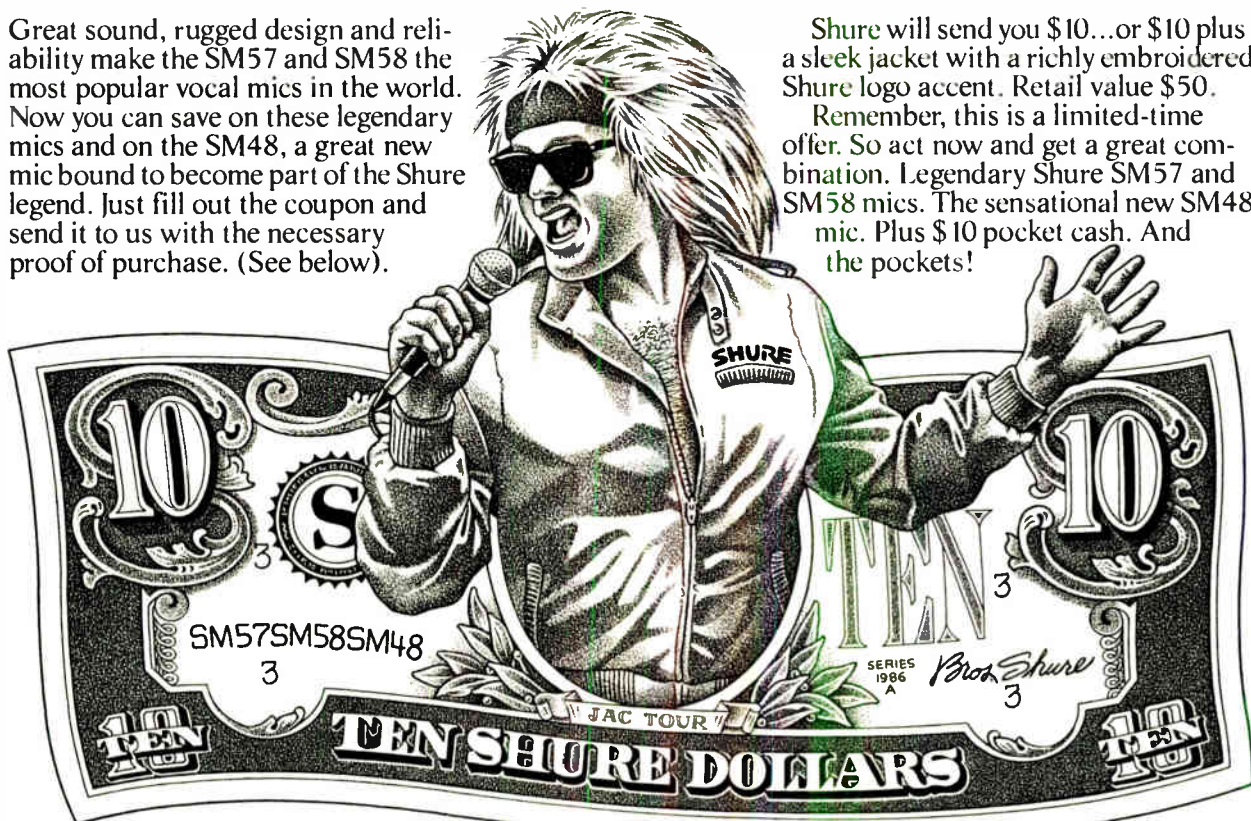
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FEATURES

16 T LAVITZ: A NEW FUSION

Like a phoenix, this eclectic keyboarder has risen from the ashes of the defunct (Dixie) Dregs to create his own blend of electric and acoustic sounds. Bill Milkowski tells how.

18 WOODY HERMAN: 50 YEARS IN THE BIG BAND BUSINESS

The last of the Swing Era bandleaders, Herman survives by his grit, guile, good taste, and sense of humor—and this month marks a milestone in his career, as John McDonough relates.

22 CECIL TAYLOR AND THE POETICS OF LIVING

Few artists interweave their lives and their creative careers with the resonance and intensity of the pathbreaking pianist; Kevin Lynch begins to explore this enigmatic, expressive musician.

26 PIERRE DØRGE AND THE NEW JUNGLE ORCHESTRA: ONE WORLD, MANY MUSICS

An exciting aspect of the '80s has been the European jazz scene—specifically, unique, unpredictable, anything-goes big bands like Willem Breuker's Kollektief, the Vienna Art Orchestra—and Denmark's New Jungle Orchestra. Mitchell Feldman gets the lowdown from their guitarist/leader, Pierre Dørge.

DEPARTMENTS

6 **On The Beat**, by Art Lange.

11 **Chords & Discords**

12 **News**

14 **Riffs**

30 **Record Reviews:** Dirty Dozen Brass Band; Sting; Eddie Harris/Ellis Marsalis; New Nashville; Henry Butler; Cannonball Adderley; Henry Kaiser; Nostalgia In Red Square; Lionel Hampton; Waxing On: Three For The Keys (Monty Alexander, Kenny Barron, Paul Bley, George Cables, Dick Hindman, Keith Jarrett, Oliver Jones, Ronnie Mathews, Mulgrew Miller, Tete Montoliu, Rufus Reid, Jimmy Rowles/Red Mitchell, Hilton Ruiz, Nabil Totah).

46 **CD Reviews**

51 **Blindfold Test:** Dick Johnson, by Fred Bouchard.

54 **Profile:** Peter Levin, by John Diliberto.

59 **Caught:** Northsea & Umbria Jazz Fests, by Michael Bourne; Verona & Ravenna Jazz Fests, by David Keller; Montreal Jazz Fest, by Mark Miller.

64 **Pro Session:** "A Basic Checklist Of MIDI Guitars," by Mark Smith.

66 **Pro Shop**

70 **Auditions:** Student musicians deserving recognition.

Cover photograph of Woody Herman by Mitchell Seidel; Cecil Taylor by Ken Miller.

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T Lavitz



Woody Herman



Cecil Taylor



Pierre Dørge

down beat

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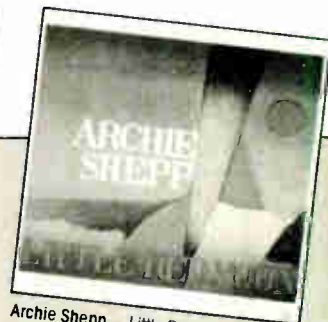
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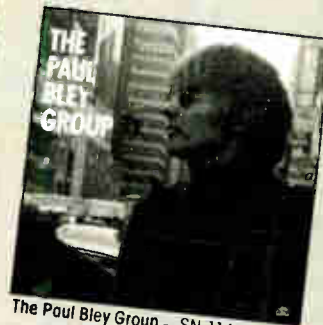
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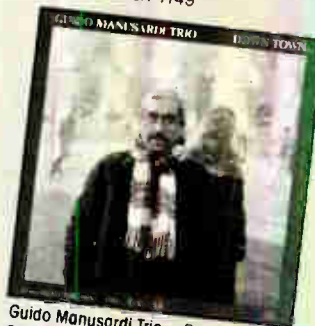
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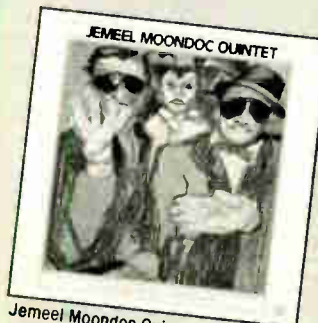
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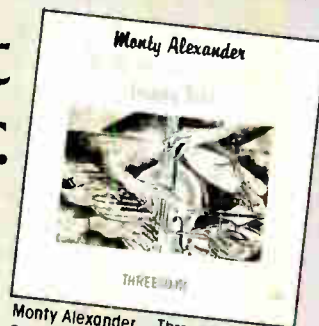


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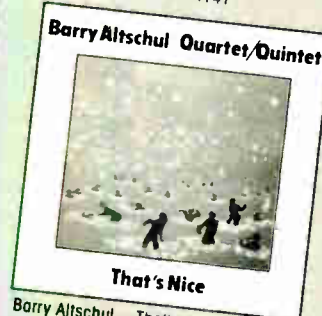


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Jazz Festivals are inherently more than the sum of their musical parts. Though programming does make or break a fest artistically, I suspect most people approach a festival differently than they would hearing the music at a club or concert setting. They attend fests for the total ambience—often a combination of fresh air, informal atmosphere, food, drink, and scenery. And combining a vacation with a first-class jazz fest in a foreign country naturally has its own

special rewards.

I was fortunate enough recently to be invited to attend the Umbria Jazz Fest in Perugia, Italy, by the festival sponsors and Alitalia Airlines, in honor of a double celebration—the fest's 10th birthday, and Alitalia's 40th anniversary. The music was world-class: Sphere, George Benson, Miles Davis, Al Jarreau, Lionel Hampton, and a number of others performed over the weeklong event, though I somewhat regret not being able to hear

those Italian jazz artists whose music never quite reaches the States. Nevertheless, it was the incomparable setting that makes the Umbria Fest unique in my experience.

The fest's home city, Perugia, is a 15th century town built on top of a hill overlooking some of the most gorgeous countryside you'd hope to see. (There are some walls and relics which date back to pre-Roman, Etruscan times. And there are modern hotels with all the conveniences—elegance and antiquity rubbing elbows with each other.) The music took place in a variety of sites, from a soccer stadium for the Benson and Jarreau extravaganzas to tiny cloistered clubs for late-night jamming. (For more detail on the music, see Michael Bourne's review on page 59.) But the fest's high point, for me—and the picture I'll carry with me for a long, long time—is Hamp and big band rollicking on a temporary stage in the middle of a huge cobblestone piazza, surrounded by picturesque old buildings and some 7,000 ecstatic fans, who kept dancing and digging the music despite the drizzle. Even the gargoyles looking down from atop the buildings seemed to be groovin'. *That's* a scene you won't find in New York or Monterey.

It's said that jazz is treated with more respect and more adulation overseas than in America, its birthplace. The European fans that I encountered certainly were enthusiastic and knowledgeable and appreciative—and vociferous about their musical opinions, but who ain't?

I'll admit, I'm prejudiced in favor of our own Chicago Jazz Festival—five days of free concerts in a large green park flanked by the lakefront and Chicago's great skyline—but I must say that the Umbria Fest is unlike anything I've ever experienced elsewhere. Thinking back, there's the Theatre Morlacchi, like a jewel-box version of what I suppose La Scala to look like, and the breathtaking medieval cathedrals, and the narrow curving sidestreets, and the curbside cafes, where with a Campari in hand you can laze away a day watching the fascinating parade of humanity. And the food. . . . db

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World Radio History

Five-star review

Having been "fried" a few times in my career by writers who have predetermined ideas about their subjects, I would like to compliment you and thank you for your choice of Burt Korall to do the article about me in the September 1986 issue of *down beat*. Burt not only "told it like I said it," but he also did a lot of research—uncovering things that even I had forgotten. Five stars for Burt as a writer and five stars to *down beat* for choosing him.

Bud Shank

Port Townsend, WA

TDWR thanks

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the *down beat* critics for voting me to the Baritone Sax/TDWR category of the recent Critic's Poll. I must surmise that the votes are as a result of hearing my debut recording *Impasse* released last year on Cadence Records (CJR1023). This is especially gratifying considering that *db* did not review the album. Hopefully, you critics will continue to seek out the best in jazz, and we'll see some new names in future polls, especially in categories such as Baritone Sax, where many of the same names appear in the Established and the TDWR categories.

I realize that with record distribution being what it is, many *db* readers do not have easy access to the latest jazz records, but we must, as jazz listeners and students of this music, continue to seek out the many talented and creative improvising artists who are often overlooked in favor of more heavily promoted musicians.

Glenn Wilson

New York City

Bird lives

I'm a new subscriber, and while thumbing through the August '86 issue of *db* I came upon some quotes from Bill Laswell that shocked me. I'm living proof that *younger* people do listen to jazz and do consider Charlie Parker music! I don't know how he "knows" young people don't love or want to know about jazz.

I'm 17 years old, and I've known jazz since I was about six because of my father's love of the music. But it wasn't until recently that I rediscovered it; pop music just became too boring, and now I eat, drink, and sleep jazz. We should all thank cats like Wynton Marsalis, who are letting people—including young people—know what jazz is really about.

David Ross

Miami, FL

Woody tribute

I know that most of you folks are young, but ye gods, I'm sure you realize the

contribution Woody Herman has made to jazz the past 50 years. Don't you agree that on this his 50th anniversary year as a bandleader there should be a feature on him? What other bandleader has had as many famous musicians play for him and as many talented composers and arrangers write for his band? In addition, it would be hard to find a more loved human being. Ask any of the lads who have played for him.

While I am writing may I compliment two of your writers? They are John McDonough, who is of my generation (nearly) and has some respect for the past, and Owen Cordle, who we are also blessed with on the *Raleigh News And Observer* down here.

Ed Mulford

Sanford, NC

We agree—and you're in for a treat, as McDonough's the man we have handling Woody; see page 18.

—Ed.

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Yamaha brings out stars for Chicago retailer



CHICAGO—A local music retail chain, Sound Post, recently held a special concert in conjunction with Yamaha International Corp. to celebrate the opening of its newest location. The concert was noteworthy because it brought together a number of GRP recording artists for a one-time-only perform-

ance. Label founder and keyboardist Dave Grusin joined bassist Nathan East and guitarist Lee Ritenour (both pictured above), saxophonist Tom Scott, drummer Alex Acuña, and percussionist Paulinho da Costa for an inspired evening of contemporary fusion at Chicago's Park West. The en-

grossed audience of nearly 1,000 (most of whom were musicians, since tickets were only available from Sound Post) responded enthusiastically to the set, which featured tunes from each members' recent or upcoming LPs. Commenting on the show afterward, saxophonist Scott claimed that the on-stage enthusiasm was high as well. "We don't get a chance to perform together very often, so when we do we each feel particularly motivated because of the mutual respect we have for each others' playing. It makes for some great music."

Sound Post owner Fritz Tasch was also pleased with the concert and was especially grateful to his co-sponsor. "Yamaha put a great deal of effort into organizing the concert, and without their capability and influence, we wouldn't have been able to put together such an incredible group of musicians. I'm really pleased that things turned out as well as they did."

—bob o'donnell

Jazz for Life

ANN ARBOR—While crowds clogged Ann Arbor's Art Fair late this summer, looking for last day bargains, thousands relaxed on the grassy hills of the city's West Park, listening to the Count Basie Orchestra under the direction of tenor saxophonist Frank Foster. The free concert was sponsored by the city of Ann Arbor, Eastern Michigan University's WEMU-FM, and the *Ann Arbor News*.

The Basie Orchestra concert was the most recent of a number of events staged in the area for Jazz for Life, a student-run non-profit organization using jazz to raise funds for underprivileged children. The first benefit, in April, featured the Dizzy Gillespie Quintet in a morning concert attended by elementary, high school, and university students. Jazz for Life can be reached at 3909 Michigan Union, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109, (313) 763-4751.

—david wild

POTPOURRI

"Break a leg": after falling and fracturing his right foot halfway through a recent two-hour performance in Saugerties, NY, sax great **Sonny Rollins** finished out the set from right where he fell, while lying on his back; Rollins reportedly completed the performance for fear of cheating his audience (which mistakenly assumed the prone performer was clowning around), concluding the show with a several-song encore ending with *I'll Be Seeing You* . . . rock notes: **Marshall Crenshaw**, **T-Bone Burnett**, **Darlene Love**, and Joe Jackson guitarist **Vinnie Zumo** are all featured on singer **Marti Jones'** second album for A&M; Journey has finally settled on top-notch sessionist **Mike Baird** as its replacement for drummer **Steve Smith**, who left the band to join jazzers **Steps Ahead**; and the Eurhythmics **Dave Stewart** is said to be busy setting to music some "highly surrealistic" lyrics penned by actor **Jack Nicholson** . . . Ellingtonia: the Essence of Jazz is presenting a series of 16 one-hour documentaries on the genius of **Duke Ellington**, currently airing via satellite from Atlanta (through the Southern Educational Communications Association in Columbia, SC); stamp collectors should note that Lyon's Den Cachet is offering a cachet designed for the U.S. Duke Ellington postal stamp, available for \$1.50 each (order c/o Rich

Hoffman, 33 Riverview Dr., Norwalk, CT 06850) . . . apologies to **John Scher** and **Muhammad Ali**, whose names were misspelled in our Sept. news story on the Amnesty Int'l concert . . . Nov. happenings: the 25th anniversary of the **Percussive Arts Society** will be celebrated 11/3-8, when 2,000 percussionists are expected to converge on the nation's capital (contact PASIC '86, Box 697, 214 W. Main, Urbana, IL 61801, 217/367-4098); the **Big Horn Jazz Festival** runs 11/7-9 in Rosemont, IL (tickets from Big Horn Jazz Festival, 190 W. 15th St., Chicago Heights, IL 60411, 312/755-8312); Randy Brecker, Art Blakey, Jon Faddis, Joe Sample, Donald Byrd, and John Scofield head an all-star lineup at the 16th annual **U. of Pittsburgh Jazz Seminar and Concert**, 10/29-11/1 (M-30 Wm. Pitt Union, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, 412/624-3344) . . . Maynard contest: trumpeters nine to 22 have until 12/31 to win a personally engraved Holton ST-550 MF Admiral B trumpet by writing 50 words or less on what they like most about the instrument; the Grand Prize winner will also receive an expense-paid trip to a rehearsal and concert performance with **Maynard Ferguson**, plus an hour-long session with MF band soloist Alan Wise and an official tour jacket and t-shirt (contest rules available at participating G. Leblanc Corp.

dealers) . . . **Totally Wired**: Artists in *Electronic Sound* returns to the airwaves this fall and winter with a lineup of 13 weekly radio shows, to be aired on over 70 NPR stations; produced by db contributor **John Diliberto** and **Kimberly Haas**, the shows will focus on Mark Isham, Philip Glass, Patrick O'Hearn/Mikel Rouse, Tangerine Dream, Warren Cann/Bill Bruford, Frank Zappa, et al . . . Beave jammin': MCA's **Cabo Frio** have wrapped up a jazzed-up arrangement of the show's original theme song, debuted 9/8 on WTTT's *The New Leave It To Beaver*, starring Jerry Mathers and other original cast members; the Beaver gig marked a bizarre beginning for the band's new saxist, Kenny Blake, who joined his new mates for 20 straight hours of studio work for the show just 12 hours after his first Cabo Frio gig . . . soulful sounds: Philadelphia's Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum is in the midst of a six-month run of "Sounds of the City: African American Music in Philadelphia;" the exhibition, which opened 9/14, tells how the city helped nurture such home-grown talents as Marian Anderson, Rosetta Tharpe, Clara Ward, the Dixie Hummingbirds, John Coltrane, Philly Joe Jones, the Heath Brothers, Lee Morgan, Patti LaBelle, Teddy Pendergrass, et al . . . jazz ambassadors: **Dr. Billy Taylor** and **Grover Washington Jr.** were among a 220-member of distinguished Americans representing the U.S.

at the recent "Chatauqua Town Meeting on U.S.-Soviet Relations" in Riga, Latvia; others on hand included Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey and former U.N. Ambassador Jeanne J. Kirkpatrick . . . jazz grants: the National Endowment for the Arts has granted \$15,000 to support the production of *Longue Tongues*, an historical jazz performance piece by composer/saxist **Julius Hemphill** and writers **W. A. Brower** and **Greg Tate**; the NEA also awarded \$10,000 to composer **Anthony Braxton** and the interdisciplinary performance group **THE** for a new work to premiere in the 1986/87 season at the U. of California . . . dated jukeboxes: **Zephyr Press** has put out a 1987 calendar featuring color photos of antique jukeboxes dated from 1937-48; the 10 x 13-inch calendar sells for \$8.95, from PO Box 3066, Berkeley, CA 94703 . . . jazz party: Dutch millionaire and jazz enthusiast Hans Loonstijn recently hosted the first of what he says will be an annual **Jazz Inn Party** at the Huis Ter Duin hotel in Noordwijk, Holland; among those performing were Clark Terry, Buddy Tate, Scott Hamilton, Harry Edison, Slide Hampton, Monty Alexander, Roland Hanna, Cedar Walton, Frank Foster, Billy Higgins, Ed Thigpen, Milt Jackson, and the Tribute Big Band, a 17-piece aggregation of young Dutch amateurs that performed Count Basie charts under the direction of John Clayton . . .



HOW BLUE CAN YOU GET?: Lowell Fulson, Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson, and Margie Evans (l-r) shared the Shipdeck Stage at Harbourfront in Toronto during the city's first blues festival in a dozen years. Weather proved a problem throughout the free three-day event, which also featured Bobby Bland (in a performance curtailed by rain), Otis Rush, Jimmy Johnson, Robert Junior Lockwood, Rory Block, and such local favorites as Paul James, the Downchild Blues Band, and Jack DeKeyser.

Teddy Wilson, 1912-86



NEW YORK—Teddy Wilson, whose piano defined perfection and was the dominant keyboard influence from the middle '30s to the ascendancy of Bud Powell, died July 31 in his Connecticut home after a three-year battle against cancer. He was 73.

Among the great piano triumvirate of the Swing Era—Wilson, Art Tatum, and Earl Hines—Wilson's influence reached the farthest. The balance and symmetry of his work became the model for those who found Hines harsh and sharp at the edges and Tatum simply beyond their grasp. Wilson's style began at the point when stride piano was fading. He kept the contrapuntal relationship between the right and left hand, but softened the rhythm function and reduced the melodic density of the right hand to pearl-like single-note lines punctuated by subtle octaves. Wilson's style, Leonard Feather once wrote, was "the first step toward the bop era's ultimate rejection of . . . the left hand for steady rhythm and concentration on the right hand for horn-like improvisation." Examples of his early work are the 1933 Benny Carter

sessions (Prestige 7643) and two 1937 recordings: *Don't Blame Me* (Smithsonian 13708) and, with Billie Holiday, *I'll Never Be The Same*.

Wilson was born in Austin, Texas, November 24, 1912. In the late '20s he began his career in various Midwest bands, finally landing in Chicago, where he substituted for Earl Hines occasionally at the Grand Terrace and made his first records with Louis Armstrong (*Basin Street Blues*, for RCA Victor). In 1933, John Hammond arranged for him to come to New York and join Benny Carter's first band. It was also Hammond who first brought Wilson together with Billie Holiday for the great small band sessions of 1935-39 that constitute the essence of Holiday's greatest work.

But the key partnership of Wilson's career was the one with Benny Goodman. He joined Goodman in 1936 after playing a concert with the clarinetist and Gene Krupa in Chicago's Congress Hotel. During the next three years, Wilson broke the color line on tours, network radio, and in the movies by performing on an equal footing with Goodman in the trios,

Thad Jones, 1923-86



COPENHAGEN—Thad Jones, the cornetist and composer/arranger best-known for co-fronting the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra for 13 years and later leading the Count Basie Orchestra for a year starting in 1985, died here of prostate cancer on August 20. He was 63.

Born March 28, 1923, in the Detroit suburb of Pontiac, Jones was the younger brother of pianist Hank Jones and the elder brother of drummer Elvin Jones. Jones' professional career began in 1939 with the 10-piece Arcadia Club Band, which featured his brother Hank on piano and was conducted by his Uncle William. He began touring with Connie Connell's big band in 1941, and in 1948 assumed leadership of his own short-lived big band. Jones spent the early '50s working in a Detroit-based quintet with his brother Elvin and pianist Tommy Flanagan, until 1954, when he was hired by Count Basie, thus beginning a nine-year stretch as a key member of the Basie Orchestra.

Jones left Basie in 1963, spending the next two years playing in bands led by George Russell and Gerry Mulligan, composing for Basie's and Harry James' big bands, and launching a quintet with baritone saxophonist Pepper Adams. In 1965, Jones and drummer Mel Lewis put together their all-star big band of top New York jazzmen, the Jones/Lewis Orchestra going on to record a dozen albums, win a total of 11 **db** Readers and Critics polls, and begin its renowned string of weekly Monday night performances at the

quartets, and later sextets. He left Goodman in 1939 to form his own band, which was not financially successful. Then came several years at Cafe Society in New York and a return to Goodman for the 1944-45 sextet with Red Norvo. From the '50s on he divided his time between faculty duties at Juilliard, touring with his trio, and frequent recording. There were also numerous reunions with Goodman on special occasions

Village Vanguard, which Lewis has continued since Jones' 1978 departure. Jones moved to Copenhagen on leaving Lewis, where he spent the next several years directing the Danish Radio Orchestra, teaching jazz at the Royal Conservatory, and gigging and recording in Europe. He returned stateside in February 1985 to assume leadership of the Count Basie Orchestra, becoming the first designated frontman for the legendary big band since its namesake's death the previous year; Jones resigned his Basie post this past spring due to health and contractual problems, returning to Copenhagen with his Danish wife and their young son.

Though his reputation was built chiefly through his work as composer/arranger and big band leader, Jones was an outstanding soloist on cornet and flugelhorn (preferring those instruments to trumpet). Charles Mingus called him the best trumpeter he'd ever heard in the early '50s, and Miles Davis once said, "I'd rather hear Thad Jones miss a note than hear Freddie Hubbard make 12." He was also a strong advocate of the music, explaining in **db** (Aug. '85): "Jazz, to me, has been the most vital and progressive music of the last 200 years. A jazz musician of the caliber of a Freddie Hubbard or a Miles Davis can create more in two minutes, spontaneously, than some orchestras can in 25 minutes. That's a marvelous gift that shouldn't be allowed to die or to wither. It should be nourished—especially in America, where jazz was really born." —bill beutler

such as a Russian tour in 1962 and the 1980 Aurex Jazz Festival in Japan (both produced LPs). Wilson's last television appearance was on Goodman's **WNET/PBS** special, *Let's Dance*, taped in October 1985 and aired the following March. On record, too, he came full circle at the end. His final album, *Swing Reunion*, was with Benny Carter and was released recently by the Book-of-the-Month Club. —john mcdonough

Phil Alvin

DOWNEY, CA—"I didn't do this for nostalgic reasons," asserts Phil Alvin of his first solo effort outside the Blasters, *Unsung Stories* (Warner Bros./Slash 25481-1), an LP thick with jive and downhome blues. "I have thousands of old 78s, but I essentially bought them because I've always performed and they provided material. In order to view American music you have to do it through records—it's *that* record, you get up to play *that* song, which is an emotional template. That's how I listen to music, not in continuity: I get up to change *each record*—which you hear on my record, the way the styles are all mixed up."

He's been mixing things up musically since he started playing clubs at 15 and found that "certain material—Hank Williams, Chuck Berry, Jimmy Reed, Jerry Lee Lewis—would go over *anywhere*: Chicano bars, oldies bars, country & western bars. To call the music by categories wasn't legal," he laughs. Buying first reissue LPs, then 78s, he discovered more and more material for his bands to play, and also discovered some of the paths along which American music evolved. "The Blasters' song makes that point—what we play is *American Music*, all kinds," he declares. While that's certainly true, the Blasters kept more within the confines of '40s and '50s idioms—r&b, jump blues, shuffles, rockabilly.

On *Unsung Stories* Phil stretches out over those bounds, calling on Sun Ra and the Dirty



ANN SUMMA

Dozen Brass Band for backing on half the LP's tracks, the remainder being lesser-known blues for which he mostly accompanies himself on his 1948 acoustic Epiphone. "I love *hot jazz* from the late '20s and early '30s," he enthuses, "people like Cliff Jackson and the Crazy Cats, Mills' Blue Rhythm Band, the Jimmie Lunceford Orchestra,

Louis Armstrong. When I first saw the Dirty Dozen Brass Band and Sun Ra, I saw jazz that talked to people the way the jazz of that period did. No matter what they're playing, no matter how heady it gets, they're playing it for *you*."

And so came about his collaboration with Sun Ra: "We did all the preliminary work on the telephone; then when we got together at Variety Studios in New York, we had 18 hours, during which he got up *one* time—to go to the bathroom [laughs]. They were amazing; he just sat at the piano and charted the stuff, and with 15 horns, if *one* guy played a wrong note he knew exactly who it was." You can hear the results on *The Ballad Of Smokey Joe*, a Cab Calloway spinoff where Sun Ra concocted mutant Fletcher Henderson segues to pastiche the three-song medley together, and on *Brother, Can You Spare A Dime*, shot through with boozy horns wandering brokenly. Or take the DDB's exuberant reading of *Someone Stole Gabriel's Horn*: "All I'd given them was this old Bing Crosby record, figuring that they'd do it just like the Dirty Dozen Brass Band—I could hear the whole thing, y'know. So then I walked into the studio and heard them playing *exactly* like the record and said, 'Oh no, not *that* [laughs], I wanted it to be like *you*.'"

Which is how Phil Alvin reformulates these old tunes—in his own and his time's image. "If you're not gonna add something, you're just doing nostalgia," he says. He certainly can't be accused of that.

—gene santoro

Bob Stone

CHICAGO—A mainstay on the city's vibrant jazz scene, the Bob Stone Big Band belongs to the ever-growing number of contemporary big bands now surfacing in various cities. The Dallas Jazz Orchestra, Cincinnati's Blue Wisp Big Band, Matt Catingub's band on the West Coast, and Chicago's Jazz Members Big Band are a few of the other local units involved in a movement to return big band jazz to the national popularity it once enjoyed. And nobody would welcome that revival more than Bob Stone, a 36-year-old drummer with many miles of big band travel to his credit.

Stone came up in Detroit where he studied music at Cass Tech during the '60s. After touring with a show band in 1967, the drummer returned home and spent a year-and-a-half as a staff musician at Motown Records. From there he proceeded to travel with the ghost bands of Jimmy Dorsey and Glenn Miller while also appearing with Woody Herman, Buddy DeFranco, and Tony Bennett. After years of non-stop touring, he finally reached the end of the road after arriving and settling in Chicago in 1973. However, it proved to be anything but a dead end.

Acting on a desire to be a big band leader, Stone went about assembling his own group piece by piece. It took a while, as he explains. "I wanted to form a straightahead band in the vein of the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra. I started the band in 1975, and for the longest time it was just



STEVEN GROSS

a rehearsal group with guys coming out to have a good time but not really caring about the music. I wanted to get serious about it for years but couldn't find 16 other people who felt the same way. Then, one by one I started finding dedicated people, and finally about two years ago I found I had put the right people in the right chairs."

In Stone's 17-piece band, the right formula appears to be a blend of experience and youth. The group's arrangers range in age from 66-year-old Brad Morey to 28-year-old tenorman Mike Bendkowski. Scanning the sections, one finds venerable veterans like trumpeter Art Hoyle and bassist Jim Atlas playing alongside relative

newcomers like trombonist Brian Jacoby and tenorman Tony Vacca. In two years time the band has landed a steady gig at Chicago's Moosehead Bar & Grill, backed Lionel Hampton, and produced a debut album entitled *Breakin' Out* (Fantasia 1001).

In spite of this recent success, Stone feels somewhat haunted by the ghost bands for whom he once worked. "As long as these ghost bands are around, it will be difficult for me to get more exposure for the band. How can I compete for major booking with the Glenn Miller or Count Basie Bands? Stan Kenton had the right idea in saying, 'When I die, the band dies.'"

All ghost-busting aside, Stone maintains a positive outlook toward his band's future. Through regular Chicago gigs, the group has amassed a loyal local following while also receiving invitations for upcoming concerts in Las Vegas and Frankfurt, West Germany. Getting the band on the road seems to be one of Stone's major goals. "It's time to get the candle out from under the basket. I would like to take the band out on the road 20 weeks each year and play concerts,

festivals, and most importantly, clinics."

And to hear him talk, one senses that Stone is intent on carrying out his self-made destiny regardless of any odds stacked against it. "I love when people tell me I can't do it, that I can't make this band a success. From the time I was 11 years old and saw Basie's band, I decided that's what I wanted to do. Maybe I was born in the wrong era, but I'm going to go for it. And there are 16 guys pulling with me."

—tom nuccio

Howe & Hackett

MIAMI—They are both firmly implanted in rock's history books: Steve Howe, the legend from Yes whose on-stage arsenal often included up to a dozen different guitars, and Steve Hackett from Genesis, whose angular ghost-like playing often sounded like it came from another world. After Yes folded in 1980, Howe moved on to form the supergroup Asia with John Wetton. Meanwhile, Hackett had been developing an adventurous solo career, daring to push instrumental material to a pop audience.

Last year, the two English guitarists joined forces to pursue songwriting together. This union begat GTR, and GTR in turn begat *When The Heart Rules The Mind*, which begat a return to the international limelight for both Steves. But before all this begat-ing began, there was a deeply rooted love for both jazz and classical music that still holds true after some two decades in the business.

"There are plenty of times when Yes had shades of jazz in their music," Howe begins. "Bill Bruford, our drummer, was a jazz nut. So between the two of us, jazz became another piece of the musical puzzle. I remember one of my secret little goals was to plug in a Gibson L-5 direct, and get at least *one* jazzy bit in on every Yes album." He grins, "I think I succeeded."

Howe continues, "I remember when I was a kid, 17 or so, and I saw Wes Montgomery at Ronnie Scott's club in London. This guy comes out smiling, he sits down, and suddenly he's playing the way you'd expect *God* to play—and I was gasping for air—he was *incredible*. And so, I

decided that I *had* to see certain guitarists. It took a bit of finding, but I saw Joe Pass, Kenny Burrell, Chet Atkins, Les Paul—and these were the guys that drew me more and more into jazz. Now there are certain jazz classics that you've just *got* to have; Miles Davis' *Sketches Of Spain*, and of course Tal Farlow's stuff—if you haven't heard Tal, then you really haven't heard the guitar. And when Jimmy Bryant and Speedy West got together—this was in the '50s, but it's *still* knocking me out today!"

If Steve Howe is a "guitarist soldier of fortune," then his associate, Steve Hackett could be "Mr. romance of the guitar." Hackett is a staunch devotee of the classical guitar, and his new solo release *Bay Of Kings* is one of the most enjoyable acoustic LP's I've heard. His nylon six-string speaks of passion, mystery, and romance.

"I have a true love for this kind of music," Hackett states. "Now, I've always kept an eye on my contemporaries—[Robert] Fripp and so on—but a lot of them have avoided developing the acoustic instrument. So I feel like it's almost my calling as a guitarist to explore that end of it. Most people learn classical guitar the same way a five-year-old is taught violin—tremendous discipline—but the important factor to me is the *feeling* behind the writing. You've got to be in this business for the love of music, and not for the love of the business itself." A slow grin creeps up on Hackett's face, "Now that I'm famous again this week [*laughs*], it seems that I'll finally be getting my solo albums heard again in America. I was beginning to think that the GTR song *Here I Wait* was becoming more of a reality than a metaphor."

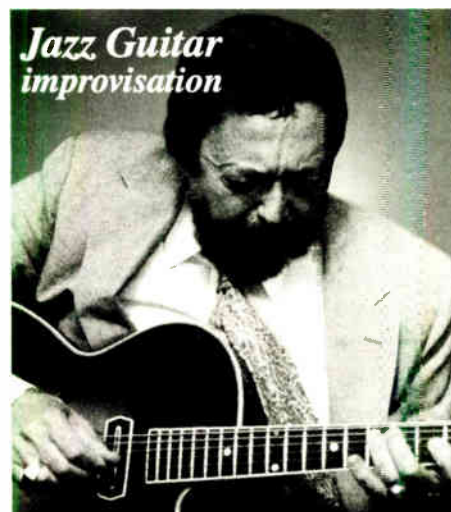
—norman bedford



Steve Howe



Steve Hackett



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By Bill Milkowski



"I'm not going to try and compete with McCoy Tyner."

T. Lavitz

A New Fusion

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... It's a different kind of fusion sound. ... "

a

s a member of the now-defunct (néé Dixie) Dregs, T. Lavitz admits that he felt dwarfed compositionally next to guitarist, bandleader, and principal composer Steve Morse. "That was definitely Steve's group. Everybody had a job, and his was writing the music," says T (no period, please). "I was writing some music then, but I wasn't seriously pursuing it. Steve was coming up with such good tunes, I didn't even present my music. I just put my ego aside."

Now the keyboardist is stepping out on his own. His first solo album, *Storytime*, on the Passport Jazz label, features eight T originals, including one collaboration with his ex-boss Morse. It has a decidedly different feel than Dregs music, as Lavitz explains.

"I don't want to try to compete with the Dregs. I'd like to break away from that, and this album is a good step because I'm not relying on a guitar lead. I really don't want to compete with the rock-heavy edge that we had. I don't want to get into this kind of complicated techno-rock stuff. That was the Dregs. And Steve has picked up where he left off with that, playing more guitar-oriented things on his solo albums and writing the same type of difficult music. Sort of like electric chamber music. Which is cool. I play on Steve's records and I listen to them and I think they're incredible. But what I'm trying to do is a little bit different—the Dregs meet David Sanborn, or something."

It's fusion-jazz without the pyrotechnics. A bit earthier than Chick Corea's Elektric Band but not nearly as earthy as Keith Jarrett's acoustic improvisations. The emphasis here is on melody and feel. And even though such technically adept players as bassist Jeff Berlin, drummer Rod Morgenstein (formerly of the Dregs), and bassist Steve Tischer appear on the album, it's far from being just another vehicle for flaunting chops.

"I really want people to hear the compositions," says T. "People who aren't into long, drawn-out solos will like this album because there aren't but one or two on the whole record. I'm pushing the compositional aspect because the older I get the more I realize that what people are drawn to—everyone from young kids to oldsters—is melody. And if you've got strong melodies, there's something to remember and they're gonna like it."

He's quick to add that *Storytime* is definitely *not* "hot tub jazz. Sure, people come home from a hard day and they want to be soothed. That's what has created a market for all this so-called New Age stuff that's popped up in the past couple of years. There's too many people doing it now, and I'm trying to create my own voice. Plus, I pride myself in having some technique. I mean, I can play. And from what I've heard, there's really no playing at all on that New Age stuff."

It's somehow ironic that a guy who never set out to be a jazz musician winds up on a label that flaunts that very word in its title. Yes, T can swing and make the changes, but he wasn't born gifted. He had to work hard at it. "I didn't know much about jazz when I walked into the University of Miami after graduating from the Interlochen Arts Academy, where the emphasis was on classical. I actually played sax in the wind ensemble at Interlochen, and on my own time I listened to groups like Emerson, Lake & Palmer. I was your basic long-haired hippie type. I didn't know from jazz. But when I enrolled at Miami, I really thought I was good. I had all this classical training, and I thought I knew about jazz because I had listened to Wes Montgomery records a bit. So I walk into the University and there's Pat Metheny, Steve Morse, Mark Egan, Jaco Pastorius, Hiram Bullock, Andy West, Danny Gottlieb, Will Lee, Rod Morgenstein—and these guys were already playing as good then as they do

now. It really blew my mind. It was a humbling experience, to say the least. Right then and there I told myself, 'You gotta work on your time. You gotta learn all these funny little harmonies.' So I spent four years down there doing just that."

T had two very influential teachers at the University of Miami who showed him the way. One was Vince Lawrence Maggio, a Bill Evans-type acoustic player, and the other was a renegade named Ron Miller, who T calls "a Joe Zawinul kind of guy." As he recalls, "Vince was teaching me about extensions and voicings and the proper approach to jazz. And Ronnie would be whispering in my ear about all these weird tentative harmonies. So basically, I learned how to play from Vince and learned a lot of theory from Ronnie."

But he never graduated. In his last semester, T got the call from the Dixie Dregs. "They were one of my favorite groups at the time. They already had two records out on the Capricorn label, so they were legendary around campus. They used to perform concerts at the University and just floor everybody, including the teachers. They were like a cross between the Allman Brothers and the Mahavishnu Orchestra, with a bit of Aaron Copland and Handel thrown in. So when they said, 'Let's go,' I went."

He adds with a laugh, "They figured, 'We can get some young, hot guy from the University of Miami who is willing to jump in the back of a truck and drive 300 miles a day to make \$200 a week.' And that's really all they were making at the time. They weren't being unfair or anything. And there I was, begging for the abuse of the road. I could've stayed in school, graduated and then come to New York or Los Angeles, waving a degree and saying, 'Hey, hey, hire me.' But, of course, it's not necessarily that way at all. So while I regret not getting a degree after coming so close, I'm still glad I went with them. I had the experience of a lifetime with the Dregs. And I learned so much from Steve and the other guys about musicality and professionalism. They were a class project all the way."

T joined the Dregs on New Year's Eve, 1979. He did all the touring with them for the group's third release and subsequently appeared on the last three Dregs albums—*Dregs Of The Earth*, *Unsung Heroes*, and *Industry Standard*, the latter produced by Eddy (Yes, ELP) Offord. In fact, it was Offord who induced T to put together a demo for some solo project down the road.

"When we worked on the last Dregs album Eddy said to me, 'You know, you really ought to record some of your jazz stuff.' So we went into a studio in Atlanta, where I was living at the time, and in a matter of days we laid down four tunes, two of which I liked enough to eventually include on my album."

Storytime is a much more personal statement than any of T's work with the Dregs. He favors the acoustic piano throughout, with touches of synthesizer here and there for coloring. He shows true blues feel on *I'm Callin' You*, co-written by former Little Feat guitarist Paul Barrere (who currently plays with T in a side project called The Bluesbusters). And he flaunts some Herbie-esque chops on the sparse jazz trio tune *Dumb Life*. Yes, the boy can play.

"I love the acoustic piano," he says. "There's nothing like it. They can emulate pianos all day long, and they're getting pretty damn good at it. But there's still something about the resistance that your fingers feel on the keys and the whole piece of wooden furniture vibrating. I guess it's subtle because only musicians or aficionados seem to notice or care. But as far as I'm concerned, piano is the most powerful instrument. Not a loud one, but a strong one. I don't know how they'll ever replace it."

Though T does rely heavily on his acoustic piano on



T LAVITZ'S EQUIPMENT

T's onstage setup includes one electric and one grand piano (usually rented on the road), an Oberheim OBX8 analog synth, a PPG Wave 2.2 synth, and an Ensoniq Mirage sampling keyboard. He enhances the organ mode on his synth with a Dynachord CLS 222, which acts like a simulated Leslie to get that sweeping effect. He also relies on a Lexicon PCM-70 digital reverb and an Ibanez digital delay. He uses two JBL keyboard speakers to run everything in stereo. On his album, *Storytime*, he also utilizes a Hammond B-3 organ (on *Baby Talk* and *A Voice From Without*), a Yamaha DX7, and a Rhodes electric piano (on the Steve Morse collaboration, *Sparkle Plenty*), and he plays some soprano sax unison lines on *Crystal*. He plans to use the sampling capabilities of his Mirage a lot more on his next album.

T LAVITZ SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader	with Jeff Berlin
<i>STORYTIME</i> —Passport Jazz 88012	<i>CHAMPION</i> —Passport Jazz 88004
with the Dregs	with The Bluesbusters
<i>INDUSTRY STANDARD</i> —Arista 8-8130	<i>ACCEPT NO SUBSTITUTE</i> —Landslide 1009
<i>UNSUNG HEROES</i> —Arista 8-8120	
<i>DREGS OF THE EARTH</i> —Arista 8-8305	

Storytime, he's not deluding himself into thinking he's the next McCoy Tyner. "This is the closest thing I've ever done to traditional jazz," he explains, "but I'm trying to do something a little bit different. I love jazz and acoustic piano trios and things like that, but I feel like there are already guys established in that genre. I mean, I'm not going to try and compete with McCoy Tyner. I'm just trying to highlight the acoustic piano with some synths on top. Like on the tune *Between Coming And Going*. I play an acoustic piano solo that I'm real proud of because it mixes up Herbie Hancock and Jerry Lee Lewis while these Oberheims are laying down a texture in the background. It's a different kind of fusion sound, and I think that's my niche—coming from rock & roll and really playing jazz, and meaning it."

Lavitz and like-minded musicians like Jeff Berlin, drummer Steve Smith (formerly of Journey, currently with Steps Ahead), and guitarist Scott Henderson (currently with Chick Corea's Elektric Band) are among that rare breed of young musicians who can play both jazz and rock with equal facility and conviction. Berlin, who put in some time with Pat Martino's hot, bopping quartet from the mid-'70s, had his solo debut on Passport Jazz last year with *Champion*. That fine fusion effort featured Lavitz, Berlin, Henderson, and Smith playing together on five of the album's eight cuts.

"There's nothing worse than hearing rock guys trying to swing or jazz guys trying to rock out," sneers T. "And that might be what I admire most about those guys. They can swing. I mean, *really* swing. It's like an overly starched shirt if a rock guy tries to swing, that white feel of rushing the time. It's not happening, it's not musical. But these guys

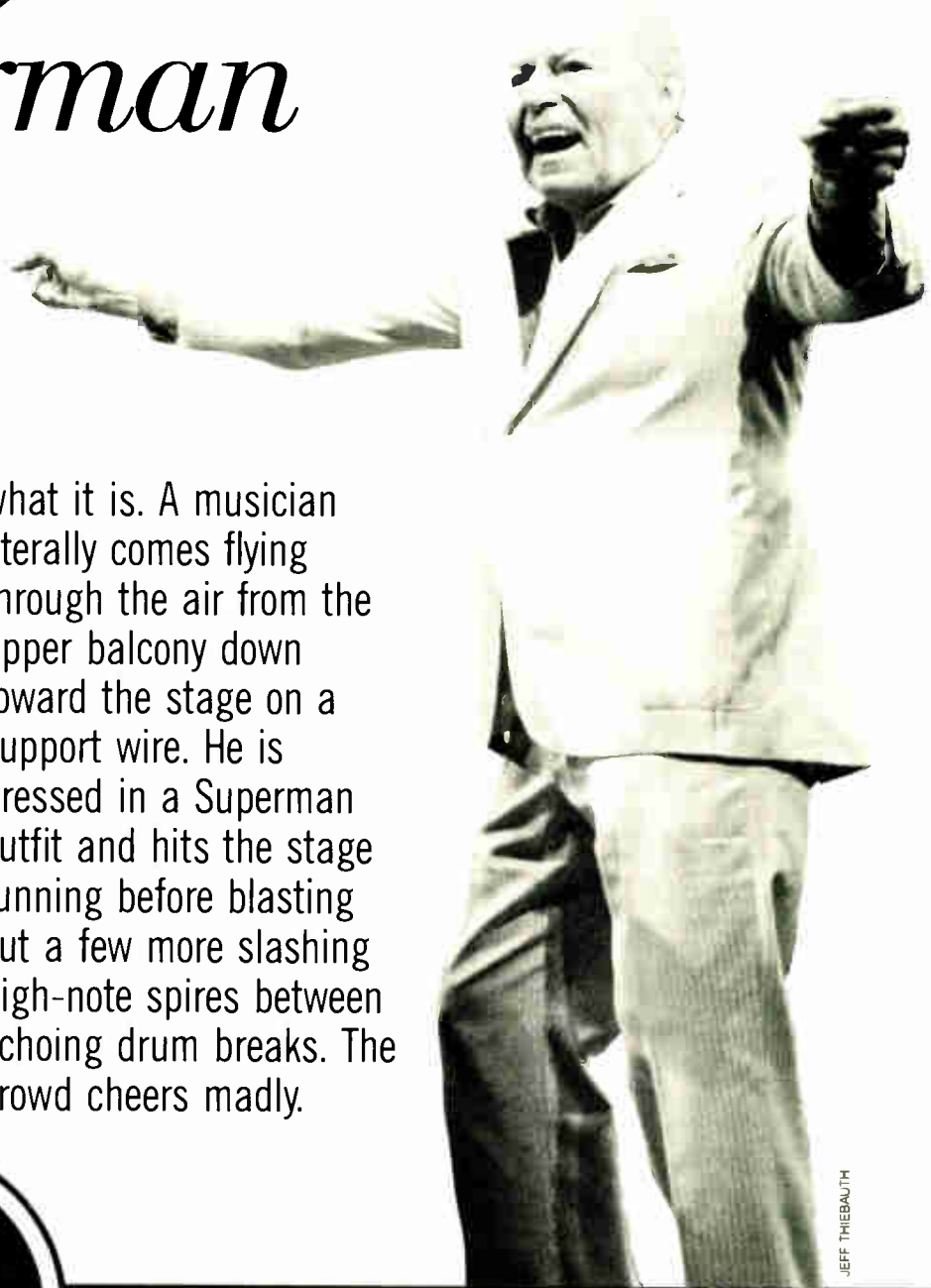
CONTINUED ON PAGE 68

By John McDonough

Woody Herman

The band is playing to a full house—about 2,700 people, mostly young. It's a hugely enthusiastic crowd that has come to hear a band at the peak of its powers. As the group blares its way full-throttle through one of its wildest head routines, suddenly a violent, stabbing trumpet break seems to come ripping through the theater from nowhere. Everyone looks up to see

what it is. A musician literally comes flying through the air from the upper balcony down toward the stage on a support wire. He is dressed in a Superman outfit and hits the stage running before blasting out a few more slashing high-note spires between echoing drum breaks. The crowd cheers madly.



JEFF THEBAUTH

50 Years In The Big Band Business

Part of an old Alice Cooper act, maybe? Sun Ra pretending to descend from a neighboring galaxy? Or perhaps Miles Davis' latest "new direction" in his own special theater of the audience put-on?

None of the above, thank you. All this happened 40 years ago at the Paramount Theater in New York. It was just another show for the Woody Herman band, the one we now think of as the First Herd; the high-flying trumpet player in the Superman outfit playing *Apple Honey* was Pete Condoli.

Herman, whose reputation for progressive bands and musical integrity over the last 25 years seems starkly out of register with such showbiz shenanigans, confessed all this recently and showed no noticeable regrets. "It was madness, but my background is show business," he laughed. "And we indulged in show business that would make Kiss look like a string quartet."

Herman has been talking about the past a lot lately for a special reason. This month marks his 50th year as an active bandleader. It was on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November 1936 that it all began, and it continues today. I don't know what the odds against sustaining a big band for half-a-century are; it would take a mathematician to compute that improbability. But no one needs a mathematician to know that, however it happened, he did it, and that is an absolutely unique accomplishment—though one not achieved without several unexpected turns of fate.

In the mid-'30s great bands were bursting into existence like popcorn. Only months or even weeks separated the debuts of some of the most enduring names. Almost simultaneously with Herman's debut in New York, Count Basie was leaving Kansas City for Chicago. But Basie died two years short of his 50th. Duke Ellington had been around a decade at this point, of course, but he died in the 49th year of his reign, in 1973. Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey each had his own band prior to Herman, but both died young, in 1956 and '57. And if it wasn't death, it was retirement. Benny Goodman would have celebrated his 50th anniversary two years ago—if he had continued as a bandleader. Similarly, Artie Shaw, Bob Crosby, and Charlie Barnet all had a small jump on Herman, but tired of the race along the way.

Today, only Woody Herman is left to know the loneliness of the long distance runner.

It's not simply that he has lasted as long as he has. The most remarkable thing is that he's remained a force in music from decade to decade while keeping the brand name "Woody Herman" intact. How? The answer is that Herman—like Tide detergent, Colgate toothpaste, and other venerable brand names—has continually reinvented himself in response to changing markets. Every few years a "new, improved" Woody Herman is introduced. Each incarnation is a little different than the one before. But none has ever turned on its predecessors in any violent revolt of stylistic self-annihilation.

The reason Herman's been able to remain contemporary in a way that Goodman did not is keenly ironic, I think: he's never been a first-rank player. Let me

explain. Woody Herman was a good but hardly brilliant reed player who made the clarinet his principal instrument in 1936 only because "it seemed that clarinet-playing leaders had a fighting chance of getting somewhere at the time." Today when you consider the original Swing Era bandleaders whose bands remained contemporary music forces by accommodating the currents of a changing music scene, the only thing they have in common is that none was a virtuoso: Herman, Count Basie, Stan Kenton, Duke Ellington, even Charlie Barnet. All were musicians who participated in their bands' music. But none was a player of Goodman's dimension—whose sheer virtuosic presence stood at the center of his orchestra and dominated its character.

Goodman, Shaw, Harry James, and a few others, now considered by many as figures of nostalgia, were so powerful as instrumentalists that their bands became settings for a personal style. "I'm the product," Goodman told the *Wall Street Journal* shortly before his death in response to a question about his attitude toward a Benny Goodman "ghost band" one day. He was right. And when the leader's voice is the product, the band is held in permanent orbit around one person. For a musician to recreate himself in a different style every few years would be like demanding Hank Aaron successfully adapt his batting talents to golf. And then tennis.

Woody Herman's bebop orchestra of the late '40s—the Second Herd—was artistically successful for precisely the reason Goodman's of the same period was not. Herman's skills as a bebop clarinetist didn't have to carry the band. As a conductor, Herman could cut his band loose and let it carry him to areas he could never reach on his own instrumental resources. A conductor always has flexibility; a player doesn't.

He agrees. "I never considered myself a soloist of import. I felt I had sufficient taste to add something to a chart and give myself a few bars. But I wasn't a solo force. This did free up my band over the years. The guys knew they could bring in anything and we'd try it. They could write in any direction, not just for me."

Woody Herman has changed his stripes so many times over the course of his career, it would take a spreadsheet to detail it all. The first Herman-led band rose out of the ashes of Isham Jones' dance orchestra of the '20s and early '30s, in which Herman was a sideman from 1934-36. (Broadcasts of Herman with Jones can be heard on Sunbeam Records HB-306.) "Even though Jones played straight dance music and I didn't get any chance to do jazz,"



Herman says, "I still liked to think of myself as a jazz musician. I paid a lot of attention to Coleman Hawkins. And when I worked in San Francisco, I used all his tricks and they thought I was a whiz." When Jones, who is better remembered as a composer than a bandleader (*It Had To Be You*, *On The Alamo*, *I'll See You In My Dreams*), retired in 1936, Herman and several other members incorporated the orchestra's remnants as "The Band that Plays the Blues."

After inheriting most of the operating apparatus of the Jones orchestra, including contracts with Jones' booking agency, GAC, and Decca Records, Herman emerged as frontman. He could sing novelty numbers and croon a ballad in perfect period style, as many of the old Decca sides show. This first Herman band debuted in Brooklyn on election night 1936, and one of its first radio broadcasts is preserved on Sunbeam SB-206. The group achieved a modest reputation, served as house orchestra to various Decca artists (Bing Crosby's hit *Deep In The Heart Of Texas* was backed by the Herman band), and scored its first significant hit with *Woodchopper's Ball* in 1939.

But none of this would have been enough to sustain the career Herman now celebrates. "We had reached a certain level before the war," says he, "but then things were determined by forces beyond our control. Everybody got drafted, and even though we started as a co-op band, finding replacements became my sole responsibility. That's when I started making the drastic changes that led to the First Herd of 1944. If the war hadn't come, we probably would have continued as before. I wouldn't have been forced to move in the direction I did. Also, Miller, Artie Shaw, Goodman, and some of the others had tremendous equity in their pre-war successes. I didn't have that much to lose by radical change. That's why we started attracting a different kind of young jazz player than would go to Benny. Arrangers, too. We came up with great people. It was a band guys wanted to be a part of."

After the war, the big band era went into decline. But Herman and one other bandleader, Stan Kenton, bucked the tides and entered the period that would establish their most enduring reputations. Although they remained friends over the years, they often disagreed on musical matters. "Kenton's greatest weakness was his handling of arrangers," Herman notes. "He invented them. He didn't go to the right sources by my standards. He looked for guys who would emulate Kenton, and that left very little room to find out the writer's point of view. He was reaching out through his arrangers for something new, but didn't know what he was looking for. I disapprove of window-shopping at the expense of your audience. He could have gone to the top writers to begin with, or maybe he didn't know the difference. We disagreed a lot about jazz and music generally."

"I was always intrigued from the earliest days of having guys who were in the band write for the band. I think they'll usually come up with better material than an outsider. And I was always very proud of the fact that we'd have a couple of guys in the sections who also arranged; this was the best situation. In the First Herd we had Ralph Burns and Neal Hefti. I have always tried to utilize people like these. They were closer to the music than I was in many cases. They knew best what guys should take what solos."

The Second Herd was born at the height of bebop's popularity—September 1947—and the young players Herman hired not only brought with them the new music but a new voicing for the Herman reed section. Stan Getz, Herbie Steward, Zoot Sims, and Jimmy Giuffre had been playing in a small four-tenor group in an L.A. club, and Herman hired the whole section practically intact (Giuffre contributed only arrangements at first). When Serge Chaloff's baritone replaced the fourth tenor, the smooth, dry *Four Brothers* blend became the most identifiable reed voicing since Glenn Miller's clarinet lead trademark. "I knew right away this was an important sound

that belonged to us," he recalls. "I wanted to use it, but not in everything we played."

It was the first two Herds that produced the most remembered and still-requested titles of the Herman book. No subsequent band would yield a body of work fans would continue to demand hearing. But this didn't mean there wasn't more exciting music still to come. Future Herds drew additional material from within their ranks, often combining with earlier ideas. The great Third Herd of 1953-54 (with Nat Pierce, Dick Hafer, Kai Winding, Carl Fontana, and Don Fagerquist) deployed the *Four Brothers* sound on *Moten Swing*. In the early and mid-'60s a series of LPs for Phillips and Columbia marked another peak, as Bill Chase, Phil Wilson, and Sal Nestico became riveting forces in a Herd that still included pianist Nat Pierce.

Herman still draws from within. Today John Fedchock (trombone) is the principal writer. "It's better than making a bunch of 25-year-old players do things their grandfathers listened to," Herman insists.

Herman's old book, an accumulation of 50-year's worth of scores, has been turned over to Berklee College in Boston, where future generations will study and play it. But it's not all there. Some of it is still on the road with the band. And even Herman himself may still think about the old days, especially when his current band jumps into *Four Brothers* or *Caldonia*. "Sure," he says, "there's some writing that can be played by others and still hold its identity and basic quality. *Early Autumn* is another. But there are others I try not to play—*Apple Honey*, *Your Father's Moustache*, and *Red Top*. They were '40s things, typical of a certain group of guys. There's no way you can get that across to a young band. All the rehearsal in the world won't do it. So I don't think we could accomplish the original purpose of the piece."

Herman looks at the concept of the jazz repertory orchestra—a standing orchestra designed to perform existing jazz works of the past—as a "noble idea," but sees nothing in the theory that can replace the experience of actually playing music night after night. "When the Mel Lewis Band celebrated 20 years in the Village, what were they celebrating?" he asks. Then he answers himself: "Twenty years of playing one night a week. That doesn't say much to me. I don't mean that it's not a fine band. But it couldn't afford to exist if the guys weren't involved with other things."

"I lead a road band. As long as you're on the road you have musical freedom. When you stay in one place, you lose that freedom. I go around the country and run into guys I played with 40 years ago, 20 years ago, last year. They talk about how great the old days on the road were. Now they're stuck in reality. I know damn



well I couldn't exist if I didn't go through all the throes of being active on the road.

"I'm not against bands playing music the way symphonies play Beethoven. But you're asking the wrong man. I've spent my life on the road playing this stuff. Originating it, I guess. My point of view is different from a young musicologist who 30 years from now might find my band's music worth performing. I'm a player. The process you're talking about is strictly an interpretative thing, not really a creative challenge."

These days Herman roams the world about nine months a year, down from 11 months a few years ago. He still puts out

one or two albums a year—his latest, *50th Anniversary Tour*, was recorded in March in The Great American Music Hall, San Francisco. If it would be hard to identify any special Hermanesque signature in the music—his clarinet is full of acidity and speaks in sharp, terse bursts; his low register playing is deep and thick—that's not unusual. For 50 years he's written in invisible ink. As the parade of new players continues through his ranks, Herman continues to pick, choose, advise, support, argue, and edit. "I call myself a coach more than a bandleader," he likes to say. "And my teams win."

db



Woody & His Woodchoppers, circa 1940.



On tv's Cavalcade Of Bands.



Santa's helper, 1940.



With Dizzy Gillespie (left) and Al "Jazzbo" Collins (right).



MITCHELL SEIDEL

WOODY HERMAN'S EQUIPMENT

Woody Herman says, "In 1957 I switched from a Buffet clarinet to a Leblanc, which I've played ever since. I've always used a French cane reed, although in recent years I find weaker ones are easier to handle—about a 2 or 2½."

"My alto saxophone is a special model—one of only two built by Selmer around 1940—very old with lots of fancy engraving. For soprano, I play a student model Leblanc—the least expensive one in their line."

WOODY HERMAN SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

1970-present

50TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR—Concord Jazz 302
WORLD CLASS—Concord Jazz 240
LIVE AT CONCORD JAZZ FEST '81—Concord Jazz 191
FOUR OTHERS—Concord Jazz 180
AT MONTEREY—Concord Jazz 170
ROAD FATHER—Century 1080
CHICK, DONALD, WALTER & WOODROW—Century 1110
40TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT—RCA 2-2203
FEELIN' SO BLUE—Fantasy 9609
KING COBRA—Fantasy 9499
THE RAVEN SPEAKS—Fantasy 9416
CHILDREN OF LIMA—Fantasy 9477
THE HERD AT MONTEREY—Fantasy 9470
THUNDERING HERD—Fantasy 9452
GIANT STEPS—Fantasy 9432
BRAND NEW—Fantasy 8414

1960s

JAZZ HOOT—Columbia 32530
WOODY'S WINNERS—Columbia 2436
1964—Philips 200 118
1963 25th ANNIVERSARY—Philips 200 065

Third Herd 1952-54

THIRD HERD VOL. 1—Discovery 815
THIRD HERD VOL. 2—Discovery 845

Second Herd 1948-50

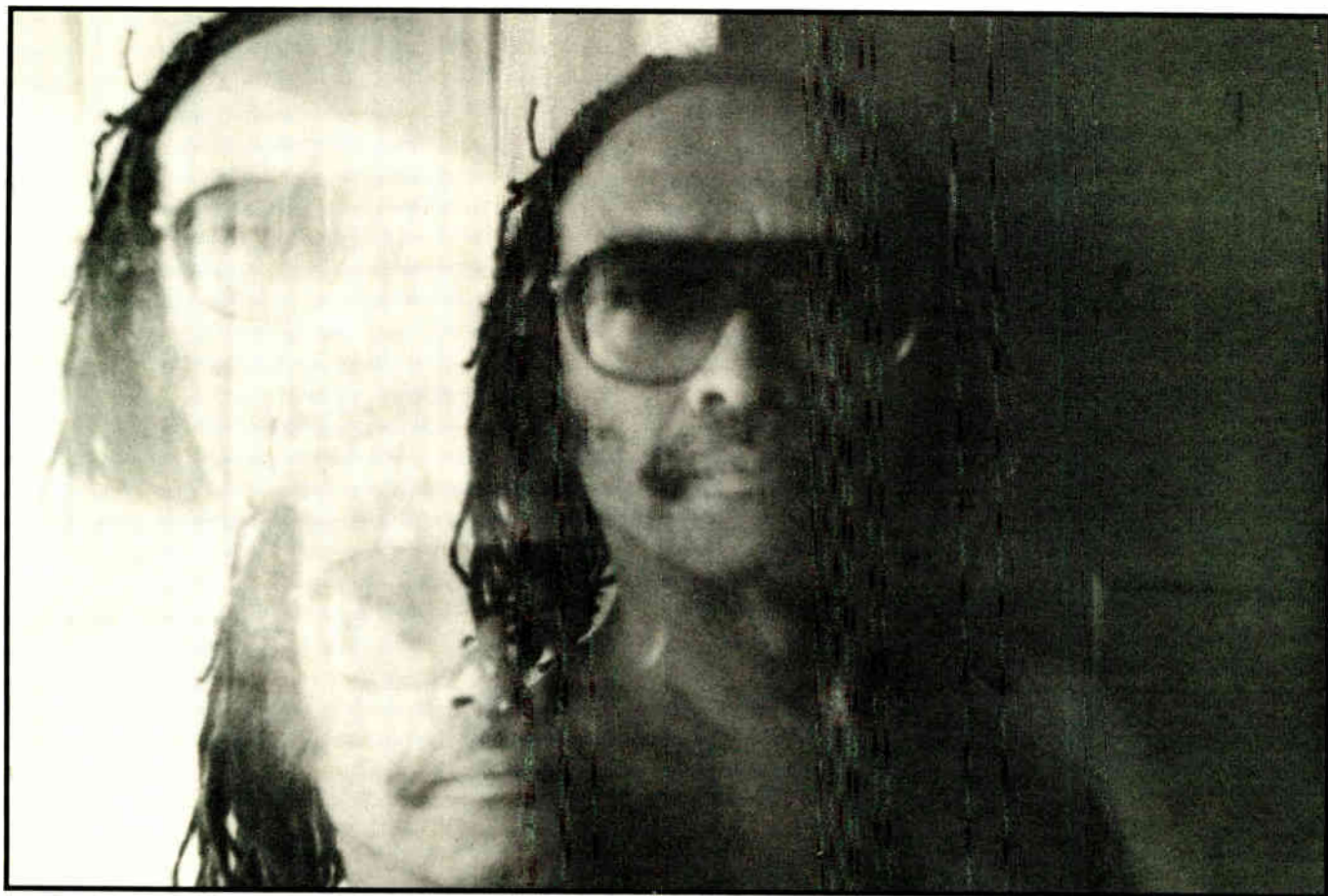
EARLY AUTUMN—Capitol 11034
ROAD BAND—Hep 18
AT THE PALLADIUM 1948—Hep 7

First Herd 1944-46

THE THREE HERDS—Columbia 592
THE THUNDERING HERD—Columbia C3L 25
CARNEGIE HALL CONCERT 1946—Verve/Polygram 2317 031
HI-FI BROADCASTS—Fantasy 22-122

1936-44

BEST OF...—MCA 4077
BLUES IN THE NIGHT—Sunbeam 206
1944—Hindsight 134
1937-44—Insight 208
1937—Hindsight 116



KEN MILLER

Cecil Taylor

And The Poetics Of Living

BY KEVIN LYNCH

Cecil Taylor remains, arguably, the preeminent pianist in all of contemporary music. Recently voted the number one pianist for the ninth consecutive year in the *db* International Critics Poll, Taylor is a standard-bearer who is exhilarating to experience, daunting to face up to—incomparably accomplished yet audaciously liberated. His music remains acoustic, though electrified by kinetic energy and imagination, of primal impulse and compound design, improbable yet realistic.

Taylor's methods always lead to his bottom-line concern—the poetics of living. His complex piano harmonies have always suggested more voices. On his most recent Soul Note album, *Winged Serpent (Sliding Quadrants)*, the 10 fingers—that often sounded like 20—inspire 11 musicians to sound like an Orchestra of Two Continents, as he calls it. The horn lines and vocal chants invoke ancestral voices wailing witness to prehistoric bodies and future spirits. This is time compressed by expanded vision—a musical power that Taylor has worked his whole career to attain. But in terms of today, what is this man—some musical brontosaurus surviving a passed era of mythic jazz dramas? Or is he closer to the monarch, perennial

dancer against prevailing currents?

The elusive musician/poet/dancer talked at length recently in an interview shortly after the death of Jimmy Lyons, his alto saxophonist and artistic alter-ego for the last quarter-century. As Taylor spoke, his large, thoughtful forehead pushed past his dreadlocks, and his dark glasses couldn't hide a man who knows and relates to the contemporary world and its varied cultures far more deeply than his relentless pursuit of an original musical language might suggest. Gradually it became apparent why his lyrical labyrinths have captured ever-growing numbers of listeners worldwide.

Pieces had been falling together well for Cecil Taylor lately. His large group writing had finally been documented in a stunning album, and the impact of that international orchestra was reflected in an invitation to a "Cecil Taylor Week" in Berlin this past April, sponsored by the Berlin Free Jazz Society. Taylor presented his artistic persona in many forms—large ensemble, the famous Unit, a solo piano recital, an evening of dancing and performing his own poetry. On May

16, he was to perform solo at the Harlem Studio, but he decided shortly before the concert to share it with his musicians. The concert left him elated.

Three days later, Jimmy Lyons died of lung cancer. Over 25 years, the two synthesized structural strength and expressive freedom like few partnerships in jazz. But if you ever saw the Unit perform during those years, you probably saw Lyons complete a bracing alto solo, then step to the stage side and quickly light up a cigarette. Lyons had spent his last weeks hospitalized, in and out of a coma.

Taylor and I met in a sidewalk cafe in Greenwich Village. His ebullient manner was disarming, reassuring, and disconcerting, all at the same time. Taylor is known as a complex man of many moods and personalities—at times these are faces of a slightly theatrical housing of his inner self.

"I saw Billie Holiday perform when I was a young boy," he said. "She taught me how you present yourself, in music and body—one's actions onstage and the music are inseparable." This sidewalk cafe became a chamber stage for Taylor as he drank down Beck's beers, bandied with the waiter and passersby who recognized him. His reputation short-shrifts his sharp wit, which he wielded shrewdly before the absurd little socio-cultural interplays of a busy Lower East Side street scene. With a raconteur's style and timing, he offered anecdotal caricatures of many musicians he knows—Gil Evans, Lena Horne, Herbie Hancock, his Brooklyn neighbor Betty Carter, and a New York critic with whom Taylor sustains a feud of sorts. His words flashed with affection, derision, irony, and idolatry. When we got around to Jimmy Lyons, glowing words quickly deflected to the subject of his funeral, and warm regard for Karen Borca, the bassoonist who lived with Lyons for the last 10 years.

"Actually, I just began playing the piano again today," Taylor admitted at one point. This notorious practicer, for years compelled to a superhuman mastery of the piano, said he had not touched the keys for three weeks after Lyons' death. But now, clearly, Taylor had emerged from his abstinence and was responding to people. This meeting was at his insistence, a social prelude to the next day's formal interview. He suggested a walk to a local club to catch guitarist Mike Stern, and he sauntered into the twilight, to the club and later to the birthday party of a friend.

Cecil Taylor is best understood as a composer-as-improviser, like another original jazz composer, Ornette Coleman, though their means are measurably different. Taylor's application of modern compositional techniques to a black methodology of music has broken ground later traveled by many musicians from North America to Europe and the Far East. But radical as it may sound, his music still builds directly from jazz tradition, though in singular ways. The Ellingtonesque melisma in horn ensembles, the fractured ragtime rhythms and half-submerged ballad chords fall within the masterful unfolding of the *Winged Serpent* title piece. His piano solo from the *One Night With Blue Note* recording, *Pontos Cantados*, alludes to bebop greats in the subsection "Klook At The Top Of The Stairs." This refers, Taylor says, to an incident when bebop drum innovator Kenny "Klook" Clarke arrived at a nightclub. Monk's *In Walked Bud* is the nominal derivative, and bits of bop, blues, and indigo mood emerge from the alternately ferocious and feathery playing. The layering of sources—Monkish rhythms, plush Ellington harmonies stitched with tonal clusters—is a characteristic Taylor collage. Ekkehard Jost, in his book *Free Jazz*, identified the innovation behind Taylor's freed rhythm: "It may seem paradoxical that precisely by getting away from the steady beat (then one of the sine qua nons of jazz) Cecil Taylor's music took on a more strongly pronounced jazz character than before. But this proves that the essence of jazz depends more strongly on the intensity of rhythmic communication in the group than on the basis of the communication."

Even as the later Units expanded and shuffled personnel, Taylor's kinetic music would court or invoke chaos but never succumb to it. The septet that recorded *Three Phasis* and *Live At*

The Black Forest realized a new level of clarity in creative density. While teaching at the University of Wisconsin and Antioch College in the '70s, Taylor often used student ensembles to develop his large group ideas. Though Taylor is a very demanding leader to work for, and performs nothing but original music, he hardly advances the traditional tyranny of the composer, with sacrosanct score.

Overlooking a tree-lined Brooklyn street, Taylor sat in his elegant practice room playing the theme he had composed that afternoon, following the line with his voice, which itself emits a strange interval, resounding from both his nasal passage and the guttural depths of his throat. He writes the letter names of each note on staffless paper, each letter placed higher or lower on the page to indicate melodic direction. Taylor orally dictates each player's part—long a jazz tradition—and the given pitch may be determined by the particular sound quality of a player's tone. So the blend may be tonally ambiguous, but the particular voices are stronger, more honestly expressive. Yet Taylor today had his most pointed praise for Unit members who deliver the material with utmost precision—trombonist Earl McIntyre, ex-mainstay in the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, and classically trained bassoonist Borca. For unnamed others, he says mischievously, "Oh ho, do I have a surprise for them tomorrow at rehearsal!" Taylor's comments on his orchestrating typically do not dwell on the purely musical. "I think what really happens is that just as you learn and develop your musicians over a period of time, you end up dealing with personalities, and simultaneously you begin to learn about yourself and understand the mysteries of interpersonal relationship on every level. That begins to be very meaningful in the musical discourse."

Taylor's conversational turns of mind, often characterized as digressive, lead consistently to meaningful resonances. "I heard a very interesting story recently. A pianist about my age spoke to a friend of mine, and told him, 'I don't have a piano in my house anymore. The reason is I've played the piano for 50 years. I don't want to practice anymore. I've done that more than I've done anything in my life.' And I thought that was a very interesting point of view; ah, it rather frightened me because, well, for the last three weeks I haven't done anything because emotionally I *could not* play. But then yesterday when I started, I started with the point of view that I had to write something beautiful. And even as difficult as it was to get up this morning, there's a lot to be done. Because all these things, if faced directly and honestly, contribute to the music that is always evolving. So I found this afternoon I adopted a certain attitude of practice. I don't like to make these separations between technique and the music that one plays."

"It seems to me that most of what I play I can track back to the formulas I began working on at the New England Conservatory. I have always given myself a week to prepare so



COLLIS H. DAVIS JR.

everything will be compressed; with momentum, the inspiration should accelerate. It usually does. And then you go absolutely out of your mind in a deliriously happy way. You can't really sleep for more than four hours, you keep hearing the music, you want to begin again, and in a sense it is without end, so that is why it is perhaps that one doesn't work too much—or just enough. The pianist I was talking about was Paul Bley. And it seems to me that I would like to be my most developed at the moment which I chemically change to another, to begin a new life. So therefore for what I'm attempting, you have to measure in years because progress is very slow."

Taylor's new theme sounded some of the humbling disquiet of experiencing the death of the man who most shared those creative years. The melody seemed an accelerated dirge, its harmonic energy exorting its own melancholic weight. "All the music will be dedicated to Jimmy Lyons," he said. Taylor was prompted to speak about Lyons, the whole musician and person. He removed his glasses and, after a long pause, sighed.

"Well, I don't really want to talk about that too much beyond saying that, ah, the degree of human understanding which was identifiable in the quality of his compassion makes me believe I was blessed with a noble existence, and having shared that musically, one attempts now to continue on the basis of what we are discovering in our recurring thoughts of his magnificence." Taylor's regard and indebtedness actually surfaced the previous afternoon amid the beers.

"Why was Jimmy Lyons so noble?" he had asked rhetorically. "For putting up with my shit for all those years." The commitment and sacrifice for such music involved Lyons, a master bebop player, giving himself to the truth he saw. "Playing with Cecil made me think differently about what the music's about," Lyons once said. "It's not about any cycle of fifths—it's about sound." The ecstasy and pain of his discoveries were audible in Lyons's playing. The ironies of Taylor's present situation surfaced inevitably.

"Our success—what it's been—has been largely a matter of self-germination. It wasn't the result of working in those dog-ass houses for which we were supposed to be grateful somebody gave us a job. What's happened to musicians who perceived what was to be done musically was one of two things. They have been either killed by disrespect, the poor pay, the conditions they had to play in, or their spirits have been completely demoralized and resultingly their music has receded, so they might as well be dead. Simply, the amount of employment possible is always a frustration in itself, because the people who control this have convinced themselves that all the means given to rock artists cannot be given to black musicians who are interested in developing their own language—or any musicians doing this—because the pettiness of their minds cannot cope with the dimension that the group of us is trying to investigate. It's really as simple as that. It's particularly enervating for the group of black men and women because of what Europe has shown—during the mid-'70s we were doing 10 or 12 concerts per tour, and none of the attendance totals were under 2,000. Then we come back to read the trade papers and a man big in the business saying, 'Well, we cannot present that kind of music on television because the audience will not accept it.' I mean, what are promotion people for? All a sales person does is sell and get the commission, and if he doesn't know anything, he should do his homework, acquaint himself so he knows what he's selling. But these kinds of things are never extended as a matter of logic, and this is rampant in the business."

The matter of categorically preconceiving an artist as an unmarketable commodity led to the idea of the typical Western process of objectifying whatever a person can "get a handle on;" by dividing the wholly perceptible being, the observer may miss the essential and potential value of the person. Taylor, like many creative musicians, perceives a dominant mentality—separating the mind and body, subject and object, which compounds the alienation and cynicism

whether it's business, art, or personal relations. "Having spent quite some time in Japan, it became evident that the separation of mind and body is a Western sickness," Taylor said. "Because it seems to me the great poets do not separate the passion that they use. If anything, the passion instructs the nature of the intellect. And that's why the great artists only become greater—because they're aware that they must find ways to develop and regenerate the focus of their love energy. And what that encompasses—the pleasure of life—is witness to the celebration of the beautiful act as represented in another art you find yourself drawn to during the time you are developing your own art. So the dynamism of the music led me to dance, to literature, to painting, to architecture. So my music and poetry have evolved and developed. Those other [business] people and forces may not be totally expendable. But any attempt they make to direct my artistic vision is a conceit worthy of their own ignorance."

Hearing Cecil Taylor's music can expand a listener's sense of creative possibility and lyrical expression. Over the years, his themes have become less angular, more suggestive of tonal bases, and with his quietest solo moments, have gained a dark, exalted lyricism, aware of the tragic but ultimately celebratory essence of the life spirit. How did Taylor's hauntingly songlike strains come about?

"Well, the magic of music is *in* poetry in a sense, in the word, and the theater. I always went to the theater, even when I had no money, in the '50s. So what I'm consciously working to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 67



KEN WILLER

CECIL TAYLOR'S EQUIPMENT

Cecil Taylor chose not to reveal the make of his practice piano. "I would just say that it's a nine-foot concert piano," he said. "No other particulars, except to say that it's important to get the best instrument you can. The man who tunes the piano is Japanese, and he's really quite wonderful. Most of the time I worked with Jimmy Lyons I only had the piano tuned every three or four years. But I've had this tuned twice in the last six months, which is rather fun. It's now more pleasant for all of us to work with."

For performances Taylor uses the Bösendorfer Imperial or a Hamburg Steinway. "The Bösendorfer's the one, though," he said of the famous piano with the extra lower octave. "It's really an altogether different instrument, for what you can do with it."

CECIL TAYLOR SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

- as a leader**
- WINGED SERPENT (SLIDING QUADRANTS)—Soul Note 1089
 - GARDEN—hat Art 1993/4
 - CALLING IT THE 8TH—hat Hut 3508
 - FLY! FLY! FLY! FLY! FLY!—Pausa 7108
 - IT IS IN THE BREWING LUMINOUS—hat Hut 2R 16
 - ONE TOO MANY SALTY SWIFT AND NOT GOODBYE—hat Art 3011
 - 3 PHASIS—New World 303
 - LIVE IN THE BLACK FOREST—Pausa 7053
 - CECIL TAYLOR UNIT—New World 201
 - AIR ABOVE MOUNTAINS (BUILDINGS WITHIN)—Enja 3005
 - DARK TO THEMSELVES—Enja 2084
 - SILENT TONGUES—Arista/Freedom 1005
 - SPRING OF TWO BLUE J'S—Unit Core 30551
 - SOLO—Trio 7067
 - AKISAKILA—Trio 3004/5
 - INDENT—Arista/Freedom 1038
 - THE GREAT CONCERT—Prestige 34003
 - STUDENT STUDIES—Affinity 74
 - CONQUISTADOR!—Blue Note 84260
 - UNIT STRUCTURES—Blue Note 84237
 - NEFFERTITI, THE BEAUTIFUL ONE, HAS COME—Arista/Freedom 1905
- THE WORLD OF CECIL TAYLOR**—Jazz Man 5026
- LOOKING AHEAD**—Contemporary 7562
- IN TRANSITION**—Blue Note LA 458H2
- with Max Roach**
- HISTORIC CONCERTS—Soul Note 1100/1
- with Mary Lou Williams**
- EMBRACED—Pablo 2620-108
- with Gil Evans**
- INTO THE HOT—Impulse 9
- with John Coltrane**
- COLTRANE TIME—United Artists 5638
- with Buell Neidlinger**
- NEW YORK R&B—Jazz Man 5032
- with Tony Williams**
- THE JOY OF FLYING—Columbia 45705
- with Various Artists**
- ONE NIGHT WITH BLUE NOTE: PRE-SERVED—Blue Note 85117
 - THE JAZZ COMPOSERS ORCHESTRA—JCOA 1001/2
 - THE NEW BREED—Impulse 9339/2
 - MASTERS OF THE MODERN PIANO—Verve 2-2514

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PIERRE DØRGE & The New Jungle Orchestra

By Mitchell Feldman

They say you can't tell a book by its cover, but even a cursory glance at the collection of ethnic instruments adorning Pierre Dørge's house in a suburb of Copenhagen—not to mention a flip through his record collection—will give you a pretty good idea about the diverse influences that have molded the music of this guitarist, composer, and big band leader.

Hanging over the grand piano are three string instruments: a Turkish saz, a Yugoslavian tamboura, and a mandola. Africa is represented by the kora standing off in a corner, a balafon

behind the couch, and talking drums of various sizes standing on shelves. Lying near the stereo are stacks of albums running the gamut from the manic music of Spike Jones to the mysterious sounds of whales, from a recording of Bolshevik choral songs to James Newton's recent interpretations of classic compositions by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn.

Yet the 40-year-old Dane has collected more than just artifacts during the course of a career that has found him playing new music with saxophonist John Tchicai, swing with

violinist Svend Asmussen, fusion with his quartet Thermaenius, and world music with the engaging New Jungle Orchestra. An artist who perceives no boundaries in his quest for inspiration and information, Dørge is just as wont to travel to Gambia or Nepal in his search for new ideas as to Woodstock, New York, to attend a two-month World Music course at Karl Berger's Creative Music Foundation or travel to the Bowery for a single, albeit influential, lesson with Ornette Coleman.

The New Jungle Orchestra, which has been delighting European audiences and critics alike since its inception in 1980 and which recently made its American debut at the Chicago Jazz Festival, is one of the most exciting bands to emerge this decade. The eclectic ensemble brings together elements of the European, African, and Afro-American musical traditions and has forged a unique sound that takes the big band heritage started by Fletcher Henderson and Duke Ellington, transmuted by Sun Ra, and refined by the likes of Gil Evans and George Russell, a step further. While the New Jungle Orchestra can be as austere as Austria's Vienna Art Orchestra, or as satirically rambunctious as Holland's Willem Breuker Kollektief, what sets Denmark's contribution to the crop of large ensembles playing

One World, Many Musics



LAUREN DEUTSCH



alternative or creative music developed in Europe in the '80s apart from its contemporaries is its multi-nationality on the one hand, and the personality of its leader on the other.

In addition to Dørge, who writes and arranges the band's material and conducts as well, the Orchestra features Tchicai (son of a Zairian father and a Danish mother) on saxophones; the South African bassist Johnny Mbizo Dyani; the Barbadian trumpeter Harry Beckett; and several prominent Danish musicians, including bassist Hugo Rasmussen, percussionist Marilyn Mazur (who just spent a year on the road with Miles Davis, the first woman to tour as a member of his band), Morten Carlsen on various woodwinds, alto saxophonist Jesper Zeuthen, and Irene Becker. Dørge's wife, on keyboards. Combined, the stylistic experiences of these artists—which range from ragtime to no-time, from the Caribbean to the Caucasus, from the conservatory to the Congo—are incredible resources with which to work.

One of the reasons the New Jungle Orchestra has been so successful—it's one of the few Danish bands to tour extensively outside Denmark and has been a fixture at European jazz festivals of the past two years—is Dørge himself. He is not only able to write music that takes full advantage of what each member has to offer, but he also has the insight, organizational ability, and temperament to hold the organic entity he created together. The enigmatic Tchicai, for example, who first came to the attention of jazz cognoscenti in the '60s when he lived briefly in the States, participating in John Coltrane's historic *Ascension* sessions and belonging to the Jazz Composers Guild, NYC5, and New York Art Quartet, sees Dørge as "one of

the few musicians with whom I can communicate intuitively; we're from the same musical tribe."

Pierre Dørge started playing the mandolin as a hobby when he was 11 and got his first professional guitar at 14. His chorus teacher in high school, bassist Erik Moseholm (who recorded with Eric Dolphy when the latter visited Copenhagen), was an early influence on Dørge and his classmates' tastes. "Moseholm taught us the difference between pop music and jazz," the guitarist recalled. "He told us what was 'good' music and 'bad' music and would play Tommy Steele and Sonny Rollins records to make his point. I'd already heard about the Montmartre then, but since you had to be 18 to get in, I wasn't able to hang out there. I did go to every jazz concert I could, however, and remember hearing Cannonball Adderley; Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers with Lee Morgan, Hank Mobley, and Bobby Timmons; John Coltrane; and an incredible solo bass clarinet concert of Dolphy's. I was very interested in and open to all kinds of music, whether it was jazz, Turkish, or Arabic, and I used to listen to a *Jazz Club Of The Radio* program every Thursday. Records were expensive, but I had a few; the first album I bought was that **down beat** Poll Winners' LP with Mingus, Ellington, Kenny Burrell, and Lambert. Hendricks and Ross—which I still have."

Dørge started formal music lessons on upright bass at a night school when he was 15, at the same time teaching himself guitar, composing music, and playing in various bands formed with friends. "It was difficult because when I started to play guitar there were a lot of basic things I didn't know about. Sometimes the music I was making was more complicated than I knew, and it wasn't until some years later that I learned these basics and found out what I'd been doing. My music's always been spontaneous, however, and since I didn't know anything about theory, I had to use my ears a lot. It was always a fight to learn how to play the guitar. In the beginning, like when I heard my first Ornette Coleman record, I didn't really enjoy free or atonal music. I was more into Rollins and Mingus, the mainstream tradition. It wasn't until 1967, when I met a drummer who liked to play totally free music, that I made a kind of compromise with my attraction to very clear themes and songs related to various folk musics. I realized then that the themes used in free music—Ayer's for example—were very simple, and that it's only when you improvise that you go 'out to lunch.'"

In 1967, Dørge attended Frank

Zappa's first concert in Denmark, and heard Tchicai's Cadentia Nova Danica, which was the opening act; both groups would make deep impressions on him. At this time, according to Copenhagen clubowner Nils Christiansen, Dørge, "like Hendrix and Coryell, was starting to fool around with his instrument making it scream and producing other strange sounds while trying to liberate it from its role as just a rhythm instrument." Dørge recalls that, "Due to Moseholm's early teachings it took me a long time before I accepted rock, which didn't become a strong influence on me until the '70s. I did, however, start to experiment with playing rock on the jazz guitar then."

Two years later, after having heard Tchicai's ensemble at the old Montmartre several times and having realized that the saxophonist's music was "exactly what I wanted to play," Dørge answered an advertisement calling for musicians to help form the second Cadentia Nova Danica. "Tchicai wasn't exactly a teacher, but his influence on me was very strong," Dørge explained. "In 1969, he was putting together a creative big band and conducted a workshop every Saturday night. We were about 20 young musicians—some were really amateurs—but the things John was doing pulled everyone together. His music is a mixture of new European music with free improvisation and lots of percussion. I learned a great deal then simply from all the experimenting we were doing, and I began to compose for large ensembles. Tchicai also invited me to join his quintet. He wrote a part for me in one piece that was so difficult I couldn't just play it, but had to go home and really practice it. I learned a lot of licks in this part which I still use—sometimes Tchicai teases me about it and asks, 'Isn't that something we played a long time ago?'"

Although Dørge made his recording debut with Cadentia Nova Danica that year—on *Afrosidisiaca*, produced by noted German jazz authority Joachim Ernst Berendt—and played his first jazz festival—in Nuremberg, Germany, with the group C.M. Music Train, with which he also recorded—he was having trouble finding steady work in Copenhagen. The city's jazz scene was peaking at that time with such artists as Ayler, Dolphy, Don Cherry, Gato Barbieri, and Booker Ervin performing on a regular basis. "It was always difficult to be accepted because I wasn't playing the type of music [bassist] Niels-Henning Ørsted-Pedersen was playing with, say, Dexter Gordon. People had the impression I was playing 'very strange music,' so I always had to fight

to get gigs and then play for the door. All this ended in 1972 when I formed a group called The Waves Of Kodania with a Danish drummer and violinist and a Hungarian bassist. We played a little bit in the style of the Mahavishnu Orchestra."

Dørge had stopped playing with Tchicai in 1971, when the latter entered a "meditation phase and joined an ashram on Denmark's Jutland peninsula." Reluctant to leave Copenhagen and enrolled in a vocational college to be trained as a music teacher (Dørge is now a member of the faculty there teaching future instructors guitar, theory, and singing), the guitarist entered what was probably the most difficult period of his life. "In 1972, I enrolled in the Conservatory to study everything from Gregorian chants to Ayler. What I was earning as a musician just paid for my strings, and I almost stopped playing music in 1974 due to my studies. This was where I had to learn all the basics I didn't know before."



Dørge returned to activity in 1976 after attending an improvisational music summer workshop sponsored by the Danish Jazz League, where he met Ørsted-Pedersen and reconnected with Tchicai. Since there was an abundance of guitarists on the studio scene by then, he bought a Fender Jazz Bass to attract more recording dates and joined Total Petroleum, a satirical band he describes as "a bit like Cheech & Chong," for two years. In 1977 three important events occurred: he made his recording debut on SteepleChase Records when Ørsted-Pedersen recommended to producer Nils Winther that Dørge participate in the session for *Real Tchicai*, which includes two of the guitarist's compositions. Although Dørge thought it was Tchicai's idea, the fact that Ørsted-Pedersen was the catalyst was "a real compliment." That same year he met his future wife, keyboardist Irene Becker, when he was asked to play guitar with a women's rock group, Hos Anne, which recorded four albums for CBS Records and an independent label between 1977 and 1980, with Dørge appearing on three of them. Finally Dørge, Becker, drummer Hans Christian Morgensen, and saxophonist Morten Carlsen—with whom Dørge had been playing on and off since 1972—formed the fusion group Thermaenius, named for the Swedish company that makes combine harvesters and other farm equipment.

With these various associations keeping him active musically and his

teaching providing relative financial security, Dørge had entered a richly creative period of his life. In 1979, he appeared on his second SteepleChase project, a duet recording with the vibraphonist Walt Dickerson, and recorded his first album as a leader, *Ballad Around The Left Corner*, with Tchicai, Ørsted-Pedersen, and drummer Billy Hart. In January of 1980, Dørge and saxophonist Simon Spang-Hanssen formed the New Jungle Orchestra with the original idea that the group be something of a musical Noah's Ark, with two of every instrument. The 16 original members, six of whom—Dørge, Becker, Carlsen, Mazur, vibraphonist Bent Clausen, and trombonist Kenneth Agerholm—remain today, would meet on Sunday afternoons to rehearse. With the help of grants from the state and the Danish Musicians Union, Dørge and Becker spent that summer studying World Music with the likes of Nana Vasconcelos, Foday Musa Suso, and Karl Berger in Woodstock, New York, and meeting such musicians as Dave Holland and Jack DeJohnette, who live in the area. "We learned some very simple but strong basic things there, like 12/8 African rhythms and playing 4-against-3. I also met Ken Day, who's been booking us, and it was through him that I first went to Gambia, where I met (the late griot and kora master) Alhaji Bai Konte and lived in his village, Brikama. I've since been back to Africa three more times."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 68

PIERRE DØRGE SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

BALLAD AROUND THE LEFT CORNER—SteepleChase 1132

with New Jungle Orchestra

EVEN THE MOON IS DANCING—SteepleChase 1208

BRIKAMA—SteepleChase 1188

PIERRE DØRGE & NEW JUNGLE ORCHESTRA—SteepleChase 1162

with Thermaenius

COPENHAGEN BOOGIE—CBS 88576

THERMAENIUS LIVE—Pickup 80301/2

with John Tchicai

AFRODISIACA—MPS 14249

REAL TCHICAI—SteepleChase 1075

with Walt Dickerson

LANDSCAPE WITH OPEN DOOR—SteepleChase 1115

with Johnny Mbizo Dyani

GRANDMA'S TEACHINGS—JAM 0582/JD 030

with Khan Jamal & Johnny Mbizo Dyani

THREE—SteepleChase 1201

with Doudou Gouirand

FORGOTTEN TALES—Vent du Sud 106

CHANTING & DANCING—JAM 1311

MOUVEMENTS NATURELS—JAM 0482

with Jean Marc Vella

INSIDE—Mobile 101

with C.M. Music Train

C.M. MUSIC TRAIN—Spectator 1007

with Hos Anne

LIVE—Better Day 8002

ÅH—Better Day 702

MED DE RØDE SLØJFER—CBS 82662

PIERRE DØRGE'S EQUIPMENT

Pierre Dørge plays a 1958 Gibson LTC and a 1980 Gibson Active Artist. He uses Vinci Medium Light strings and alternates between Gibson Hard picks and ones handcrafted from animal horn that are manufactured in Paris. His amplifier is a Polytone Minibrute IV and he modifies his sound with a Roland RE 301 Space Echo and a Chorus/Flanger Box made by TC Electronics in Denmark.

Regarding his style, Dørge offered the following: "From the beginning I never liked the sound of the jazz guitar—I thought it was boring. I like it a little better today, but back then the tone always sounded the same—there was no real expression there. Although I thought what people like Barney Kessel and Jimmy Raney were playing was fantastic, I always wanted the guitar to sound like a horn—maybe I secretly wanted to play a horn rather than a guitar!

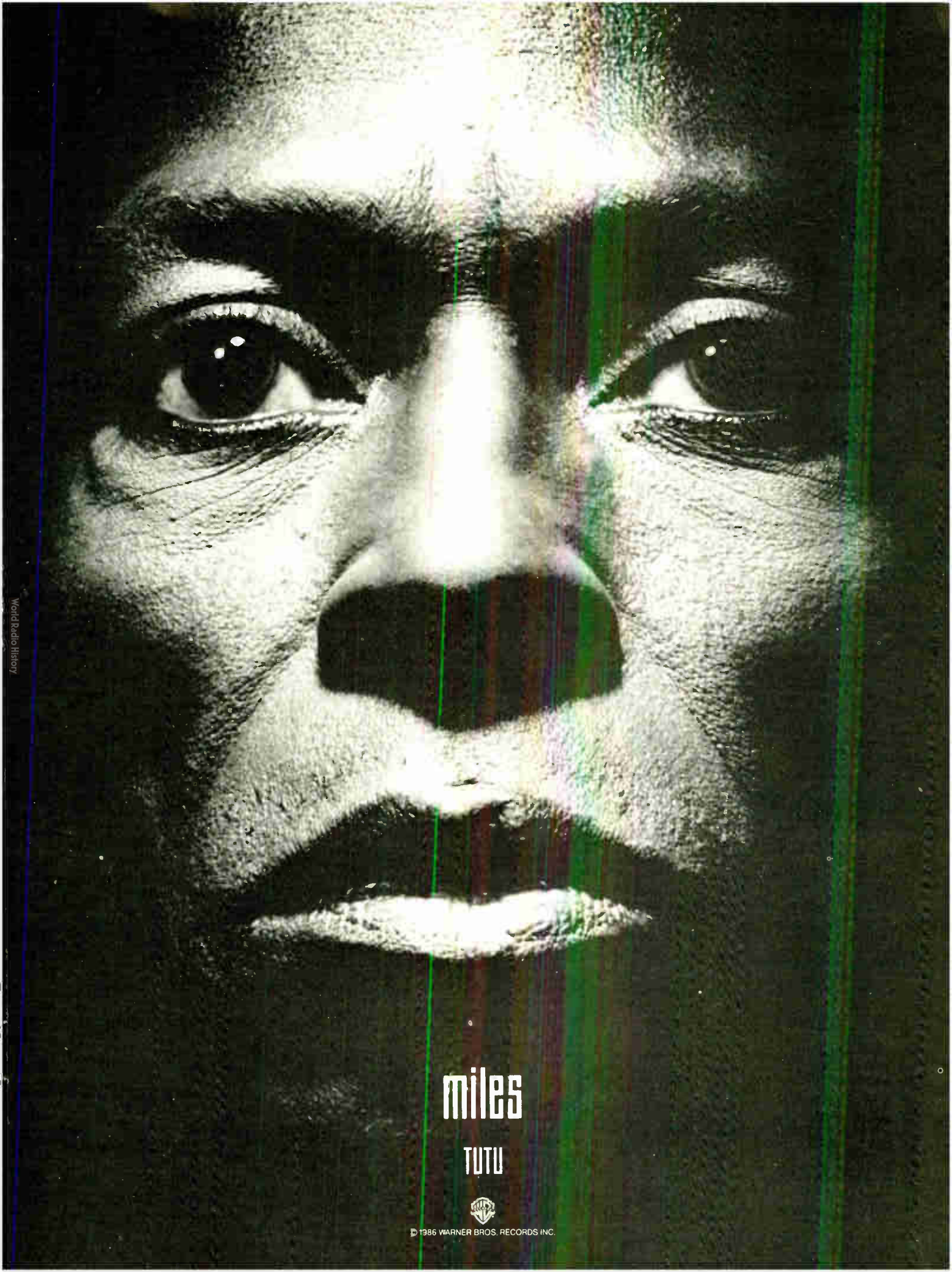
"I've always been working at getting the guitar to sing, but early on this was difficult because I didn't know how to make sustain or long tones, or about the pedals that Hendrix and Coryell were using. I started to experiment, but the duration of a jazz guitar's tone is very short, so the first thing I did was start to play around with hand tremolos like a mandolin player would to make the sound last longer. Inspired by hearing Coryell's and Hendrix's feedback, I would also hold my guitar close to my little amp so I could make longer notes by making the guitar scream.

"Later I got an amp with reverb which helped me a lot. Then I got an Echoplex as a result of my studio work. I've always been resisting and fight-

ing the guitar's sound and trying to make it smoother than it is. At the same time I have a problem, because I attack the guitar with a pick very hard, and some of the sounds I make are because I'm doing things totally opposite, totally wrong. I break strings all the time—one every second concert. After I heard African hi-life music that style interested me a lot, so I tried playing that sound with a small echo. I'm always changing my sound, too. I vary the delay and I always use reverb to get away from a dry sound. I don't feel comfortable without reverb."

Among other members of the New Jungle Orchestra, John Tchicai plays a Conn tenor sax with a Straton Adjustatone hard rubber mouthpiece; an Adolphe Sax soprano sax with Berg Larsen hard rubber mouthpieces; and an Orsi bass clarinet with a Van Doren mouthpiece—and Rico reeds on each. Keyboardist Irene Becker uses a Roland Juno 60 synthesizer, a Yamaha DX7, an Crumar Organizer organ from 1970, all through a Roland 120A Jazz Chorus amplifier. Reedman Morten Carlsen has the largest assortment of instruments, from a Selmer Double Silver tenor sax made in 1965 (with an Otto-Link mouthpiece and medium-soft La Voz reeds) to a Pan American bass sax made in 1919 (outfitted with an A.L. Paris mouthpiece and Rico reeds)—plus a Buffet SI clarinet, a Ney flute handcrafted by Kadry Sorour in Cairo, Egypt, and a black wooden taragato made in Budapest.

The other members of the New Jungle Orchestra utilize—in addition to their standard trumpets, trombones, and the like—such exotica as African talking drums, balafon, bamboo flutes, Tibetan cymbals, Brazilian caxixi, and 34 bird-calls made by Fabrica de Pios in De Caca, Brazil.



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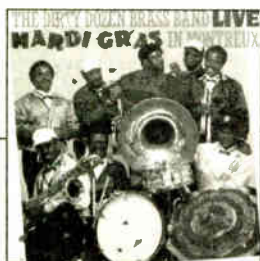
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RECORD REVIEWS

★★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ VERY GOOD ★★★ GOOD ★★ FAIR ★ POOR



DIRTY DOZEN BRASS BAND

LIVE: MARDI GRAS IN MONTREUX—Rouner 2052: *Who Took The Happiness Out?*; *Mardi Gras In New Orleans*; *It Ain't What You Think*; *Do It Fluid/Do It Again*; *The Flintstones Meets The President (Meets The Dirty Dozen)*; *Night Train*; *Blue Monk/Stormy Monday*; *Lickity Split*; *Encore: Blackbird Special, Part 2*.

Personnel: Gregory Davis, Efreem Towns, trumpet; Kevin Harris, tenor saxophone; Roger Lewis, baritone, soprano saxophone; Charles Joseph, trombone; Kirk Joseph, sousaphone; Jenell Marshall, snare drum, vocals; Lionel Batiste, bass drum.

★★★★★

Justification for the accolades and the significance of the Dirty Dozen Brass Band can be heard throughout this wild party of an album. Eight young black musicians from New Orleans have refurbished a dance spirit in jazz without having to incorporate anything electrical (except themselves), choosing instead to build on a local heritage of brass band music and make its generic lines of descent and development more than casually obvious. Brass band music's impact on New Orleans jazz was immeasurable, and evolving out of the various types of music played by these bands was also a special Crescent City feeling for rhythm & blues. So much of what the Dirty Dozen does reveals this brass band foundation of popular dance music, as well as a symbiotic Mardi Gras Indians street music with its infectious pageantry—plus their tireless and equally hard-headed style of playing is sheer fun. The tracks on this album are wonderfully segued from two 1985 Montreux concerts, and they are a revolutionary music not just because of their constant change, as annotator Kalamu ya Salaam points out, but because their presentation itself is constantly in motion. Talk about stamina! You've got to stay in shape to keep up with the Dirty Dozen. They engage their audience from a moving train.

The Dirty Dozen remain true to the heritage of brass band music by emphasizing ensemble playing, and the occasional solos occur in the fashion of their jazzmen forebears in these bands who wanted to stretch out. So we have some gritty baritone work by Roger Lewis on Jimmy Forrest's *Night Train*, followed by his impassioned pleading soprano statement and Charles Joseph's comically laconic trombone on *Blue Monk*. In the *Stormy Monday* segment, down-home singing by Jenell Marshall and Gregory Davis' great trumpet-plunger work highlight the most solo-packed outing here.

Remarkably, in the source and the direction

of the band's style, they have enjoyed New Orleans traditions in the broadest sense, and one can hear in their insistence and in their pungent, melodically extended riffs, a link with non-New Orleanian James Brown, both directly to his irrepressible *Cold Sweat*-through-*The Payback* period, and indirectly through Nigeria's Fela Anikulapo Kuti. While the Dirty Dozen is assuredly on its own terms a singular outfit, any comparisons bear fertile fruit in Brown's far-reaching influence. Their *Encore: Blackbird Special, Part 2* culminates the rhythmic power of side one and the concert-ending *Lickity Split*. The voicings on *Who Took The Happiness Away?*, with its driving sousaphone bassline and co-composer Kevin Harris' mean tenor (particularly the way he opens his solo), recall what may have been James Brown's best years for cohesion and ensemble playing.

Whatever your musical and historical interpretations, the Dirty Dozen delivers!

—ron welburn



STING

BRING ON THE NIGHT—A&M Bring 1: *Bring On The Night*; *When The World Is Running Down*; *Consider Me Gone*; *Low Life*; *We Work The Black Seam*; *Driven To Tears*; *The Dream Of The Blue Turtles*; *Demolition Man*; *One World*; *Love Is The Seventh Wave*; *Moon Over Bourbon Street*; *I Burn For You*; *Another Day*; *Children's Crusade*; *Down So Long*; *Tea In The Sahara*.

Personnel: Sting, guitar, vocals, acoustic bass (cut 12); Darryl Jones, electric bass; Branford Marsalis, tenor, soprano saxophone; Kenny Kirkland, keyboards; Omar Hakim, drums; Janice Pendarvis, Dolette McDonald, vocals.

★★★★½

Live is a good context for this band. You really get a chance to hear Kenny Kirkland stretch out, as he does on the 12-minute jam of *Bring On The Night* segued to *When The World Is Running Down*. And dig Branford's Coltrane-esque *My Favorite Things* soprano solo on the waltz-time *Children's Crusade*. And feel the mesmerizing reggae groove on the 11-minute vamp of *One World* segued to *Love Is The Seventh Wave*, featuring Darryl Jones' rootsman bottom, Omar Hakim's chugging one-drop beat, and Branford's coy Sonny Rollins-like soprano work.

This is one very capable band. Not a great band, and certainly not a jazz band, but a good vehicle for Sting's muse. And it ain't rock either. David Lee Roth's new supercharged

band would blow these guys off the stage. And don't even ask what brother Wynton thinks of it. (Harrumph!) It's likable pop music with some fancy trimmings and thoughtful lyrics by one Gordon Sumner, an upstanding young man of conscience who cares about hungry babies crying in the night, impressionable youths being served up as cannon fodder during times of war, and other human tragedies.

While some point to Sting's work with Msrs. Kirkland, Jones, Hakim, and Marsalis as being an ambitious experiment in bridging the gap between rock and jazz, this formula runs the risk of being neither here nor there. The group's rendition of *When The World*, for instance, is a slick hodgepodge of elements (Kenny's Herbie-esque piano solo, Munch's funk-it-up basslines, Branford's ersatz hip-hop rap, and the Las Vegas-y uh-huhs and whoa-whoas of background singers Pendarvis and McDonald). There's something prefabricated about it all. It just doesn't carry the same sincerity or impact that the original Police version had.

The experiment works best on the ambitious *Dream Of The Blue Turtles* and the jazzy *Consider Me Gone*, featuring Branford's bluesy tenor work. And Sting's call-and-response work with Branford's soprano throughout this double album (particularly on *Tea In The Sahara* and *We Work The Black Seam*) is noteworthy, though not new. Joni Mitchell tried that a decade ago with Wayne Shorter on *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter*.

But Mr. Sting is an earnest lad. And humble. Dig this comment in his liner notes: "*Dream Of The Blue Turtles*, to my horror and embarrassment, was nominated for a Grammy in the Jazz category. Thankfully and rightfully, the award went to Branford's brother Wynton—the first time I've ever been relieved *not* to receive an award."

Oh well, let's just hope, for Sting's sake, that he loses again next year when *this* album gets nominated.

—bill milkowski



EDDIE HARRIS/ELLIS MARSALIS

HOME-coming—Spindletop 105: *Home-coming*; *Deceleration*; *Ethereal Moments 1 And 2*; *I Can See Clear Out Of This World*; *Darn That Dream*; *Have You Met Miss Jones?*; *Zee Blues*.

Personnel: Harris, tenor saxophone; Marsalis, piano.

★★★★★

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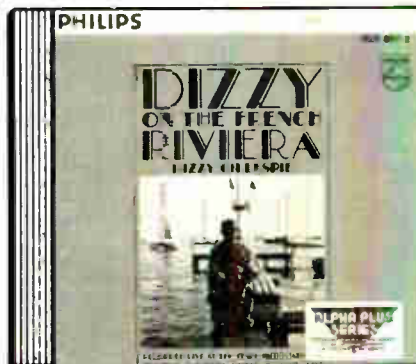
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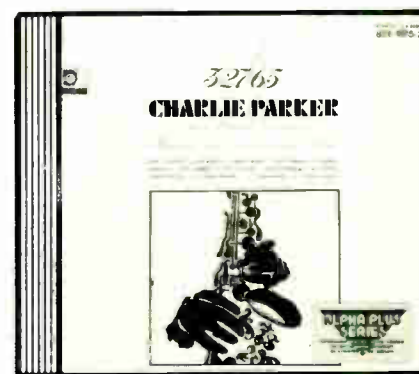
Dizzy Gillespie On The French
Riviera 822 897-2 [+ 1]



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RECORD REVIEWS

"there are no wrong notes, only wrong connections." It's hard to imagine music better exemplifying this belief than that contained in *Homecoming*, for Harris and his collaborator, Ellis Marsalis, consistently make all of the right connections in this restless, sometimes frantic, strangely haunting release. And this unorthodox duo consistently creates large music—large in scope, intensity, and feeling. To say these players are seasoned would be the height of understatement; their playing makes it evident that both men have long since surpassed the point of mastering their instruments and improvisational theory, transcending technique and stylistic limitations to forge a completely transparent, immediate music, music of a broad swirl and swell.

Consider the clarity of the title track. The

textures of Marsalis' intricate chords and Harris' rough-hewn tenor sonorities cast each other in sharp relief. The piece unfolds with effortless poise as each player unerringly charts the other's course, creating a momentum of profound musical ideas. *Ethereal Moments 1 And 2*, the most outside track, is an aptly titled otherworldly venture into atonality with heightened imagery of tension and release, as pouncing piano treble clusters are foiled by tenor cries. The effect, though, is hardly chaotic, for these players seem of the exact mind as to how these outer limits should be navigated.

Also present are three standards, *I Can See Clear Out Of This World*, *Darn That Dream*, and *Have You Met Miss Jones?* The first of these gets a clever latin-funk treatment. Harris' tone

is characteristically boisterous, modulated at times with warm softness, at other times with a raw, cutting edge. These diverse elements of his sonority are balanced to create a coherent, variegated reed spectrum. The duo's reading of *Darn That Dream* is tantalizingly tangential, for only the form of this piece, not its content, is preserved. These wonderfully rich variations on an only obliquely stated theme produce remarkably fluid, intertwining lines. And notice how much mileage they get from the simple turnaround vamp at this vehicle's end—further evidence that these men are in complete control of their material. Harmonic structures, these players assert, need not be destiny. *Have You Met Miss Jones?* receives a similarly infectious peek-a-boo treatment as Marsalis' Garnerish left hand prolongs the tension until the theme is finally stated.

If there's still any doubt as to these players' artfulness, consider *Zee Blues*, a three-part excursion into rich blues tonality. The second section descends to the lower depths of blues tribal memory, a kind of Walpurgis Night of blues feeling. Here, as throughout, these players make all the right connections.

—jon balleras

New Nashville

The new MCA Master Series sure looks good. The first batch of albums on the jazz/New Age label come packaged in distinctive copper-brown jackets with attractive and whimsical art work/photography centered on the front covers. Everything, right down to the lettering, is handsome. And what's this? A sticker affixed to each record cover states that the disc within has been "custom pressed on KC 569 blend premium virgin vinyl." Look out, Windham Hill.

Of course, the music is what matters. The Masters Series allows seven foot-soldiers from the pop, pop-jazz, and bluegrass campaigns to slip free from the shadows of rank-and-file studio obscurity and display their instrumental mettle and songwriting craft in the full light of headliner status—storm the hill, guys, take those record sales away! Several of the sidemen-become-leaders tender soporific sounds tailored for the perpetually pensive listening set. Others venture into the realm of invigorating musical surprise and delight.

British expatriate **Albert Lee** is one of the leading L.A. guitars-for-hire, having worked with Eric Clapton, Emmylou Harris, and the pop *creme de la creme*. The would-be country boy saturates *Speechless* (MCA 5693) with a soulful gaiety that's not the least bit contrived. Lee's speedy yet articulate guitar on the traditional *Arkansas Traveler* and his *T-Bird To Vegas*, plus his low-twang emulation of Duane Eddy on the pioneer rock guitarist's *Cannonball*, exemplify his marvelously frolicsome nature. When Lee takes it slow and easy, as on *Seventeenth Summer*, he does so with overt conviction. Lee's countrified rock co-conspirators are suitably attentive; pianist Jim Cox deserves special mention for contributing unexpectedly persuasive jazz to *Cannonball* and Lee's stompin' *Bullish Boogie*. *Speechless* proves Lee, the studio escapee, has lots to say.

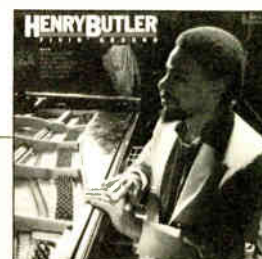
A second denizen of L.A. studios, **Larry Carlton**, best known for his Crusaders involvement and contributions to Steely Dan, takes the easy-listening pop-jazz route on *Alone/But Never Alone* (MCA 5689). The

eight tunes are pleasant enough—after all, Carlton has winning melodic sense and calls upon technically adept session pals for support—but the smile-inducing tranquility begs for some impassioned heat.

Former Taj Mahal sideman **Robert Greenidge** plays steel drums and L.A. cohort **Michael Utley**, who has worked with ex-Byrd Gene Clark and Rita Coolidge, handles the piano, organ, and synthesizer parts on *Mad Music* (MCA 5695), a moderately interesting pop-jazz duo record. Greenidge knows how to draw emotional shadings out of his West Indian percussion and thus enliven otherwise unremarkable original material. On occasion (*Conchita*) a drum machine—programmed by Robert Irving—gets in his way, but Greenidge perseveres. Steel drum magic: *Shango*, in the spirit of Professor Longhair.

From Nashville way comes the disappointing *Under The Wire* (MCA 5675) by **Jerry Douglas**, the accomplished bluegrass dobro player who was a vital part of J. D. Crowe and the New South. The problem with this album is how self-satisfied and showy Douglas, Bela Fleck (banjo), Mark O'Connor (violin), Sam Bush (mandolin), and the other gifted musicians appear when they stray too far from the Bill Monroe tradition and produce a streamlined hybrid of rock, jazz, and bluegrass. A *New Day and Grant's Corner* are well-played, but cold, treacly, dreamy. *The Trip To Kilkerrin* is a passionless ersatz jig and *Before The Blues* plods on aimlessly. Technical proficiency outweighs earnestness too often, and the record is ideal for playing as hip muzak in BMW showrooms.

Tennessee acoustic bass player **Edgar Meyer**, who made a cameo appearance on Douglas' album, is joined by the dobro whiz, O'Connor, Fleck, Bush, and a percussionist for an exhibition of instrumental prowess inappropriately entitled *Unfolding* (MCA 5694). Neither emotional detail nor musical direction is revealed, and about all we get is clear-as-mud pompousness that some might consider bold jazzgrass. At least native Californian **John Jarvis**, the token "sensitive" pianist on the Master Series label, injects pride and joy into the pop throwaways of *So Fa So Good* (MCA 5690). —frank-john hadley



HENRY BUTLER

FIVIN' AROUND—MCA/Impulse 5707: *FIVIN' AROUND*; L.A. *SAMBA*; *THE EASTERN CONNECTION*; *IMPROVISATION ON AN AFGHAN THEME*; *GIANT STEPS*; *SWING IT!*; *MY COLORING BOOK*; *THE BUTLER'S BLUES*; *OLD FOLKS*; *I WANT JESUS TO WALK WITH ME*.

Personnel: Butler, piano (cuts 1-9), vocal (10); Charlie Haden, bass (1, 2, 5-9); Billy Higgins, drums (1, 2, 5-9), gambre (3); Freddie Hubbard, trumpet (2, 6, 9); Azar Lawrence, tenor saxophone (2, 9); Jeff Clayton, oboe (1, 3); Steve Kujala, flute (7); Richard Greene, Margaret Wooten, violins; Roxann Jacobson, viola; Gloria Strassner, cello (5, 9).

★ ★ ★ ½

The specter of John Coltrane haunts Henry Butler's debut album on the revived Impulse label. There's a ghostly logic to that, of course, since Coltrane was the first artist signed to the original Impulse label, and his name ultimately appeared on some three dozen Impulse albums. The most direct link to Coltrane is *Giant Steps*—arranged by Butler for piano trio plus string quartet—but there are many other subtle connections: the influence of McCoy Tyner on Butler's playing and composing; the sharp-edged sound of Azar Lawrence's tenor saxophone; the driving modal vamps; the references to religion and Eastern music; the

CURRENT EVENTS OF JAZZ



BRIAN BROMBERG
A New Day

with Alex Acuna, Kei Akagi,
Joe Farrell, Freddie Hubbard,
Ernie Watts

This powerfully infectious album debuts Brian Bromberg's talents on jazz bass. With guest solo stars Freddie Hubbard and Ernie Watts, this LP contains the final flute, tenor and soprano sax work of the late Joe Farrell. They join Bromberg and others to make this a refreshingly electric experience.



CARMEN LUNDY
Good Morning Kiss

Carmen Lundy is the bold, truthful answer to the search for sensational young women vocalists. This album should be influential in catapulting her to eventual stardom, where she will take her place beside the veteran top-floor occupants such as Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Carmen McRae and Nancy Wilson.



STEVE KUHN TRIO
Life's Magic

with Ron Carter, Al Foster

This collaboration with two of the foremost practitioners on their respective instruments, Ron Carter on the bass and Al Foster on the drums, is triumphant and authoritative. By way of the deserved attention the music on this album will attract the Kuhn Trio will find its way into the current annals of jazz.



DIZZY GILLESPIE WITH THE MITCHELL/RUFF DUO
Enduring Magic

Exquisite, magical, elegant and swinging all describe this album's music recorded live from concert performances featuring Dizzy Gillespie's trumpet and Jew's harp and the stylings of Dwayne Mitchell on piano and Willie Ruff on bass and French Horn.



STEPHANE GRAPPELLI
Live In San Francisco

Stephane Grappelli's inspired trademarks are taped live in San Francisco at the Great American Music Hall and the Paul Masson Winery. This best band in many years includes the young contemporary electric guitar playing of Martin Taylor, Diz Dwyer's acoustic guitar, and Jack Sewing's double bass, swinging hot with new and familiar tunes.



THE LEADERS *mudfoot*

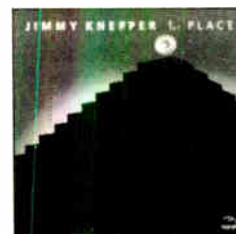
Arthur Blythe, Lester Bowie,
Chico Freeman, Kirk Lightsey,
Cecil McBee, Don Moye

The Leaders is a powerful all star line-up loaded with six established New York band leaders with international profiles. The spirited sextet has been playing to full houses throughout their U.S. and European tours during the past couple of years. This is the first album by this hard-swinging group of jazz innovators.



CRYSTAL
Clear

Crystal is a broad-appeal contemporary band whose instrumental and vocal stylings will quickly enliven the senses. A core of four talents—Charlie and Holly Camerata, Jim Lucas and James Cardarelli, augmented by guest artists—their magnetism works!



JIMMY KNEPPER
1st Place

This is a long-awaited album by world class trombonist, Jimmy Knepper. The title "1st Place" reinforces the high esteem accorded this perennial poll winning jazz star joined by a lineup of front rank sidemen, guitarist Bruce Forman, bassist Mike Richmond and drummer Billy Hart.



STAN GETZ QUARTET
Voyage

This is an impassioned Stan Getz album destined to become a fast favorite. Getz' incomparable magic on the tenor sax is made even more memorable by the bright talents of Kenny Barron, George Mraz and Victor Lewis. A truly uncontested choice as one of the idiom's best albums by a giant of jazz and his quartet.

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RECORD REVIEWS

presence of Freddie Hubbard (who played on *Ascension*); the sound of *Swing It!*, inspired, says Butler in the liner notes, by "what (bassist) Jimmy Garrison did with perfect fifths on *Equinox*...."

Most important is the spirit of searching. Coltrane spent his life in pursuit of a musical Holy Grail. It will be many years before we know if Butler's quest is anywhere near as significant, but he clearly has a restless soul. He begins his album with an unusual piece in 5/4 and phrygian mode, and closes it with a


spiritual that sets his operatic bass-baritone voice against an ambitious string quartet arrangement based on serial concepts. In between, he explores different formats (solo piano, trio, quintet), instrumentation (oboe, flute, the African gambre), rhythms, harmonic structures, and musical forms.

Butler, a student of the iconoclastic Alvin Batiste, is obviously a very talented fellow. Unfortunately, he has tried (or was encouraged) to show us the full range of his abilities in the space of a single album. Listened to


straight through, *Fivin' Around* sounds like some sort of anthology. The best tunes, to my ears, are the least contrived ones: *L.A. Samba* (featuring a mellow Hubbard); the sparkling *Improvisation On An Afghan Theme*; and—especially—*The Butler's Blues*.

We can taste the essence of Butler's music on *The Butler's Blues*, a trio piece featuring Charlie Haden. Throughout the album, Haden and Billy Higgins offer eloquent, perfectly balanced support—Higgins fluid and bright, Haden dark-toned and dead-center—but their musicianship is sometimes obscured by the elaborate arrangements. On this one tune, it's everyone front and center. Butler, unencumbered by guest soloists, locks in with his rhythm section and just *plays*. He sounds more relaxed and forceful than he does anywhere else on the album. Since Butler, Haden, and Higgins play together regularly, how about a live album of the trio next time? —jim roberts


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CANNONBALL ADDERLEY

THE CANNONBALL ADDERLEY COLLECTION, VOLUME 1: THEM DIRTY BLUES—Landmark 1301: *DAT DERE* (take 5); *DAT DERE* (take 3); *DEL SASSER*; *SOON*; *WORK SONG* (take 3); *WORK SONG* (take 4); *JEANNINE*; *EASY LIVING*; *THEM DIRTY BLUES*.

Personnel: Adderley, alto saxophone; Nat Adderley, cornet; Bobby Timmons (cuts 1-5), Barry Harris (6-9), piano; Sam Jones, bass; Louis Hayes, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

VOLUME 2: CANNONBALL'S BOSSA NOVA—Landmark 1302: *ONCE I LOVED*; *MINHA SAUDADE*; *CLOUDS* (take 5); *CLOUDS* (take 7); *GROOVY SAMBA*; *JOYCE'S SAMBA*; *CORCOVADO* (take 8); *CORCOVADO* (take 6); *SAMBOP*; *BATIDA DIFERENTE*.

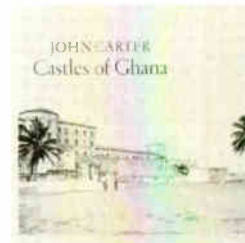
Personnel: Adderley, Paulo Moura (1,2,6,9,10), alto saxophone; Sergio Mendes, piano; Durval Ferreira, guitar; Octavio Bailly, Jr., bass; Dom Um Romao, drums; Pedro Paulo, trumpet (1,2,6,9,10).

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

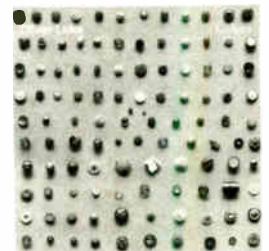
VOLUME 3: JAZZ WORKSHOP REVISITED—Landmark 1303: *PRIMITIVO*; *JESSICA'S DAY*; *UNIT 7*; *THE JIVE SAMBA*; *MARNEY*; *MELLOW BUNO*.

Personnel: Adderley, alto saxophone; Nat Adderley, cornet; Yusef Lateef, tenor saxophone (2,3,5,6), flute (1,4), oboe (1); Joe Zawinul, piano; Sam Jones, bass; Louis Hayes, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★



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GRAMAVISION

RECORD REVIEWS

Reissued albums pop up everywhere these days, praise be, and among the most welcome of the back-in-print lot is Landmark Records' *Cannonball Adderley Collection*. Landmark honcho Orrin Keepnews co-owned the old Riverside label and produced in-shop records by Julian "Cannonball" Adderley between 1958 and '64. Certain long-lost master tapes had been gathering dust in the vaults of Capitol Records, of all places, until Keepnews rescued them.

The Cannonball Adderley Quintet, along with other hard-bop mavens, put the words "funky" and "soulful" into the jazz lexicon. The group indeed furnished jubilant, outgoing, bluesy sounds for many years (from the late '50s to Cannonball's passing in 1975), contributing mightily to the popularization of jazz along the way. The three recently unearthed discs remind us how much he's missed.

Them Dirty Blues (originally on Riverside 1170) is one of the earthiest—and best—of all the Quintet's albums. Cannonball delivers restrained-but-powerful sermons on alto, the big fellow's blue-shaded emotions to the fore. Brother Nat is in magnificent form, his cornet mature, exuberant, and probing in all registers (no harm, really, if he occasionally plays flat). The kinsmen's handling of the song themes in unison is the epitome of soulfulness. The rhythm section sets *solid* grooves throughout the selections. On side one pianist Bobby Timmons is a wellspring of stirring gospel-blues in his solos and block chord support; Barry Harris, on the ivories for the numbers re-

corded several weeks later, carries on competently in a less funky bop bag. "Soul jazz" flag-wavers *Dat Dere* and *Work Song* (two takes of each included) still provide great pleasure.

Cannonball's Bossa Nova (issued in '63 as Capitol 2877) was a special "outside" recording project, done by Cannonball sans Quintet. Accompanied by six Brazilian musicians, he strikes a romantic turn-down-the-lights mood, as he coddles then expands upon the pretty melodies of Antonio Carlos Jobim's *Once I Loved* and *Corcovado* (two appearances); takes happy solo flights in pianist Sergio Mendes' *Groovy Samba*; and generally invests the songs with coolly swinging lyricism. Drawbacks are the constant politeness of the Bossa Rio Sextet and the unvarying tone of Cannonball's saxophone, the combination of which wearies this listener when samba follows samba follows samba.

The third *Collection* release is *Jazz Workshop Revisited* (Riverside 9444), the return to the West Coast jazz den where the group's career-launching hit *Quintet In San Francisco* (Riverside 6062) had been recorded. Multi-instrumentalist Yusef Lateef and pianist Joe Zawinul were now in the fold and the presence of the former, a vigorous player and a serious exponent of African and Asian modes, gives the music added dimensions—*Primitivo* and *Mellow Buno* in particular. The album's soulful earthshaker is *The Jive Samba*. It's safe to assume the Jazz Workshop crowd went home smiling—the music's good feelings haven't paled since then.

—frank-john hadley

HENRY KAISER

MARRYING FOR MONEY—Minor Music 1010: *MURDER ONE*; *THE SET-UP*; *T-MEN*; *THE BIG CLOCK*; *TOO LATE FOR TEARS*; *RED HARVEST*; *PIGS AND BATTLESHIPS*; *JAVA JACK*; *THE HONEY TRAP*; *THE HAIRY EYEBALL*.

Personnel: Kaiser, Glen Phillips (cut 1), Fred Marshall (2), John Abercrombie (5), Amos Garrett (10), electric guitar; Hilary Hanes, electric bass; John Hanes, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

"Free improvisation" doesn't describe a sound, but an attitude; *Marrying For Money* ("all selections free-improvised") brims with riff-based rock and tactical overdubs. A contradiction? Not really. Often, a track will instantly coalesce around a single constant element sketched out in the opening bars: a lumbering bass ostinato, or shrapnel-edged metallic chords.

Early in Kaiser's career, Derek Bailey was his departure point. On more recent excursions, his other idol, Captain Beefheart, has supplied prime inspiration—good news for all who recognize Don Van Vliet as a modern master of polyrhythms and texture. John Hanes' rolling thunder [sic] harks back to Beef drummer Drumbo, with whom Henry's recorded. Bassist Hilary Hanes' unhurried yet insistent progress likewise has roots in the Captain's Magic Band.

But where Beefheart's music is carefully planned to sound casually chaotic, many of

these improvisations were spontaneously shaped to sound carefully structured. At times, seeming seamlessness makes one doubt its improvised nature—witness the snug fit of crunching, dancing chords and bulbous bass line on the Beefheartiest *Battleships*. Here, Kaiser's overdubbed countermeasures forge such admirable coherence. Multi-tracking needn't violate the spirit of free improvisation, if the addenda are spontaneously conceived. But *Battleships'* studied use of overdubs breaks the LP's ground rules—even if the results are too winning to make any objections count for much. Besides, you can't pay homage to Beefheart without a dense woof and welter of brittle guitars.

Guest pickers from Abercrombie to Garrett blend in with surprising ease. Just as these guests are drawn from far-flung worlds, and just as tune-titles refer to sources as diverse (yet connectable) as Hammett's hardboiled fiction and Imamura's surreal cinema, so has Kaiser based his style on eclecticism, discovering his own identity in the process of creating unity from diversity. (In this respect, his working method resembles Eugene Chadbourne's.) Thus, he'll combine a loopy, singing Frithy guitar line with messily splashy chords (*Murder One*, with guest Glen Phillips), or incessant ant-man string chatter with a goofy terpsichorean beat (*Honey Trap*). In the process, Kaiser and company make tunelessly noisy music whose antecedents are clear but whose sound is its own. And you can dance to it.

—kevin whitehead

Nostalgia In Red Square

A couple of years ago, Francis Davis bemoaned the "seeming indifference of the American critical fraternity and record buying public" to Soviet jazz. (His remarks were published in an *Ad Lib* in **db**, April 1984.) Davis praised the "overall quality and originality" of the music and wondered why there wasn't more interest in the "strange and fertile" world of Soviet jazz.

Since that time, Western awareness of the Soviet scene has taken a great leap forward. The catalog of Leo Records, the label operated by outspoken Russian emigre Leo Feigin, now lists more than 20 albums by jazz players from the U.S.S.R. and other Communist countries. Another small record label, East Wind, has released five albums licensed from Melodya, the official Soviet record company. (A two-record anthology of selections from the East Wind albums is available on Book-of-the-Month-Club Records.) The best-known Soviet jazz group, the Ganelin Trio, recently played their first concerts in the U.S. American tv, radio, and newspapers gave the tour extensive coverage, and it was the subject of a feature article by Howard Mandel in the September 1986 **db**.

Still, for many Westerners, the idea of Russians playing jazz seems a little ridiculous (like the idea of a B-movie actor being head of the U.S. must seem to many Russians). How good could this *dzhaz* be, anyway? The answer is: better than you might think. The best Soviet jazz is challenging, innovative music that draws on both American jazz and indigenous musical resources. But don't take my word for it—listen to the records.

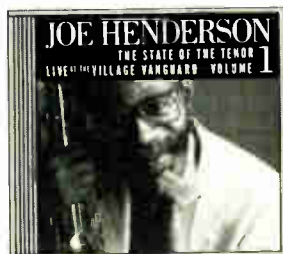
The best place to start is with an album by the **Ganelin Trio**. The exploratory collective of Vyacheslav Ganelin, Vladimir Chekasin, and Vladimir Tarasov has frequently been compared to the Art Ensemble of Chicago and other AACM groups—justifiably, I think, since they are using similar methods, if different material. Because of this, the trio's music is an important bridge between Soviet and American jazz. Each Ganelin album is devoted to a single "polystylistical" suite that combines elements of jazz, modern classical, and Russian folk music. For example: *Poi Segué* (East Wind 20647), a crisp 1981 studio recording, begins with a single, resonant chord that is dismantled and then reassembled by the musicians during the next 37 minutes. Some passages are carefully worked-out; others are wide-open and very free. The sound colors are impressively varied, especially since they are accomplished without the electronics that are commonplace in the West. Instead, each musician uses many instruments: Ganelin plays guitar, flute, and basset (keyboard bass) as well as

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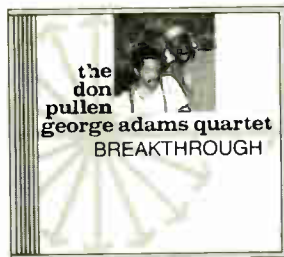
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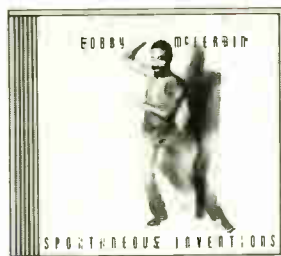
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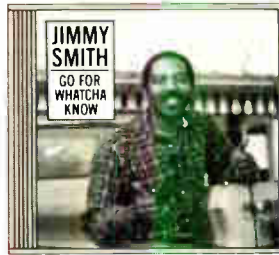
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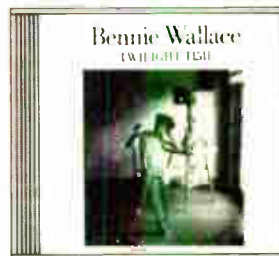
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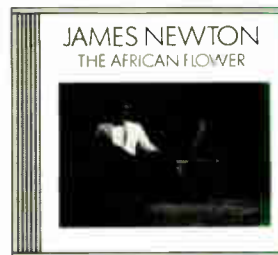


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5 STARS—DOWN BEAT



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RECORD REVIEWS

piano; Chekasin is featured on saxophones, trombone, flute, violin, and percussion; Tarasov plays flute, drums, and percussion.

The Ganelin style has proven to be highly influential with other Soviet jazz musicians, like **Anatoly Vapirov**. The three pieces on his album *Invocations* (Leo 121) are long suites similar to those of the Ganelin Trio. Vapirov builds his textures with different materials, however, emphasizing his virtuosic saxophone improvisations and the wordless vocals of Valentina Ponomareva. A classically trained musician, Vapirov seems to have been strongly influenced by John Coltrane, Albert Ayler, and other "New Thing" saxophonists. His wailing, squealing outbursts are tremendously emotional, but he is also capable of great delicacy.

The pianist **Sergey Kuryokhin**, who accompanies Vapirov on *Invocations*, could be the Soviet Union's first crossover musician. His intricate jazz style was featured on two earlier Leo releases—*The Ways Of Freedom* (Leo 107) and *Sentenced To Silence* (Leo 110)—and he can be heard playing rock keyboards on the double-album *Red Wave: 4 Underground Bands From The U.S.S.R.* (Big Time 1-10020). Kuryokhin's band, Aquarium, is the most polished of the groups on the album. Their thoughtfully energetic tunes

sound something like the Talking Heads, although the lyrics suffer in translation: "Take your flute/I've already packed mine/Instrument of unknown quantity of strings/I won't return home tonight." Like the Soviet avant garde jazz groups, Aquarium and the other rock bands on *Red Wave* weave Russian folk music and "unmusical" grunts, growls, and screams into their music.

The group **Homo Liber** from Novosibirsk, Siberia, plays lengthy pieces that include many "little instruments" as well as reeds, piano, and—sometimes—bass and drums. In an interview packaged with their album *Siberian 4* (Leo 114), the musicians cite the influence of Coltrane, Ayler, Ornette Coleman, and other American free players. Compared to the dense structures of the Ganelin Trio, Homo Liber's suites are very spacious, with isolated chords and long, floating horn lines that suggest the vast desolation of Siberia. Their second album, *Untitled* (Leo 129), is a piano/saxophone duet that is overwhelmingly gloomy despite the comic twanging of a "khomus" (jaw harp).

Rituals (Leo 141) features the Russian clarinetist **Misha Lobko** leading a group of French musicians. The program begins with a long, Ganelin-like suite and ends with a six-minute free jam. Lobko extracts an impres-

sive range of sounds from his instruments (B \flat clarinet, C clarinet, bass clarinet, and baroque clarinet), ranging from a smooth, legato tone to agonized gargles. His music has a dark, elegaic quality, something that's reinforced by the grim recitation of a poem during the piece *Ritual III—Sentence*.

If Soviet jazz sounds a bit somber—well, a lot of it is. But then there's **Arkhangelsk**, a wonderfully eclectic sextet that has taken the spirit of Sun Ra to the frozen shores of the White Sea. Their eponymous album (Leo 135) begins with some very strange vocalizing and out-to-lunch playing, then unexpectedly segues into a rowdy version of *Sunny Side Of The Street*. After more outside blowing, there's a bit of dixieland, an r&b vamp, a vaguely oriental piano-and-percussion duet, and a stomping instrumental version of *Rock Around The Clock*. Saxophonist Vladimir Rezitsky then cuts loose with some pure energy blasts; a wailing synthesizer enters, and, out of the blue, Rezitsky begins to growl a vocal (in English) as the band plays *I Just Can't Leave Your Love Alone*, a Joe Sample/Will Jennings tune recorded by B. B. King on his *Midnight Believer* album. Alas, the *Arkhangelsk* album is only 35 minutes long, having been culled from damaged tapes of a 1984 concert in Leningrad. Encore!

BOSS SPECIAL SET-UPS/2



Although the Ganelin Trio, Homo Liber, Arkhangelsk, and other Soviet groups are working on the cutting edge of the avant garde, it would be wrong to conclude that this is the main thrust of Soviet jazz. Actually, as James Lincoln Collier points out in his liner notes on *Poi Sequé*, "The most broadly popular kinds of jazz in the Soviet Union are traditional jazz . . . and big band swing." So far, no records by Russian dixieland bands have reached us, but the mainstream is represented on such albums as *Blue Coral* (East Wind 20648) by the guitarist **Alexei Kuznetsov**. Although he's accomplished in the chord/melody style, Kuznetsov swings like a lead balalaika. The late **Vagif Mustafa-Zadeh**, a pianist from Baku, was a far more convincing player with a powerful two-handed style shaped by his study of Oscar Peterson. Mustafa-Zadeh's album *Aspiration* (East Wind 20650), recorded in 1978, is a fascinating if uneven blend of bebop with Azerbaijani folk tunes and the Russian classical tradition. Unfortunately, Mustafa-Zadeh died in 1979, before he had a chance to perfect his unique stylistic synthesis.

There are lots of Soviet rock bands (see *Red Wave*), and there are even Soviet fusion bands. **Arsenal**, led by Alexei Kozlov, can be heard on the album *With Our Own Hands*

(East Wind 20649), recorded in 1982. Their stiff Mahavishnu riffs and trite synthesizer effects sound badly dated. The pianist **Igor Brill** has a more contemporary style, and his rhythm section on *Before The Sun Sets* (East Wind 20646) plays some pretty convincing grooves. Brill's electric jazz is curiously unfocused, though, tilting at one moment toward abstract, Weather Report-ish textures and then veering into lightweight tv-theme pop. Russian "New Age" music, I guess.

In Czechoslovakia, **Jiri Durman** (reeds), **Miroslav Posejpal** (bass), and **Miroslav Kodym** (percussion) are playing long, episodic suites with a different twist. Their album *Hidden Voices* (Leo 123) leans heavily on multiple percussion effects. Kodym does not play trap drums but uses cymbals, bells, chimes, bongos, castanets, and various "found objects" like books and metal pots to create exotic settings for the potent alto sax blasts of Durman. Posejpal thickens the textures with arco bass effects, bowed cymbals, and percussive forays inside a piano.

Down in Romania, pianist **Harry Tavitian** and drummer **Corneliu Stroe** are mixing up outrageous duets based on traditional folk dances, avant garde classical music, and Thelonious Monk. On *Transylvania Suite* (Leo 132)—which has a blood-red cover, by the

way—Tavitian goes for the jugular with zig-zag bebop phrases and Cecil Taylor-ish clusters. His adaptation of two pieces by the 17th-century Romanian composer Ion Caianu includes one rip-roaring dance in 5/4 and another over a shuffle beat. Tavitian plays everything with great intensity, but he's got a lively sense of humor, too, punctuating his keyboard crashes with tinkling asides and lusty shouts.

The audacity of many of these albums is especially impressive when considered against the gray backdrop of life in a Communist country. It's one thing, after all, to struggle against the indifference of the American mass market—but quite another to work with the secret police peering over your shoulder. (Not too long ago, it was forbidden to play flatted fifths and other reactionary blue notes in the U.S.S.R.) In that context, this music is that much more remarkable. It deserves to be heard.

(Leo Records are available from N.M.D.S., 500 Broadway, New York, NY 10012. East Wind Records are available from East Wind Trade Associations, 99 Hungerford St., Hartford, CT 06106. The rock anthology *Red Wave* is sold by Stingray Productions, 9000 W. Sunset Blvd. #405, Los Angeles, CA 90069.)

—jim roberts



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LIONEL HAMPTON

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Personnel: Hampton, vibraphone, DX7 synthesizer; Vince Cutro, John Pendenza, Al Bryant, Lee Romano, trumpet; Charles Stephens, Robert Trowers, John Gordon, Chris Gulhaugen, trombone; Tom Chapin, Adam Brewner, Doug Miller, Jerry Weldon, Dave Schumacher, reeds; Alan Simon, piano; Pat O'Leary, bass; Rick Visone, drums; Sylvia Bennett, vocals.

★ ★ ★



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I trust I won't reveal myself as a blithering know-nothing if I confide that I'd never heard of Sylvia Bennett until this LP came along. Yes, it's a Lionel Hampton record according to the cover, and I believe I've heard of him. But it's really her album with Lionel taking the role of conductor/soloist. And that's why I wonder: If she's really so unknown, why would she occupy co-star status with Hampton on an album that might otherwise be a top-notch Sinatra project?

In any case, here she is alongside Hampton in a throwback to the days of big band, three-minute, fox-trot-with-vocal-refrain items. It's an unusual, unexpected, but delightfully attractive set from Hampton, a player normally associated with high-energy instrumental workouts.

But standards seem to be in, and perhaps Hampton wants to get in on what's in. Neither the intent nor the mood is nostalgic here. Hampton's picked nine evergreens, dressed them in bright, big band charts, seasoned with impeccably silky and graceful vibraphone work. The band plays it all with relaxed, swinging journeyman craftsmanship. *Avalon* is the one instrumental and the familiar closing lick from the Benny Goodman Quartet routine seems grafted onto this gently boppish chart. But all in all, Lionel's succeeded admirably in producing a classy, if not quite classic, mix of excellent songs and elegant jazz. No surprises, none intended.

—john mcdonough

WAXING ON

Three For The Keys

MONTY ALEXANDER: *FULL STEAM AHEAD* (Concord Jazz 287) ★ ★ ★ ★

KENNY BARRON: *AUTUMN IN NEW YORK* (Uptown 27.26) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½

PAUL BLEY: *MY STANDARD* (SteepleChase 1214) ★ ★ ★ ★

GEORGE CABLES: *PHANTOM OF THE CITY* (Contemporary 14014) ★ ★ ★ ★

DICK HINDMAN: *SECRET GARDEN* (Catero 010) ★ ★ ★ ½

KEITH JARRETT/GARY PEACOCK/JACK DE JOHNETTE: *STANDARDS LIVE* (ECM 1317) ★ ★ ★ ★

OLIVER JONES: *REQUESTFULLY YOURS* (Justin Time 11) ★ ★

RONNIE MATHEWS: *SO SORRY PLEASE* (Nilva 3414) ★ ★ ★

MULGREW MILLER: *KEYS TO THE CITY* (Landmark 1507) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½

TETE MONTOLIU: *CARMINA* (Jazzizz 4003) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½

RUFUS REID: *SEVEN MINDS* (Sunnyside 1010) ★ ★ ★ ★ ½

JIMMY ROWLES/RED MITCHELL: *TRIO* (Contemporary 14016) ★ ★ ★

HILTON RUIZ: *CROSS CURRENTS* (Stash 248) ★ ★ ★ ★

NABIL TOTAH: *DOUBLE BASS* (Consolidated Artists 103-A) ★ ★ ★

Whoever said you can't have fun while taking care of business obviously doesn't know much about playing music, especially jazz music, and especially pianists like most of these players, at the top of their game. Mainstream keyboard today is still thoroughly absorbing the legacy of T. Monk and B. Evans (gone barely a decade) for style and Oscar Peterson and Art Tatum for technique, and the joy of swinging pervades the music of their spheres in very different but boundlessly inclusive ways.

You can't ask for much more drive and direction, intelligence and excitement from piano, bass, and drums than you get here from

Monty Alexander with Frank Gant and Ray Brown. These authoritative interpretations of classic bop and standards (Randy Weston's *Hi Fly* is a killer; *Happy Talk* from *The King And I* a bouncing joy) smack of Oscar Peterson with ginger, and Mr. Brown contributes as mightily to the punch and depth of ensemble patterns here as he did with O.P. (and Ed Thigpen) 30 years ago.

Muscadet winemaker Jean-Ernest Sauvion describes his light, clean wines as "crisp and teasing," and that's how **Kenny Barron** plays piano: light, firm touch, playful lines, dizzying inventiveness, double-times without haste. The three originals are specially fun, as Barron excels with the ins and outs of bop form. *New York Attitude* is full of quick changes a la Bud Powell, a medium samba to his wife, *Joanna Julia*, brims with delighted surprise, and *Lemuria* (*An African Atlantis*) goes up in a swirl of brilliant leaves as Barron fairly dances through Central Park. Rufus Reid (himself a leader further down the page) and Freddie Waits bring optimal support—that rich, springy bass and needling, shimmery ride.

Paul Bley seems ever to have had his inward flair for oblique cantabile, and his personalized stamp on old standards. I remember a GNP date with Charlie Haden in 1958 where Gershwin's *Porgy* had an odd bass line and the melody certain raised tones, and Bley's still putting the fresh treatment here on a mixed bag of oldies. *I Wish I Knew* gets tense tremolos and bowed bass from Jesper Lundgaard; *You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To* blares out discordantly as a piano roll; *I Can't Get Started* is cryptic, *Black And Blue* earthy. Billy Hart is as usual a bit more than you could ask from a drummer. Always a challenge.

George Cables has been one of the most effective team players in jazz—as witnessed by his many late Art Pepper dates—and he's a leader of sensitivity and substance. No ghost with his clean, crisp writing and churning style, Cables flashes forth with a trio date of brilliance and élan. Tony Williams and John Heard provide glove-tight support to the sparkling arrangements, especially on the grabby title track, waltz-light *But He Knows*, and the arresting frames to *Dark Side/Light Side* and chipper *You Stepped Out Of A Dream*. (Heard is also seen, as his Van Gogh-like portrait of Cables graces the cover; see also Montoliu below.)

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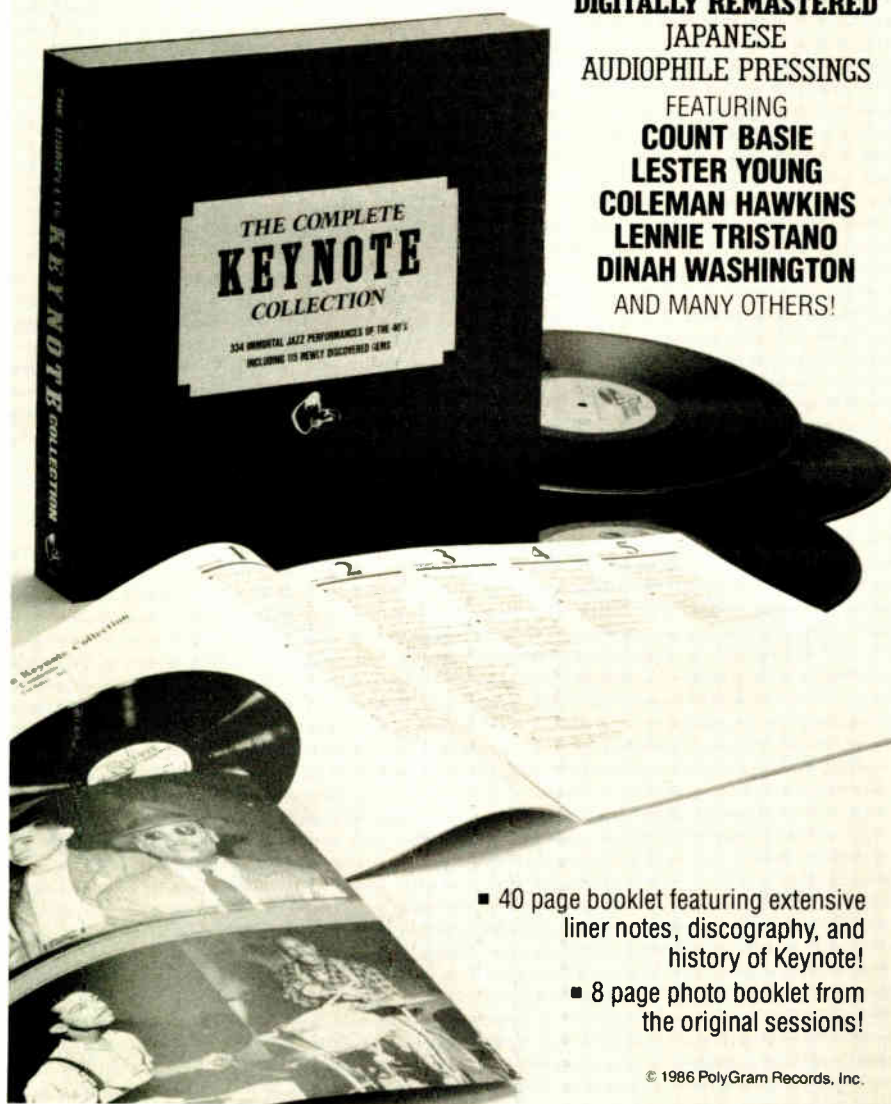
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an unabashed Bill Evans advocate is especially evident on ballads, like his *Lost In A Dream* and inescapably on the cover of *Hi-Lili Hi-Lo*: lambent phrasing, note choices, voice leading, triplet tripping—everything. His somewhat predictable melodizing and narrow block chord range are played cleanly and with respect. Hindman's overfondness of certain licks and tendency to rush the beat are not shared by bassist Paul Warburton and drummer Colin Bailey. An easy-going samba features Warburton's solid, attractive cantabile playing, and dub him a creative listener to Scott LaFaro. Hindman is found dreaming of the master in his own way on two closing ballads, and moving toward Windham Hill.

Standard revival has been a boon for **Kelth Jarrett**, who with **Gary Peacock** and **Jack DeJohnette** have come up with another delicious set, this time before an adoring full house in a Paris hall. Full workouts are afforded excellent tunes sadly neglected by young jammers, such as *The Way You Look Tonight* (Fields/Kern) and *Falling In Love With Love* (Rodgers/Hart) as well as surprises: another Alec Wilder goodie (*The Wrong Blues*, unbluesy as *Blues In The Night*) and the Adamson/McHugh Pat Boone chestnut (*Too Young To Go Steady*). Jarrett's popularity makes him, like Linda Ronstadt, a vehicle of revitalization for superior pop material of the post-World War II era; having caught young ears with his oblique and insinuating opener of *Stella By Starlight*—that redoubtable warhorse—Jarrett moves us along as the perfect teacher of neglected goodies. You just have to tune out his gratuitous cries and moans—not easy. Peacock and DeJohnette deserve their sharing of top billing; this is a trio of rare interplay.

Oliver Jones is ostensibly a Canadian pianist who has made little attempt to shake off the awesome and confining mantle of Torontonian Oscar Peterson. Thus we endure galumphing Erroll Garnerisms with good-time tremolos and minor asides on *Teach Me Tonight*, speed-demon antics a la Chopin on *Cheek To Cheek* (mis-timed bashes like at the circus), a mock-serious *'Round Midnight*, and a giddy Gershwin medley. Everything is rushed, even rubatos, in the hyper drink-up-and-go-home tradition. Jones' is an exercise in blatant histrionics, cocktail funk; along for the ride are bassist Skip Beckwith and drummer Anil Sharma.

Ronnie Matthews is wound tight and dry, with fast and facile fingers. He plays Monk by the book (*Crepuscule With Nellie*) but his own blues, *Song For Leslie*, is paced too fast to pop, and most of the runs up and down *Daydream* are crabbed and songless, inward-pointing and brusque. Ray Drummond's butter-fat bass sound brings the date a long way, and Paris-based Alvin Queen here exhibits more chops on drums than as producer. Good straight-ahead mainstream.

Mulgrew Miller is unquestionably a thinking player, in the tradition of Herbie Nichols, where no note is struck without forethought and intent. Yet he is also a musician of power and deep emotional impact, in the tradition of McCoy Tyner, whose rumble and roar are reached in a noble tribute on *Sand's Run*, with Smitty Smith rolling and slashing a la Elvin

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Jones. The tough and tender elements merge best in the rugged vistas of *Portrait Of A Mountain*. Miller shows a wink of wit on *Milestones*, and a graceful solo bow to Duke on *Warm Valley*. Ira Coleman appeared in Boston several years back as an impressive young bassist, and he's improving steadily; his strength of character and resolute purpose show through clearly here. A brilliant "debut," after years with Blakey & Sons, Woody Shaw, and Johnny Griffin.

The unfettered lyricism of Spanish keyboard master **Tete Montoliu** is a thing of beauty and a joy forever. When he's on (nearly always) he's untouchable for warmth of spirit, informed harmonic understanding, perfection of detail in phrasing, and majesty of expressive skills. Tete has a knack for pacing the speed and direction of successive phrases, evident especially on Kenny Dorham's neglected gem *Scandia Skies*. Drummer Sherman Ferguson plays with candor and restraint; the two-minute *Salt Peanuts* is a classic in miniature. John Heard plays both fine bass and brush: his acrylic portrait of Tete and Carmina Aymani, this album's dedicatee, is as bold, colorful, and refreshing as the music.

Rufus Reid, one of two non-pianist leaders among these 14 dates, has plenty of taste, class, and smarts, and his album with Jim McNeely and Terry Lyne Carrington shows up as something unusually pleasant in terms of

jamming. The threesome sound well-balanced and relaxed, and are nicely recorded at Wm. Patterson College (Wayne, NJ). Carrington's brushes ping to the wire on Benny Golson's *Along Came Betty*; she's earned her spurs and rolls along loose-limbed and grand. Reid's bass solos are mixed robust and winey, and back off a bit for Jim McNeely's cheerful arrivals. The tunes are well-chosen, including Reid's song and blues strut, though I could dig a ballad. A happy, lively set.

Jimmy Rowles and **Red Mitchell** make a wise and comfortable team. Mitchell's profound, big-boned bass is one of the jazz world's deepest earfuls, and Rowles skims, darts, and feints only a little less playfully than is his wont. Nobody would ever accuse them of running changes; they're too artful and canny for that, and always find ways to improve on familiar standards, or revive neglected ones. When's the last time you've heard *Lilacs In The Rain?* Or *I'm Getting Nowhere With You* (no, not *I Can't Get Started*) in Grand Paws' deliciously gravelly vocal? Or, for that matter, on a jaded *Yesterdays* or *Larry Gales'* slinky *Loco Motiv?* Stacy Rowles pitches in on trumpet and flugel on three tunes, adding a bit of sensitivity but no dash. Colin Bailey is the rarest of drummers, almost intangible. If anything, these erstwhile West Coasters seem almost too laidback: out to pasture, but in a field of daisies.

Hilton Ruiz has come up with a tasty con-

cept album that doesn't flag and works beautifully: brisk tracks of jazz standards given the light salsa touch. Claves and jawbone decorate *My Little Suede Shoes* (about one chorus too long), Ed Blackwell's gong (master of succinct time) introduces *If I Were A Bell*, and Ray Barretto's congas color most tracks, with Steve Berrios on hand all the way. This nacho bop outing really deserves a listen; Ruiz plays exuberantly, yet briefly (no tracks exceed five minutes) and Major Holley bows and plucks with his customary deep ardor but not his patented growl-n'-bow stretchers. This album carves its little niche with a sharp blade, and should work its way into lots of airplay. Short and salty.

Nabil Totah, graceful bass doyen of the golden age of bop, whose credentials include work with Charlie Parker, goes for the sweet sound here, with lots of arco balladry (*Lush Life*, overdone but pleasant, and *My Romance*) and a winey, straight, somewhat romantic tone (*My Foolish Heart*). His Palestinian roots emerge on an oud-like *Caravan*, and there's little walking to be heard except on an over-dubbed *Subaru Mama* and as a bottom for Sal Mosca's crisp drumming. Mike Longo plays good piano but his amorphous synthesizer fills bloat without substance.

Basically, it's a heck of a good crop of piano trios, fun to listen to—or to play along with, if you dare.

—fred bouchard

JOHN ZORN

On *THE BIG GUNDOWN*, "the Lower East Side's reigning musical thinker" (*Vogue*) reworks the music of Italian film composer Ennio Morricone (*The Good, The Bad and the Ugly*, *Once Upon A Time in the West*). "Like Bernard Herrman's work for Alfred Hitchcock, Nino Rota's for Fellini, or John Barry's for the James Bond movies, Morricone's writing for Sergio Leone marks one of the pre-eminent composer-director collaborations... Zorn's foxy, intrepid arrangements latch onto the soundtracks only to crack them open." (from the liner notes)

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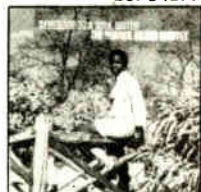
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STEEPLECHASE

Idrees Sulleman/Per Goldschmidt/Horace Parlan/Mads Vinding/Billy Hart, co-op quintet in an '85 date heavy on bop vibrations, GROOVIN'. **Khan Jamal**, Philly vibist fronts trio of Johnny Dyani and Leroy Lowe, THE TRAVELLER. **Bob Rockwell**, underrated hot saxist in a quartet setting, NO RUSH.

FANTASY

Kronos Quartet, adventurous string quartet follows their Monk LP with another jazzy project, from Landmark, MUSIC OF BILL EVANS. **Keith MacDonald**, sensitive pianist backed by bassist Michael Moore and drummer Akira Tana, from Landmark, WAITING. **Hank Crawford/Jimmy McGriff**, down home date includes the saxist and organist, plus George Benson's guitar on one side, from Milestone, SOUL SURVIVORS. **Jackie Cain/Roy Kral**, mostly original songs pertaining to the celluloid idol, from Fantasy, BOGIE! **Art Farmer/Benny Golson Jazztet**, mostly Golson tunes energized by the classy sextet, from Contemporary, BACK TO THE CITY.

GRAMAVISION

Rhythm & Blu, three violinists—John Blake, Didier Lockwood, Michael Urbaniak—team up to fiddle around, RHYTHM & BLU. **James Newton**, perennial poll-topping flutist with a pastoral program of tone poems for wind sextet and added guests, WATER MYSTERY. **Klaus Schulze**, synthesized soundscapes originally recorded in '74 on the available hi-technology, PICTURE MUSIC.

SWING/DRG

Cat Anderson, high-flying trumpeter leads fellow bandmembers in '58 and '64 small band interpretations, & THE ELLINGTON ALL-STARS. **Various Artists**, inc. Rex Stewart, Cootie Williams, and others instrumentalize Gershwin's classic, PORGY AND BESS REVISITED. **Bobby Jaspar**, Belgian saxist with strong '50s reputation waxes a '56 session alongside Tommy Flanagan, Elvin Jones, et al, IN PARIS. **Kenny Clarke**, bop drum pioneer kicks a variety of French combos from '57 and '60, IN PARIS VOL. 1. **Tony Bennett**, '73 sides by the singer's singer, acc. by Ruby Braff/George Barnes Quartet, THE RODGERS AND HART SONGBOOK.

INDEPENDENTS

Robert Fripp, ex-King Crimson guitarist and 17 others combine as the League of Crafty Guitarists, from Editions EG, LIVE!, and with Toyah Wilcox's narration of two Frank R. Stockton stories, *THE LADY OR THE TIGER*. **Peter Kater**, keyboardist plus assistance from some Spyro Gyra'ers and others, from Optimism Records, *TWO HEARTS*. **Various Artists**, anthology of Living Music musicians inc. Paul Winter, Paul Halley, and Denny Zeitlin, *PAUL WINTER & FRIENDS*. **Hadley Hockensmith**, guitarist doubles on synth, joined by West Coast vets, from Meadowlark Records, *HEARTSONGS*. **Billy Smiley**, trumpeter and pals create music with an uplifting message, from Meadowlark, *NEW NIGHT*. **William Ellwood**, solo guitar pieces done digitally, from Narada Records, *OPENINGS*. **Dan Krimm**, electric bassist from Princeton adds Marty Fogel on sax and Vic Juris' guitar, among others, from Overtone Records, *SENTIENCE*. **Roger Miller**, multi-instrumentalist from Birdsongs of the Mesozoic synthesizes everything but the kitchen sink into his music, from Ace of Hearts Records, *NO MAN IS HURTING ME*. **Mark Moore**, keyboardist's '84 project bears fruit on Mark Moore Productions, *HIWAY HYPNOSIS*.

Various Artists, sampler of classic cuts by Duke, Rollins, Mingus, etc, intended to se-

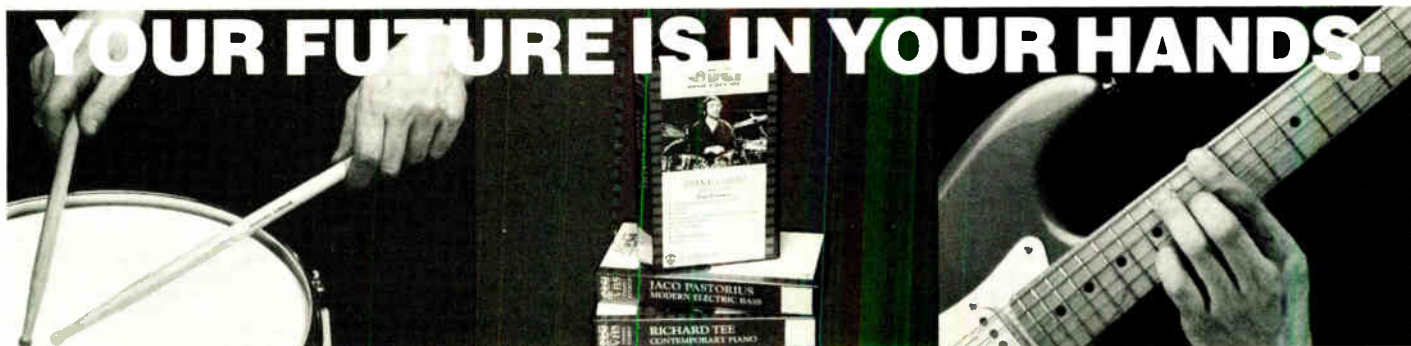
duce the newcomer, from British RCA, *JAZZ FOR ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS*. **Clifford Jordan**, '84 quintet date brings the Windy City tenorman together with trumpeter Red Rodney, plus Jaki Byard's piano, from Bee Hive Records, *DR. CHICAGO*. **Larry Adair/Dan Perz**, a pair of guitarists team up on swing and bop material, from Adair/Perz, *BEMSHA SWING*. **Ron Eschete**, mostly original material from the guitarist and keyboardist David Benoit, from Bainbridge Records, *STUMP JUMPER*. **Steve Clayton/Derek Smith**, singer and pianist collaborate w/ Milt Hinton and Bobby Rosengarden for songs primarily by Ruby Fisher, from Sovereign Records, *ALL AGLOW AGAIN*. **Interweave**, piano trio offers originals by pianist Frank Giasullo, from Vanderveer Records, *EXPEDITION*. **Phil Ranelin**, trombonist's leader debut, w/ West Coasters Tony Dumas and Billy Childs from Freddie Hubbard's band assisting, from Rebirth Records, *LOVE DREAM*. **Peggy Gilbert and the Dixie Belles**, six-piece trad band of female jazz vets, from Cambria Records, *DIXIELAND JAZZ*.

Bernt Rosengren/Nisse Sandstrom, two of Sweden's top saxists travel down the mainstream together, from Phontastic Records, *SUMMIT MEETING*. **Fredrik Noren**, Swedish drummer's quintet attacks some standards and a few originals, from Phontastic, *THE SNAKE*. **Lennart Åberg**, Swedish reedman's large ensemble explore all-original moods

and textures, from Caprice Records, *GREEN PRINTS*. **Soul Train**, debut of band voted to record by Swedish readers of *Orkester Journalen* and *Tonfallet*, from Caprice, *SOUL TRAIN*. **Maxine Sullivan**, fourth volume of vocals backed by the Swedish Jazz All-Stars, from Kenneth Records, *THE QUEEN*. **Henny Vonk**, Dutch bassist debuts his lyrics to classic Miles tunes, from Timeless Records, *REEROOTIN'*. **Deborah Brown**, vocalist's premiere outing accompanied by Slide Hampton and others, from Jazz Cats Records, *MY ONE AND ONLY LOVE*. **Bert Joris**, Dutch flugelists' quartet performs self-penned pieces, from Jazz Cats, *SWEET SEVENTINA*. **Onaje**, acoustic quartet from Australia presents their music, played their way, from Larrikin Records, *WALTZ FOR STELLA*. **Reg Schwager**, Canadian guitarist highly praised by local critics, from Justin Time Records, *RESONANCE*. **db**

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If your local record store doesn't carry these records, try writing NMDS, 500 Broadway, NYC 10012; Daybreak Express Records, POB 250 Van Brunt Station, Brooklyn, NY 11215; Roundup Records, POB 154, N. Cambridge, MA 02140; or North Country Records, Cadence Bldg., Redwood, NY 13679.



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CD REVIEWS

A CD Potpourri

The CD market was started by audiophiles, people who talked about sound more than music. That's one explanation for Projazz, a Japanese CD label where the emphasis is on "Pro." They specialize in pop-fusion, recycling the same L.A. and New York studio musicians into recordings that are interchangeable as automobile interiors. You don't like the plaid seats in your Mustang? How about the blue vinyl?

Although most of the Projazz CDs are recorded and mixed on analog machines, they are free of hiss and have a remarkable depth and clarity. In fact, clean sound and satin surfaces are among the few recommendations I can give these assembly line recordings.

Don Grusin's 10k LA (Projazz CDJ 610) typifies the formula. Don and Dave Grusin gather together a host of West Coast sessioners like Lee Ritenour, Ernie Watts, Harvie Mason, et al, stick them in front of some bouncy fusion charts, set the tape recorder on "slick," and let it roll. It's got punchy drums, nice contrast between the percussion and electric keyboards, and a kicking bass bottom. It's also funky, faceless, and forgettable.

For those of you who can't figure out which **Sadao Watanabe** record to get on CD, don't worry. *Morning Island* (Projazz CDJ 605) is interchangeable with any of the light-funk records he's made. Though a vital post-bop exponent, Watanabe's wiry alto saxophone lines are just another lead voice when plugged into the studio session contingent. But check out Marcus Miller's poppin' bass on *Nice Shot*, and the sweet string charts on *Inner Balance*—and didn't I hear all of this plus vocals on the Don Grusin record?

Steve Gadd's Gadd About (Projazz CDJ 604) is a welcome but slight variation on the formula. With distinctive players like Richard Tee, George Young, Lew Soloff, and Ronnie Cuber, there's genuine interaction between the musicians, caught with a live feel. In particular, *My Little Brother* generates a haunting atmosphere, with Jeff Mironov's reverbed guitar suspended across a bottomless depth of field. Gadd's solo on *Montauk Moon* leaps out and around the speakers.

As we come near the end of the Projazz assembly line we come to the initial CD's in this series, both featuring trumpeter **Lew Soloff**. *Hanalei Bay* (Projazz CDJ 601), unlike the other Projazz recordings, is all digital and it shows. Soloff's trumpet bristles with laser clarity against a paired-down Gil Evans band that in-



Vintage Corea on Denon.

cludes Evans himself, comping and pumping on electric piano. They groove through bop changes with fusion flair. The mirror-like stereo imagery between percussionists Andy Nussbaum and Manolo Badrena, and synthesist Pete Levin's percussive synthesizer tones, forms a deep frame for Soloff. Unfortunately, you have to sit through one funk groove too many before you get to tracks like *Well You Needn't* and *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*.

Soloff is also a member of the **Manhattan Jazz Quintet**, whose self-entitled CD (Projazz CDJ 602) is a welcome breath of acoustic air. This MJQ harkens back to the mid-'60s Blue Note days in style as well as sound. It's a lively jamming session recorded with that old Blue Note stereo-paired microphone ambience. It doesn't have a lot of presence, but a warm overall sound giving Soloff a more rounded tone against the earthiness of George Young's throaty tenor on *Milestones*. Steve Gadd's drums are loosened from their fusion tautness, and bassist Charnett Moffett is a real find here, with an authoritative swing and some tight soloing.

Stepping out of the Projazz factory we come to the DMP plant, and **John Tropea's NY Cats Direct** (DMP CD-453). The "Direct" means a direct to two-track digital live performance. *NY Cats Direct* leaps with clearly defined spatial placement on *Moroccan*, with Tropea's fluid guitar framed against a lilting percussive backdrop. *The Chant* is a hopping funk-bop number with a circuitous horn chart led by George Young on tenor. For those who place quantity at a premium—and with the price of CDs that's not a frivolous consideration.—*NY Cats Direct* clocks over 60 minutes of music, close to the maximum for a CD.

L.A. Transit's De Novo (Interface 33CY-1004) leaps off the turntable with its layered percussion over Brazilian rhythms. With three female vocalists who give Tania Maria and Flora Purim a run for their money, they percolate a

sensuous variation on the light fusion formula, but don't take too many chances.

3 Guitars 3 (Pro Arte CDD 235) is one of the reasons that CDs were made—so we could hear delicate, detailed music free of pops, hiss, and distortion. **Laurindo Almeida, Sharon Isbin, and Larry Coryell** team up in a series of latin classical compositions, including the oft-recorded *Adagio From Concierto De Aranjuez*. More restrained than similar affairs with Di Meola, McLaughlin, and De Lucia, it's also less improvisatory, with intricate arrangements. Digitally recorded, *3 Guitars 3* has a supple warmth that belies CD critics' claims of digital brightness. In fact, Coryell's Ovation guitar, which often sounds brittle on LP, has a full-bodied tone found on older guitars.

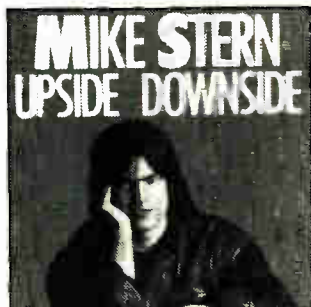
If I didn't know that **Max Lasser** played with Andreas Vollenweider, my first reference point for *Into The Rainbow* (Relativity EMCD 8058) would've been Pat Metheny. Like Metheny, Lasser favors spacious compositions, deft changes, and airy melodies that make you think you're watching a travelogue. There's a light, airy quality to this CD, highlighting Lasser's arrangement of glistening keyboard textures and colorful rhythms from Vollenweider cohorts drummer Walter Keiser and percussionist Pedro Haldeman.

I've been waiting for a good compact disc by **Ravi Shankar**, and *The Genius Of Pandit Ravi Shankar* (Oriental Records CD 108) comes close. The spidery webs of Shankar's sitar, the subtle intonations and ornaments beg to be etched on the deep black silence of the CD listening surface. While the recording quality is clear, there's enough surface noise to remind you that you're listening to audio tape and not music from the Great Beyond. But for those of us who suffered through the old World Pacific sandpaper recordings, this CD is a welcome relief.

Finally, a record that proves the adage, it doesn't matter how bad the recording is, if the music's happening. *Early Days* by keyboardist **Chick Corea** (Denon 33C38-7969) gathers some of the best tracks from his 1969 Solid State recordings *Sundance* and *Is* and includes tracks I can't find anywhere in his discography. Although *Early Days* was digitally remixed and mastered, they couldn't hide the tape hiss or lack of dynamic range in the original recordings. But they also couldn't hide Corea's exploratory zeal in music that attacked collective improvisation and structural resilience with passion. I'll take this over an audiophile formula record any day. —john diliberto

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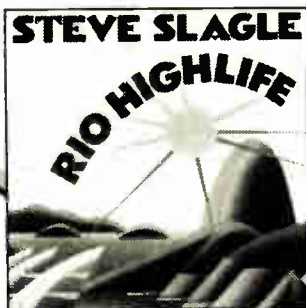
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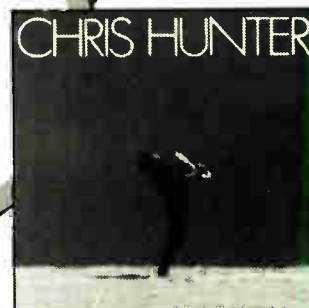
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CHRIS HUNTER
CHRIS HUNTER

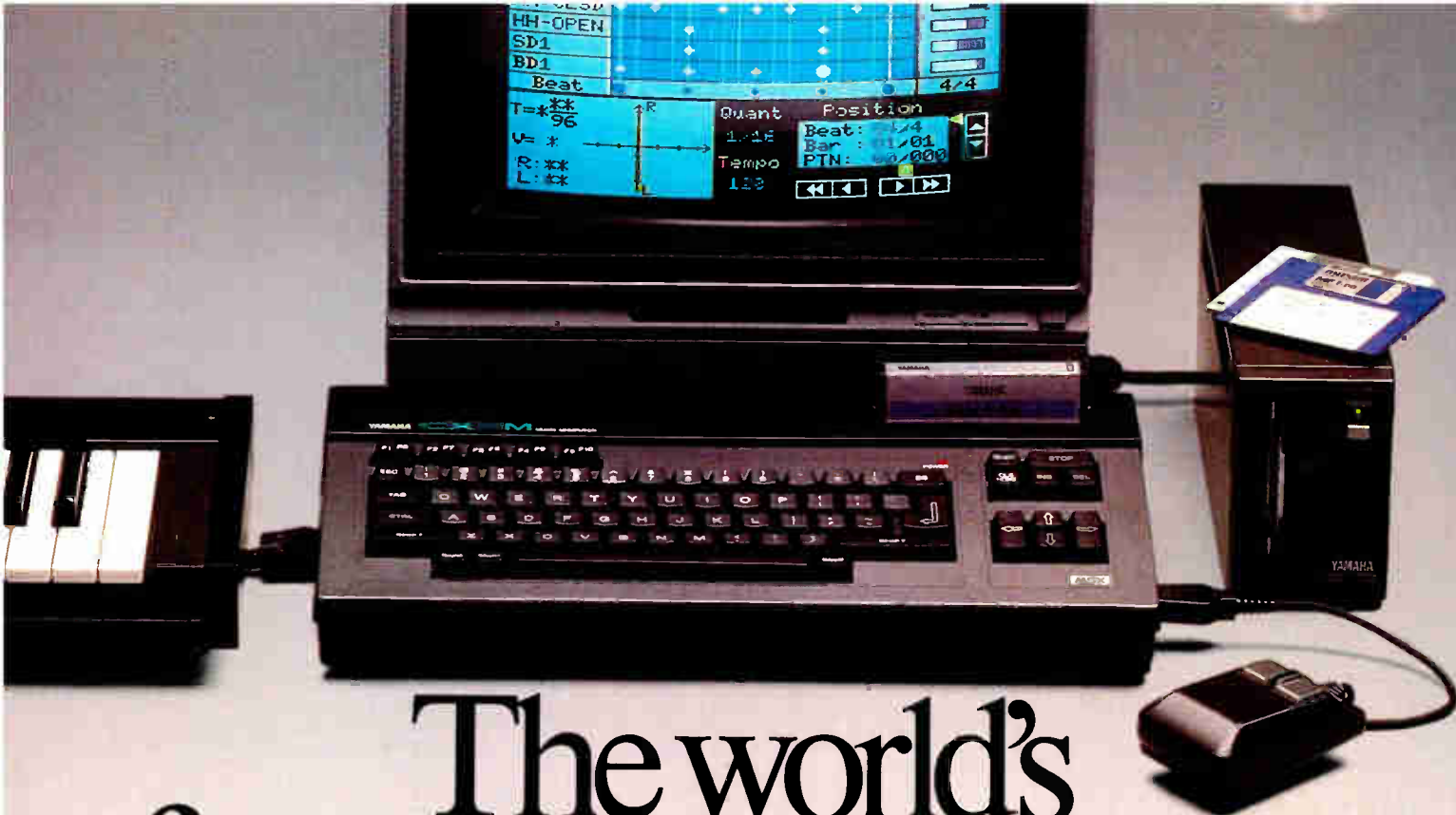
English saxophone player Chris Hunter hasn't taken long in making a name for himself. In his early twenties, he was a much in-demand session player in London. Then in 1983 he moved to New York to accept a place in the Gil Evans Orchestra. His debut LP spans the spectrum of American music: from "Purple Rain" to "Georgia On My Mind" to "America The Beautiful." Accompanied by Hiram Bullock, Richard Tee, Steve Jordan and Anthony Jackson, this is one of the most talked-about debuts of the year.

Produced by Don Sebesky
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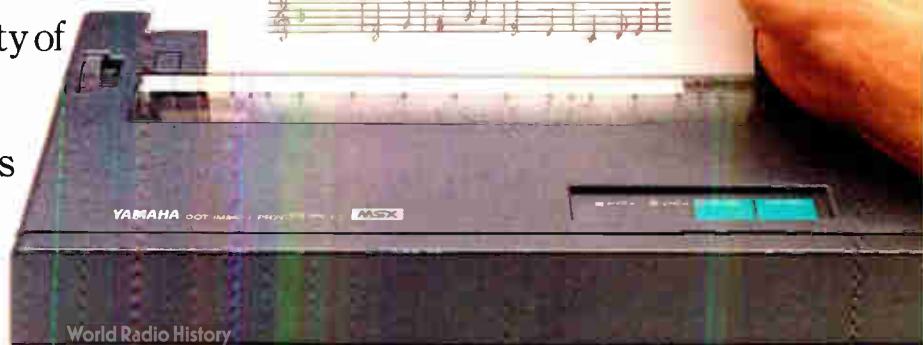
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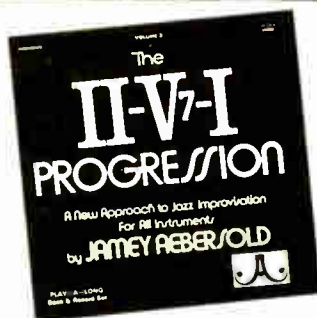
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Peter Levin

This keyboardist abandoned the french horn to explore electronics—and satisfied customers Evans, Scofield, and Giuffre are glad he did.

BY JOHN DILIBERTO

His shaved head looming over a bank of synthesizers and a computer terminal, Peter Levin looks like he's ready for the brave new world of synthesized jazz. "Computers are the toys I've been waiting for all my life," he exclaimed the morning after a loose and energized set with the Gil Evans' Big Band. "I've always liked doing puzzles, and to me the computer is a big logic puzzle."

Peter Levin paints a vision of the near electronic future in which all musicians will have access to the electronic sounds and parameters that he's been exploring for years as a keyboardist. "Everyone who wants to do it will be able to do it, and everyone who doesn't will go on playing acoustically or go sit in a corner and moan about it, which I have no sympathy for at all."

These may seem like harsh words from someone who plays in one of the most freewheeling big bands in jazz, boasting many of New York's brilliant players on any given night. But he's seen it coming since he joined the Evans band in 1973—not as a synthesist but as a french horn player.

Levin's music career defies established patterns of logic or precedent. Born in Boston in December 1942, he's the elder brother by four years of Tony Levin, the bassist and stick player with King Crimson, Peter Gabriel, and countless other pop and jazz artists. Though they resemble one another with their matching bald heads and mustaches, the Levin brothers play together infrequently. His father played violin and his mother played piano and sang, but Levin thinks they were surprised when he actually went into music professionally. He studied classical music and went on to earn a masters degree on the french horn at Juilliard, where he also picked up his piano skills.

Levin admits there wasn't much indication for a future in jazz in his early profile. After a stint in the Army, he



Peter Levin stands out amid the hubbub of the Gil Evans band.

began playing the Hammond B-3 in r&b groups. He laughs. "I was more interested in playing in the rhythm section than in a symphony orchestra, which is what I'd been trained for." All along he'd been listening to jazz records in high school and playing in small-time groups on french horn, an instrument that isn't exactly steeped in jazz tradition. However, he was inspired by one of the few french horn players in the music then, Julius Watkins. "I had all kinds of records by Julius Watkins," Levin recalls. "I could hear that it was special, although I didn't know why. Then Peter Gordon, who was one of the original horn players with Gil, completely opened up the book with what a horn player could do."

After Levin moved to New York City, multi-horn player Howard Johnson recommended him for the french horn chair with Gil Evans. But it wasn't long before it had to be filled again. "I had a Mini-Moog, and I asked Gil if I could bring it in and make some noises and he said sure," Levin recalls. "I started bringing a clavinet, and eventually Gil got another horn player to cover the parts, because I couldn't get to my horn in time. After a couple of years, I just stopped bringing my horn."

Levin's approach to the synthesizer as a textural instrument, extracting spacious environments, fabricating effects and sonic filigree, was initially generated on the organ. "The thing I like most about the organ was that it seemed to be able to create textures and things that I couldn't get any other way," he says. Even before he got a synthesizer, Levin was twisting the organ inside out, reshaping

its sounds like a tinkering inventor. "I used to experiment trying to run the output of the organ through a wah-wah pedal. That was a serious effect."

Levin's electronic epiphany occurred in the early '70s, at a concert by the Tony Williams Lifetime with the now-deceased Larry Young on organ. "Larry Young was playing a Hammond B-3 through a Baldwin amplifier, one of the first amplifiers with a graphic equalizer," reflects Levin, with a tinge of awe in his voice. "Almost everything he did was textures. He'd just play a cluster and move all the drawbars back and forth. The effect was amazing. I walked away and thought, Wow! I'd been doing all that Jimmy Smith stuff, but why? Why was I bothering? So every gig I did after that I just grabbed the drawbar and played clusters and experimented."

Levin's ensuing explorations turned up in some of the most unusual—some would say contradictory—places. He's likely to turn up on a Minute Maid commercial the day after a Gil Evans date, and that might be followed by a tour with Paul Simon, a film score like *Silver Bullet* or *Missing In Action*, or a pop music session. These sessions give him the opportunity to experiment as well as income. "It pays better than jazz, obviously," Levin admits. For the electronic music junkie who must keep abreast of the rapid evolution in music technology, money means more than just food in the mouth.

Levin seeks out the unknown, the tiny crevices of sound happening between the notes and the chord changes. You might

CONTINUED ON PAGE 56

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PROFILE

find him doubling a horn line, echoing Jimmy Giuffre's clarinet or John Scofield's guitar (on the guitarist's *Electric Outlet*, Gramavision 8405), or trading rhythms with drummer Danny Gottlieb in the Evans band. Occasionally, he'll just get twisted. "Sometimes I'll just sit back there comping along and say, 'Gee, this is a good place for a gong,' and I'll just punch up a gong sound."

He punched up a lot of gong sounds, along with breaking bottles, whistles, and assorted sound effects via tape in the Clams, a group he had with his brother Tony in the early '70s. Their specialty was sending up Top 40 radio hits, like the Carpenters' *Close To You*, with Spike Jones-inspired irreverence. An insight into Levin's personality can be gleaned from a note that he sent me with a Clams cassette. It read: "Just in case you thought I was normal."

Levin sees electronics and computers freeing creative musicians to follow whatever musical direction they can conceive. His taste and skill is best heard on Jimmy Giuffre's recent album, *Quasar* (Soul Note 1108), in which his synthesizer provides lush structures and abstract landscapes for Giuffre's otherwise acoustic quartet. The results are one of the most engaging Giuffre recordings in recent years. *Quasar* recalls the best of Weather Report and Joe Zawinul, an admitted influence on Levin, only without the insistent back-beat and reliance on catchy hooks. "I was trying to create a sound-texture environment," Levin agrees. "On the album before that, *Dragonfly* [Soul Note 1058], Jimmy was after the same thing."

With a nearly unlimited array of timbres, Levin can respond to almost any situation that Giuffre or Evans might devise. "Gil came in one night and called *Little Wing*, the Jimi Hendrix tune," says Levin. "Howard Johnson likes to play a pennywhistle solo on that one. Gil leaned over and told me how he'd heard two guys playing on a street corner with a kalimba and a pennywhistle. So he said, 'When Howard solos on pennywhistle, I want you to play the thumb piano.' So I dug around in the memory and found something like a kalimba, and Howard and I did a couple of choruses of the street music that Gil had heard."

Levin spends much of his time recording pop tunes and jingles, and much of that work is done with computer programming. He sits in his Connecticut home or New York condo and composes music into his IBM clone computer system, triggering an array of synthesizers and drum machines including his faithful Mini-Moog, an Octave Plateau,



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He composes directly into the computer, usually using the keyboard rather than the computer terminal. He uses the Octave Plateau Sequencer Plus software package, which gives him the equivalent of a 64-track recording studio. "It's like having a little man on each track," enthuses Levin, "and he'll play mathematically perfect, sloppy, or jazz—or whatever you want."

He even finds flexibility in drum machines, devices that are still anathema to many jazz purists. "People say they can't swing, but that's not true," counters Levin. "If you play swing stuff into it, it'll swing back to you. The thing is that if you want some spontaneity, there isn't any. You have to pre-plan every casual riff and every rimshot. But if you can deal with that, it'll swing."

It might appear that Levin is trying to eliminate acoustic players entirely. He waxes rhapsodic about a system that trombonist/synthesist George Lewis is working on in which a computer will be programmed to react in what appears to be a spontaneous fashion to a soloist. And he is indignant toward musicians who say things like, "It's always better with live musicians." Levin's response? "Excuse me for having to plug in."

However, this synthesist operates on the cutting edge with the most innovative, spontaneous, and interactive purveyors of improvised music. Be it the big band of Gil Evans, the fusion of John Scofield, the cerebral improvisations of Jimmy Giuffre, or the rock of Paul Simon, Levin is an interactive musician. "Everything interfaces with everything," says Levin, talking about the interconnecting possibilities of MIDI and conventional instruments, but betraying an open-minded musical philosophy in the bargain.

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NORTHSEA & UMBRIA JAZZ FESTS

VARIOUS SITES

THE HAGUE/PERUGIA—"It's too much!" gasped a friend as we staggered between concerts at the Northsea Jazz Festival—"too much" meaning "excess," but also "flabbergasting!" And that was only the first night.

Every summer Northsea turns the Congresgebouw of The Hague into a kaleidoscope: for 12 hours each of three days simultaneous concerts happen in 13 venues. I staggered through 33 hours of music, sometimes whole concerts, more often only a number or so, altogether more or less of 60 concerts, an experience both exhausting and exhilarating.

It was crowded *everywhere*. There's an audience for every concert, even for the most obscure performers; many venues were SRO. ("They all *listen*!" said pianist Ellyn Rucker, delighted by the audience as much as she delighted them.) And as many people meandered between venues, watching jazz videos on screens at every turn, shopping for records or instruments, eating, drinking, or just hanging out. They'd look at the schedules as if working a crossword, calculating times and which way to navigate from concert to concert.

I started with Holland's ubiquitous studio musicians, The Metropole Orchestra of Rogier van Otterloo, but soon I was snoozing from the strings and headed downstairs for some serious bebop—Slide Hampton and the Heath Brothers with the Jimmy Owens New York Jazz Stars. Upstairs on the roof terrace, three musicians-of-the-year were honored with Northsea's "Bird" Award: one Dutch, pianist Rein de Graaf; one European, pianist Martial Solal; one American, saxophonist David Murray. Each was joined by friends: Dave Pike with de Graaf, Lee Konitz with Solal, Murray with the World Saxophone Quartet.

I followed the antics and Ellingtonia of the WSQ with the similar charms and grooves of a mostly Dutch saxophone sextet, De Zes Winden (featuring John Tchicai's resounding tenor sax). They have a flourishing jazz scene in Holland, and one of the favorites, rollicking pianist Pia Beck (called "The Flying Dutchess") was honored. Also fun were Max Teawhistle, master of "Neder-bop" (singing jazz classics in Dutch), and the acoustic fusion of pianist Rene van Helsdingen.

There was fusion all around Northsea, from as far away as Iceland and In-



Buddy Rich

donesia, but too much sounded only Corean. Miles Davis and "Sons" (McLaughlin, Shorter, Zawinul, et al) were each featured with new bands; John Scofield's new quartet sounded newest. Best of the fusion was Xero Slingsby and the Works, a tongue-in-cheek (but nonetheless intense) British trio who've "fused" bebop and rockabilly.

Another highlight was each night's latin blast, especially the big bands from Cuba, Grupo Proyecto and Arturo Sandoval's Orquesta. Sandoval's stratospheric trumpet out-Maynards Ferguson, and when he joined salsa star Perico Ortiz for a trumpet showdown the Congresgebouw almost burned down.

There's wasn't much impromptu jamming, but several spirited encounters were scheduled: McCoy Tyner with Freddie Hubbard, Johnny Griffin with James Moody, Clark Terry with a Who's Who of Kansas City Swing, the "Great Friends" (Fortune/Harper/Cowell/Workman/Hart) Quintet, Larry Coryell and Emily Remler together again. Best of the encounters was a JATP-like tribute to Parker and Hodges by "The Alto Saxophone Choir"—players from across the spectrum of jazz: Bob Wilber, Marshall Royal, Lee Konitz, Sonny Fortune, Julius Hemphill, Oliver Lake, Richie Cole, Paquito D'Rivera, and Piet Noordijk, who swung every solo as if a Dutch Flip Phillips. (Flip Phillips himself swung with Dutch pianist Cees Slinger.)

Best of the fest was William Breuker's Kollektief, wild and wonderful as always, playing tangos or tarantellas or *Tiptoe Through The Tulips*, whether clowning or swinging full blast. Everything else the last night was anti-climactic. Lionel Hampton climaxed the festival, playing non-stop as always—as he'd be doing the following weekend in Italy.

The Umbria Jazz Festival begins the same weekend as Northsea but plays on through another week with concerts all around the medieval piazzas and palazzos of Perugia. Buddy Rich played outdoors in a garden the night we arrived. After midnight each night three local clubs, re-named for New York clubs, offered more: Ahmad Jamal at "The Blue Note" (The Jet Set, a swanky piano bar), Brazilian singer Marcia Maria at "The Village Vanguard" (Panino, a one-time dungeon), and Sphere at "Bradley's" (the Hotel Brufani salon).

Every venue was overcrowded, with listeners turned away. It's great they have such a turnout but a shame the space is so limited. Al Jarreau at Perugia's soccer stadium was the most painful concert experience I've ever endured: a shoe-horned crowd arranged so that the sight lines were ridiculous. When the press walked onto the field the crowd threw trash at us.

Best of the venues was Teatro Morlacchi, a 19th century theatre with five horseshoe tiers. David Chertok showed movies of jazz greats there, and Gary Burton fronted a concert with Berklee teachers in Perugia for workshops with young Italian musicians. After a climactic concert in the city's main piazza, with the indefatigable Lionel Hampton relentless even in the rain, the festival ended with an after-midnight, all-night blast at the theater. Ahmad Jamal, Jon Hendricks, and Sphere were scheduled to perform, but I was exhausted long before the finale.

What exhausted me in Perugia, much more than all the music, was traveling around Assisi, Spoleto, Orvieto, and the Umbrian countryside. It's all so open, so green, every vista a beautiful landscape. Enjoying the sights and living history of Umbria was as much fun (and more) as the concerts.

And that, in the end, is the greatest appeal of the international fests: to enjoy the scenery as much as "the scene" of India (Jazz Yatra) or Italy (Umbria Jazz) or Holland (Northsea) or even New York.

—michael bourne

VERONA & RAVENNA JAZZ FESTS

VARIOUS SITES

ITALY—The Southern European jazz festival season kicked off with the re-established Verona International Jazz

CAUGHT

Theatre St-Denis. Thus no one, two, or now even three people could have taken in the entirety of the festival.

The festival's rarer offerings caught the attention first: Clarinet Summit (John Carter, Alvin Batiste, Jimmy Hamilton, David Murray), in a rich, thorough reaffirmation of the instrument's place in jazz; a long, promising night that began, however, with a blasé performance by the Herbie Hancock Quartet, continued more passionately with the Brazilian singer Milton Nascimento (boasting, variously, Hancock, Pat Metheny, and Wayne Shorter as guests), and concluded triumphantly with the Shorter Quartet; an ill-fated Paul Bley/Chet Baker collaboration which saw the trumpeter withdraw after his initial two numbers prompted jeers; an immaculate Tommy Flanagan/Hank Jones two-piano concert, full of great tunes and good humor; a vivid soprano saxophone pairing of the Jane Ira Bloom Quartet and the Steve Lacy Sextet, in which the electric Bloom steered to the imaginative side of gimmickry, making the traditionalist Lacy seem all the *more* traditional by contrast.

Among other notable performances: the Dave Holland Quintet, with a wonderful lilt to his music and a new prize-soloist in trombonist Robin Eubanks; the larger-than-life Paris Reunion Band, whose Benny Bailey (with Woody Shaw the octet's other trumpeter) got a rise out of the audience with his whopping solos; and the intense Montreal quartet of the



Jane Ira Bloom

important pianist Jean Beaudet, whose saxophonist, Yannick Rieu, and bassist, Normand Guilbeault, also received well-deserved exposure with several other local bands during the festival.

Unique to 1986, FIJM played host to a European Broadcast Union series in which nine European countries were represented by bands or solo performers. However, only the Swiss pianist Irene Schweizer, the Danish duo of altoist John Tchicai and guitarist Pierre Dørge, and Holland's young Podium Trio caught the spirit and flavor of the creative European

scene. The best of the rest was Mario Rusca's hard-bop Italian quintet, which boasted in the impressive Flavio Boltro a trumpeter who seems tailor-made for some future edition of the Jazz Messengers.

Among the Europeans in the festival's other series were the Finnish big band UMO, the French musicians René Urtreger, Eric Lelann, and Toots Thielemans, and the Spanish guitarist Paco De Lucia—the bopper Urtreger in a solo piano series that also included Monty Alexander, Jay McShann, and Ellis Marsalis, and the fiery De Lucia in a series with Woody Herman, Michael Franks, Chick Corea, James Brown, and others.

The Concours de Jazz de Montréal, a competition previously restricted to the province of Quebec, went national this year with uneven results. The trio of Saskatoon's Jon Ballantyne, a gifted and assured 22-year-old pianist steeped in the tradition, was the unanimous choice of a seven-man jury; of the other four competitors, the Claude Ranger Quintet from Toronto was a stronger unit than Ballantyne's, all told, but the drummer's free-spirited, unrelenting music was apparently more than the jury was prepared to handle.

Ballantyne subsequently opened the festival's last concert, a triple bill at Place des Arts headlined by Dizzy Gillespie to no particular effect, first with the so-called, so-so Montreal All Stars and then with the brawny Montreal big band of pianist Vic Vogel. The Gillespie concert was nevertheless the lone certifiable jazz event of the eight presentations in the high-profile and thus controversial Place des Arts series new for 1986; the other artists here were Antonio Carlos Jobim, Astor Piazzolla, Milton Nascimento, Véronique Sanson (the Parisien pop singer), Ginette Reno with Michel Legrand (two nights), and Van Morrison. Still waving numbers, FIJM organizers met criticism of the series with the explanation that it paid for the most visionary of the festival's jazz series, and that further, there was more jazz in the FIJM's strict jazz series than in any other Canadian festival of 1986.

Also new this year, and another indication of the question marks surrounding the FIJM, was the rise of a modest parallel festival, No Man's Land, organized at a nearly punk bar by the musicians of Montreal's Association pour la diffusion de musiques overtes (ADMO) to underline the vitality of the city's new music scene in face of what they perceived as FIJM disinterest. These latter-day Newport Rebels did not make history, but they too made their point. —mark miller



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A Basic Checklist Of MIDI Guitars

BY MARK SMITH

Guitar controllers (instruments), interfaces (converters), and synthesizers are hot items, and more and more guitarists are getting into the new groove. From the early Arp Avatar to the Synclavier and more recent offerings from relative newcomers in the market, the metamorphosis of single-purpose guitars into full-fledged synthesizer controllers continues to be redefined.

The methods of converting guitar pitches into synthesizer-useable information (usually MIDI) take on three basic forms: pitch-to-voltage conversion (P/V), fret wiring, and optical conversion. P/V conversion makes use of hex (individual output per string) pickups to determine pitch, amplitude, etc. This information is then fed to an interface (converter) for translation into synthesizer-useable data. Fret wiring works as an electronic matrix—fret contact is analyzed and interpreted digitally as pitch information. Actual pitch information is not used. Fret wiring is more expensive than P/V due to the increased cost of production and parts. Optical conversion reads individual string movement to interpret pitch and converts that movement into a useable format. True working versions of optical controllers have not as yet proved marketable.

While there are some monophonic (single-note processing) interfaces on the market, most current interfaces are polyphonic (multiple-note processing) and are designed to operate with MIDI in the MIDI mono-mode. The MIDI mono-mode is used to allow individual strings to control individual MIDI channels in order to compensate for the inherent problems of translating guitar performances into synthesizer performances. In this way each string in effect controls its own MIDI performance and in no way interferes with the performance of another string. Operation in MIDI poly-mode works, but is less desirable. But some interfaces will only operate in the MIDI polymode.

Guitar controllers range from retrofit kits for your guitar that combine with P/V converters, to guitars designed to operate with other equipment manufacturers' controller/interface packages, to original equipment controller/interface packages. MIDI output is standard for all interfaces unless otherwise noted.

Perhaps the most popular retrofit kit/interface package is the IVL Pitchrider 7000. The 7000 is a polyphonic P/V interface that comes with a hex pickup for your guitar. A separate MIDI channel

can be assigned to each string (MIDI mono mode) and individual strings can be transposed. Hex pickups alone are available from Bartolini Pickups.

The longest-lived P/V retrofit kit/interface package is the Synclavier. It is based on the Roland GR series interface cabling system and is perhaps the finest on the market. Unfortunately, it is dedicated solely to Synclaviers' rather expensive synthesizer system.



Roland's GR77 Bass

The most successful P/V packages are the relatively inexpensive Roland GR series of guitars and basses (GR707 guitar and GR700 synthesizer, GR77 bass and GR77B synthesizer). The GR700 features two DCO's per string and a full range of foot controls. The GR77B features the same plus two CPU's per string for improved tracking. The GR interfaces however do not operate in MIDI mono-mode. The controllers both feature a graphite support bar for improved resonance and stability. The controllers use a 24-pin connector to the interface. Compatible controllers are available from Gibson, Steinberger, Hamer, and probably others.

Two new entries in the P/V package market are from Ibanez and Charvel (IMC). The Charvel entry, the GTM6, is of German manufacture and was developed in conjunction with the German government. The interface has six CPU's, a built-in sequencer, and a detachable remote control unit. The GTM6 controller has a specially designed tremolo bridge with six individual Piezo pickups and uses a standard quarter-inch jack for interface input.

The Ibanez IMG 2010 controller and IMC1 interface represent an ergonomically designed package geared toward accurate P/V conversion. The IMG 2010 includes a staggered hex pickup design and an assignable MIDI parameter control arm similar to a tremolo bar. The IMC1 features full MIDI implementation and a control section devoted to definition of the parameters assigned to the guitar's performance controls (i.e. control arm).

The Octave Plateau guitar controller has been a long time coming. This controller is fret-wired and all processing, including MIDI information generation,

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takes place on board the controller. In other words no secondary interface is required. The guitar has a separate output for audio signals as well as MIDI connections. An on-board keypad lets you call up different synthesizer patches remotely and an eight-segment readout tells you what's happening. Each individual string is assignable as a controller for different synthesizer parameters, and a total of eight programmable knobs and switches provide access to still more synthesizer parameters.

The hottest new fret-wired offering is the Synth Axe. The Synth Axe has two sets of strings, a conventionally stringed fret board for the left hand and a separate set of six short-trigger strings for picking. The ergonomic design features a drastically angled neck, six piano-style mini-keys for individual string sustain, and two other keys for sustaining the upper and lower three strings. The Synth Axe comes with a pedal box that adds automatic hold, automatic capo, and left-hand string dampening. This dedicated controller outputs MIDI only; no audio out is available.

The only currently available optical



Synth Axe and endorser Allan Holdsworth

controller is the Photon guitar from K-MUSE. The Photon uses four infrared light sensors per string to convert frequencies to MIDI via a proprietary high-speed data transmission method called M-NET. M-NET claims to operate 16 times faster than MIDI, on 96 channels, and uses SMPTE as its time code.

One final note: unless the synthesizer you are controlling is also in the mono-mode you will lose the advantages to be gained from mono-mode operation. Unfortunately, many synthesizers do not operate in this mode. A few that do are the Casio CZ101 and 5000; the Oberheim Matrix 12, 6, and Expander; the Sequential Six Track, the Yamaha TX816 rack; and the Emulator II.

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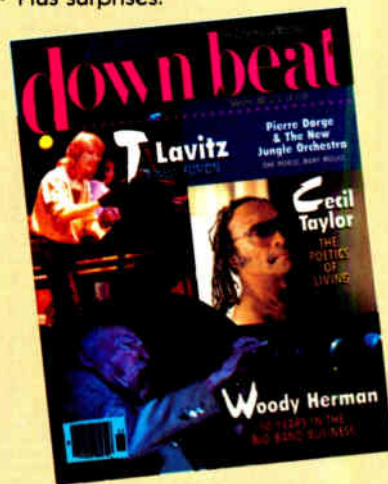
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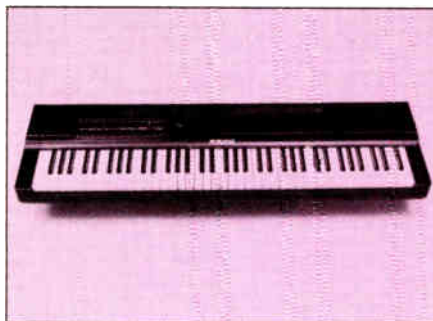
HSS Inc. (Richmond, VA) has added hi-tech mat black hardware and fittings to its Sonorlite drum series. The Phonic Plus hi-tech hardware has double-braced legs for support, equipped with solid rubber tips and shafts that slide smoothly through clamp brushings to avoid shaft damage during height adjustment. Drum shells are made from Scandinavian birch; snare and bass drum shells are 12-ply and measure seven millimeters, tom-tom and floor tom shells are nine-ply and measure six millimeters.



Noble & Cooley's SS Snares

NOBLE & COOLEY Co. (Granville, MA) is offering its Classic SS line of handmade maple snare drums, including a three-and-a-half-inch x 14-inch piccolo snare for drummers needing a distinctive second snare drum voice. Like the line's five- and seven-inch snares, the piccolo model is sensitive from the center to the rim; all models feature a single-piece maple shell, a 10-lug tensioning system, and 16-strand suspension. The drums also feature heavy-duty die-cast chrome rims, brass tension casings, and cast-brass single-end throw-off snare restrainers. Red, white, and black catalyzed polyurethane and natural honey maple finishes are available.

KEYBOARD COUNTRY



Ensoniq's Digitally Sampled Piano

ENSONIQ (Malvern, PA) has introduced the Ensoniq Piano, a digitally sampled piano featuring 12 preset sounds, all instantly available at the push of a button. The sounds include grand and electric piano, marimba, and electric and upright bass. Acoustic piano variations include bright and mellow timbres and honky tonk piano; there are also bright and mellow electric piano variations, two marimba sounds, vibes, percussion, and mallet. The keyboard features 76 piano-sized weighted keys; the player can control dynamics and timbre with touch sensitivity and sustain and sostenuto pedals. There is also a transpose switch that allows transposition up a Major fourth and down a diminished fifth. Sixteen MIDI channels are programmable from the front panel; also included are separate MIDI channels for bass sound, and MIDI In, Out, and Thru.



Yamaha's Portable Keyboard Mixer

YAMAHA INTERNATIONAL CORP. (Buena Park, CA) is offering a compact, high-quality eight x two mixer designed for on-stage mixing. Two of the KM802's eight input channels include adjustable preamps with two-band EQ, as well as an effects send control, and can therefore accommodate microphones as well as keyboards. The other six channels are optimized for line-level electronic instrument signal and each has three effects

send controls. All channels have a recessed, straight-line fader and a stereo pan control. Separate left and right master faders permit stereo output to be balanced or used as dual mono outputs. The mixer is designed to complement the company's DX Series keyboards, and its electronic specifications are comparable to full-size Yamaha consoles. The AC-powered KM802 weighs five-and-one-half pounds.

GUITAR WORLD



Guild's T-200

The T200 Roy Buchanan guitar from GUILD GUITARS (Lyndhurst, NJ) was designed with the help of its namesake and features a lightweight one-piece poplar body, a rosewood neck, EMG pickups, gold-colored hardware, and 22 reachable frets. The pickup system is said to offer the high-end quality of a Telecaster, but with EMG's added punch and noise suppression. Each handbuilt T-200 receives a handsprayed, handrubbed polyurethane finish in one of several available colors.

Silver Eagle's Designer Straps

SILVER EAGLE INC. (Van Nuys, CA) is debuting its "Con Tempo" Pick-Pocket Series guitar straps, made from top-grain leather and stitched with nylon thread. Each strap is reversible and three inches wide, and features four "pick-pockets" for holding picks, slides, and capos. New designs include Miami Vice Palm Tree, Lion and Deer English Tapstry, Picasso Brush Paint, and Oriental Print; some are available in more than one color combination. **db**

develop is a concept that utilizes the voice. The Kabuki, the Bunraki, and the Zuma Kabuki [Japanese theater styles] please me greatly and have an effect on what I've done in recent years. So in order to understand the mushrooming effect of what an artist-poet attempts to do, one has to be aware of the choices that shape the criteria which moderate the thought and act."

Taylor's sources also include dance—from jazz to traditional African to ballet—and the American Indian influences of the vocal chant piece *Cun-Un-Un-Un-An*, from *Winged Serpent*. Taylor's performances may increasingly need audio-visual documentation, as do the theatrically oriented works of the AACM. Sitting beneath a magnificent blown-up photograph of Joseph Jarman in rich African regalia, Taylor pondered the limits of those possibilities.

"The question is, why? The opportunities are there, but there seems to be a pretty concerted effort to not allow access to media channels. And that's part of the historical consciousness that allows that limiting power. Yet there are groups of people in Europe, Japan, the U.S., South America, and Canada who I know personally are aware of the contribution of the light that elevates the human experience. They are very aware of the contributions that James Lyons made to dignify the speech. You know, I become less reactive to the corporate mentality which attempts to shape, but to be less reactive is not to be less aware, or complacent." Taylor's actions are in his music and the positive power he sees in it. And that power reciprocally feeds and instructs the elusive ways of his music-making.

"I think the choices of material are dependent upon the amount your home environment make accessible, so that when you go outside of the home you take the matriarchal, the patriarchal, and ancestral, and you manipulate depending on your understanding of it. Now training, it seems to me, is the melody which is the shape of the life song, therefore in order to continue the life cycle, one must continue the search, whatever your activity is. So it is always an attempt to understand the nature of the most sacred areas of one's own body temple. One must always attempt to enrich oneself, so it then becomes a gleaning process which allows, hopefully, an understanding of one's final attitude, which is the face of one's ancestors—the source of the sense-memory."

How does a musician prepare the senses for this?

"Practice, to be studious at the instrument, as well as looking at a bridge or dancing or writing a poem or reading or attempting to make your home more beautiful. What goes into an improvisation is what goes into one's preparation, then allowing the prepared senses to execute at the highest level devoid of psychological or logical interference. You ask, without logic where does the form come from? It seems something that may be forgotten is that as we begin our day and proceed through it there is a form in existence that we create out of, that the day and night itself is for. And what we choose to vary in the daily routine provides in itself the fresh building blocks to construct a living form which is easily translated into a specific act of making a musical composition."

Sounds good, but is it really so easy to do?

"Once again, to become a musician is one thing. To attempt to make music into poetry is something else. The dedication to the challenges of the material and of the political and economic inequality we have today—and what one decides to do to engender a healthy perception of the ongoing exchange between people, their governments, and society—determines the truth and value of the artistic motivation that becomes whatever poetic energy you can consolidate into a recognizable force."

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swing for real. And if they turn it up loud and wanna rock out, it sounds incredible. It's mindblowing. These guys don't have any boundaries. They want to cover it all."

Those four players—Lavitz, Henderson, Berlin, and Smith—actually recorded material for a possible album. "It's like the Passport Jazz All-Stars," explains T. "We put the band together for a music convention, and it sounded so good we decided to book a couple of nights at a club in Los Angeles. And we recorded the stuff with a mobile unit. We're considering the possibility of going into the studio and doing some additional music. But whatever does come down, it's going to sound great. We play really well together. There's a mutual admiration between all the players there."

Until that project gets under way, T will have his hands full with The Bluesbusters, who are currently touring the States on the strength of their Landslide Records release, *Accept No Substitute*. It's a good-timey, bluesy band that allows Lavitz to get down on some gospelish piano feels. Very earthy, very much fun—like the reincarnation of Little Feat. Somewhere, Lowell George must be smiling.

While The Bluesbusters are strictly a back-to-the-basics band, Lavitz does try to keep his hand in the ever-changing world of technology. At home, he works up ideas on his Commodore SX-64 computer, which is MIDI-ed to a sequencer made by a German company called Steinberg Research. "It's an unbelievable tool for composing," he says of the sequencer. "I actually bought the computer because

of the sequencer program. You can use it to drive up to 16 keyboards. It's actually a 16-track digital MIDI recorder. So I take an interface right out of the computer and go MIDI into my keyboards, programming a sequence at a time. So maybe I'll run a sequence over and over until I come up with a good melody, then loop it or maybe get a whole song down and just file it away to play with later. It's a great program, compatible with the Commodore, which is a fairly inexpensive unit. So I'm set."

Lavitz works with an Oberheim DMX drum machine at home on his demo tapes, though he'd never consider playing with one on-stage or using one on his albums. "I like hearing live drummers playing to a click track, then I erase the click track so you end up with the human element. That's so important. The drum machines sound real good, but there's no spontaneity at all. It just doesn't fit in with my music. But I guess I'm just spoiled because I've had the opportunity to play with some great drummers like Rod Morgenstein, Andy Newmark, and Steve Smith. Who'd want to use a drum machine with those guys around?"

T does dabble in technology onstage with The Bluesbusters. He's not down on electronic hardware by any means, but he has set his priorities. "For me, the piano is the main instrument. Synthesizers are like the icing on the cake. They enhance it, they color the music. I own all that stuff, but the keyboard that I grab for the most is a piano."

On that note he adds, "I wanted to be a piano player ever since I was seven years old, but obviously all that has changed because of the technology and the direction the music has taken in the past decade or so. A lot of guys don't want to hear anything but a Hammond B-3 or an acoustic grand, and it's hurt their careers. It's tough these days to just say you're a piano player. So I'm glad I was able to make a transition into the new age of synthesizers. I made the transition, and I feel comfortable about it. I like what I see and hear."

db

DØRGE

continued from page 28

It was during Dørge's and Becker's visit to the States they also met Ornette Coleman, a meeting which inspired Dørge to write the composition *254 Bowery* on the first New Jungle Orchestra album, and provided Becker with the subject for her Conservatory thesis, an analysis of the alto saxophonist's solos and compositions. "It's always powerful to meet someone like Ornette or Konte, who can tell you just a little small thing which ends up influencing you for a long time. Ornette taught me something about harmolodics, specifically the concept of parallel instruments, and he also gave me a 12-tone scale which I've been using ever since. I didn't go to Gambia with the intention of learning to play the kora, but rather to listen to the music, which is tremendously inspirational. I've since been working at translating this to the guitar."

The New Jungle Orchestra, which benefited from the knowledge Dørge gathered in America and Africa and the compositions resulting from these trips, made its concert debut in the fall of 1980 and its recording debut in 1982, featuring Tchicai, who had

joined the group that year. Activity was sporadic until 1984 when the Orchestra's second album, *Brikama*, was released; by this time the personnel had changed to include Rasmussen and Dyani on bass, and Frenchmen Doudou Gouirand on saxophones and Michel Marre on trumpet. This recording, which showcases the big band's versatility through performances of such diverse Dørge compositions as the African-inspired *A Rainbow Over The Bamboo Forest*, *Monk In Africa*, and the ballad *To Alhaji Bai Konte*; a fast-paced minor-swing tribute to the Dada movement, *Sunday in Zurich*; as well as the traditional *St. Louis Blues* and Django Reinhardt's *Nuages*, brought the New Jungle Orchestra to the attention of jazz festival producers throughout Europe. The group has since been presented in France, Germany, Holland, Poland, Sweden, and Norway, its front-line strengthened by the 1985 addition of trumpeter Beckett, who replaced Marre, and its popularity bolstered by the release of its third album, *Even The Moon Is Dancing*, that year.

In concert the 14 musicians interact

extremely well together, whether playing one of Dørge's tightly arranged swing passages or playing against one another in a free break. "The music for the Orchestra is very open. After I've written parts we work them out in rehearsals, and I've found the more simple I make the arrangements or parts, the better the music. It sounds much more organic when musicians develop their own approach, and I don't make any heavy distinction between what's written and what's improvised."

"Sometimes you can go too far in one direction when you're experimenting, but that's part of the learning process and part of living a creative life; sometimes you break a few 'normal' rules by being an artist. Still, the most important thing to me is to make not so much the perfect statement in my music, but to convey as many human expressions, from joy to fear, as possible. For me, music should be an adventure, it should tell a story if possible, and express feelings and thoughts which you can't express in words. That's the power of music—to express that depth of feeling."

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AUDITIONS

down beat spotlights young musicians deserving wider recognition.



RATED TEN, a band of modishly attired and coiffed rock & rollers from Newport Beach, CA, has kept busy this past year playing original music and spreading a strong anti-drug message. Formed five years ago, Rated Ten took up fighting drugs in August '84, when lead guitarist Brian Burke was called by police to identify his band's 18-year-old drummer, who had died of a cocaine overdose. Rated Ten—consisting of Burke's siblings Garry (rhythm guitar), Sherri (bass), and Steve (drums)—has toured schools throughout the U.S. as well as England and Japan, a typical gig involving a 30-minute set at a school assembly followed by a two-hour concert at night.

The band members, who named themselves after receiving a perfect 10 rating at an Anaheim "Battle of the Bands," range in age from 17 to 21 and cite Bruce Springsteen and John Cougar Mellencamp as important influences. Their immediate goals are to cut an EP and shoot a video—and to keep warning young people off drugs. "We are rock & rollers," says Brian, "and we fight the image that everyone in our business is a drug addict." Adds Sherri, "Our message is that you don't have to be on drugs to have fun. By the end of our show, we've proven that point."



JAMIE WAY, 17-year-old trombonist and 1986 graduate of the Interlochen (MI) Arts Academy,

began playing piano at an early age, switching to trombone at age 10. He won a scholarship to the Jamey Aebersold Jazz Clinic in 1984 as a National Association of Jazz Educators' Young Talent Winner, and was so impressed that he returned to the Aebersold clinic the following summer. Way has earned a pair of Outstanding Performance citations in the **db** Student Music Awards, including one this year as a jazz instrumentalist and one last year as a classical instrumentalist. His other major accomplishment to date was an Honorable Mention in the jazz category of the 1986 ARTS Competition.

Way, who began work toward a career in studio music this fall at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, studied trombone with Carson Sharp, formerly of the Utah Symphony, and with Interlochen's Peter Brockman. His influences include jazz trombonists Frank Rosolino and Carl Fontana and classical trombonist Ralph Sauer, as well as such jazz artists as Bill Evans, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, and Tom Harrell.



BRYAN SMITH, 23-year-old drummer, graduated from the Musicians Institute of Technology in Hollywood this past September, having moved to Los Angeles from Houston 18 months ago to pursue a career playing drums. Smith is currently in a rock band called Malichia, which recently released its first album, *Under The Blade*. Previous groups that he has belonged to have backed such artists as Eric Johnson, Greg Kihn, and Pat Travers; he also did a video "aired all around Texas."

Smith began drumming at age 14 and takes his drumming very seriously, practicing a minimum of eight hours a day. His biggest influences have been Terry Bozzio, Neal Peart, and Bill Bruford. His current plans are to stay in L.A. and keep working on his drumming.



DANNY JAMES, 29-year-old Chicago-born drummer, has performed with saxophonists Von Freeman and Clarence Wheeler in his hometown, as well as studying in A.A.C.M. workshops there. In 1977-78, James was a member of the Governors State University Jazz Ensemble in suburban Park Forest South, under the direction of Dr. Billy Howe. James has also accompanied blues harpist Carey Bell & The Nouvelle Generation du Blues on a European tour, and funk artist Captain Sky on a tour of the States.

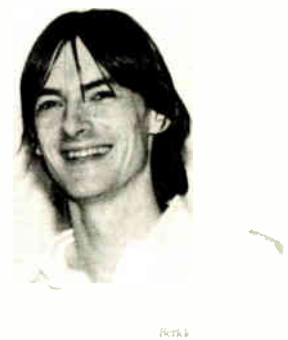
James, who sings, composes, and plays bass in addition to drumming, was leader of the band A.T.T., which blended funk, rock, and classical elements. He has spent the last few years writing for and rehearsing his new band, Forever. Last January, James moved to Los Angeles with his wife and two daughters to pursue his current ambition—getting Forever signed to a recording contract.



DAVID MANTH, 21-year-old saxophonist, was recently named top soloist at the Ohio State University Jazz Festival. The North Tonawanda, NY, native began his music career on alto sax, but in the past several years has become equally proficient on flute, clarinet, and tenor and soprano saxes. Manth

got his start with the Brian Lewis Big Band while a high school senior, gaining valuable playing experience with Sal Andolina and Bobby Militello. He was also a member of the North Tonawanda Jazz Ensemble, with whom he won outstanding soloist awards at the Fredonia State (Auburn, NY) and University of Buffalo jazz festivals.

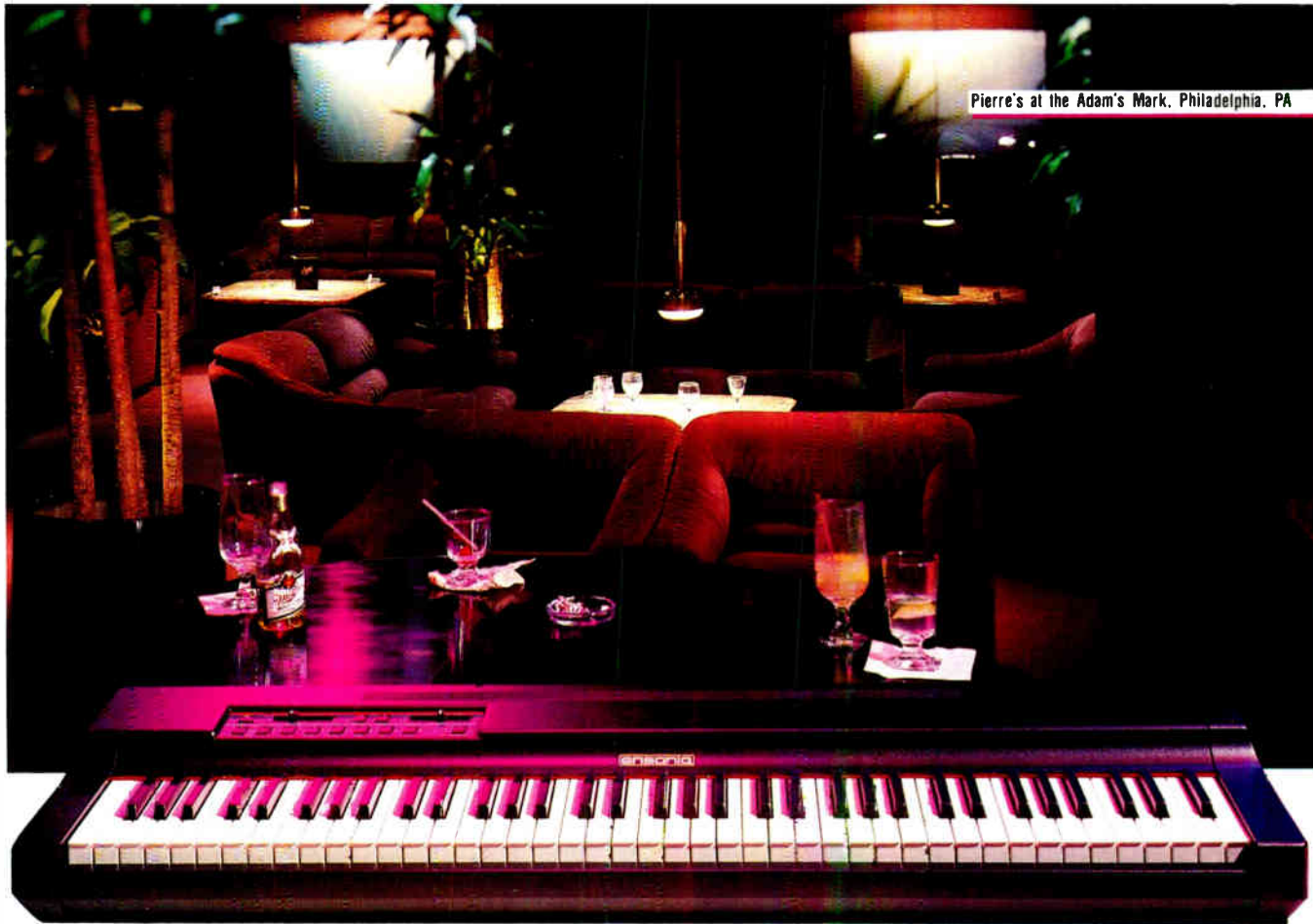
Manth has also performed with the N.Y. All-State Band, conducted by composer/arranger Manny Albam, and he has received advanced jazz instruction from former Woody Herman tenorman Dave Schiavone. Listing David Sanborn, Charlie Parker, Richie Cole, Phil Woods, and Maynard Ferguson as major influences, Manth is currently teaching reed instruments while pursuing his B.F.A. in Music Performance at the University of Buffalo.



CHRISTIAN JACOB, 28-year-old French-born pianist, was named top collegiate jazz instrumental soloist in the 1986 **db** Student Music Awards. Recently graduated from the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Jacob was also honored this year with that school's Joe Zawinul Jazz Masters Award, presented annually to an outstanding pianist at the Berklee Concert Series.

A native of Montigny Les Metz, France, Jacob is also a graduate of Metz Conservatory and the recipient of a First Medal from the highly respected Paris Conservatory. He has had an acclaimed LP of his own compositions released in Luxembourg and, while in the States, performed with vibist Gary Burton around Boston and on the S.S. Norway luxury liner. **db**

Young musicians wishing to be considered for Auditions should send a black & white photograph and a one-page typewritten biography to **down beat**, Auditions, 222 W. Adams St., Chicago, IL 60606.



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