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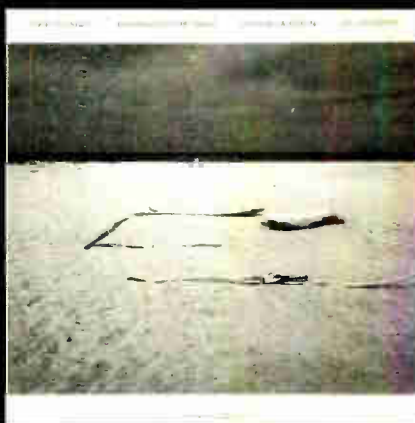
Art Lande



We Begin

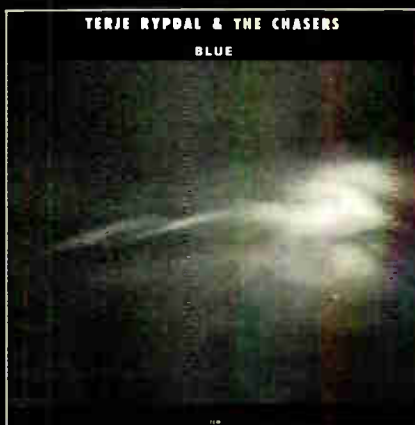
Mark Isham/Art Lande
WE BEGIN

831 621



Zakir Hussain
MAKING MUSIC

831 544



Terje Rypdal & The Chasers
BLUE

831 516

Mark Isham /Art Lande

Mark Isham (synthesizer, trumpet, percussion) reunites with his mentor of the seventies, Art Lande (piano, synthesizer, percussion), for an album of original music which displays the duo's shared compositional language and approach to orchestration. An intimate, fresh-sounding work by two long-time collaborators.

Zakir Hussain

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STEVE KAGAN



Kevin Eubanks

MITCHELL SEIDEL



Tim Berne

CHERYL KLAUSS



Dennis Chambers

ALDO MAURO

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It took a little longer than he hoped, but the iconoclastic saxist/composer has finally struck it big with an ear-opening album on a major label. **Kevin Whitehead** chronicles Berne's years of self-sufficiency to his present success.

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All roads led to the Windy City this past April, as 1,200 student musicians from 68 schools competed in the first annual Musicfest U.S.A., sponsored by **db**. A gallery of photos hints at the excitement participants and audiences experienced, and **Bill Beuttler** provides an overview.

Cover photograph of Lyle Mays by Andy Freeberg.

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down beat

For Contemporary Musicians

JULY 1987

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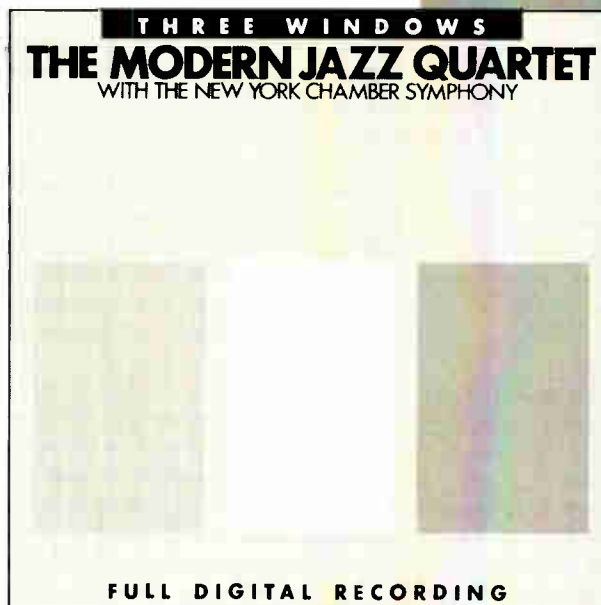
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CDS, TAKE 2

by Art Lange



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&
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8/18 Pat Metheny Group

8/25 Paul Winter Consort*
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8/26 Sarah Vaughan
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In the three months since I wrote about my initial plunge into the sea of CDs, I've had the opportunity to hear a wide variety of musics—rock (from early Beatles, in mono, to Japan, heavy on electronics in digital sound), classical (Handel's *Water Music* to Cage's *Sonatas And Interludes For Prepared Piano*), and jazz (Benny Goodman live at Carnegie Hall in 1938 to John Scofield hot-wired in '86). The discs I've heard encompass ensembles of varying size and instrumentation, recorded over a period of six decades (and originally utilizing the technology of their time), performing a near-spectrum of musical styles. And my strongest impression of the CD format so far has been . . . its unevenness.

For one thing, despite industry claims to the contrary, not everything sounds better converted into CD—not to my admittedly non-audiophile ears, anyway. The process of remastering original tapes for the digital system apparently lends itself largely to the individual talents and sound-reproduction theories of the engineer at hand. As a result, some companies and engineers have been scrupulous in their reworking of the original tapes, cleaning up the sound and in some cases rebalancing the instruments to great effect (see the CD Review column on page 47 for a somewhat more detailed account). At other times, however, balances have been diddled with to the detriment of ensemble detail and unity. And elsewhere, there's been no re-working, no attempt at improvement whatsoever, and the flaws of the original recordings remain, now etched permanently in plastic. Sound quality varies from disc to disc as well; some of the CDs I've heard present a brighter, clearer, more immediately exciting sonic experience, while others sound simply dull, or overly reverberant, or so clean as to be antiseptic.

Given the CD's 75-minute capacity—and I've heard that was decided as the industry standard solely because it was the length necessary to fit Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* on one disc—most record companies have been blatantly cavalier about time-for-money from the consumer's standpoint. I'm not ashamed to say it—when I browse for CDs, one of the first things I look for is total time, and yes, I have passed on a number of CDs because, despite the music on the disc, I felt that I wasn't getting my money's worth. Some classical companies have made a point of combining compositions to good, full time advantage, but others are shamefully

negligent in not re-programming LPs transferred to CD. Worse yet, they're compounding this error by repeating one of their old mistakes—issuing endless versions of the eminently marketable "50 Famous Pieces" while ignoring the fringes of the repertoire. I'm still waiting for the chance to purchase some of Morton Feldman's enchanting music on CD, not to mention George Crumb (though to be fair there is one CD containing two of his compositions on BIS—a Swedish label), Ned Rorem, or Charles Wuorinen, among many others. Meanwhile, major jazz labels like Blue Note, Impulse, and CBS have begun what promise to be extensive reissue programs on CD, and most of their new product comes out on CD now as a matter of course. But for most labels, it's a hit-or-miss system, with pre-1950 recordings seldom represented. When will we get Pee Wee Russell on CD, not to mention Jelly Roll Morton or Fletcher Henderson?

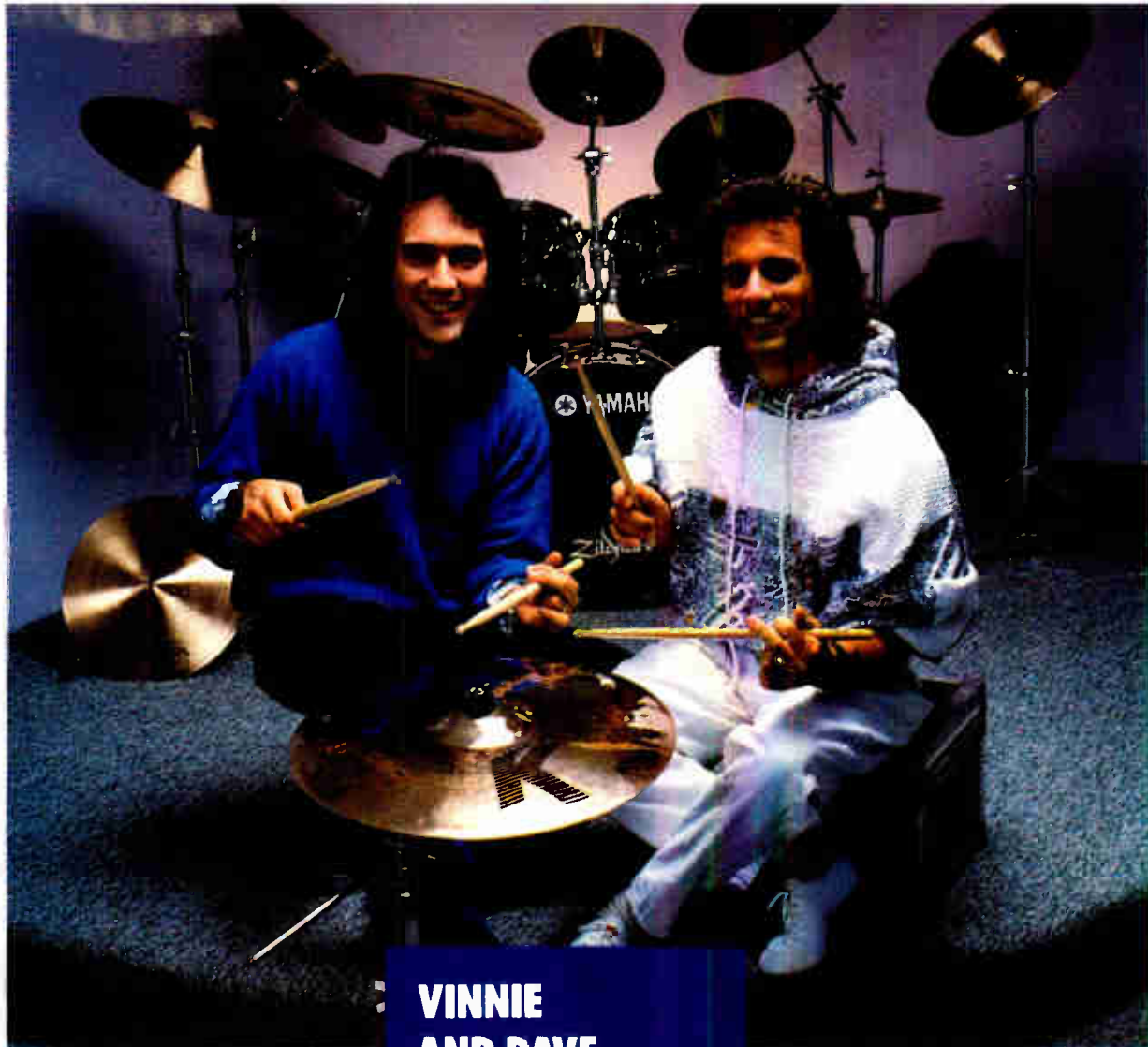
On the whole, a few labels have been more conscientious about providing additional material to expand the playing time of their CDs, including alternate takes or unreleased tracks when available; nevertheless, too many discs still surface with an abysmally short playing time of 30-40 minutes. Some labels ignore their vaults completely and issue LPs as they are—a blatant slap in the consumer's face. Rock records are especially bad in this regard. *Every* label should rethink *every* LP it reissues on CD for time and programming content, but I fear few do.

It should be noted that on newly recorded sessions some companies are sweetening the pot by including titles on CD only—and that's fine with me; something should make up for that added cost.

And about that cost. I've heard rumors that CD prices will be coming down dramatically in the coming months, but I'll believe it when I see it. What I *do* see is that CD sales are booming—I see it every time I go into a store and watch people walking out with armloads of CDs. And I can certainly understand the attraction; I'm hooked on the novelty of the medium myself. Like a kid with a new toy, I'm still mesmerized by the shiny silver discs and sold on the convenience of the system—with my trusty remote control in hand, I've fallen completely for the instant reject, fast forward, and replay capabilities.

Unfortunately, I'm not independently wealthy, and I'm not ready to take out a second mortgage on my house in order to replace perfectly good (if slightly worn) LPs with CDs. Not yet, anyway. But that doesn't stop me from spending my weekly lunch money on that Monk CD I've just *got* to have.

db



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"Zildjian is really tuned in to the needs of the drummer. Their people are out in the field listening and doing research, asking drummers what they want in cymbals," says Vinnie Colaiuta, L.A. studio drummer who's played with Frank Zappa, Joni Mitchell, Gino Vannelli, Tom Scott, Chaka Khan and The Commodores.

Dave Weckl, currently with Chick Corea, explains. "I told Zildjian I wanted the perfect ride cymbal for all occasions. One that had just the right amounts of brilliance and attack, but not too pingy. Sort of a dry definition that would allow me to carry out the emotion of the music."

"So I actually worked in the Zildjian factory, experimenting with new designs. We combined "A" machine hammering and "K" hand hammering, no buffing and buffing. The result is what is now the K Custom."

"The K Custom is a nice, warm, musical ride cymbal with a clean bell sound, yet it's not too clangy. I can turn

around and crash on it without having to worry about too many uncontrolled overtones. It blends perfectly," says Colaiuta.

Zildjian continues to play an instrumental role in shaping the sound of modern music—by working closely with leading-edge drummers like Vinnie and Dave.

"I'm always looking for new sounds and so is Zildjian. In fact, that's how we came up with the idea of mixing a Z bottom and K top in my Hi Hats. The K gives me the quick, thin splash characteristic I like. And the Z provides that certain edge. They really cut through," says Weckl. "Which is important because of all the electronics that I use."

"Zildjian's really hit upon a winning combination in terms of delivering new concepts. They're creating cymbals that have a musical place and make a lasting impression," claims Colaiuta.

"Zildjian is as sensitive to the needs of drummers as the drummers are towards their instruments," concludes Weckl.

If you'd like to learn more about Zildjian A, K or Z cymbals, stop by your Zildjian dealer. And discover the virtue of listening.

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chords & discords

A STAR IS LOST

Somewhere between my manuscript and the printed page a star fell from the review of Anthony Braxton's *Composition 113* album (Sound Aspects 003, in db, April '87). This is unfortunate since that unaccompanied Eb soprano saxophone recording can stand with the best solo horn outings on disc and certainly deserves the four-and-a-half star rating I gave it.

Terry Martin
Chicago

MISSSES BUDDY

When I heard about my idol, Buddy Rich, being in the hospital for a brain tumor, I got very upset. However, I still believed that he would be back playing. I knew he would not give up. I wrote him a letter, at the UCLA Medical Center, to wish him a fast recovery. A week or so later, a friend of mine in the band that I play drums in informed me of the sad news that he heard on the radio.

Buddy Rich influenced me more than any other drummer. I had met him 25 times. As far as I'm concerned, he was one of the nicest guys that I've ever met. I have a

couple of pairs of sticks and autographed pictures that he gave me.

The drum world has lost a man who will never be replaced. Buddy Rich could do more with a pair of sticks than anybody else. Yes, Buddy Rich was the greatest drummer of all time, bar none, and I will still listen to his records, love him, and miss him.

Tim Smith
Silver Spring, MD

BOTH SIDES NOW

I read with interest Bill Beuttler's interview with Billy Cobham (Apr. '87). I had assumed that relations between he and McLaughlin were not well since Cobham reportedly plays drums and percussion on McLaughlin's *Mahavishnu* (Warner Bros. 25190) but his photograph does not appear on the album cover with the band. We have heard Cobham's side of the story. How about an interview giving McLaughlin's side? If the situation occurred as Cobham outlined, my respect for the once seeker of the "right way" (*Love Devotion Surrender*, Columbia 32034) will slide beneath the increasingly murky waters rained by our

television evangelists.

James S. Dorsey
Fort Walton Beach, FL

NASMD KUDO

Hats off to *down beat* for recognizing in your May issue NASMD's 25 years of service and support of music education.

Your article "NASMD At 25" serves to remind us of the interdependence of musicians, educators, and the music industry and our special responsibility to preserve and advance our Nation's musical heritage.

The achievements of today's musicians and those who help make their accomplishments possible—educators and music retailers who support education in music—deserve increased public recognition.

down beat and *Up Beat* magazines are helping to increase public awareness and appreciation of deserving musicians and those who support their efforts. You are "playing" an important part in assuring the future of America's culture. Bravissimo!

Jack Coffey
Norwood, MA



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VANGUARD COVERAGE

I was very pleasantly surprised to see your article on saxist Evan Parker (Apr. '87), as well as the one on Peter Brötzmann and Han Bennick (Jan. '87). European free music has for years been, to my mind, the most exciting, *vital* avant garde around, while being almost totally ignored by the American jazz press. Very glad to see **down beat** back in the vanguard, and hope to see more feature articles on these guys.

Erskine Reichart
Hollywood, CA

MUSICFEST THANKS

Just a note to say "Thank You" for an outstanding jazz festival this past week in Chicago. The event offered an in-depth musical experience, as well as true educational value to all of our students who attended. The effort made to attend and the support given by **down beat** added up to a winning formula for all who attended. We cannot predict what the future holds, but Arts Magnet High School is presently planning to attend the second annual

Musicfest U.S.A. in Orlando, Florida in 1988. We are sure the event will be just as good with **down beat's** support. Thanks again for a wonderful as well as meaningful musical experience.

Bart Marantz
Director of Jazz Studies
Arts Magnet High School
Dallas, TX

I just wanted to drop a note to personally thank you for your hospitality and cooperation last weekend at Musicfest. It was a great privilege for Rush Hour to participate at Musicfest and to actually be awarded the Silver Award! I sincerely wish **down beat**, Musicfest, and all others involved continued success in future festivals. Once again, thank you for allowing Rush Hour to participate in Musicfest.

Larry Imbordino
Rush Hour
Medinah, IL

GREEN QUESTIONS

I was wondering if you ever did a feature on the late, great Freddie Green? I also

noticed in your "Final Bar" in the May '87 issue that you stated that Freddie had also recorded "several albums under his own name." I was aware of *Mr. Rhythm* (1955) and *Rhythm Willie* with Herb Ellis. What were the others? I ask these as open questions to you or any other **db** readers.

Michael Steinbrecher
San Rafael, CA

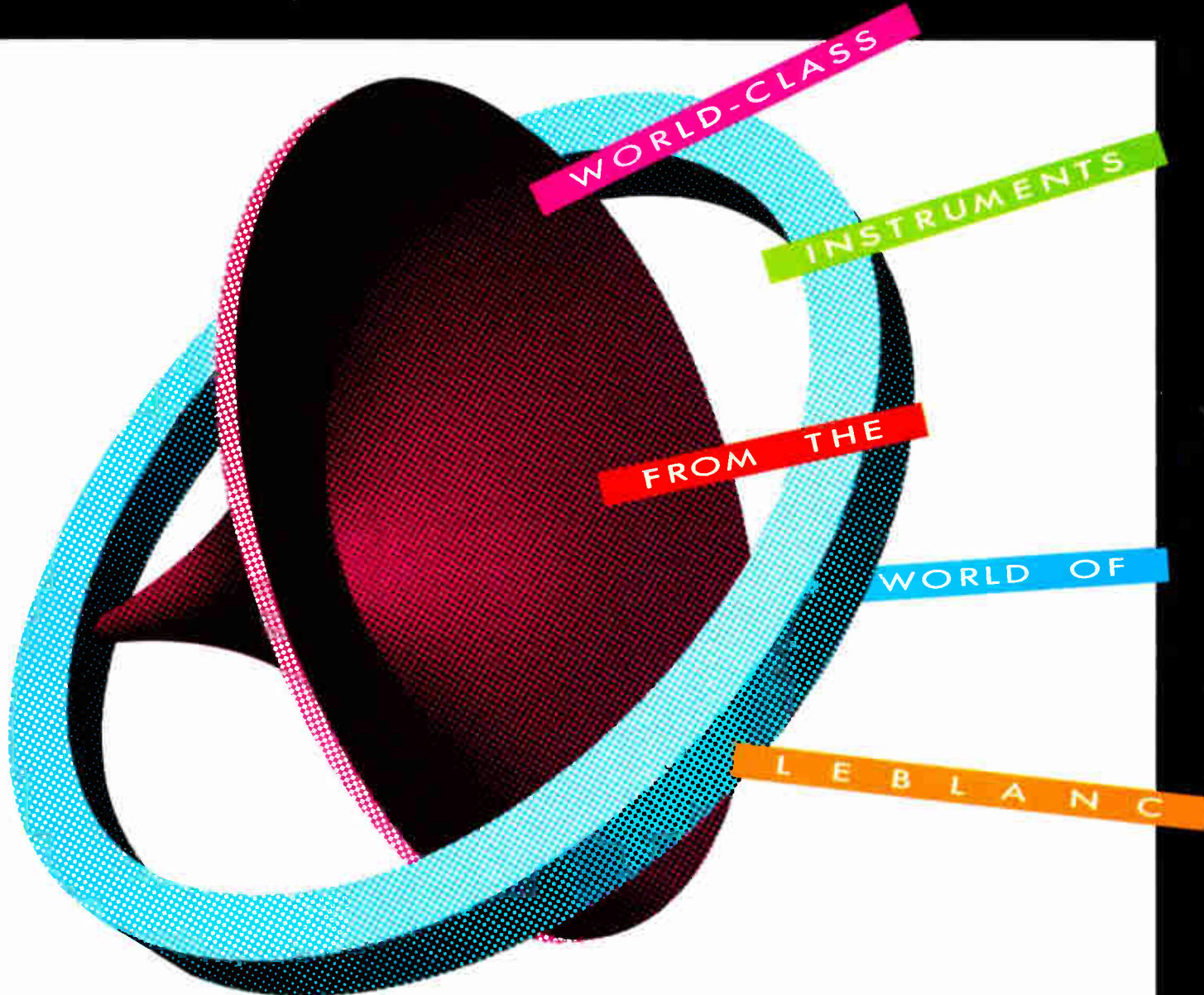
HAMILTON SWINGS

Recently I have had the opportunity to hear the Scott Hamilton quintet a few times in person, and also at a recording session. This group is, without a doubt, one of the very best in jazz today, and is anchored by a "Rolls Royce" rhythm section with John Bunch, piano; Phil Flanigan, bass; Chris Flory, guitar; and Chuck Riggs, drums. These guys, for the most part, grew up together, and it really shows in their playing. As for Scott Hamilton, he is playing more swinging, inventive, and hot tenor sax than *anyone* else on the scene today. A strong statement? Catch this group live and you'll see what I mean. They *define* swing.

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BUDDY RICH, 1917-87

LOS ANGELES—Bandleader, part-time singer and dancer, and one of the greatest drummers of all time, Buddy Rich died April 2 of heart failure as the result of seizure. After suffering a presumed stroke in January, Rich was found to have a brain tumor. He was operated on and seemed to be recovering when stricken at home. He was 69.

Born September 30, 1917, Rich followed his parents onto the vaudeville stage before he was two. Within a decade he became the second highest paid child performer in show business (Jackie Coogan was first). In 1930 "Buddy Traps" appeared in a Warner Brothers movie short. During the early- and mid-'30s, he faded as a child act only to re-emerge in 1937 fully formed as one of the greatest, most powerful drum virtuosos of his generation. Although his first record date was hardly the ideal showcase (the Andrews Sisters hit, *Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen*), his rise was rapid, first with Joe Marsala's band on 52nd Street, then Bunny Berigan's orchestra, and finally the great Artie Shaw band of 1939. Rich's impact on the Shaw orchestra was incredible. The arrangements fit his driving style perfectly, and his personality and power were like a charge of electricity. Even on studio recordings like *Traffic Jam*, listeners can hear his shouts of enthusiasm spurring the musicians on.

After the Shaw band broke up, Rich went with Tommy Dorsey. Whereas with Shaw's band Rich was an instant presence, the more stylized Dorsey arrangements gave him little room to shine. Aside from a brief turn with Benny Carter, Rich remained with Dorsey until 1946, when he formed his own band. It lasted off and on until the early '50s, after which Rich divided his time between Norman Granz' JATP stock company, his own small groups, touring with Harry James, and even a tv sitcom with Marge and Gower Champion. In 1959 Rich, then 42, suffered the first of several heart attacks. He had bypass surgery in April '83.

In 1966 Rich became a bandleader again, this time for keeps. Opening in Las Vegas, the band got off to a fast start and never looked back (except for 1974 when he briefly led a septet). Several outstanding Pacific Jazz LPs became Rich's best showcase since the Artie Shaw days—contemporary, swinging, but never excessively stylized. He commissioned charts of '60s rock pieces by the Beatles and the Doors, and



Buddy Rich

took his music to young audiences in rock venues such as the Kinetic Playground and the Fillmore. Helped by regular exposure on *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson, Rich's celebrity rapidly transcended jazz and reached general audiences who came out in big numbers for the next 20 years to hear his music.

In addition to his many records, Rich also appeared in a number of movies. He made *Dancing Co-ed* at MGM in 1939 with the Shaw band, plus three short subjects with Shaw at that time. With Dorsey, he appeared in *Las Vegas Nights*, *Ship Ahoy*, *Girl Crazy*, and *DuBarry Was A Lady*. In *Ship Ahoy* he performed a dance number with Eleanor Powell as well as drum duties in the Dorsey band.

Throughout his career, Buddy Rich never purveyed nostalgia. In 1982, at a retrospective concert during the Kool Jazz Festival, Mel Tormé persuaded Rich to play two old charts: the Shaw version of *The Carioca* and Dorsey's Sy Oliver arrangement of *Well Git It*. It may have been the only sentimental moment of his musical life. Rich carved out his own repertoire with remarkable integrity and found his own voice through his bands. They were driving jazz ensembles, not, as he said, "for tootsie tapping."

Rich's fluency, taste, and superb technique were negotiable in virtually any context. Although there was a period when some critics held his Swing Era credentials against him—even to the ridiculous assertion that he "ruined" a Charlie Parker/Dizzy Gillespie session for Norman Granz—Rich's vast body of recorded work (chronicled in Doug Meriwether's bio/discography, *We Don't Play Requests*) speaks for itself.

—john mcdonough

Potpourri

Guesting with Gil: **Sting** recently sat in with the **Gil Evans Orchestra** during its regular Monday night gig at Sweet Basil, a dress rehearsal for his scheduled special guest appearance with Gil this summer at the Umbria Festival (7/10-19) in Italy; Sting played guitar and sang the Jimi Hendrix tunes *Up From The Skies* and *Little Wing*. Also guesting with the Evans Orchestra in Perugia will be guitarist **Pat Metheny**, reuniting Pat with his former rhythm section of bassist **Mark Egan** and drummer **Danny Gottlieb** . . . Richards rehearsal: **Keith Richards** is busy jamming up material in a Manhattan rehearsal studio with drummer **Steve Jordan**, bassist **Charlie Drayton**, and guitarist **Waddy Wachtel**; watch for an album and tour . . . Update update: guitarist **Scott Henderson** (profiled in May '87) was recently picked by **Joe Zawinul** for Weather Update . . . Birds honored: **Benny Carter** and **Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen** have been named winners of the Northsea Jazz Festival's 1987 Bird awards; a panel of 23 jazz journalists from the U.S. and Europe decided who'd get the mvp honors, which are named, of course, for Charlie Parker . . . new music: Virgin Group chairman/ CEO **Richard**

Branson and Bill Graham will share keynote speaker honors at the eight annual **New Music Seminar**, 7/12-15 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in NYC; this year's 65-panel agenda will feature increased emphasis on dance and "alternative elements" coverage as well as moral and philosophical issues concerning the industry . . . gallery showing: **db** contributor **Mitchell Seidel** had a collection of his photos featured 4/21-5/30 at Imageworks Gallery in North Plainfield, NJ . . . Berklee honors: drum great **Art Blakey** and Grammy-winning producer **Phil Ramone** received honorary doctor of music degrees at the recent commencement ceremonies of the Berklee College of Music in Boston . . . jazz academy: the Internationale Sommerakademie der Hochschule "Mozarteum" in Salzburg, Austria, will include a lineup of jazz master classes 7/25-8/7; among those teaching will be **Herbie Hancock**, **Kenny Wheeler**, **John Surman**, **George Gruntz**, **Miroslav Vitous**, **Tony Williams**, **Sheila Jordan**, and **Bobby McFerrin**. Write Mirabellplatz 1, A-5020, Salzburg, Austria for more info, or phone Salzburg 75 5 34 . . .



BLUES BUDDIES: Eric Clapton, following a concert appearance at the Rosemont Horizon, joined longtime friend and blues master Buddy Guy onstage at the Chicago's Limelight Club, with Clapton's tour-mates Phil Collins and Robert Cray joining in on the jamming as well. It's a tradition for Clapton to jam with Chicago blues artists when he's in town; last time he joined Guy at the renowned Checkerboard Lounge on the South Side. Guy, incidentally, will soon be releasing a new album featuring Clapton, Jeff Beck, Stevie Roy Vaughan, and Ron Wood.

FLAMENCO PURO

BELGIUM—"Flamenco Puro" is alive and kicking its heels high, judging from the enthusiastic response of the press and concertgoers at this country's international guitar festival held recently in Liège and other cities. Reflecting the many moods of flamenco—from its raw and gritty rhythms to the sweetness of Spanish folk tunes—Serranito brought the house down with his young protégé, Miguel Riviera, at an event that otherwise maintained a strong slant toward classical guitar.

The festival showcased artists from a wide range of guitar styles, including England's fusion great John McLaughlin and Brazil's bossa nova guitarist Baden Powell. But the emphasis was on the likes of Julian Bream, Oscar Ghiglia, and Ichiro Suzuki—Japan's leading classical guitar-

ist—along with other classical virtuosi. Serranito, in fact, has many fans in the classical camp. To this day, he remains the only flamenco guitarist to be heartily endorsed by Segovia, the Maestro himself.

While his fusion-oriented colleague Paco de Lucia has blazed new trails and attracted new audiences to flamenco, Serranito, another Spanish guitar giant, has brought the same audiences back to the music's roots, which run deep in Spanish soil. It was 500 years ago that India's gypsies migrated to the Iberian Peninsula, an event that tragically coincided with the Spanish Inquisition. Flamenco was then a documentation of their persecution by the swords of the Spanish. But it wasn't until the 20th century that the rest of the world found out about what may be Spain's greatest national treasure.



Victor Monge "Serranito" (right) and protégé Miguel Riviera

DIANE GORDON

In 1934, the legendary Ramon Montoya played his first solo concert in Paris, and since then, flamenco has become an international symbol for Spanish culture. Serranito is one of the leading lights of the generation that followed Montoya and other flamenco pioneers, such as Sabicas and Niño Ricardo. Today, flamenco has found its way to the world's greatest concert halls, and Serranito has played at many of them, including Moscow's Tchaikovsky Hall and New York's Carnegie Hall.

Despite his extensive travels since winning several national prizes for flamenco guitar in the early '70s, Serranito has clearly stayed close to the spirit of the music that he says is best expressed by "cante jondo," or "deep song," which is flamenco singing, the medium which was historically the first of the style, before dancing and guitar playing.

"Paco de Lucia is a great artist, but there is always a danger of losing the elemental feeling of the music when it strays too far from true flamenco," he says. And while other guitarists may have cashed in on the commercialization of flamenco, both at home and abroad, the music of Serranito serves as a reminder that this isn't necessary—flamenco puro speaks for itself.

—diane gordon



BAKER APPOINTMENT: Jazz composer/educator Dr. David Baker of the University of Indiana (he's also president of the National Jazz Service Organization) is one of seven nominees chosen by President Reagan for appointment to the National Arts Council, the advisory body to the National Endowment for the Arts. Baker's term will run through Sept. 1992. Previous council members associated with jazz have included Duke Ellington, Gunther Schuller, Dr. Billy Taylor, and writer Ralph Ellison.

See page 46 for
July Fest Scene

Final Bar

John Malachi, pianist, arranger/composer, and educator, died of a heart attack Feb. 11 in Washington, DC. He was 68. A professor of Jazz Studies at Howard University as well as Artist-in-Residence at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, Malachi first earned a niche in jazz history as pianist/arranger for the legendary Billy Eckstine Big Band in the '40s. His *Opus X* was an early example of bebop being translated into a large ensemble context. Malachi toured with such instrumentalists as Dexter Gordon, Sonny Stitt, and Gene Ammons, but was best known for his work with such vocalists as Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughan, Dinah Washington, Dakota Staton, and Joe Williams.

Maxine Sullivan, whose career as a jazz vocalist took off with her 1938 recording of the pop hit *Loch Lomond*, died of cancer April 7 in a New York City hospital. She was 75. The Cotton Club veteran

had remained active until just weeks before her death, and was nominated for Grammy awards in 1985 and '86. She began singing as Marietta Williams in 1934, and was later introduced to band-leader Claude Thornhill, with whom she recorded her first hit. Other hit tunes like *Jeepers Creepers* and *Darn That Dream* followed, as did movie and Broadway appearances.

Eddie Durham, a trombonist and electric guitarist who composed and arranged for Swing Era big bands led by Count Basie, Jimmie Lunceford, Glenn Miller, and others, died March 6 in New York City. He was 80. Durham had led his own bands off-and-on since the 1940s. His compositions include the jazz standard *Topsy*, which was a hit single for Cozy Cole in 1958. His arrangements include *Pigeon Walk*, *Lunceford Special*, and *Blues In The Groove* for Lunceford; *Out The Window*,

Topsy, and *Time Out* for Basie; and *Slip Horn Jive*, *Glen Island Special*, and *Wham* for Miller.

Billy Rogers, jazz guitarist noted for recordings and performances with B.B. King, George Shearing, Ronnie Laws, Jack McDuff, and others, died Feb. 11 at his home in San Francisco at age 37. A self-taught musician, Rogers began his career after graduating from high school in Omaha, Nebraska. He spent much of his career in Los Angeles, where he recorded a gold and a platinum album between 1977-80 as a member of the Crusaders. For the past three years he had been a featured artist on many national tv commercials.

Leslie Rout, a baritone saxophonist and professor of history at Michigan State University, died April 2 following a long battle with hepatitis. He was 51. During the

late '50s and early '60s, Rout played in the bands of Lionel Hampton, Woody Herman, and Claude Thornhill. In the early '60s he also performed with the Paul Winter Sextet, taking part in a six-month Latin American tour, two albums on Columbia Records, and a White House performance.

Allan Jaffe, who ran Preservation Hall in New Orleans since founding it in 1961, died of cancer March 11 at age 51. Jobs for traditional jazz musicians were nearly nonexistent when Jaffe started Preservation Hall, which has since become a tourist landmark and living museum of traditional New Orleans jazz. Preservation Hall has provided a showcase for such traditionalists as clarinetist George Lewis, trumpeters Kid Thomas Valentine and Punch Miller, trombonists Jim Robinson and Louis Nelson, and pianist and singer Sweet Emma Barrett.

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LIL' ED & THE BLUES IMPERIALS

There's something familiar about the man on stage, both in his appearance (slight stature, thin face and buck teeth, with a hat atop his head), and the music he plays: raw, gutbucket, slide-guitar blues. The man is Ed Williams, nephew of J. B. Hutto; keeper of his late uncle's guitars, leader of the Blues Imperials. Now after 10 years together, Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials have literally become an overnight success. It happened this way.

Alligator Record's Bruce Iglauer signed up Lil' Ed between sets at Blue Chicago, a club in the yuppie playground known as Rush Street and a far cry from the band's familiar turf of West Side blues bars, but the deal was just for one cut on an anthology of new Chicago blues bands. Several weeks later the subdued quartet entered Streeterville Studios for their debut recording. Ready for the first take, Lil' Ed put on the white fez he reserves for special occasions and cut loose. By the time he began to duck walk across the studio, the assembled Alligator staffers had decided this band deserved an album. Two hours and a case of beer later the cut for *The New Bluebloods* (Alligator 7707), *Young Thing*, was in the can—along with 20 other songs, enough to fill their debut LP, *Roughhousin'* (Alligator 4749).

"In my neighborhood it's rough going if you play the blues," explains Ed. "You got to work hard to get across and work hard to make a living. Blacks just don't take to the blues like



SUSAN MATTES

they do on the North Side. J. B. used to tell me, 'If you're gonna play the blues, go to the North Side. West Side and the South Side just don't have the money.'"

What Lil' Ed's fans in North Side clubs, college town bars, and at a festival in Gronigen, Netherlands hear is typically a lively set that begins with *Yonder Wall* and ends with *Shake, Rattle And Roll*. In between, Ed shifts from song to song as the impulse hits him: *Summertime*, *Messin' With The Kid*, *Walkin' The Dog*, *Cleo's Mood*, or his own songs. *Old Oak Tree*, *Car Wash Blues* and the standard-sounding but original *Everything I Do Brings Me Closer To The Blues*, while emphasizing his lead guitar

licks—and enlivening the crowd—with a complimentary series of back bends, kneeling appeals, audience forays, and enthusiastic gestures.

"There's no song list. They're a waste of time to me. The band watches me real close, listens real close. If I'm in a different key they're right there. We practice so much when they go to sleep they hear me," says Ed about the Imperials: his half-brother Pookie Young on bass, Louis Henderson and Dave Weld on guitars, and the group's newest member, Pete Williams on drums.

For his next album, Ed has plans beyond simply repeating the music he grew up with. Ed's *Mother-In-Law Blues* has a blues-style lyric, but the music he's working on has more of a rock and country sound to it. He and Louis are working up a holiday song, wishing a merry Christmas to the bluesmen who have passed. And Ed would like to sing a song by one of his favorite vocalists—Kenny Rogers' *Coward Of The County*.

But Ed's thoughts come back to the man who gave him his inspiration, his uncle J. B. Hutto. "One of the first stage gigs we had was with J. B. He was having trouble with his band so he took us with him to South Bend, Indiana. I was so scared onstage I wouldn't move, but J. B. was walking those tables. That gave me a blast. I thought, one day I'll do that."

"I've never tried to sound much different than J. B. I like his style and sound. Our voice tones are different but guitar-wise we're about the same. But our lyrics are different. J. B. liked to sing slow blues. He'd take a slow blues and make you cry. I hope to do that myself someday." —dave helland

DUKE ROBILLARD

Years ago, guitarist Duke Robillard and tenor saxist Scott Hamilton used to pal around together in Providence, Rhode Island, trading information and opinions about the jazz and r&b they were so knocked out by. Okay, time changes everything, but it still seems fairly far afield that the negotiations for their first collaboration together would be finalized in Stockholm.

"That's the way it works sometimes," chuckles the 38-year-old Robillard. "Jimmie Vaughan was slated to be on my next record, but the T-Birds have gotten so popular that we had to delay recording for a bit. For the last couple years I've been getting back to the stuff I listened to when I first started playing guitar. Jazz from the '30s to mid-'40s is my favorite period—and I think it's Scott's too. I was totally engulfed in that era of music, everything from Bill Doggett to Buddy Johnson to Count Basie. So, I thought about doing a jazz-based album. I mentioned it to Scott at a festival in Stockholm, and everything was go."

So springs forth *Swing* (Rounder 3103), the first record to show that Duke isn't only capable of snapping off those tuff licks (like he does with his everything-I-need blues 'n rol trio, The Pleasure Kings, on his two



ROBERT LUPET

previous LPs—the eponymous debut, Rounder 3079, and *Too Hot To Handle*, Rounder 3082), but a fleet-fingered string player who can finesse his way through jazz-slanted r&b blowing vehicles. You know, smoooooth stuff.

Actually, those familiar with the guitarist's past work—he was at the helm of the initial incarnation of Roomful of Blues—shouldn't have a hard time figuring out where the rhythms on *Swing* are coming from. He's been covering variations of this particular turf ever since he put on his first wide-labeled jacket.

"I already do a few tunes in my repertoire

that come out of that period," says Robillard. "A good listener might be able to hear that part of my sound already. Today people seem to play the blues with a hurried, up-in-front-of-the-beat style. I often play with a relaxed, laidback feel. That's me. I set the beat way back there; that's the way I hear it. It comes from listening to all that swing when I was growing up. And it goes along with my personality—just take it easy."

By the sound of the record, there wasn't too much worrying going on in the studio. Robillard seems quite at ease sitting in with Hamilton and his band, bouncing their way through tunes that give them all a chance to explore the rhythm & blues corner of the jazz lexicon (especially drummer Chuck Riggs). Aligning their instruments on the heads of tunes such as *Jumpin' Blues*, *Shuffling' With Some Barbeque*, and *Glide On*, the guitarist and tenor player sound like this stuff is second nature.

"That's because it clicked," explains Duke. "We did it in one or two takes. We had an advantage because those guys have a unified sound already. And I knew many of their playing habits because I've jammed with them a few times over the years. It was a common feeling."

"We all agreed on one thing," he concludes. "We wanted simple, swinging, down-to-earth stuff. The groove is quite important to me." —jim macnie

"You Know It's A Great Instrument By Its Ability To Become A Part Of You."

John Denman, Principal Clarinet, Tucson Symphony and jazz soloist; Michele Zukovsky, Principal Clarinet, Los Angeles Philharmonic; Buddy DeFranco, renowned jazz clarinetist; and Joseph Longo, Co-Principal Clarinet, Minnesota Orchestra talk about Yamaha clarinets.

Jazz. Classical. Chamber music concerts. Solo recitals. With this many diverse careers, musical styles, and artistic backgrounds, you'd think these four virtuosos had little in common. Yet, as they talk you detect many similarities.

"Virtuosity in jazz or in classical music is attractive to anybody," observes John Denman. "If you're a clarinet player and you don't play jazz, listen to Buddy DeFranco. You can't help but say, 'I wish I could do something like that.' But it takes years and years to be able to get to that level of ability. You've got to study. It's too difficult to play the clarinet just by ear."

But dedication to the art of clarinet playing isn't all they have in common. They all play Yamaha.

"The Yamaha clarinet is pretty much what both areas of music need to perform with," states Buddy. "I play jazz very comfortably with the Yamaha. I think it's about the best you can get."

So how does one get hooked on just one clarinet? For Joe Longo it was during the Baltimore Clarfest in 1983: "Another participant brought it to me. He said, 'Hey, try this. There are some nice things about it.' I did and I was impressed in two minutes. It had a nice feel to it. It had the resistance that I liked. It was a very flexible instrument."

Buddy tried Yamaha fifteen years ago during a concert and liked the feeling: "It felt right. Had a little more flexibility which I seemed to be looking for, and the scale was

very even. I've been playing a Yamaha ever since."

Still, what makes Yamaha right for so many different styles?

As Joe puts it: "It doesn't make any difference whether one is playing jazz or in a symphony orchestra. A good player looks for a certain quality in an instrument—a certain feel."

Michele Zukovsky is impressed that you're not physically aware of the clarinet when you're playing it: "Some people are always aware of the instrument. But the Yamaha becomes a part of you. In that way it takes on your personality."



John agrees: "With the Yamaha, you can get personality into it. Plus, you don't have to go to alternate fingerings to compensate for bad intonation. It's pretty near perfect up and down the instrument. But the most important part is that it's in tune at all dynamic levels."

"It responds like my voice responds," says Joe, "without having any impediment from here to the end of the clarinet. It's alive."

"Of course, Yamaha has that undefinable thing," inserts Buddy, "maybe a warmer quality to the sound that I wanted—that I was looking for."

However, it's not sound alone that attracts these players to Yamaha. Michele likes the light

construction of the Yamaha: "And that helps the technique. It doesn't fight you—

it's no big battle. It just plays! It's a real artist's instrument."

"It feels comfortable," states Buddy. "The mechanism feels comfortable for me and the ring set-up is just right for my fingers."

But it was John who seemed to sum it up for all four artists with the fact that it is actually fun to play this instrument: "I'm really enjoying it. It seems to me that somebody got it right. It's the greatest over-the-counter product that I have ever come across."

*The International Clarinet Society
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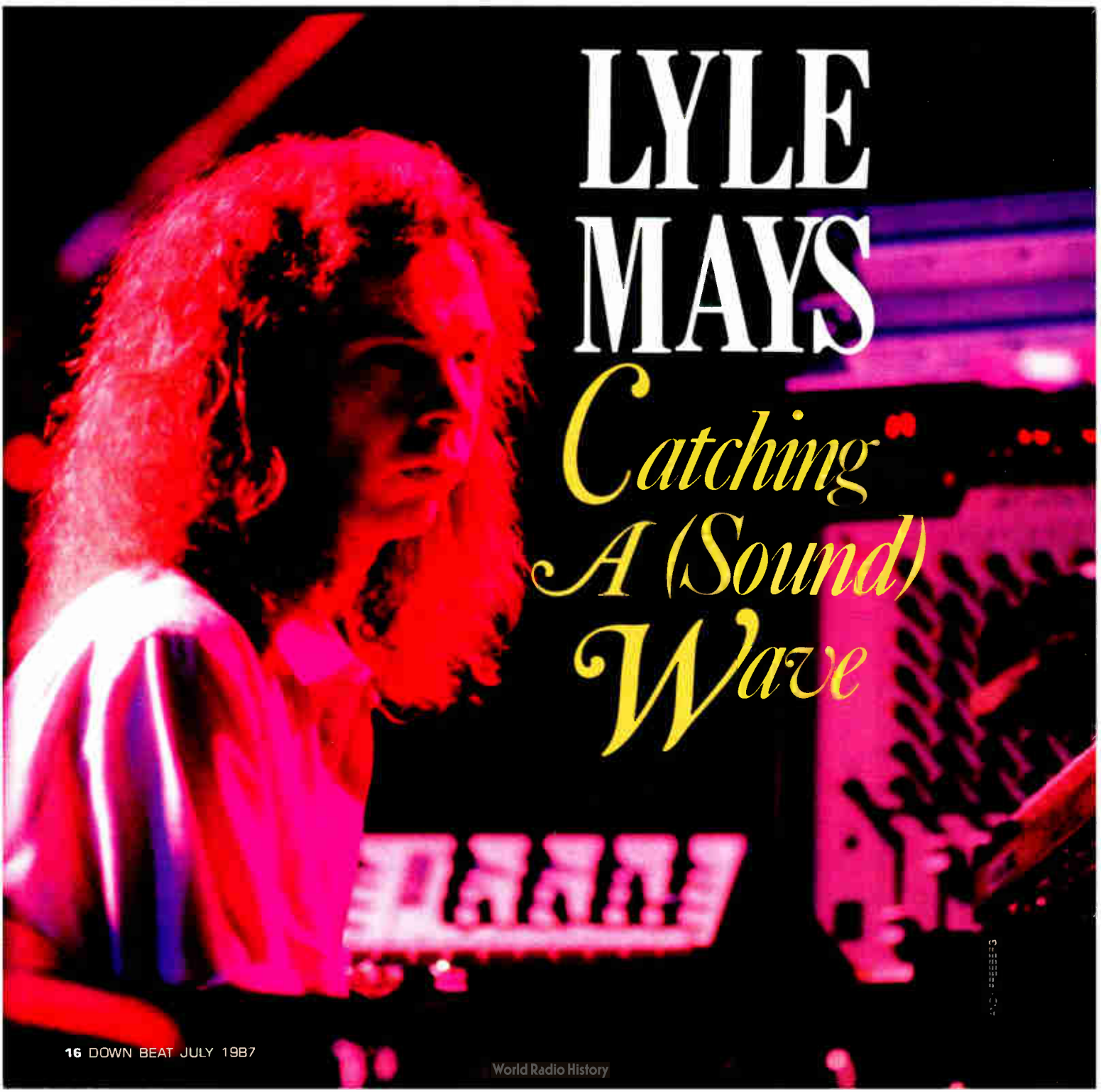
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by GENE SANTORO

It's been a dozen years since a 22-year-old pianist and a 20-year-old guitar player met at the Wichita Jazz Festival, discovered they had a great deal in common musically, and formed a band. Since then, the Pat Metheny Group has built a sturdy, steady following for their music. Blending bebop chops, c&w pastoral evocations, and touches of grittier styles like harmolodics and funk, Metheny & Co. have breathed a new and different life into the fusion dinosaur.

In no small part, the signatures of the Metheny Group sound emanate from the keyboards of Lyle Mays. Besides the soloing duties he shares with Metheny, Mays co-composes and co-arranges much of the material, and provides the synth pads that expand the band's sonic capabilities beyond the confines of their numbers. Last year, he released his first solo album, which featured Bill Frisell, Marc Johnson, Billy Drewes, Alex Acuna, and Nana Vasconcelos. He also co-wrote and co-produced with Metheny the soundtrack to *The Falcon And The Snowman*, and has recently composed scores for tv versions of two childrens' stories (*Peter Rabbit* and *Mr. Jeremy Fisher*) narrated by Meryl Streep. When I spoke to him in his midtown Manhattan hotel room, he'd just finished a marathon mastering session for the forthcoming Metheny Group album.



LYLE MAYS

Catching A (Sound) Wave

GENE SANTORO: After your last *db* interview (July 1983), *First Circle* appeared. Did the group's approach to composing and recording change for that album?

LYLE MAYS: The distant past [laughs]. That was the first time since *American Garage* that we were in the studio by ourselves. It was an opportunity for us to get a version of our music that was not so much processed through Manfred Eicher [head of ECM, the Metheny Group's previous label]. So we were going for a little hotter sound; basically, for better or for worse, something that represented how it sounded to us, and how it sounded live. The music was selected because we liked it, and just about only because of that—we've never really had a strong concept album or any political cause, we just put together a collection of music that sounds good to us, that we enjoy playing. Sometimes that actually makes it difficult to make a record out of it. On this new record, too, we didn't go in with the order ahead of time; you know, this piece has to do this because that piece does that. It's a different thing making a record than it is making music. With *First Circle* we didn't even have song titles, just this collection of music we wanted to do.

It was evolving then, too. We were getting a little more ambitious with the way we were using the technology. From the keyboard standpoint, I really didn't put any parts on that record that I didn't play live. I elaborated on them a little bit; instead of actually doing everything live with one hand on the piano and one hand on the synth I would actually play the piano part and then overdub the synth part. But all of us were approaching even the overdub stage with a more open, improvising attitude.

We had a lot more time than ever before in the studio—and it still wasn't that much. When Pat and I did *As Falls Wichita*, that took four days total, mix and everything. So to have a week or more in the studio was an amazing luxury. We didn't use the extra studio time to bog it down in parts and layers and all that. We basically represented in the studio what we were doing live, and I really like the way it turned out for just that reason. The various parts have an organic feel to them. I can remember improvising other parts after the basic tracks. You know that the second half of some section wants to have another sound, another texture, and it's not so important sometimes exactly what it is, it's more important that it has that *feeling* to it. I really like the kind of loose feeling that we were able to maintain even by adding more layers.

GS: Then came *The Falcon And The Snowman*. Doing a film score must be different from doing an album.

LM: Sure; the overriding fact is that in a film project the music is just a portion of the total effect. For our records and our live shows, of course, the music is *it*—there are no stage theatrics, no messages, no movement we're tied in with. The real challenge, I thought, with that project was to put myself into it completely and make the music as full and rich and varied as it could be, and yet keep in mind that that was just a portion of the total result. It didn't have to carry the day—and shouldn't—shouldn't try to do all the emotions, shouldn't try to tell the whole story. It just has to tell its part of the story. That's a real challenge—to tone it down or thin it out at the same time as you're putting everything into it.

Pat and I actually lived there for a while; we had flats in London, we'd go to the office every day, plug in a videocassette, look at a scene a number of times, and see what we could come up with. It was a very different direction for us. But John Schlesinger is a director who I think has used music very well; the first time I really noticed it was in *Midnight Cowboy*—the theme and the whole tone of the music worked so well with what the movie was doing. He is actually a fan—he had come to our concerts in New York—and so he was willing to take a chance on us, because we weren't proven in the scoring business, which is a different game altogether from what we do. He was generally very open to what we wanted to do, although being the director he would always have opinions about it. He was also not that familiar with multi-track recording, so there were funny times when he would come in and actually see us put the music on tape, and it would be confusing for him, since he didn't see the orchestra out there, and it didn't sound like the finished product immediately. But we got through it [laughs].

GS: What was it like working with David Bowie?

LM: It was pretty wild, because it was so unexpected. From the

start, we've never tried to reach a mass audience, we've never had any ambitions for any kind of popular success in that way. And so to suddenly be working with someone who is one of the heaviest pop musicians was wild. Pat and I had to go out and get his records and check up to see what he was really into [laughs]. He was really great to work with, though; I found him to be very unconcerned about his fame and success and image. He was just there to do a job. He told us his ideas about the lyrics, what he thought he could do with them and so on, and asked us about ours. It was like a couple of construction workers sitting down and talking about where that beam's gonna go—there was no pretension. He really knows pop music. I don't think we could have done a pop single ourselves, because we don't know that music. At the same time, it's not something we really aspire to, either. But in the context of the movie it fit—in fact, Schlesinger put us together. So we were able to do a version of our music that worked with a version of what Bowie does.

GS: Since we're talking about composing, how do you approach writing yourself? Is there a typical way it happens?

LM: It's always different. As soon as I think I understand what I do and try to codify it, I'm gonna fall flat on my face. It's becoming clear to me that I can trick myself real easily into thinking I understand the process, and actually I think there are some real pitfalls in working from that kind of limited self-knowledge. If I would form a description of how I work, and then try to follow that, it wouldn't work.

But, as far as I can determine, I need some time to clear my mind before I get into something. While I'm into it, I try to let the music dictate where it wants to go; I try not to impose my aspirations on it. It's really more like being an archaeologist. I try to uncover little bits that may come from an original idea, however short it might be, and try to get in there and let it tell me what it needs, what instruments can play it, what other notes it likes to be with—really try to take myself as an emotional participant out of the picture as much as I can to look at what the music really is, what it really can do. That's difficult to do, and even that description isn't complete.

I've also found that there are two stages—there's a more creative stage and there's an editing stage. I'm trying more and more to separate the two, so that I don't write down a couple of notes and then immediately go into the edit mode [laughs] and say, "Oh, that's no good, that second note has to go." That way you can spend hours and get nowhere. When things seem to be flowing I just let them flow and try not to pass judgment on them. I might get up the next morning and look at it as dispassionately as I can, almost as if someone else had written it and I'm coming in with my background and experience and detachment.

GS: Do you actually write the music down or put it on tape?

LM: I write it down. Sometimes I don't even write it down; I've found that it's almost superfluous to write down a lot of the best things, they just stick in there. I seldom makes tapes of sketches because there's a danger in that—demo fever: you get into liking what's on the demo and not seeing the possibilities. I use my imagination a lot, and I'll stop short of finishing something to allow for other musicians' input. I'll trust that a couple of squiggles on a piece of paper that I can sing along with as I play could be realized by a good musician and sound like something. I try not to get it to the point where it sounds complete when I'm playing it. I still fill up reams of manuscript paper, score paper. That kind of hard copy feels good to me; it's a good way of working. It's closer to being able to manipulate it with your hands. Of course it's not—it's still ephemeral, it's still sound waves you can't really grab and hold on to. But it gives you a sense that you might.

GS: Talking about catching sound waves, your solo LP grew out of a live performance you gave in Montreal in the summer of '84.

LM: It really did. I had been putting off doing a solo concert for a long time, because it was hard for me to figure out what that meant for me. I mean, I haven't exactly dedicated my life to the acoustic piano, so I didn't feel right about going onstage with just a piano and saying, "Okay, now I'm gonna do my version of this." But there's also something about the solo setting that's very challenging, and that kind of challenge is necessary for growth. I'd put it off long enough. I had a very good offer from the people at the Montreal Jazz Festival, who've always been great to us—we've played there a lot and gotten to know them. And so I decided to do it.



STEVE KAGAN

So after the anxiety attacks subsided [laughs] I started working on how I could do some music just with the keyboards, using the piano, but also the setup that had evolved around it. I'm starting to see that setup as more my instrument, rather than any one of the elements in there. Even the term keyboard player doesn't fit, sometimes, either. Some of the things I do on some of the synthesizers a child could do, in terms of the technique. If I hold one finger on a note to get *that* sound or *that* texture while something else goes on, it seems funny sometimes, but it's in the cause of the orchestration, or the arrangement, or the composition. So the whole thing gets connected; those instruments have become useful to me for composing and arranging and orchestrating. I'm not a keyboard player in the sense that some people are—you know, they take solos on their mini-Moogs or DX7s or whatever, and really play them from a performance standpoint. A lot of the time I just use them to make sounds, so the performance aspect doesn't figure into it real strongly.

Anyway, the challenge of coming up with music that I liked and that fit my instrument—this composite instrument—led to a lot of music that worked well in the solo concert. But I decided it needed some other input too, that the best setting for that music would be in a larger ensemble.

GS: How did you pick people to work with?

LM: Basically, I thought about who are the musicians I like listening to, working with, who would sound good playing this music. I've known Marc Johnson since 1975—we went to North Texas State together—and we're almost brothers. Sometimes I almost forget that he's this heavy bass player, 'cause he's my friend Marc, but I really love the way he plays and really admire what he's done. I could imagine him playing this music and taking it that extra step. Same with the other musicians. Nana, of course, was in the group for a few years, and we really evolved some textural things together that still sound real good to me. He's a percussionist who understands orchestration; he never wanted to wail on congas or something, was always looking for the spot where he could make another level of interest in the music. I admire his taste and his unique simplicity. For example, there was one tune in 5/4, and his response was to play a version of the basic beat, but in 4/4. Younger musicians are always looking for more and more complex things to do—'How can I play 7 against 13?' [laughs] But Nana playing that little thing in 4/4 makes

the whole tune sound great. And Frisell—I don't even know if he plays the guitar. I mean, it *looks* like a guitar [laughs]. He shares my love of sounds, what shaping sounds can do to music. The way he and Billy Drewes work together—their melodic playing on the record still moves me, the way they could blend their two instruments together to sound like some undiscovered third instrument. And Frisell's not into being flashy or drawing attention to himself. All the musicians on the record were selfless in that way.

GS: There are a lot of different sounds on the album. Highland Aire, besides the pipes, has echoes of Keith Jarrett, that kind of piano feel with the gospel things and big splashy sounds.

LM: Well, it's partly that and partly coming from the same place that Keith is coming from. It's a bit of a challenge playing straight eighth-note music, in that that tradition hasn't been going on that long and it sounds very Americana to me. That can be good and bad, but it's still something I'm working on a lot. I'm noticing now influences that are coming from Ramsey Lewis, Earth Wind & Fire, Tower of Power, the Beatles—all sorts of pop music from the '60s. There's so much in the straight eighth-note side of jazz to explore. Keith has really found a voice, captured a lot of people's imagination with his version of dealing with this kind of music, but I hear a lot of Paul Bley in Keith's stuff too, which is seldom talked about. Paul's a real underrated pianist. There's also a lot of Chopin in what Keith does [laughs]. See, you can go in and really find all these things—you can find them in everyone's playing, I'm sure. But it all gets processed in different ways by different people.

GS: Let's talk about your use of synths versus piano. You still solo on piano, although now you're talking about this composite instrument that you've built. How do you see the role of synths in what you do?

LM: I really haven't changed my approach that much; it may even be getting more firmly entrenched. The instruments aren't really evolving as fast as I thought they might; I think we have more and more synthesizers now, but I still think there's a big gap between what's possible on synthesizers and what's possible on traditional acoustic instruments. So it's getting even harder for me to use synthesizers, their sounds are even less satisfying to me, and I'm becoming even less content with using my imagination to fill in the gaps. A sawtooth wave sounds even *more* like a sawtooth wave to me now than it used to [laughs]. It's all over the place—there's so

many DX7s on pop music it's like a plague. It's sounding more and more to me like grainy digital high-end, and it's harder and harder for me to say that's good. It's really a challenge, because I've got this instrument that's evolved, and it's causing me even more grief to try to get music that I like out of it.

Also, where I'm coming from is a much more acoustic place. That's the music that sounds best to me. There is an argument to be made for a modern sound that uses a lot of synthesizers in naked ways, and that may groove some people—I have no argument with it. Music can be made with synthesizers, even the blatant electronic-sounding ones. I don't personally want to do that. Using synthesizers to me is a compromise right from the start.

GS: It is a way to get the complex arrangements you like without needing an orchestra.

LM: And in the simplest way, it's a way of getting sustain. Start with just a piano and an organ—on the piano the note dies out, on the organ it sustains. That's a basic orchestrational difference. And of

course, the different sounds have their different uses, which is why I'm using the synthesizers.

GS: The band has just finished mastering the new Metheny Group LP. What can we expect?

LM: We're so close to it, it's still so new, we've been so immersed in it for so long, that it's really hard for me to have a perspective on it. I can't sit here and say, "This is what this music is." I couldn't anyway, even after the fact—that's for other people to decide. Again, it's music we really like.

The group is evolving. We've expanded—there's seven people now. Still Steve Rodby and Paul Wertico, but we've got a couple of new singers, David Blamires and Mark Ledford, and Armando Marcal playing percussion—the hottest young Brazilian percussionist. So it's a bigger palette. The idea of having two voices doing what one voice did before grew out of Nana's vocalizations. Pedro Aznar's role in the group was basically an elaboration of the way Nana would use his voice with his percussion. The sound of the human voice, the breath, the incredible complexities of it, added so much to the music that we wanted to expand on that. So we got Pedro, an excellent singer who had that Brazilian vocal style coming from Milton Nascimento or Ivan Lins, the wordless vocal, using the voice as the instrument. That then became an even bigger part of the group's sound. The move to having two singers doing that was natural—they're basically singing in unison all the time. It's just another texture. And the expanded potential of the Synclavier has given it a larger role in things, not even in the keyboard sounds so much as different parts all over the place. We can sample a guitar note and drop it in somewhere, or have it play a percussion part by accessing its sampled files of percussion sounds.

But the big challenge on this record was dealing with the complexity of sound—the complex music and complex orchestrations. The possibilities were greater, and we were trying to use them. So there's a lot going on, and it took longer than any of our previous records. Part of that added time is because of the added complexity. The thing is, the stuff is never finished. Even now we can listen to it and say, "Shouldn't have done that there," or, "This is too loud," or, "This section could've been different." You can just keep going back; who knows where to stop? The fact is, you decide on what you're gonna record and then you record it, and you have to stop at some point. You can overpolish, but you can also improve. You feel that you owe it to the listener to give as accurate a representation of the music as you can, and if something sounds bad, or it's played bad, that's not an accurate representation. So you're naturally gonna want to change it to get the message across as clearly as you can. You take the complex music and have it sound uncomplicated, have it sound natural. It's conceived that way, but the process of actually realizing it gets difficult.

GS: How did you approach the recording?

LM: Similar to *First Circle*. We went for a very live feel. We'd play all together, and then certain things get replaced. There may be a couple of bass notes Steve wants to change, maybe a guitar solo Pat wants to do something with, we may redo the vocals. But what we start with is not a click track, so you have the feel and the sound of a rhythm section playing, a band playing. Even the overdubs reflect that. Some of the horn parts—those synthesized hornlike things [laughs]—are based on the original piano parts that were on the live takes. At one point I was having all sorts of problems because I knew I wanted to put a horn part on the end of a section, but I couldn't seem to fit anything else in there, even though it sounded incomplete without something else. So I transcribed what I'd played on piano, and wrote some horn parts that part of the time played what the piano played and part of the time answered it. It ends up being a composed thing, but it's based on the original moment, the impulses I had when it was going down, and so it sounds much more natural to me. It has the best of both worlds—there's the polished aspect to it, because I had some perspective and some time to sit back, but it also blends in with the live track. That's much more satisfying to me than another layer, another level of information with new lines, new movements. It feels much more organic. It's a crazy way of getting it to be more organic, but that's the result. It's funny, but after all this time in the studio the music ends up sounding very much like it sounds live. It's a strange process. **db**



STEVE KAGAN

LYLE MAYS' EQUIPMENT

Lyle Mays prefers Steinway pianos. His current synthesizer lineup is fairly extensive. "I still have the Oberheim from when the group started, the same Prophet Five—from before they put all sorts of digital oscillators in it, so it sounds a little warmer. So I've got some dinosaurs in the setup, but at the same time I've got access to the Synclavier that's become part of the group. When Pat first got it, he had this idea that it would enlarge the possibilities for us, and I've gotten to know it and love it and hate it. It's a remarkable thing. It's not a synthesizer; they call it a Music System, and that's pretty accurate. It can do so much, from sampling to printing out in real time what you're playing—that kind of stuff is scary. I've also gotten involved with Kurzweil, trying to help them make the 250 better. So I can access sounds from the most primitive synthesizers to the most state-of-the-art, but they all have expanding possibilities and inherent limits. It's schizophrenic." He also uses amplified autoharps and a Yamaha electric organ.

LYLE MAYS SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

LYLE MAYS—Geffen 240987

with Bob Moses

THE STORY OF MOSES—Gramavision
18-8703-1

WHEN ELEPHANTS DREAM OF MUSIC—
Gramavision 8203

with Eberhard Weber

LATER THAT SAME EVENING—ECM
1-1231

with the Pat Metheny Group

THE FALCON AND THE SNOWMAN—EMI
America 17150

FIRST CIRCLE—ECM 25008-1 E

TRAVELS—ECM 1-23791

OFFRAMP—ECM 1-12116

AS FALLS WICHITA, SO FALLS WICHITA
FALLS—ECM 1-1190

AMERICAN GARAGE—ECM 1-1155

PAT METHENY GROUP—ECM 1-1114

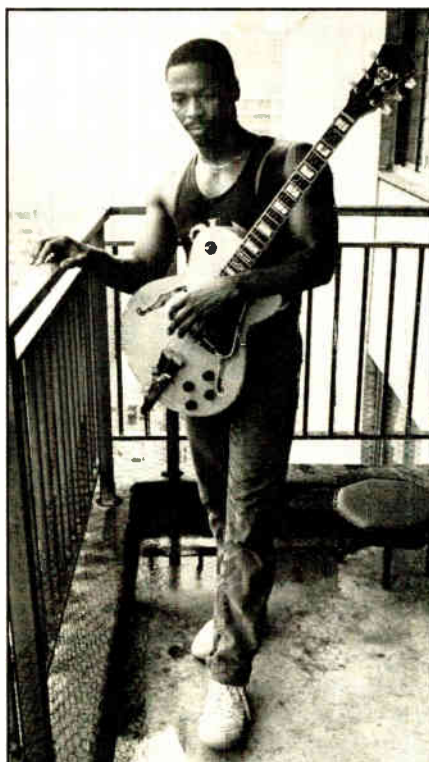
WATERCOLORS—ECM 1-1097

from playing with Art and Slide, Roy Haynes, Ronnie Mathews, I'd been doing nothing but straightahead tunes. I was still transcribing solos. I was knee-deep into that. And then all of a sudden I didn't hear one change. I didn't know what to do, and it felt good. Sam would have the direction already in his head. We did some funk things, but I never took any solos in the free sections. I was really much better at comping and changing then. I played more on the funk things but it was really more of a rhythm gig, an imagination gig. I was breaking down a lot of habits. It freed my thinking. The music I'm playing today with my group was very much affected by the music I played with Sam."

The Kevin Eubanks Trio features bassist Grant and drummer Gene Jackson. They haven't recorded yet as a band—but then, the music Eubanks plays live differs from the music he's recorded. "One thing that's similar is you'll hear a lot of original material. One difference is that the improvisation is much more group-oriented. Everybody solos, but it's not a matter of solos. It's how everything inter-relates. Everybody gets to solo all night if they want to, especially if they have a hot night. It's set up so they can go into a solo whenever they want. That's a big difference from the records, a much freer concept, and it's much more funky than on the records. We play tunes from each of the records, but the concept is woven together with the free thing I learned from Sam Rivers and the confidence I learned playing with Art and Roy and Slide. I feel confident doing bitonal things or stretching the basic chords and still saying something. There's still a melody. For example, you'll hear *Trick Bag* [by Wes Montgomery, recorded on Kevin's record *Face To Face*], but you'll hear it with the band's concept. If the drummer is feeling hot, he doesn't have to wait till the end of the guitar solo. If I feel he's coming up I can go into an ostinato and they'll know I want to hear more of it. When the drummer starts to cool down I'll go back to the guitar solo. That's when the band sounds the best, when we're just going back and forth through whatever is happening. We have a lot of material but we go in and out of it. It would be impossible to put that on a record. It's live. It changes from night to night."

Eubanks hopes to record eventually with McCoy Tyner, and dreams of playing with Elvin Jones. "I've been fortunate to play with the drummers I've played with—Tony Campbell, Kenny Washington, Smitty Smith, Roy, and Art. I'd like to play a rock or fusion gig with Tony Williams or Billy Cobham—but the one I've always wanted to play with is Elvin."

Will he also, as is fashionable nowadays, perform or record with another guitarist? "I love doing duets with another guitar. Mike Stern and I used to play a lot. I'd have a good time with John Scofield or Kenny Burrell. But the person I'd really love to play with is George Benson. He's the most swinging



MITCHELL SEIDEL

KEVIN EUBANKS' EQUIPMENT

Kevin Eubanks plays an Ibanez GB10 electric guitar and an Ovation Legend acoustic guitar. "The Ibanez is the right size for me," he says. "I'm going to have a guitar built and use a lot of the same specifications. The Ovation is easy to play sitting down. With a lot of acoustic guitars, you can tell the difference more in the studio. It's so temperamental live, the way acoustic guitars can sound totally different. I use the acoustic mostly in the studio. I play electric mostly in concerts."

Eubanks plays through a Galien Kruger 400 amp with Bose 802 speakers, two Roland Jazz Chorus, Ernie Ball Volume Pedal, Rat Distortion Pedal, plus Boss Delay, Octave Divider, Chorus, Compressor, and, for strings, "the thickest I can find," he says. "I like a fat sound. There's more feeling, more presence on the guitar. I used to use Fender heavy-gauge strings, but they stopped making them. It's very hard to find heavy-gauge strings. Even ones that claim to be heavy, they're not. It's pretty frustrating sometimes when it's not what they say on the package. I can tell when I tune up—you hear a twang and you know it's not the heavy-gauge strings you're looking for. It's a serious drag."

KEVIN EUBANKS SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

FACE TO FACE—GRP 1029
OPENING NIGHT—GRP 1013
SUNDANCE—GRP 1008
GUITARIST—Elektra/Musician 60213

with Art Blakey

LIVE AT MONTREUX AND NORTHEA—Timeless 150

with Rosalyn Burroughs

LOVE IS HERE—Sunnyside 1009

with Meredith D'Ambrosio

IT'S YOUR DANCE—Sunnyside 1011

with Billy Hart

OSHUMARE—Gramavision 18-8502-1

with Bob Thompson

BROTHER'S KEEPER—Intima 4XJ-73238

with James Williams

ALTER EGO—Sunnyside 1007

PROGRESS REPORT—Sunnyside 1012

with The Young Lions

THE YOUNG LIONS—Elektra/Musician 60196

guitar player there is today."

Kevin is excited that Benson, along with Onaje Allan Gumbs, will produce his next record. "Ron Carter is going to help me out with it, and I hope to use the band as much as we can." But will Benson play? "If we did that, people will be comparing us, and I wouldn't want that. I just hope to learn as much from George as I can. I'd love to do a gig with two guitars, me and George, with a rhythm section at The Blue Note or somewhere. I'd have to practice my ass off before that one!"

Eubanks, as always, is learning. "I think the hardest lesson to learn is that what is most important is knowing your own sound, your own color, your own rhythm you vibrate, so that you always have self-awareness—whether you're in school being bombarded by information, or you jump into the New York scene with a zillion great musicians. All of a sudden there's a wave of talented young musicians. You have to know your own vibration so that whatever circle you move in, whether it's musical or social or whatever, you're still yourself. You don't have to change what you're doing to fit this person or that scene. For me, getting closer to George Benson is something that excites me—being close to somebody I respect and admire—but you don't want to lose your own perspective of yourself. It's important to keep your own personality. I'm into a lot of things jazz musicians have not traditionally been into, but a lot of young cats are. I like punk. Sometimes I dress like that. I'll be in the Vanguard walking around with studded bracelets. But it was the same when Bird and Miles and Papa Jo came along. They had their own thing, like big ties with spots. That's who they were. People brought what they were, musically or cosmetically, into the scene."

Kevin worries that young musicians, looking at the success of a Wynton Marsalis or a Stanley Jordan, will not be encouraged, that they'll be discouraged if they're not as successful. "Somebody else's success becomes your misery!" He also worries that young musicians imitate too much what's happened before.

"I don't want to have to live up to the attitudes of what went before. I don't want to be 'serious' and wear suits. I want to say, 'This is me! This is what I'm bringing!' We respect what went before, but if I want to dress like this, if I want to wear a muscle t-shirt and still swing *C Jam Blues*, that's the way I feel. Let's see what the people think about it. Let's be ourselves and see what kind of excitement that brings. Young musicians aren't eclectic enough. We don't act our age enough. We get so caught up in what we're expected to do. We're young. We're silly. We like to dance! But when I see cats play, I don't see it. To see a 23-year-old go up to the mic, finish the solo, take a tiny bow and walk off, I don't understand that. I want to see some personality. This is not, 'Let's be the new Lee Morgan or the new Wayne Shorter.' Let's be You! This is the '80s—after rap, after Vietnam. This is now!" db

By Kevin Whitehead

tim BERNIE

BEYOND THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Visit Tim Berne at home and you'll know why his latest record's called *Fulton Street Maul*. Construction of the Fulton Mall—a grim pedestrian strip which runs within a block of his downtown Brooklyn loft—deafened the neighborhood for years, leaving mauled Fulton looking no better than it did before renewal.

Or so says Berne, who should know; he's been living here for almost a decade, since before a Brooklyn address became *de rigueur* for young turks. "If it wasn't for all the noise around here"—car alarms and jackhammers accompany most of our afternoon interview—"I might not have become a professional musician. When I first moved to New York, in the mid-'70s, every time I'd start to practice, the neighbors called up to complain."

Not long after moving down by Fulton, alto saxophonist/composer Berne issued his first record on his own Empire label—1979's *The Five-Year Plan*. More Empires followed, including the gorgeous/hot live quartet set *Songs And Rituals In Real Time*, with Paul Motian on drums. Then came two LPs for Soul Note, the reissue of an Empire Berne/Bill Frisell date on Minor Music, and the big-label breakthrough with Columbia's *Maul*.

The goal of that five-year plan was to give up his day job and devote full time to music. Actually, it took seven years—which, as five-year plans go, isn't bad. Berne's no overnight wonder, but his progress has been accelerating of late. His first two records featured Los Angeles-based players—among them Vinny Golia, Alex Cline, John Carter, and Glenn Ferris—because he didn't know many musicians in the Apple. Now he works with feted New Yorkers like Frisell and John Zorn, and records for the most major of majors.

It's as if he's sold his soul to the devil—which is not far from the way some folks see it. "When you're on Columbia," Berne says, "people immediately think either a) you've sold out, or b) who did you know who got you this?"

In Tim's case it was b), although it wasn't a connection he tried to exploit. His guardian angel at Black Rock is Gary Lucas, ex-Captain Beefheart guitarist and longtime Columbia copywriter, who'd just produced a Peter Gordon LP for CBS Masterworks. Lucas is from the old neighborhood in Syracuse where Tim grew up. "Gary would come into Tower Records, where I was working last year, to buy CDs. He'd say, 'I hear you're making records; I want to check you out, maybe I



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can get you a deal.' And I put it nicely as I could: 'I'd prefer not to waste my time.'" Tim had dealt with enough industry types to know his freebop-and-beyond had No Commercial Potential.

But Lucas proved a stubborn booster; a few months later, he got the nod from upstairs, and Tim was looking at the same 60-page contract Springsteen signs. At the time the deal came through, Berne had been prepping a more traditional sextet

date for Minor Music. A major label deal dictated a change of plans. But *Fulton Street Maul* is no sell-out. For anyone who thinks of Berne in terms of the melodic, sometimes haunting acoustic dates he's recorded in recent years—Soul Note's *Mutant Variations* is a good introduction—the new album sounds downright noisy. The band's a quartet, beefed up by overdubbing: alto, Frisell's guitar, cello, and drums.

Berne thinks that most artists who sign with major labels and then make blatantly commercial records don't buckle to corporate pressure, but go for the gold on their own initiative ("Not an entirely lame thought if you're predisposed in that direction"). Tim decided to buck the system—to make a record *less* "safe" than the one he'd been planning—even if he drove himself into "bleak frenzy," imagining the terrible ruckus that might ensue when the CBS brass heard the results. He kept waiting for an axe to fall. It never did.

Lucas, who would produce *Fulton Street Maul*, knew what he liked. And of all the recent tapes Tim had played him, the Beefheart alumnus preferred the increasingly dense duo work with Frisell. "The new album crystallizes ideas that we began on the duo record, which was the first time Bill and I had played together. We'd been playing and touring in the two years since, and the music had become so structured and so dense, we sounded like 10 people; it's a much bigger sound than we got with overdubs in the studio. It took me two years to figure out how to harness this stuff into a record, to present all the ideas the duo got into, without totally dismissing what I'd done before."

A quartet would be more unwieldy than a duo, he knew. But the addition of cellist Hank Roberts and drummer Alex Cline was worth more than the sum of their parts. "With Bill and Hank and myself, we can get the illusion of seven or eight winds, almost. Bill and Hank have been playing together for 10 years—they had a band in Boston in the '70s—and just those two playing in unison sounds like something other than itself.

"The projects that I had in mind with Bill and Alex involved a lot of overdubbing and production that I just couldn't do on a budget with Minor Music. The Columbia session involved five days, which for me was an eternity. We mixed for two-and-half days." The Empire dates were one-day affairs. Still, Berne points out, despite overdubs, grafts, and retroactive structuring, on *Fulton Street Maul* "most of the real playing is live; about 60 percent of the music is improvised."

Where Berne's acoustic LPs boast an appealingly lean lyricism—a simplicity at times suggestive of folk art—*Fulton Street Maul* is dense enough to be advertised as "industrial strength." Though recorded under laidback conditions in L.A., *Maul*, as its title suggests, is full of urban chaos, and touches on current Lower Manhattan trends.

But while working with Frisell was a catalyst, Berne's taste for increased density was born of independent observation. The records he likes best are the ones that still yield secrets after 50 listenings. "There are very few records I'll play over and over again. The more you



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hear them, the more glaring the weaknesses become. If there aren't enough surprises, I'll hear the whole thing in three listens." So he packed *Fulton Street* tight with everything from saxophone chords and doubled cellos to Tibetan harmonic singing—and is pleased with how well it continues to wear on his own ears.

Yet radical as *Maul's* dense and distorted textures sound, it's not hard to hear a resemblance between its cello-powered urban hoedowns and the vamping tunes on *The Five-Year Plan*—where Cline's drums helped fill the bass register, as they do on the new album. (*Fulton Street Maul* recycles some favorite melodic material, too.) "I like that early stuff, though it's unbelievably naive—and for that reason some of the ideas are really good. My basic ideas in terms of structure are the same now, but they have a lot more depth.

"Sometimes I go vamp-crazy. And each time I do, they get more and more intricate; it might be a 13-bar vamp so bizarre you don't even know it's a vamp. Right now I'm into weird rhythmic transitions, from one impossible vamp to another, crazy stuff. I'm interested in having these really complicated written things going on, and then have somebody blowing—and to have the harmonic information be so oblique that it's impossible for the soloist to approach it tonally. The musicians have to deal with it in terms of texture and rhythm; this layer of stuff forces them to think in a way they're not used to. They can't just say, 'Oh, this is in A flat, so I'll stick to that.' A lot of times the metric shape is pretty extreme. And at the same time as all this stuff, the tune is still going on." Jackhammers rattle away in the background as he speaks. It's not hard to figure how

environment might affect his art.

"I base this stuff on my impressions of their playing"—they' being regular collaborators who include Frisell, Roberts, and jungle-brass whiz Herb Robertson. "I know they can go this extra mile. When it's rehearsed enough, it creates some pretty interesting tensions. We'd rehearsed seven or eight times before I took a quintet into Sweet Basil last fall. By the time we got in there, we were smoking, playing all this really hard stuff with all these incredibly sick structures. It was so loose, every night was great.

"So I just keep extending these things, and making them denser. This density thing is probably going to explode in my face, and then I'm gonna have to start over again, start another approach. Sometimes I go insane with these things; the written thing will just eclipse the blowing. I think it will peak with the next record"—no specific plans as yet—"and then I'm going to go backward, probably do a live trio with cello and drums, and blow my brains out."

That shuttling between polar extremes—between sleek singing and rude shouts when he plays, between merry songs and rapturous rituals when he writes—is typical of Berne. "I'm getting to the point where I'm writing out a lot more than I did, and I'm sure I'll reach a point where I'll try to bring it back, to accommodate the individual improviser a little more.

"Records are self-contained and concise. I'm really compulsive about having structure, about not having any dead air. But I'm not necessarily shooting for that in a concert. I want the unexpected to happen—I want people to f**k up the form."

To preserve the flow of a live set, a player might have to diverge from the

structure Tim's laid out. 'Hank and I have these things we call 'coups,' where someone will do the wrong thing at the wrong time, on purpose. For example, the bass player might be doing something totally happening. If he just stops—"This is what Tim wants"—it's a drag. On the other hand, I want people to exercise some sort of discipline and self-control, to say, 'Compositionally, this is what will work best. If I don't lay out here it's gonna sound like the last section, or it won't lead logically to the next section.' So we have this underlying thing: you can do a coup—I encourage coups—but it had better be a good one."

Berne's writing conveys a similar attitude: there are no rules, except those dictated by taste. That outlook is a key lesson Tim learned in the mid-'70s from his mentor/hero/enduring influence, Julius Hemphill. "Julius showed me things you could do—articulations, ideas—and told me that for everything a musician could do, you could invent something else to fulfill the same purpose. You shouldn't be limited to just the stuff everybody does, or what's in the books.

"Because I don't know all the rules of composition, I don't avoid anything. If I want to write 80,000 minor seconds or parallel fifths and it sounds good to me, I'm not going to take it out because you're not supposed to do that. I'm pulling everything out of the kitchen sink," he says, acknowledging his music's primitive aspects. "But I'm not a self-made, self-taught prehistoric weirdo. I obviously practice, I've studied, and I know what something's going to sound like when I write it. I've learned a lot by trial-and-error; I don't just keep making the same mistakes.

"I'm never going to flash anyone to death; I really have to depend on my ideas. I have to have an idea when I start soloing, or else I can't even play. As a soloist, I have to have a structure, but it doesn't have to be a chord progression. I always find it interesting to grab things from the tune, invert 'em, break 'em up, change the rhythms, whatever—so I'm reacting to the tune, not just throwing it away. I think I'm a completely melodic player, definitely a thematic player. If you take apart my solos, half the time I'm playing the head, but playing it 80,000 different ways."

Working with John Zorn in a couple of record stores was his entree to the Lower Manhattan scene, and Berne credits his fellow altoist with widening his expressive range. "The good thing about John is, he sees things in me he knows I can do, and makes me do them. He'd come in the store one day and say, 'Berne, let's do some Ornette tunes'—something I never would have done, and I'd hem and haw. The next day he'd say, 'Okay, we've got a date in a month; this is the band, we're gonna do these tunes.' I did it, I learned tons, we had this incredible concert. Then he said,

'Okay, let's do a concert of Hank Mobley and Kenny Dorham tunes,' and I'd say, 'John, please, don't do this to me.' Next thing"—he snaps his fingers—"he had a quintet. It wasn't state-of-the-art bebop or anything, but I thought we played it in an interesting way. We didn't do anything radical or try to make it our own—we just had a good time and played 'em."

But despite intuitive, seat-of-the-pants flying—as altoist and composer and record producer—Berne is naturally cautious. (Listening to even an innocuous question, he cocks his head back and widens his eyes in surprise, as if considering its worst possible implication.) The 20-ish kid who apprenticed with Julius Hemphill paid his master back, talking him up to critics, getting him concerts, and helping Julius put out his Mbari two-fer *Blue Boye* (thereby learning enough about the record business to launch Empire two years later). And though Hemphill's doleful and/or guttural alto style left its mark on Berne, now 32, Tim got away from his teacher in time to develop a style of his own.

Black Saint has approached Zorn and Berne about doing an LP of Ornette tunes, but for now Berne has too many misgivings. "It's an amazing tradition and we're not being disrespectful, but at the same time it's not something I work on every day. There are a lot of guys my age who play bebop and are into it, heavy; there are a zillion great players in New York you've never heard of, who couldn't get a record deal to save their lives. Even the guys who've been doing it for 30 years that we know about have a hard time getting record deals. But if I said I wanted to make a bebop record, I probably could, even though I don't do it half as well as these guys. It's ironic, but a lot of people would rather hear some 'avant garde' guy stumble through some standards.

"I like the idea of John recording some bop, because he's not saying, 'I'm a bad motherf**ker,' he's just doing it 'cause he likes it. John's much more established than me, in terms of what he does as a composer; I don't want to start diverting people's attention from my own material."

Berne enjoys his new sideman duties—"It's got me more confident about just playing"—but still prefers the security of planning his own music, of being in control. (The loss of total control over all aspects of production is what he misses most from Empire days—even if he gets more respect and attention recording for other labels.) Now that he's well-connected, is there no dream gig he secretly covets? Tim Berne, who recharges his creative cells by going to the movies—there are six screens within a few blocks of his house—mulls it over. "Actually, I do want to do the music for *Pee-wee's Playhouse*," he says—naming a tv show that's fast, dense, and imagistic, an intricate series of basic elements, a deceptively complex entertainment. For Tim Berne, the *Playhouse* sounds just like home. **db**

TIM BERNE'S EQUIPMENT

Tim Berne plays two old Selmer Mark VI altos, and favors Berg-Larsen 95/2 mouthpieces. Among reeds, he'll use "anything that works." For him, that usually means a Vandoren Java #3 ½, Rico Royal #3 ½, or a medium-hard LaVoz.

TIM BERNE SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

as a leader

FULTON STREET MAUL—Columbia 40530
MUTANT VARIATIONS—Soul Note 1091
THE ANCESTORS—Soul Note 1061
SONGS AND RITUALS IN REAL TIME...—Empire 60K-2
SPECTRES—Empire 48K
7X—Empire 36K
THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN—Empire 24K

with Bill Frisell

... THEORETICALLY—Minor Music 008

with Vinny Golia

COMPOSITIONS FOR LARGE ENSEMBLE—9 Winds 0110

with Mark Helias

SPLIT IMAGE—ENJA 4086

with Herb Robertson

TRANSPARENCY—JMT 850002

with Stefan F. Winter

DIE KLEINE TROMPETE/DIE LITTLE TRUMPET—JMT 860007

with John Zorn

THE BIG GUNDOWN—Nonesuch 79139-1

MUSICFEST U.S.A!

by BILL BEUTTLER

S ometime 'round midnight, a gregarious 16-year-old Philadelphian, Joey DeFrancesco, strolls to the lounge piano at the McCormick Center Hotel and begins to play. Soon he's joined by a trombonist, then a bassist, and before you know it the room's overflowing with jamming young musicians, many of them wearing the white Musicfest U.S.A. All-Star jackets they'd won a couple of hours earlier.

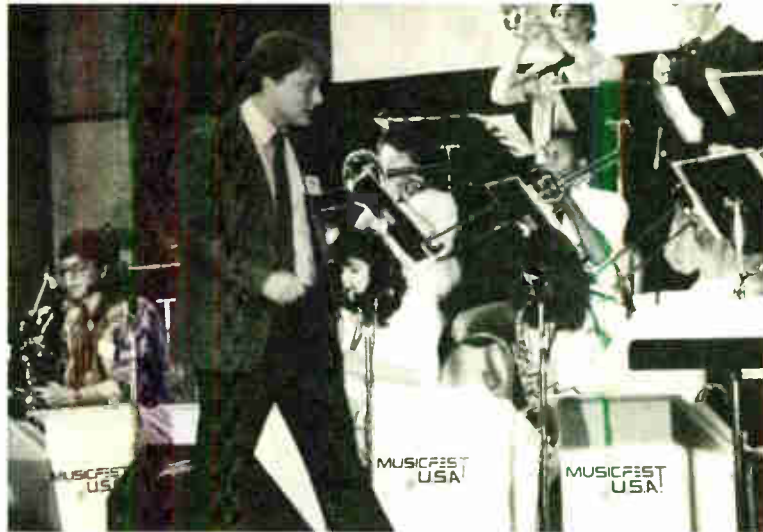
For the third straight night these kids' enthusiasm has bubbled over into a late-night impromptu jam session (the previous night Free Flight flutist Jim Walker got caught up in the excitement and blew a few bars himself). They came to Chicago to play, and play they did—some of them until three or four in the morning, closing off the weekend's activities with a nightcap riff or two in the hotel hallways.

And who can blame them? The first annual Musicfest U.S.A., sponsored by **down beat**, gave the 1,200 student and amateur musicians and vocalists who attended it April 9-11 plenty to be excited about. First off, there was the competition itself—68 schools, representing virtually every state in the Union, putting the hard work that earned them their invitations on display for

their peers, to be critiqued by some of the finest adjudicators in the land, among them Pat Sullivan, Hal Crook, Steve Houghton, and Larry Monroe. Then there were the clinics and concerts: top-flight pros providing over 36 hours of instruction on a wide array of instruments by day; dazzling performances by the Bob Stone Big Band, Free Flight, Insight, and Wild Blue by night. Top it all off with a thrill-packed awards night, where shrieks of delight erupted as the prize-winning bands and vocal ensembles, festival All-Stars, and Berklee College of Music scholarship recipients were announced. And don't forget the truly extraordinary support from manufacturers and music industry associations such as Baldwin, E. K. Blessing, E-Mu Systems, Invisible Stands, G. Leblanc, Musician's Institute of Hollywood, the National Association of Music Merchants, Peavey Electronics, Pro Mark, Roland, Selmer/Ludwig, Tama Drums, TOA Electronics, Yamaha, Zildjian, and others—who provided state-of-the-art equipment, sound crews, and clinicians for the fest's three stages and adjoining practice rooms, making Musicfest U.S.A. a reality.

The festival revolved around two days of competition involving four types of ensembles: stage bands, jazz combos, electronic





combos, and vocal jazz ensembles. High schools competed mainly on Friday, colleges on Saturday. Each group performed three or four songs (some standards, some originals) within a set time limit, with fellow fest attendees and a panel of adjudicators looking on. An upbeat critique by one of the adjudicators followed each performance, with praise for the group's strengths accompanying specific technical advice on where there'd be room for improvement.

The camaraderie in evidence at these performances was remarkable. Take the gold medal-winning performance of the Philadelphia All-City Jazz Ensemble as a case in point. Each soloist, on returning to his chair, was greeted with a discreet hand clasp from the musicians on either side of him (sort of a "low five"). Even more impressive was the goodwill that came from outside the band when Antonio Parker's alto saxophone suddenly quit working; Parker never did learn the name of the alto saxist in the crowd who loaned him the axe that he used to finish out the set.

That's not to say that the competition couldn't be fierce. Arts Magnet High School jazz director Bart Marantz, on being thanked for bringing his school's prize-winning ensembles from Dallas to support the festival, shot back, "We didn't come here to support it; we came here to win it." But even the fiery Marantz, whose school took home a gold and two silvers, knows there's much more to Musicfest U.S.A. than winning or losing: the chance for each band to play as well as it can for top adjudicators, and the knowledge that's gained by "mingling with other students and clinicians—the end result is that we're all better for it."

Veteran saxophonist and adjudicator Pat LaBarbera agrees that winning isn't everything. To him, besides giving the participants a chance to find out what professionals think of their playing and singing, festivals like Musicfest U.S.A. and the Canadian Stage Band Festival exist to spur students on to better and better things. "The most important thing these festivals do is to bring kids together to hear other kids," explains LaBarbera. "If you think you're the hottest thing in town and then you find a kid that smokes you out, that's going to make you work harder—you'll go back home and work toward coming back the next year."

The various competitions weren't the only things happening throughout the day Friday and Saturday. Many of the participating ensembles kept the hotel lounge swinging with informal concerts. There were also many superb clinics: Jamey Aebersold on beginning and advanced improvisation, Randy Brecker on trumpet, Arnie Lawrence on saxophone, Roland's

Musicfest U.S.A. was a potpourri of sights as well as sounds. Pictured here (from bottom left to upper right) are a guitar soloist from the electronic combo In-Flight East, from Johnson City, NY; the college stage band Strictly Rhythm, from Alorton, IL; a critique of members of the Milton Academy stage band, from Milton, MA; a saxist from the silver-winning Cardava High School stage band, from Rancho Cordova, CA; and Cardava's director Curtis Gaesser and the rest of the band.

Paul Youngblood on MIDI, Yamaha's J.P. Lincoln on synthesizer, and Peavey's Marty McCann on sound reinforcement, to name just a few.

At night, there was more great music from some great pros: the Bob Stone Big Band, sponsored by G. Leblanc, with guest soloist Arnie Lawrence on Thursday; Free Flight's pyrotechnic blend of jazz and classical influences on Friday, sponsored by Yamaha; and on Saturday the jazz-funk of Insight, sponsored by Ludwig and Zildjian, and the red-hot rock of Wild Blue, sponsored by Selmer/Ludwig.

Standing ovation followed standing ovation at these concerts, as the kids in the crowd knew better than anyone what fine chops they were hearing and seeing. And the pros were having as great a time as the kids were. Says Insight drummer Jerry Pickett of his band's Musicfest performance: "Whenever you play for people, it's great. But when you play for musicians—who know what's happening—that's even better. It felt so good to see the energy in these students for jazz." In fact, a band couldn't hope for a more upbeat audience than was on hand at Musicfest. "We got a standing ovation when we were called out on the stage," marvels Pickett, "and they didn't even know who we were." Maybe not at first, but by the end of the concert they sure did. "I signed at least 380 autographs after the show," says Pickett.

And finally we come to the awards ceremony on Saturday. How to describe the electricity that seemed to charge the room? Picture those 1,200 students and their directors perched at the edge of their chairs awaiting the names of the gold, silver, and bronze winners. War whoops accompany the announcement of each winner, as the bands and vocal ensembles in question jump up and start celebrating. The gold winners send representatives to the podium to claim their plaques, most of them attempting nonchalance but shaking all over with excitement.

"It was a sensational event," says Yamaha senior vice president Karl Bruhn. "The 'electricity' at the awards ceremony is something that I won't forget for a long, long time." Adds *down beat's* John Maher, who served as festival president: "I can't remember ever being in a room so full of excitement and emotion. Seeing those young adults so pumped up with the anticipation of being recognized for their musical accomplishments was one of the most gratifying experiences of my life."

Sixty-four individuals were named All-Stars during the awards ceremony, the news being greeted with similar enthusiasm. And the Berklee College of Music handed out \$30,000 in scholarships to outstanding high schoolers (Berklee's representatives had intended to award \$25,000 to Musicfest U.S.A., but the talent was so outstanding they kicked it up another \$5,000). Arts Magnet's outstanding trumpeter Roy Hargrove earned the top



One of many virtuoso players at Musicfest, this trumpeter is from the Philadelphia All-City Jazz Ensemble.

Berklee award of \$5,000, with East St. Louis Lincoln trumpeter Anthony Wiggins and Athena High School (Rochester, NY) trombonist Evan Dobbins each winning \$4,000, and six other students dividing the rest.

The awards ceremony was capped off with a telegram from President Ronald Reagan, which read in part: "From dixieland to



Berklee scholarship winner Joey DeFrancesco from the Philadelphia All-City Jazz Camba.



There was continuous music in the hotel lobby. Here musicians from Arts Magnet High School, Dallas, perform.

swing to bebop and today's variety, jazz has provided some of our finest musicians and composers. It's good to see this rich legacy being fostered and continued through Musicfest. . . . May this inaugural Musicfest be the first of many."

So where do we go from here? To Orlando, Florida, which has already been designated as the site of the *second* annual Musicfest U.S.A. The consensus among those who attended the first Musicfest U.S.A. is that it's going to keep getting bigger and better. "For the first one, this came off with very few hitches," says Arts Magnet director Bart Marantz. "It's an exciting festival that will continue to build and grow. **down beat's** involvement gives immediate prestige to the festival, so it draws world-class musicians as clinicians and corporate sponsors with Class A equipment." Pat LaBarbera, whose lengthy involvement with the Canadian Stage Band Festival makes him a man who knows a first-rate festival when he sees one, also predicts good things. "The Musicfest facilities are good, and in the States there are more clinicians to choose from," he says. "I'm sure once this thing gets promoted it's really going to snowball."

db



Dr. Warrick Carter, Dean of Faculty, Berklee College of Music, and chairman of Musicfest U.S.A.'s advisory board, presents a scholarship award to Evan Dobbins, Athena H.S., Rochester, NY.

MUSICFEST U.S.A. AWARD WINNERS

Vocal Jazz Choir IIA [19 years or under], Silver: Arts Magnet H.S., Dallas TX
Vocal Jazz Choir IB [no age limit], Bronze: Sound Solution, Milwaukee WI
Vocal Jazz Choir IA, Gold: University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND
Vocal Jazz Choir IA, Silver: Monmouth College, Monmouth IL
Vocal Jazz Choir IA, Bronze: Oakland University, Rochester MI
Electronic Combo IIIA [16 years or under], Gold: Legacy, Sepulveda CA
Electronic Combo IB, Gold: In-Flight East, Johnson City NY
Electronic Combo IB, Silver: Rush Hour, Woodridge IL
Stage Band IVA [14 years or under], Gold: Brooks Jr. H.S., Harvey IL
Stage Band IIIA, Gold: East St. Louis Lincoln H.S., East St. Louis IL
Stage Band IIIA, Silver: Decatur McArthur H.S., Decatur IL
Stage Band IIIA, Bronze: Council Rock H.S., Newton PA
Stage Band IIB, Gold: Philadelphia All-City, Philadelphia, PA
Stage Band IIB, Silver: Montgomery County Public Schools, Silver Spring MD
Stage Band IIA, Gold: Arts Magnet H.S., Dallas TX
Stage Band IIA, Silver: Cordova H.S., Rancho Cordova CA
Stage Band IIA, Bronze: Phoebus H.S., Hampton VA
Stage Band IB, Gold: Unifour Jazz Ensemble, Hudson NC
Stage Band IB, Silver: Prime Time Big Band, Durand WI
Stage Band IB, Bronze: Clark College, Atlanta GA
Stage Band IA, Gold: University of Massachusetts, Amherst MA
Stage Band IA, Silver: Western Illinois University, Macomb IL
Stage Band IA, Bronze: Ohio State University, Columbus OH
Jazz Combo IIIA, Gold: Interplay Trio, Reston VA
Jazz Combo IIIA, Silver: Lexington H.S., Lexington MA
Jazz Combo IIIA, Bronze: Enigma, Cheshire CT
Jazz Combo IIA, Gold: Philadelphia All-City, Philadelphia PA
Jazz Combo IIA, Silver: Arts Magnet H.S., Dallas TX
Jazz Combo IIA, Bronze: Milton Academy, Milton MA
Jazz Combo IB, Gold: First Hand, Fairfield NJ
Jazz Combo IB, Silver: N.E.O., Madison WI
Jazz Combo IB, Bronze: Walter Henderson Group, Chicago IL
Jazz Combo IA, Gold: William Paterson College, Wayne NJ
Jazz Combo IA, Silver: New York University, New York NY
Jazz Combo IA, Bronze: Brigham Young University, Provo UT
Berklee College of Music Scholarship Winners: Roy Hargrove, trumpet, Arts Magnet H.S., Dallas TX (\$5,000)

Anthony Wiggins, trumpet, East St. Louis Lincoln H.S., East St. Louis IL (\$4,000)
Evan Dobbins, trombone, Athena H.S., Rochester NY (\$4,000)
Tom Hayes, tenor saxophone, Arts Magnet H.S., Dallas TX (\$3,000)
Joey DeFrancesco, piano, Philadelphia All-City, Philadelphia PA (\$3,000)
Jeff Cooper, drums, Cordova H.S., Rancho Cordova, CA (\$3,000)
Christian McBride, electric bass, Philadelphia All-City, Philadelphia PA (\$3,000)
Timothy Owens, vocalist, Arts Magnet H.S., Dallas TX (\$2,500)
Matt DeMerritt, tenor saxophone, Denver Citywide, Denver CO (\$2,500)
Vocal All-Stars: Tyra Robinson, St. Martin's Episcopal, Metairie LA
Timothy Owens, Arts Magnet H.S., Dallas TX
Mark Bolton, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks ND
Jenny McClure, Oakland University, Rochester MI
Kurt Sustarsic, Lakeland Community College, Mentor, OH
Christy Ogilvie, Monmouth College, Monmouth IL
Robin Dunham, Grand Rapids Community College, Grand Rapids, MI
Esterine Biggers, Sound Solution, Milwaukee WI
Electronic Combo All-Stars: Irwin Lee, vocal, Legacy, Sepulveda CA
Karen Mietz, keyboards, Rush Hour, Woodridge IL
Andy Grieder, saxophone, In-Flight East, Johnson City NY

Stage Band All-Stars: Derrick Ward, trumpet, Clark College, Atlanta GA
Bob Sutherland, trumpet, Prime Time Big Band, Durand WI
Josephine Cavallero, saxophone, Northeastern IL University, Chicago IL
Peter Hannen, tenor saxophone, Western Illinois University, Macomb IL
Jack Wiegrosky, trumpet, Elmhurst College, Elmhurst IL
Dell Knickerbocker, baritone saxophone, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant MI
Steve Bonetich, trombone, Spokane Falls Community College, Spokane WA
Chris Admacout, alto saxophone, Dartmouth College, Hanover NH
Vincent Gross, trumpet, University of Maryland, Princess Anne MD
Jon Nathan, drums, University of Massachusetts, Amherst MA
Mark Lane, baritone saxophone, Ford Community College, Dearborn MI
Rodney Jordan, bass, Jackson State College, Jackson MS
Brian Barker, trumpet, Brigham Young University, Provo UT
Bill Mulligan, alto saxophone, Ohio State University, Columbus OH
Phil McKnight, trumpet, St. Joe H.S., Buffalo NY
Anthony Wiggins, trumpet, East St. Louis Lincoln H.S., East St. Louis IL
Jeff Marder, piano, Council Rock H.S., Newton PA
Russell Hubert, trumpet, Greenville H.S., Greenville, NY
Evan Dobbins, trombone, Athena H.S., Rochester NY
Trent Miller, trumpet, Bay High School, Bay Village OH
Judy Winger, trumpet, South Lake H.S., Reston VA
Chris McBride, bass, Philadelphia All-City, Philadelphia PA
Mark Rozas, piano, Montgomery County Public Schools, Silver Spring MD
Rob Machold, drums, Milton Academy, Milton MA
Matt Huston, drums, Decatur McArthur H.S., Decatur IL
Mike Seminann, trumpet, Sun Prairie H.S., Sun Prairie WI
Joseph Futch, trombone, Cody High School, Detroit MI
Marcus Prater, trombone, Phoebus H.S., Hampton VA
Linda Neilson, flute, Ashwauberon H.S., Green Bay WI
Jeff Cooper, drums, Cordova H.S., Rancho Cordova CA
Tom Hayes, tenor saxophone, Arts Magnet H.S., Dallas TX
Jazz Combo All-Stars: Rudy Tyson, piano, University of North Carolina, Wilmington NC
Jeffrey Brown, saxophone, Trio Quartet, Roslindale MA
Jeff Lickies, bass, N.E.O., Madison WI
Pete McDonald, drums, First Hand, Fairfield NJ
Lance Bryant, saxophone, Walter Henderson Group, Chicago IL
Rob Machold, drums, Milton Academy, Milton MA
Reginald Thomas, piano, Western Illinois University, Macomb IL
John Vlastakis, saxophone, New York University, New York NY
Charles Anderson, trumpet, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago IL
Ted Cruz, piano, North Texas State University, Denton TX
Mark Taylor, french horn, University of Tennessee, Knoxville TN
Dave Gross, trombone, Elmhurst College, Elmhurst IL
Mark Dworack, saxophone, Brigham Young University, Provo UT
Shatia Chambers, vocal, Denver Citywide, Denver CO
Joey DeFrancesco, piano, Philadelphia All-City, Philadelphia PA
Greg Burke, piano, Okemos H.S., Okemos MI
Roy Hargrove, trumpet, Arts Magnet H.S., Dallas TX
Brian Jenkins, bass, Enigma, Cheshire CT
Scott Denett, guitar, Interplay, Reston VA
David White, piano, Lexington H.S., Lexington MA

MUSICFEST U.S.A!

GOLD AWARD WINNERS



Vocal Jazz Choir IA: Univ. of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND



Jazz Combo IIIA: Interplay Trio, Reston, VA



Jazz Combo IB: First Hand, Fairfield, NJ



Stage Band IIA: Arts Magnet H.S., Dallas, Tx



Stage Band IA: Univ. of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA



Stage Band IIIA: East St. Louis Lincoln H.S., East St. Louis, IL



Stage Band IVA: Brooks Jr. H.S., Harvey, IL



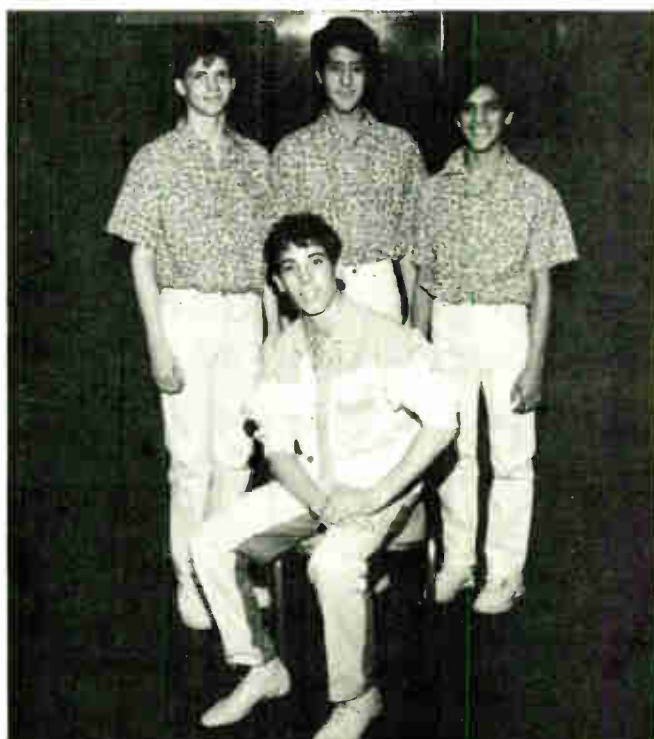
Stage Band IIE: Philadelphia All-City, Philadelphia, PA



Stage Band IB: Unifour Jazz Ensemble, Hudson, NC



Jazz Combo IA: William Paterson College, Wayne, NJ



Electronic Combo IIIA: Legacy, Sepulveda, CA



Electronic Combo IB: In-Flight East, Johnson City, NY

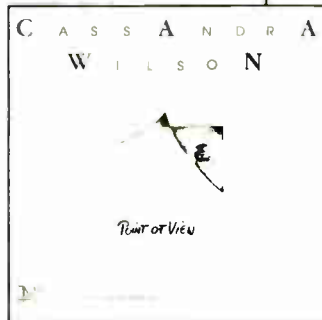
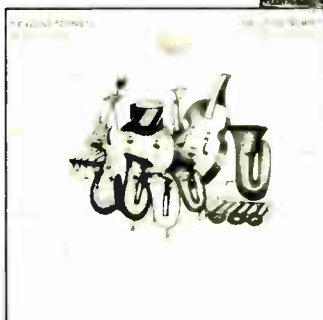
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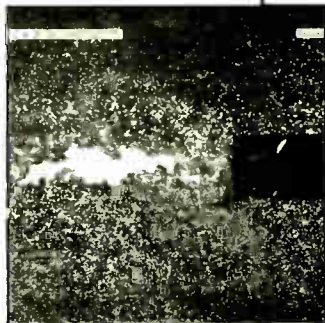
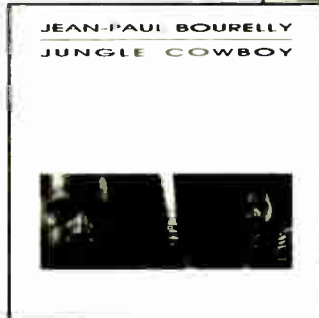
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NEW AIR

AIR SHOW NO. 1—Black Saint 0099: *ACHTUD EL BOUD (CHILDREN'S SONG)*; *DON'T DRINK THAT CORNER MY LIFE IS IN THE BUSH*; *AIR SHOW*; *APRICOTS ON THEIR WINGS*; *SALUTE TO THE ENEMA BANDIT*; *SIDE STEP*.

Personnel: Henry Threadgill, alto, tenor saxophone, flute, eastern banjo; Fred Hopkins, bass; Pheeroan akLaff, drums; Cassandra Wilson, vocals (cuts 2, 4, 6).

★★★★★

HENRY THREADGILL SEXTETT

YOU KNOW THE NUMBER—RCA Novus 3013-1-N: *BERMUDA BLUES*; *SILVER AND GOLD BABY*; *SILVER AND GOLD*; *THEME FROM THOMAS COLE*; *GOOD TIMES*; *TO BE ANNOUNCED*; *THOSE WHO EAT COOKIES*.

Personnel: Threadgill, alto, tenor saxophone, bass flute; Rasul Siddik, trumpet; Frank Lacy, trombone; Diedre Murray, cello; Fred Hopkins, bass; Pheeroan akLaff, Reggie Nicholson, drums.

★★★★★ ½

For all their conceptual sophistication, Air sounded best when the trio got down in the gutbucket, and structure became transparent—which is why *Air Show* may be more fun than anything they've done since '79's rag-reviving *Air Lore*. The opener, *Achtud*, bounces in an irrepressible dancefloor groove; Pheeroan raps the backbeat, Fred Hopkins primes a pedal-point, and Threadgill shows you don't have to pander to catch the grit of r&b—a point he reinforces with honkin' tenor on *Side Step*.

On *Side Step* and *Don't Drink*, guest Cassandra Wilson sings an independent line, snaking through the ensemble with the assurance of Jeanne Lee. (She animates *Don't*, the sort of Air dirge that drags elsewhere.) Henry's fiendish line *Apricots* displays her achingly sexy ballad style. Hopkins again pounces on the beat, wrestling it to the ground; he more than anyone gives this music the visceral punch Air sometimes lacks—even as his technique and ear grow ever more precise. New Air's akLaff shows that even old Air's virtuoso Steve McCall can be replaced. And Threadgill, hot and cold elsewhere, sizzles on both these LPs, rigorously editing his ideas.

The staccato circus *Air Show* and the hyperactive *Enema Bandit* boast the merry conceptual clarity of Ornette's *Golden Circle* trio. If this is No. 1, don't forget to send volume 2—air

mail.

The latest from Threadgill's seven-member "Sextett" swings with similar jubilation, shaking the mournful air of previous releases. Simply put, the B side rocks. Threadgill's ear-fooling feats of economic orchestration are by now old hat. He may divide his crew into mini-big band sections that swing with small group agility. (*Good Times* grasps the essence of a big band's strength: the massed power of horns rushing ahead in taut unison.) He might pair cello with bass, along string-family lines, or with the trombone that inhabits the same range.

By now, the players have his act down cold—Henry's associates have never sounded more tightly drilled, or more at ease. Not even the upbeat anthems on previous LPs bristled the way these tracks do. *To Be Announced* keeps gaining momentum, even as it lumbers along in ramshackle calypso rhythm. The writing prompts exuberance—horn riffs smack of pop hooks you can't quite place (*Achtud*, *Bermuda Blues*).

Henry hasn't forsaken grieving funeral music (*Silver And Gold*) or elaborate concepts. The multifaceted *Theme From Thomas Cole* attempts an aural parallel to the 19th century painter's rich allegorical landscapes—yet still ends with punchy energy to spare. Hot playing and a hot pen make *You Know The Number* this group's most accessible effort. Henry Threadgill is on a roll, and it sounds great.

—kevin whitehead



PRINCE

SIGN "O" THE TIMES—Paisley Park 25577-1: *SIGN "O" THE TIMES*; *PLAY IN THE SUNSHINE*; *HOUSEQUAKE*; *THE BALLAD OF DOROTHY PARKER*; *IT*; *STARFISH AND COFFEE*; *SLOW LOVE*; *HOT THING*; *FOREVER IN MY LIFE*; *U GOT THE LOOK*; *IF I WAS YOUR GIRLFRIEND*; *STRANGE RELATIONSHIP*; *I COULD NEVER TAKE THE PLACE OF YOUR MAN*; *THE CROSS*; *IT'S GONNA BE A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT*; *ADORE*.

Personnel: Prince, various instruments, vocals; Mico Weaver, guitar (cut 15); Wendy, guitar, vocals, (7), tambourine, congas (12); Lisa, vocals (7), sitar, wooden flute (12); Sheila E., drums, percussion (10, 15); *The Revolution* (15); Susannah Hoffs (2, 5, 15), Camille (4, 10-12), Sheena Easton (10), Jill Jones (15), Greg Brooks (15), Wally Safford (15), Jerome Benton (15), vocals.

★★★★★

Despite all the hyped-up mystery and intrigue

that the media machine swirls around him, like smoke around a Gene Kelly dance routine, the fact is that Prince is one helluva smart composer and musician. More than that, his multi-images are part of the deal: like his music, they represent and then suture together the variety of American musical and cultural fragments he seems intent on reuniting in himself.

Perhaps reuniting isn't the right word. It's more as if over his nine albums Prince has been collecting and collating the shards of our culture, and refracting them through his own distinctly individual and voracious sensibility. That sensibility, like the culture it investigates and recycles, seems at first glance to be random assortment of alienated, even opposed fragments: black/white, male/female, perverse/devout, self-contained/universal. If he wants to party at the end of the world, he also expects a Christian Redeemer to right the world's wrongs at the Apocalypse; if he's the ultimate cool macho man whose womenfolk swoon, he's also the androgyne who looks in the mirror to see his duality manifest as more than narcissism, the anti-drug preacher whose dance-powered jeremiads top the playlists.

This new double-album explores all those themes and more, and sets them with Prince's usual musical hipness to lend multiple ironies to their meanings. James Brown, Paul Revere and the Raiders, Chicago house music, Free, Chic, Little Richard, Springsteen, Sly Stone, Yes, the Spinners, Hendrix, *The Wizard Of Oz*, Motown—you name it, and it's probably milling around somewhere in the mix. Some tracks are honed to a tensile spareness, others explode with sinewy orchestrations. Still, it all adds up to Prince. If he doesn't resolve what look like contradictions, maybe he's just recalling that earlier American embracer, Walt Whitman, who exulted in contradictions as the key to this place's peculiar mongrel identity. And best of all, you can—have to—dance to it.

—gene santoro



TONY WILLIAMS

CIVILIZATION—Blue Note 85138: *GEO ROSE*; *WARRIOR*; *ANCIENT EYES*; *SOWETO NIGHTS*; *THE SLUMP*; *CIVILIZATION*; *MUTANTS ON THE BEACH*; *CITADEL*.

Personnel: Williams, drums, drum machine; Wallace Roney, trumpet; Billy Pierce, tenor, soprano saxophone; Mulgrew Miller, piano; Charnette Moffett, bass.

★★★★★

Tony Williams changed the way jazz and rock

drummers play. Joining Miles Davis in 1963 at age 17, he hit the big time flying. Five years later, he formed Lifetime, only to have guitarist John McLaughlin, whom he brought from England, appropriated by Miles. Williams veered off-course with a CBS contract during the '70s and dropped out of sight as a leader until *Foreign Intrigue*, recorded two years ago for the revived Blue Note label. He appeared in the film *Round Midnight*, and now he's dealing with the aftermath of the '60s.

Dealing positively and opportunely, as this album attests. Instead of rejecting the ensemble sound and compositional style of Miles' mid-'60s quintet, Williams recasts them, adding the refinements of the new jazz mainstream—the deceptive nonchalance of Pierce's post-Coltrane saxophones, the light attack and fluid lyricism of Roney's trumpet, the controlled volatility of the rhythm section.

The biggest change from the '60s is the mellowness of the rhythm section. The performances are less taut now, although Williams retains his loose, rattling, slinging, thudding brand of counterpoint. The explosiveness that once kept you on the edge of your seat has become less interruptive and more integrated.

The compositions—all by Williams—form a suite, and *The Slump* is best, with Moffett playing deep-toned solo breaks like Ray Brown. Some, like *Mutants*, burst in and get directly to the point; others, like the title cut, are more impressionistic and abstract. The compositions, performances, leadership, and attitudes all register growth in Williams. This is his best straight-ahead jazz album since the '60s.

—owen cordle



BIRELI LAGRENE

STUTTGART ARIA—Jazzpoint 1019: *AMERICAN BOY*; DONNA LEE; *STUTTGART ARIA I*; *JACO REGGAE*; *THE CHICKEN*; *TERESA*; *STUTTGART ARIA II*; *THE DAYS OF WINE AND ROSES*.

Personnel: Lagrene, electric guitar; Jaco Pastorius, fretless bass, piano, vocals; Vladislav Sendek, keyboards, synthesizers; Peter Lubke, drums; Serge Bringolf, percussion, vocals; Jan Jankeje, synthesizer bass (cut 6), upright bass (cut 8).

★ ★ ★ ★

BIRELI LAGRENE—Jazzpoint 1018: *PSP NR. 2*; *BERGA*; *ALL THE THINGS YOU ARE*; *ALBI*; *SOLO NR. 1*; *GLORIA'S STEP*; *ALL BLUES*.

Personnel: Lagrene, six-, 12-string acoustic guitar; Larry Coryell, six-, 12-string acoustic, electric guitar; Miroslav Vitous, bass.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

What a talent! He's so lyrical. He plays with such precision and passion. He's got such a

propulsive swing to his playing. If only he were born an American with dimples and an engaging smile, he'd be as famous today as Stanley Jordan and Eddie Van Halen (since he's certainly their equal in terms of overall musicality and sheer command of his instrument). But as it is, Bireli Lagrene is a brooding Gypsy from the French Saverne area. He rarely visits New York or L.A. and he seldom cracks a smile on stage. In fact, he seems so nonchalant when he plays, at times it looks as if he could fall asleep up there. But what's coming out of his guitar is just too much to be believed. How does he make it look so easy? This young man breathes music. And it ain't just about technique either. He's got real soul, whether he's playing flamenco, bebop, swing, or the blues.

These two albums from the West German Jazzpoint label highlight the artist in two very different lights. The live session with Coryell and Vitous is basically an outgrowth from the guitarist's Django phase, which he had been doing to death since the age of nine and seems to be moving away from now (at the ripe old age of 21). The studio session with Jaco is a burning electric affair, heavy on the funk and blues feels. Both are excellent offerings for guitar fans to savor.

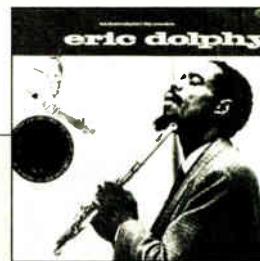
One of Bireli's amazing attributes is his rapid-fire right hand technique. He strums up a flamenco fury on Coryell's *PSP Nr. 2*. On *Berga*, Bireli's bossa number, his legato playing is beautifully lyrical. He comps like a horse behind Coryell's Tal Farlow-like lines on the old chestnut, *All The Things You Are*, then burns on the uptempo, boppish *Albi*.

Throughout, his phrasing is imbued with such feeling, such soulful nuance, such bravado and drive. And if that's all that he did, I'd still be amazed. But Bireli can burn down the house on electric guitar. I'm talking about nasty, distortion-laced rock riffs that rank right up there with Van Halen and Steve Vai. And he can play some B.B. King-inspired licks to make your toes curl. As Jaco would say, "The real deal."

Jaco is a particularly apt partner for young Bireli on *Stuttgart Aria*. As Bireli is the bridge between Django, Tal Farlow, B.B., and Eddie Van Halen, Jaco is the common link between Coltrane, Sly Stone, James Brown, and Jimi Hendrix. Jaco's in good form here, and he pushes Bireli to some dizzying heights on the two funky *Arias*, particularly the second one, where Jaco pulls out all his classic licks and even quotes Jimi's *Third Stone From The Sun*. Bireli is flawless on a blazing *Donna Lee*, though Jaco does stumble a bit here. On the slow and easy version of Pee Wee Ellis' *The Chicken*, a regular Jaco showpiece, Bireli's blues lines sound a lot like John Scofield when he dips deeply into the B.B. King trough. And on *American Boy*, he lays heavily on the wang bar from some raucous fusion (buoyed by the very imaginative synth work of Vladislav Sendek, the Kenny Kirkland of Switzerland).

Bireli is, in a word, amazing. Of course, you won't find either of these two fine records in your local bins. Maybe the import bins. It only goes to prove that some of the most happening sounds these days aren't necessarily happening in the States. If only Bireli could get that big, well-oiled American Record Company Machine behind him, there's no telling how far he might go.

—bill milkowski



ERIC DOLPHY

OTHER ASPECTS—Blue Note 85131: *JIM CROW*; *INNER FLIGHT #1*; *DOLPHY-N*; *INNER FLIGHT #2*; *IMPROVISATIONS AND TUKRAS*.

Personnel: Dolphy, alto saxophone, bass clarinet, flute; Ron Carter, bass (cut 3); Gina Lalli, tablas (5); Roger Mason, tamboura (5); unknown vocal, piano, bass, percussion (1).

★ ★ ★ ★

VINTAGE DOLPHY—GM 3005D: *HALF NOTE TRIPLETS*; *ODE TO CHARLIE PARKER*; *IRON MAN*; *DENSITIES*; *NIGHT MUSIC*; *ABSTRACTION*; DONNA LEE.

Personnel: Dolphy, alto saxophone, bass clarinet, flute; Edward Armour, trumpet (cuts 1-3); Gloria Agostina, harp (4); Eddie Costa, vibraphone (4); Barry Galbraith (5), Jim Hall (6, 7), guitar; Richard Davis (1-4, 6), Chuck Israels (5), Art Davis (5), Barre Philips (6, 7), bass; J. C. Moses (1-3), Sticks Evans (5-6), Charli Persip (7), drums; Matthew Raimondi, Lewis Kaplan, violin (6); Samuel Rhodes, viola (6); Michael Rudiakov, cello (6); Phil Woods, alto saxophone (7); Benny Golson, tenor saxophone (7); Jimmy Knepper, trombone (7); Nick Travis, Don Ellis, trumpet (7); Lalo Schiffrin, piano (7).

★ ★ ★ ★

Each in its own way, these two recordings of previously unreleased material by Eric Dolphy add to our collective picture of that triple-threat flutist, bass clarinetist, and alto saxophonist who died at age 36 in 1964. Dolphy has been characterized variously as a follower of Bird and a leader of the avant garde. What comes across on these two releases, though, is the breadth and versatility of his talents, both as a composer and as a player.

Other Aspects is the product of tapes that for 25 years after Dolphy's death were safeguarded by his friend, composer Hale Smith. A high point of the record is *Jim Crow*, performed by Dolphy and unidentified musicians including a female singer with a voice that's like a solemn finger pointed at your heart. The dignified, impassioned spirit of *Jim Crow* is close to Coltrane's *Alabama*, which may be more than coincidence, given Dolphy's collaboration with Trane.

Although Dolphy's playing holds up in all situations, even the most exposed, not every piece on *Other Aspects* wears its age as well as *Jim Crow*. That's a risk a producer takes when he starts clearing out attics and archives to find more material. Even if *Improvisations And Tukras* sounds dated, it does capture the era of the early '60s, and that's as valuable in its own way as an album's having well-planned variety.

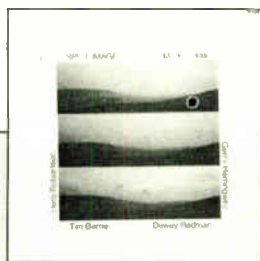
Vintage Dolphy has the advantage of a cohesive lineup of compositions, partly be-

cause producer Gunther Schuller programmed three of his own works recorded by Dolphy at Carnegie Hall at the 20th Century Innovation series Schuller directed. This recording shows Dolphy surrounded by top musicians, from violist Samuel Rhodes to Jim Hall. The Kronos Quartet may be turning heads today for playing *Purple Haze* on string instruments, but Schuller had worked strings into his Third Stream writing over two decades ago, and the music still holds up.

Dolphy sounds as much at home with the atonal writing as noodling around on *Donna Lee* or playing his own boppish *Half Note Triplets*. The kinship to Parker is almost always apparent in these recordings; Dolphy's lines swirl and dip in the best Bird tradition. And when he plays with a close-listening sideman like Ron Carter on *Dolphy-N*, it becomes clear how much filtering must have gone on in Dolphy's mind before he released the pure extract to the listener.

These records don't capture the full measure of Eric Dolphy, but no single recording would be able to do that. Dolphy's genius went far beyond making the bass clarinet sound light on its feet, and these discs go a long way toward documenting his path.

—elaine guregian



MARK HELIAS

SPLIT IMAGE—Enja 4086: *SPLIT IMAGE*; *QUIESCENCE*; *LANDS END*; *LE TANGO*; *Z-5*; *YELLOW AND BLUES*.

Personnel: Helias, bass; Herb Robertson, cornet, trumpet, valve trombone; Tim Berne, alto saxophone; Dewey Redman, tenor saxophone (cuts 3, 4); Gerry Hemingway, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

STEFAN F. WINTER

THE LITTLE TRUMPET—JMT 86007: *PANACOUSTICA*; *DESPAIRING LITTLE TRUMPET*; *FRIENDSHIP*; *THE WELCOMING*; *SAD FATE*; *LULLABY*; *WILD DISPUTES*; *HARMONY*; *THE NIGHT*; *THE MARVELOUS EVENT*; *PANACOUSTICA*.

Personnel: Herb Robertson, pocket trumpet, flugelhorn, cornet; Robin Eubanks, trombone; Bob Stewart, tuba; Tim Berne, alto saxophone; Warren Smith, vibraphone, marimba; Bill Frisell, guitars; Anthony Cox, bass; Reggie Nicholson, drums.

★ ★ ★

The pronounced difference in narrative tone between *Split Image* and *The Little Trumpet* surpasses such similarities as the presence of

Herb Robertson and Tim Berne on both albums. *Split Image* is Mark Helias' overdue "first book"—to use annotator Nat Hentoff's metaphor—a well-wrought volume teeming with vivid characterizations and supple craftsmanship. *The Little Trumpet* is another story all together; the brainchild of producer Stefan F. Winter, it is a semi-precious jazz album/story-book package salvaged, musically, by Robertson's arrangements and an assertive ensemble. The former is strong, undiluted music; the latter, while not being compromised by its function, is occasionally constricted by it.

Winter's score strictly adheres to his somewhat convoluted tale of musical instruments being recycled into tin cans and other "useful" items on the planet Panacoustica. Compositions such as *Lullaby*, a tender Bill Frisell acoustic guitar solo, and *Wild Disputes*, replete with mechanical cadences and cacophonous highlights, are explicitly programmatic. This precludes the surprise-filled structural devices Helias employs throughout *Split Image*. Helias' title composition's subdued Shorter-esque theme ruptures into a searing collective improvisation that, in turn, implodes,

setting up the leader's probing, pressure-dropping solo. The suite-like *Lands End* pivots from an elipitcal bop-tinged theme to a Colemanesque dirge on a finely attenuated solo by Dewey Redman, who forwards an elder statesman's presence on the two cuts he appears on.

The Little Trumpet does include several endearing performances. Coming on the heels of the lovely waltz, *Panacoustica*, *Despairing*... an unaccompanied Robertson solo, is a pseudo tear-jerker that glimmers with wit. *The Welcoming* has a loose-limbed, Mingus-like arrangement; Robin Eubanks and Anthony Cox hand in two of the set's most heated solos. There is a charming stage-band quality to *The Marvelous Event* that points up the not-so-underlying naivete of Winter's project; the r&b-hued rhythm section is a secure foundation for the sweeping theme, which gives way to quavering lines from Robertson and veneer-scraping statements from Berne.

Winter is to be credited for his stylistic latitude, especially on the freely improvised Robertson/Berne duet on *Friendship*; for most adult ears, the terrain they cover is adventurous, and it is welcomed that Winter would

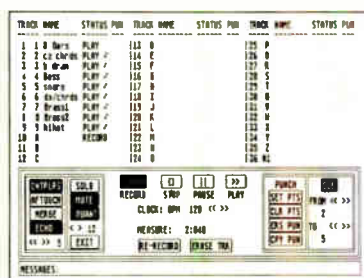


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think such material appropriate to, potentially, a very young audience. Still, *Friendship*, in keeping with its programmatic dictates, is a far less gripping, incisive work than Helias' Z-5, a

piece of blistering intensities that draws upon the common demoninator in the musical coming of age of Helias, Berne, and Gerry Hemingway—Anthony Braxton. The differences be-

tween these two compositions accurately encapsulates not only the differences between the two albums, but the differences between children and adults, as well. —bill shoemaker

A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF A SOPRANOIST

by Fred Bouchard

 f the living masters of soprano saxophone, Wayne Shorter is the magician, Steve Lacy the intellectual, and Dave Liebman the man of feeling. As Shorter has the unerring ear for textures and dynamics; and Lacy the eagle's eye for cool, hard ideas; so Liebman has the ability to touch the soul, eking from the wayward straight horn an extraordinary depth of emotion and dramatic range. His cantabile (singing) style, as identifiable as a human voice in its emotional tone and dramatic role-playing, may, in a given solo, conjure up anguish, ecstasy, anger, fear, hilarity, or haughtiness. Liebman's music is storytelling of a very high order: form, content, accent, color, and mood are all in place, on cue.

A year in the life of Dave Liebman means several trips to Europe, where he is generally lionized as one of the jazz world's prime practitioners on the saxophone. It also means a growing number of college concert dates and workshops. Much of the rest of the time, sadly and ironically, is spent seeking rare gigs with his superlative working quartet, Quest, in and around the "jazz capital of the world," New York City.

A typical year (April '85 to April '86) also finds Liebman making several albums (six here) on European labels (four German, two Swedish). His playing throughout is intense, bell-clear, always vocal and emotional, frequently inspired and transcendent. Liebman has bent the straight horn to do his bidding, achieving an extraordinarily limber expressiveness, a romantic modernism of unique and personal dimensions. Yet he has not made a single recording for an American label since 1978 (*Pendulum*, Artists House 8).

Loneliness (CMP 24), a set of studies for soprano solo with as many as six overdubs, explores the emotions and pursuits of all who "go for it" in life. Liebman, whose childhood polio forced him to wear a leg brace into his teens, talked with keen fascination to athletes everywhere; the devotion and discipline, pain and exhilaration that Liebman drew from distance runners struck for him incisive parallels to his career as a musician, and have become through this work an analogy for all who dare to seek and achieve in life's endeavors.

Loneliness spins an intricate and beautiful web of variations from two brief

motives, symbolizing Body and Mind. The motives are simple, their development rather advanced, but eminently accessible: Liebman has the charisma and chops to envelop the listener in his fabric of logical development, informed with both emotional depth and the athlete's spirit. Multiple overdubs lend a layered, lambent, often dreamlike aura to certain tracks. He has given a short technical account of what goes on in the notes to the album; let me just say that I found the work to be compelling, cumulative, and successful in its depiction of the passion of life's true strivers.

Liebman dropped the tenor sax after leaving Miles Davis in 1980, and the flute last year (*The Hollow Men* on *Quest II*—reviewed below)—is his last recording on flute). Like chicken-man Frank Perdue, Liebman has "put all his eggs in one basket, and is watching that basket." "Artistically, it's a better message," explains Liebman, "than jumping around from horn to horn. People are fooled by doubling, but depth requires mastery. I want the reed and mouthpiece to give me an unlimited palette of colors and emotions." Liebman's fine shading of both chromatic and psychological hues is undampened by tempo, material, and company, but in certain contexts may reach exceptional subtlety.

Liebman and pianist Richie Beirach have been a rare team since the late '60s' Lookout Farm. They have a sixth sense about playing together—like Gary Burton and Steve Swallow—which stems from philosophical alignments forged as loftmasters of Free Life Communications in the '70s with guys like Randy and Mike Brecker and Dave Holland. Saxophonist Bill Evans, in a recent Blindfold Test, observed that they "play as one." Their two duo albums here are remarkable for their sympathetic conspiracy and plangent beauty. They know each other's book and moves intimately.

Double Edge (Storyville 4061), the first of two soprano-and-piano duet dates, offers standards far removed from the usual pedestrian accountings. Coltrane's *India* unleashed Liebman's Middle Eastern roots, where his Semitic blood finds kinship with the shenai, or double-reed country oboe, and he keeps flattening that emphasis note. *'Round Midnight*—the *Stella By Starlight* of the '80s—is treated with much ingenious variation and irreverence as an impromptu mini-suite, and *Oleo* flies swift with a light, fine control. Having played these warhorses hundreds of times together, Liebman and Beirach wear them like a second skin.

It is especially on the original melodies explored in *The Duo Live* (Advance Music 86101) that the two take the extraordinary liberties possible only between boon

companions. *Elm* delivers far more lush and poetic a message than the version on Beirach's initial release (ECM 1142); Liebman's B section entry shifts the hue from greens to reds, the scene from misty Bremen to sunny Izmir. *Tender Mercies*, on the other hand, spins out its starry refinement to the rim of self-indulgence. (Pianist Bill Dobbins has transcribed the entire performance into score.)

Doubling the membership with the addition of bassist Ron McClure and drummer Billy Hart brings a fresh outlook and new facets to *Quest II* (Storyville 4132). *Gargoyles*—a cantankerous, quixotic line by Liebman—as a vehicle for the two comes out angular, introspective, polite; but for four it takes on an insinuating, perverse undertow, and Liebman writhes like a penitent in a religious processional. He and Beirach peek in and out of the tracery on fast passages, with the rhythm as flying buttress. Other duos emerge—flute with bowed bass on *The Hollow Men*, bleak as T. S. Eliot's scarecrows without dreams or vision. *Quest* should be a priority live in The Apple, and elsewhere. At 1369 in Cambridge, MA last spring (thanks to WHRB-FM's live re-broadcasts) they played stretched-out, vital versions of *Pendulum*, *Elm*, and others, as Beirach, matching Liebman's muezzin-call quarter-tones, seemingly played in the cracks of the tuned-out piano.

Liebman's role as traveler, teacher, and merry minstrel brings him annually to the courts of northern Europe, where he holds forth as a genial guru to hordes of eager youths and makes consistently refreshing recordings with them. He is guest of honor on Scandinavian bassist Lars Danielsson's *New Hands* (Dragon 125), where the electric quartet's grounding does not sway his eye from the firmament. The emotional connection and breadth is audible in every solo, from defiant triumph on *Chrass*, to bitterly mournful on *Rue Payenne*. Veteran pianist Bobo Stenson plays brilliantly throughout.

Playing front man for the ripping Tolvan Big Band (on *Guided Dream*, Dragon 120) gives Liebman a chance to go full throttle on *Softly As In A Morning Sunrise*, get a fresh look at his pretty, hummable *Doin' It Again* through Tom Boris' buoyant arrangement, and stark soprano/big band duos on the title track by Sten Ingelf, who also charted *Footprints* as a feature for trumpeter Anders Bergcrantz, who acquits himself handily over bubbling rhythm. Showpiece is Bill Dobbins' 15-minute recreation of two early Liebman pieces, *M.D./Lookout Farm*, dedicated to his early '70s boss Miles Davis and Lookout Farm's Eugene Grogan—strong writing, excellent playing, and, naturally, soprano overview with great feeling.

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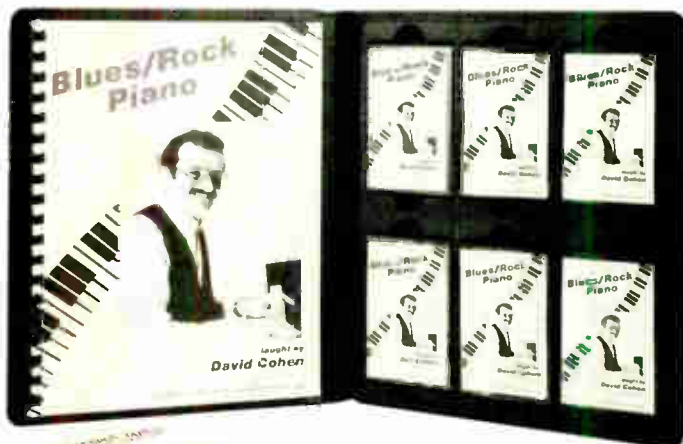
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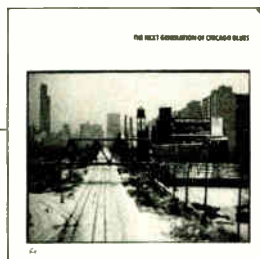
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Personnel: Donald Kinsey and the Kinsey Report (Kinsey, guitar, vocal; Ronald Prince, guitar; Kenneth Kinsey, bass; Ralph "Woody" Kinsey, drums); Valerie Wellington (Wellington, vocal; John Duich, guitar; Sumito Arioshi, piano; Nick Charles, bass; Brady Williams, drums); Dion Payton and the 43rd Street Blues Band (Payton, guitar, vocal; Joanna Connor, guitar; Rockin' Tom Heimdal, keyboards; Murphy Dass, bass; Earl Howell, drums); The Sons of Blues/Chi-Town Hustlers (J. W. Williams, bass, vocal; Billy Branch, harmonica; Carl Weatherby, guitar; Moses Rudes, drums); Professor's Blues Review Featuring Gloria Hardiman (Professor Eddie Lusk, keyboards; Gloria Hardiman, vocal; Anthony Palmer, guitar; Fred Barnes, bass; Michael Scott, drums); John Watkins (Watkins, guitar, vocal; Jimmy Johnson, guitar; St. James Bryant, keyboards; Larry Exum, bass; Fred Grady, drums); Michael Coleman (Coleman, guitar, vocal; Eddie Harsch, keyboards; Danny Fields, trumpet; Garrick Patten, alto saxophone; Johnny Cotton, trombone; Noel Neal, bass; Ray Allison, drums); Maurice John Vaughn (Vaughn, guitar, tenor saxophone, vocal; Allen Batts, keyboards; Kenny Pickens, bass; Casey Jones, drums); Melvin Taylor and the Slack Band (Taylor, guitar, vocal; Willie "Wee" Love, bass; Curtis Labon, drums); Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials (Ed Williams, guitar, vocal; Dave Weld, guitar; James Young, bass; Louis Henderson, drums).

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

It's been more than 20 years since Samuel Charters produced the three-volume *Chicago/The Blues/Today!* anthology on the Vanguard label, nearly 10 years since Alligator Records' Bruce Iglauer issued the first half of his similarly formatted six-album *Living Chicago Blues* series. Now Alligator has released a single-LP compilation, *The New Bluebloods*, featuring 10 young Windy City groups for whom the blues is very much alive and thoroughly up-to-date.

Most of the featured performers here are in their early 30s; many were or are sidemen in better-established bands. Stylistically, they lean toward the gospel-inflected soul-blues pioneered by Bobby Bland and Little Milton and recently revived by the late Z. Z. Hill. It is an approach similar to that of rising blues star Robert Cray, but without Cray's sophisticated lyrics or rock-influenced melodic hooks.

Like Cray but unlike the two female singers

on the album, the male vocalists sound slightly callow, as though their best years are yet to come. Their instrumental work, tinged with hard-funk and heavy-metal, shows greater polish and pizzazz. As Iglauer points out on the liner, blues bands today often use synthesizers, phase shifters, fuzz boxes, and wah-wah pedals, but neither these effects nor the post-Hendrix psychedelic funk they help produce are included.

Donald Kinsey, the son of bluesman Big Daddy Kinsey, played guitar behind Albert King and Bob Marley, and briefly led a rock band called White Lightnin' before returning to his father's group, the Kinsey Report. Despite his varied experience, he performs in a conservative, Albert King-like vein on *Corner Of The Blanket*. Another relatively traditional stylist is Valerie Wellington, a conservatory-trained singer who came to the blues by way of musical theater; she gives the album's finest vocal performance on *A Fool For You*.

Dion Payton, a native Mississippian with a gospel-soul background, is more of a modernist, singing and playing guitar with compelling power and originality on his own composition *All Your Affection Is Gone*. The Sons of Blues/Chi-Town Hustlers are co-led by bassist J. W. Williams, also a Mississippi transplant, and harmonica player Billy Branch, who discovered the blues when he moved from Los Angeles to Chicago to attend college. Williams' gruff singing on *The Only Thing That Saved Me* gradually rises to a fever pitch, and Branch's supercharged Paul Butterfield-style harp work is stunning. Singer Gloria Hardiman and keyboard player "Professor" Eddie Lusk both have roots in gospel music, but their rendition of *Meet Me With Your Black Drawers On* is pure if unexceptional blues. Conversely, singer/guitarist John Watkins grew up in the thick of the Chicago blues scene but favors a gospel-soul approach on the overlong *Chained To Your Love*, accompanied by his uncle, Jimmy Johnson.

A veteran blues and soul sideman at age 30, guitarist Michael Coleman plays and sings in routine fashion on *Woman Loves A Woman*, a clever reworking of B. B. King's *Why I Sing The Blues* that was originally recorded, with Coleman as producer, by vocalist Jerry Tyrone. Maurice John Vaughn, who served his apprenticeship with Phil and Buddy Guy, is a triple threat on guitar, tenor saxophone, and vocals; he takes a strongly soulful turn on the lugubrious *Nothing Left To Believe In*. Melvin Taylor is an astonishingly adept and versatile guitarist, virtually in a class by himself in terms of sheer technique. On his own *Depression Blues*, he sings and overdubs lead and rhythm guitar tracks in a dazzling display of instrumental creativity and prowess that remains just inside the bonds of blues convention.

Lil' Ed Williams has already been featured on his own Alligator LP; a nephew of the late slide guitarist J. B. Hutto, he plays and sings in the same raw, Elmore James-derived style. Despite his youth, Williams is a throwback to an earlier era, betraying not a hint of modernity as he rocks out on the buoyant *Young Thing*. Unlike some of his more urbane colleagues, he seems to play the blues not so much out of preference but, in John Lee Hooker's words, "because it's in him, and it's got to come out."

—larry birnbaum



ELVIN JONES/ McCOY TYNER

REUNITED—BlackHawk 521-1 D: *LITTLE ROCK'S BLUES*; *HIP JONES*; *KORINA*; *FOR TOMORROW*; *SWEET AND LOVELY*; *ORIGIN*.

Personnel: Jones, drums; Tyner, piano; Pharoah Sanders, tenor saxophone; Richard Davis, bass; Jean-Paul Bourelly, electric guitar.

★ ★ ★ ½

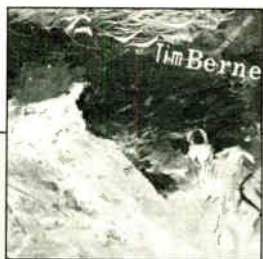
As a rule, pop music reunions are designed for nostalgia-shrouded self-congratulation and a one-more-time unging at consumers' wallets. Reunions of jazz musicians are far less suspect, motivated as they usually are by a let's-get-together-and-blow camaraderie built of artistic imperatives. Whenever redoubtable players Elvin Jones and McCoy Tyner cross paths, it is wise to sit up and pay attention.

Since the storied days of the John Coltrane Quartet, ex-members Jones and Tyner occasionally have joined forces for the making of superlative Trane-inspired jazz, giving us *The Real McCoy* (Blue Note 84264, with Joe Henderson and Ron Carter) in the late '60s and second treasure *Trident* (Milestone 9063, with Carter) a decade later. The recently issued *Reunited*, an early '82 session wherein the principals hook up with kindred spirits Pharoah Sanders and Richard Davis, is but a moderately productive gathering.

On the album, former Trane duelist Sanders seldom takes flight, perversely content to stay earthbound with uninteresting clinches to passable melodies. The saxophonist seems determined to emphasize his budding gentleness, his calming of spirit, and wilder impulses are held in check. For his efforts he sounds terse and remote. Only when he cuts loose in *Hip Jones*, probing the range of the now proud-toned terror, does he live up to his "Got to have Freedom" dictum. Got to have feelings, indeed.

Jones is in fine form. His polyrhythmic thunder rumbles across the expanse of three Sanders compositions and Tyner's trancelike *For Tomorrow* as if prodigious messages from a jazz deity. Jones' every action behind the drum kit is precise and significant. His accents spur Tyner and he drops incendiaries in and around the pianist's oft-compelling elaborations of song themes, all the while underscoring the special rapport enjoyed by the two. Jones and Tyner are especially effective on *For Tomorrow* and *Sweet And Lovely*—more accurately "Sweet and Lively" in their hands. Bassist Davis performs well, his presence strong, and electric guitarist Jean-Paul Bourelly stays in the shadows much of the time. An irritant: the piano now and again is placed too low in the mix.

—frank-john hadley



TIM BERNÉ

FULTON STREET MAUL—Columbia 40530: UNKNOWN DISASTER; ICICLES REVISITED; MINIATURE; FEDERICO; BETSY.

Personnel: Berne, alto saxophone; Hank Roberts, cello, voice; Bill Frisell, guitar; Alex Cline, percussion, harmonic singing.

★ ★ ★ ★

Fulton Street Maul, the major label debut of saxophonist Tim Berne, exudes an urban sensuality, a cosmopolitan joie de vivre that could only be inspired by New York City. Despite its sometimes hip, street-jive pretensions, the music captures a moment in time, a curious cross-cultural clutter of mid-'60s free jazz, mid-'70s harmolodics, and mid-'80s funk.

Unknown Disaster sets the tone for this celebration, with stop-go traffic rhythms on top and the churning screech of a subway train underneath. Hank Roberts' arcing, grinding cello adds an earthy grit rather than the navigational thrust of a bass. Combined with the sustain of Bill Frisell's electric guitar, their neon blur frames Berne's growling alto saxophone.

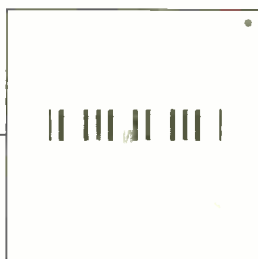
Like the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Berne and company use jazz as a funnel for 20th century classicism and pan-ethnicism, and probably a few -isms I haven't identified. *Ice-icles Revisited* opens with quiet, introspective interplay that recalls the intuitive work of the Art Ensemble's *People In Sorrow* or, say, classical composer George Crumb's *Voices Of Ancient Children*—although Crumb would never build it into a rollicking rhythm with Alex Cline exploding syncopated cymbal crashes left and right.

Bill Frisell leaves skid marks all over *Fulton Street*. He's a guitarist to be reckoned with, alternating between choppy backing chords, doubling Berne's alto, or sending out ricochet space guitar solos on *Federico*.

The album's most ambitious work is *Betsy*, with its symphonic structure and arrangement. It opens with doubling altos, cross-fading guitar and cello, and atmospheric percussion. Roberts' cello drones, imitating Tibetan monks, and Alex Cline's "harmonic singing," in which the overtones of a fundamental sung note are split, creates, in this case, an eerie, ghost-like whistling effect. This mystical jangling meditation evolves into a Sun Ra Egyptian strut, and Berne turns in one melodic invention after another over this modal backdrop.

The influences and precedents for Tim Berne are readily apparent, but his cluttered pastiche of them is compelling and distinctive. If he sometimes wears his urban hipness on his sleeve, well, sometimes you've just gotta flaunt it.

—john diliberto



BOB THOMPSON

BROTHER'S KEEPER—Intima 7328: SHOOTING STAR; UNDERCOVER; WAITING FOR YOU; BROTHER'S KEEPER; OVERJOYED; VITORIA; MY FIRST LADY.

Personnel: Thompson, piano, synthesizers; Gerald Veasley, electric bass; Omar Hakim, drums; Kevin Eubanks, electric guitar (cut 1), acoustic guitar (6,7); John Blake, violin (1,7); Doc Gibbs, percussion (6); Lita Blake, vocals (1,4).

★ ★ ★

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I'm sure this album will get a lot of airplay on Yuppie and Buppie jazz stations, right alongside the latest by Ramsey Lewis and Joe Sample. It certainly is pleasant-sounding enough. It has that air of elegance and sophistication that goes well with white wine and formal wear. And the band is certainly together. With workhorses like Gerald Veasley, Omar Hakim, and Kevin Eubanks, you can't miss.

Or can you? The material here is just too safe for my tastes. It's performed well, and Thompson is certainly a capable keyboardist, but I just can't get too excited about happy-jazz these days. This is rather tame fare, geared toward an audience that relates to the light and frothy side of life. Ironically, the individual solo work by the sideman here would be considered far too "out" by this same crowd.

Three pieces do stand out, however. The upbeat opener, *Shooting Star*, features some sizzling electric guitar work by Eubanks and fine violin lines by Blake. The samba groove on *Vitoria* serves as a great springboard for a burning acoustic solo by Eubanks. And the sparse ballad, *My First Lady*, features Thompson, Eubanks, and Blake engaging in some delicate interplay. The rest—well, you just gotta be in the right mood and proper frame of mind for this stuff. It doesn't challenge, it soothes.

—bill milkowski



STANLEY TURRENTINE

WONDERLAND—Blue Note 85140: *BIRD OF BEAUTY; CREEPIN', YOU AND I; LIVING FOR THE CITY; BOOGIE ON, REGGAE WOMAN; ROCKET LOVE; DON'T YOU WORRY 'BOUT A THING; SIR DUKE.*

Personnel: Turrentine, tenor saxophone; Stevie Wonder, harmonica (cut 5); Mike Miller, guitar (1, 5, 6); Ronnie Foster (1, 2, 4-7), Don Grusin (1, 4-6, 8), Eddie del Barrio (3), keyboards; Abe Laboriel, bass (1, 4-8); Harvey Mason, drums (1, 2, 4-8); Paulinho da Costa, percussion (1, 2, 5-7).

★ ★ ★ ★

As the evolution of jazz slows down, musicians are discovering what's been there all along—

the blues, the rhythmic orientation of a phrase, and the thematic extension of a line. With these elements back in vogue, now's the time for Stanley Turrentine—Mr. Soul Quaver—again. Put him in an attractive contemporary rhythm section setting—nothing too down and dirty; neither too slick, but just a little sweeter than the old acoustic piano/bass/drums format—and give him tunes by Stevie Wonder, today's pre-eminent pop composer, and he makes it all sound as natural as bending a blue note.

With this record, there are no loose ends, no errant improvisational leaps, no dead-end phrases. The theme statements are a groove—solid rhythm (with nice latin percussion added on some tracks), piano and synthesizer comping keyed to Turrentine's personal phrasing, tenor basking in a cushion of keyboard sounds. You can dance if you wanna.

Turrentine takes off from the heads in a smooth and soulful joyride. The hottest track is *Boogie On, Reggae Woman*. The tenor man digs deep into his preaching bag after Wonder blows a few characteristic licks on harmonica. *Creepin'* is a pleasant, slinky, mysterious performance. *Rocket Love* comes closest to the mood music this album might have become in less soulful hands.

Ronnie Foster produced the album. As a tribute to the contemporary jazz possibilities of Wonder's music, it succeeds. As a vehicle for Turrentine's robust tenor, it succeeds even more. Good cooking, Mr. T. —owen cordle

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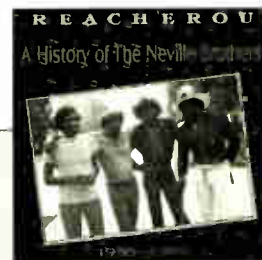
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THE NEVILLE BROTHERS

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Personnel: Art Neville, keyboards, vocals (cuts 2,3,7); Aaron Neville, vocals, percussion (4-6,8-11,14,18); Charles Neville, saxophone, percussion; Cyril Neville, percussion, vocals; The Hawkets (1); The Wild Tchoupitoulas (12,13); The Neville Brothers Band (15-17,19-24).

★ ★ ★ ★

UPTOWN—EMI America 17249: *WHATEVER IT TAKES; FOREVER . . . FOR TONIGHT; YOU'RE THE ONE; MONEY BACK GUARANTEE (MY LOVE IS GUARANTEED); DRIFT AWAY; SHEK-A-NA-NA; OLD HABITS DIE HARD; I NEVER NEEDED NO ONE; MIDNIGHT KEY; SPIRITS OF THE WORLD.*

Personnel: Art Neville, vocals, keyboards; Aaron Neville, vocals; Charles Neville, saxophones; Cyril Neville, vocals, percussion; Willie Green, drums, Simmons drums; Daryl Johnson, bass, background vocals, synthesizer (1); Brian Stoltz, guitar, piano (6); Ronnie Montrose (1), Carlos Santana (2), Jerry Garcia (3), Keith Richards (9), Richie Zito (10), guitar; Clem Clemson, electric sitar (7); Corey Lerios, keyboard arrangements (2-4); Steve Nieve, keyboards (7); Eric Kolb, keyboard programming; Alan Roy Scott, rhythm tracks (1); Luis Jardin, percussion (6); Branford Marsalis, saxophone (5,8-10).

★ ★

Down New Orleans way the r&b band of greatest merit is the Neville Brothers, a modern-day buccaneer clan of four brethren and three sidemen that gloriously stirs together Mardi Gras Indian chants, red clay soul harmonies, West African and Caribbean rhythms, parade beats, funk syncopation, sounds of blues and jazz saloons, and other remarkable elements of Crescent City black music. When the Nevilles catch fire and burn on stage as if

sweating Tabasco sauce, there isn't a band on earth that could bear to stand in their way. Even that famed Jerseyite and cohorts would stagger before such wondrous bayou-style revelry, such extraordinary cannonades of passion.

Every few years Aaron, Art, Charles, and Cyril cut an album and try to bust out of southern Louisiana, hoping to capture national fame and fortune—what they rightfully believe is their due after too many long, hard years of scuffling. This season there's a big push: *Uptown*, a studio album on the big-time EMI America label; the two-record career retrospective, *Treacherous*, from Rhino Records; and an impending new concert album, delayed some months by legal entanglements. Plus it doesn't hurt the cause to have Rhino's three-volume *A History Of New Orleans Rhythm & Blues* and EMI's *It Will Stand*, a compilation of classic Minit singles by various worthies, receiving deserved college radio airplay and laudatory reviews.

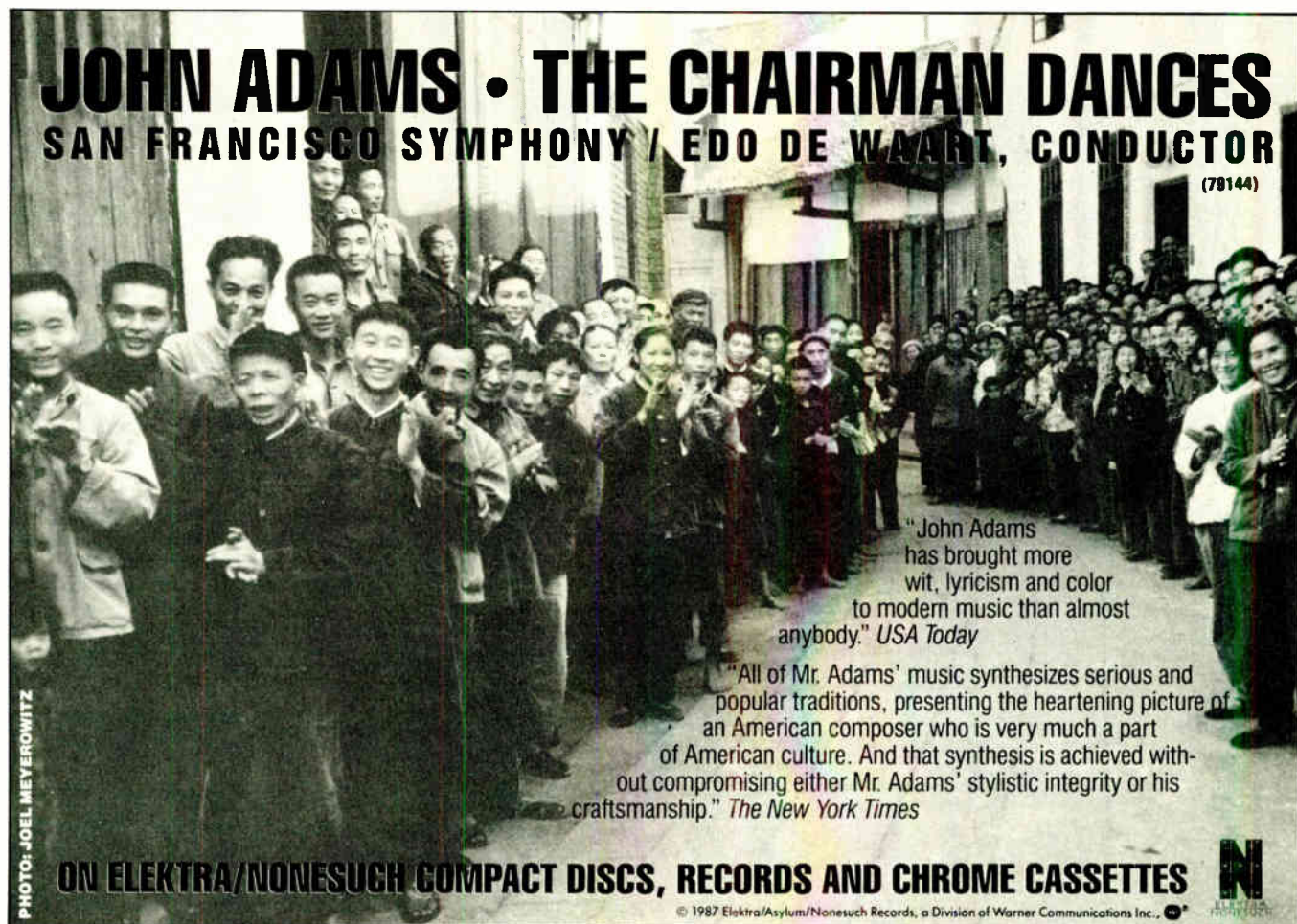
Treacherous collects solo feature numbers by both Aaron and Art as well as representative family collaborations—a total of 24 in all spanning the years 1955-85. There is much here to treasure, to savor again and again. There is, too, a fair amount of Nevillizing to accept begrudgingly.

Brother Aaron has one of the most emotionally resonant and altogether compelling voices ever heard in popular music. *Treacherous* includes *Over You* (1960), his confidently

sung debut recording and initial encounter with producer/arranger/songwriter/pianist Allen Toussaint; the mature ballad *Let's Live* (1961), wherein Aaron's poignant reflections on sad love achieve parity with Sam Cooke's emotionalism; and the deeply argued *Tell It Like It Is*, a countrywide blockbuster in 1967. Five more feature tracks, products of Toussaint-supervised sessions in the '60s and '70s, are also enthralling because of Aaron's expressive tenor/falsetto and the consonant, unfailing arrangements.

Brother Art is an undistinguished singer. He has fun on *Mardi Gras Mambo* (1955), which was recorded during his teen years, and he trolls rakishly on late '50s rockers *Zing, Zing* and *Cha Dooky-Do*. He gives us sly winks in the maudlin *All These Things* (1962).

Treacherous doesn't offer any numbers by The Meters, those instrumental masters of the funk riff, but it does have two uplifting groove-chants—*Meet De Boys* and *Brother John*—off the Wild Tchoupitoulas' delightful '76 album (*Antilles* 7052). Additional selections from these costumed "Indians" riotous stomp, which featured the four Nevilles, would be welcome at the expense of several studio-sugarcoated tunes plucked from the Neville Brothers' first record (1978). The more honest but still prissy *Fiyo On The Bayou* (1981) is represented by updates of two Meters struts and a filé-smooth cover of Jimmy Cliff's *Sitting In Limbo*. And the disappointing *Neville-ization*



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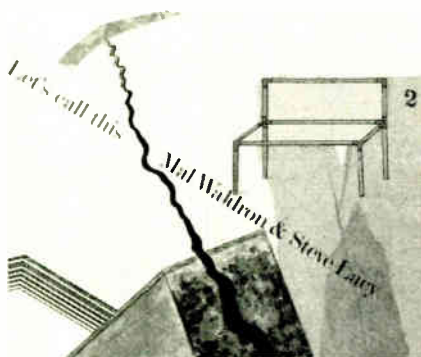
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(1984), recorded at Tipitina's in New Orleans, lends a diffuse rendering of *Fever* and a musically satisfying, anti-nuke Art Neville composition called *Fear, Hate, Envy, Jealousy* to the anthology.

Sadly, the new release, *Uptown*, has been groomed for pop chart action and is devoid of anything pointing to New Orleans. Steady, familiar voices try to wring emotions out of mostly blank lyrics, and gorgeous harmonies come and go, but it's the soppy melodic hooks, guest blitzes by guitarists like Carlos Santana and Ronnie Montrose, and the glitter of the

synthesizer-heavy production that will attract mainstream rock fans—the targeted audience. *Shek-A-Na-Na* probably has the best chance for commercial success, thanks to producers/sound-shapers Clive Langer and Alan Winstanley, who've previously worked with Madness, Elvis Costello, and others. It'd be a kick, I suppose, to have an ebullient Aaron blasting out of 10 million radios. But would James Booker, Big Chief Jolly, and Professor Longhair—some of the notables to whom the record is dedicated—have cared a whit?

—frank-john hadley

New Releases

(Record Companies: For listing in the monthly New Releases column, send two copies of each new release to Art Lange, db, 222 W. Adams, Chicago, IL 60606.)

WINDHAM HILL/LIVING MUSIC:

The Gyuto Monks, *Tibetan Tantric Choir*. The Nylons, *Happy Together*. Paul Winter/Paul Halley, *Whales Alive*. Susan Osborn, *Susan*. Pierre Bensusan, *Musiques*. Montreux, *Sign Language*. Bobby McFerrin/Jack Nicholson, *The Elephant's Child*.

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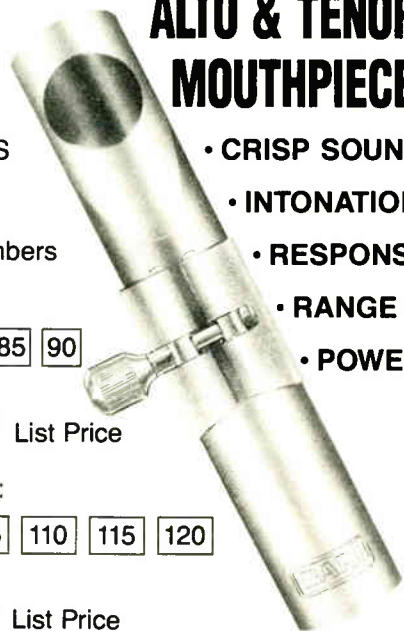
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Fest Scene

The mostly classical **Ravinia Festival** will once again feature a solid lineup of contemporary jazz this summer. The acts lined up for performances in the north Chicago suburb of Highland Park include a Windham Hill Showcase of Andy Narell, Michael Hedges, and the Montreux Band (7/1); the Kronos Quartet (7/13); Edward Wilkerson's Eight Bold Souls and the Don Pullen/George Adams Quartet (7/20); the Art Farmer/Benny Golson Jazztet, the Count Basie Orchestra (led by Frank Foster), and Joe Williams (7/31); the Roscoe Mitchell Quartet and Cecil Taylor (8/3); the Preservation Hall Jazz Band (8/6); Bass Desires (Marc Johnson, John Scofield, Bill Frisell, Peter Erskine) and special guest David Darling (8/10); Foday Musa Suso and the L. Subramaniam Trio (8/17); the Pat Metheny Group (8/18); the Paul Winter Consort and special guest Malcolm Dalglish (8/25); Sarah Vaughan and the Phil Woods Quartet (8/26); and Jean-Luc Ponty and special guest Bobby McFerrin (8/28). For more information, call (312) 433-8800.

The **Montreux Jazz Festival** will bring a variety of contemporary music to Switzerland during its 7/2-18 run. The French Symphony Orchestra will kick things off 7/2 with a tribute to George Gershwin. Other highlights will include Brazilian music from Joao Bosco, Nana Caymi, Cesar Camargo, and Simone; rock and blues from Chuck Berry, B.B. King, et al; a guitar night featuring Stanley Jordan, Larry Carlton with Stix Hooper and Jeff Berlin, and John McLaughlin and Paco De Lucia; tenor giants Dexter Gordon, Stan Getz, and Michael Brecker; as well as performances by Dizzy Gillespie, Wynton Marsalis, James Newton, et al. For a complete schedule, contact the festival by writing Case 97, CH-1820 Montreux, Switzerland, or phoning (021) 63 12 12.

The **du Maurier International Jazz Festival** takes place in Vancouver, Canada, 6/26-7/5. Artists include Abdullah Ibrahim & Ekaya, Hermeto Pascoal, John Scofield, Etta James, Michael Brecker, Dave Holland & Muhal Richard Abrams, the Rova Saxophone Quartet, Ray Anderson, Bill Bruford, et al. Contact John Orysik, #203-1206 Hamilton St., Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6B 2S9, (604) 682-0706.

The **Pori International Jazz Festival** will be held 7/4-12, featuring the Dizzy Gillespie Big Band, Miles Davis, B.B. King, Courtney Pine, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Manhattan Transfer, Cab Calloway, Stan Getz, Hugh Masekela, Ahmad Jamal, Carmel, Slickaphonics, the Terence Blanchard Quintet, et al. Contact the Finnish Jazz Federation, Postisiirtotili 151520-6, Bulevardi 3 B 22, 00120 Helsinki 12, Finland.

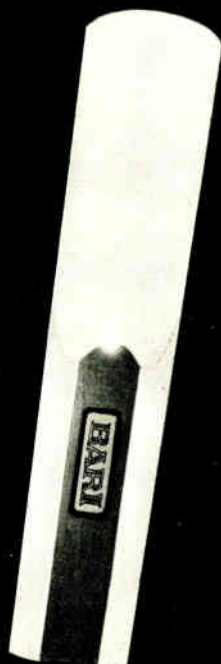
The 22nd annual **San Sebastian Jazz Festival**, 7/21-26, will feature Sarah Vaughan, Dexter Gordon, Stan Getz, Ornette Coleman, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, the Gil Evans Orchestra, Stanley Jordan, Branford Marsalis, and more to be announced. For more details, contact the festival by writing Reina Regente, s/n, 20003 San Sebastian-Donostia, or phoning (943) 421002.

The **Nice Jazz Festival** runs 7/9-19 and will feature the Dizzy Gillespie Big Band, the Count Basie Orchestra, the Wynton Marsalis Quintet, the Branford Marsalis Quartet, Herbie Hancock, the One O'Clock Jumpers (with Clark Terry and Buddy Tate), Dexter Gordon, Stan Getz, Michael Brecker, James Cotton, B.B. King, Chuck Berry, and the Harlem Jazz & Blues Band. Contact the Nice Board of Tourism for more info. □

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CLASSICS

According to Webster, "classic" is defined as "... the highest class or rank ... refined, pure, clear-cut ... a time-tested work of distinction." Among the avalanche of LPs recently adapted for CD, more than a few qualify for classic status. Not all of the sides considered herein reach that rarified stature, mind you, and the transformation to CD has affected many of them in curious ways; still, there's enough quality in this selection that we need not quibble about the title.

Louis Armstrong, of course, was of classic stature throughout his career, yet except for his early Hot Five and Seven sessions critics seldom agree on the merits of his many recordings. His two early '60s meetings with **Duke Ellington** have been issued on one jam-packed compact disc—*The Great Reunion* (Mobile Fidelity 2-807, 68:08 minutes)—and if the results are more comfortable than challenging, chalk it up to the politesse of the participants. The sound quality is first-rate (save the slight echo surrounding Satch's voice), the material is all-Ellington, and the band is all-Armstrong (with the exception of Duke and clarinetist Barney Bigard, who held notable tenure in both bands). Armstrong is completely at ease on tunes like *I'm Just A Lucky So & So*, and his wide-open trumpet vibrato is perfectly suited to the Nawlins drawl of *Black And Tan Fantasy*. Trummy Young contributes some strong trombone, and Duke's piano is everpresent, but Bigard is, for me, the unsung hero of this date—especially his clarinet's oozing dark creme on *Mood Indigo*.

Thus it's all the more disappointing that Bigard's sincere, satisfying playing is occasionally lost to the hobgoblins of digital remastering on *Louis Armstrong Plays W.C. Handy* (Columbia CK 40202, 55:28). Billy Kyle's piano is similarly mistreated, but there's plenty of Trummy Young's robust trombone, and Armstrong's trumpet has an almost supernatural presence in relation to the rest of the ensemble. Still, there's no muting the exuberance and sheer joy communicated throughout these performances—but be advised, 50 percent of the cuts are newly issued takes not on the original LP. Ditto on *Satch Plays Fats* (Columbia CK 40378, 38:28), where six of the nine cuts are alternates (Humphrey Lyttleton's knowing notes help clarify the differences); altogether an entertaining but slightly less substantial achievement than the Handy LP.

Both of the latter CDs are part of Columbia's initial release of "classic" material from their vaults (though why didn't we get the Hot Fives and Sevens?). Ellington pops up again in tandem with **Count Basie** on *First Time! The Count Meets The Duke* (Columbia CK 40576, 39:43), which combines the full personnel of both bands, but is not the behemoth you might imagine. Actually, despite a touch of unavoidable muddiness when both bands are roaring full out, the sound is acceptable, and the stereo spread helps differentiate the personnel. The arrangements (by Thad Jones, Frank

Wess, and Frank Foster on the Basie items, and Duke and Billy Strayhorn on the others) assist in this regard as well, highlighting the flow of familiar, fanciful soloists without strain or artifice. And hearing Basie and Ellington trade remarkably compatible licks on piano is a special joy—what wouldn't we give for a duet album!

Benny Goodman is afforded a pair of releases in this first batch; his *Sextet* (Columbia CK 40579, 45:49) combines seldom heard 1950-52 sides which contain no surprises, no problems, and precious few sparks of inspirations. Vibist Terry Gibbs and B.G. are featured throughout (Teddy Wilson sits in on nine of the 12 tracks), and the only miscalculations occur when the drummers (either Charlie Smith or Sid Bulkin) try to whip up some Krupa-esque bombast. Crisp, clean, realistic sonics reflect the mostly mellow charts.

On the other hand, *Benny Goodman Live At Carnegie Hall* (Columbia G2K 40244, 49:00/53:03) is fully of sloppy playing, iffy sound, and magic throughout. There are no miracles of sound retrieval or reproduction here—remember, this was caught live in 1938, with less than hi-tech equipment—and noise from the original acetates is still quite noticeable in spots. As often occurs on CD, the drums are brought up to an unrealistic level, but given Gene Krupa's rigorous intensity, the music is all the more exciting. The highlights of this set are well known by now, but in retrospect much of the magic lies in the small, easily overlooked details: Krupa's sizzling strength subtly electrifying the otherwise all-Basie rhythm section on *Honeysuckle Rose*, that same tune's all-star string of solos like a string of pearls (the seed for JATP?), the vehement satire in the ricky-ticky Ted Lewis parody, the orchestral muscle-stretching (analogous to a nation preparing for war?) in *Life Goes To A Party*. (In addition to the unimproved sound quality, points should be taken away for the questionable production; Irving Kolodin's original liner notes are provided but the complete band personnel is inexplicably dropped, and there's no rational reason why the third of a trio of quartet numbers is isolated on the second disc.)

Dave Brubeck rates a pair of releases as well—one a confirmed classic, the other a hodge-podge of cuts. The classic is *Time Out* (Columbia CK 40585, 38:49), which was the first jazz LP I owned, as I recall. After 30-odd years the music sounds a tad precious, but endearing, too, thanks to the slight but charming material, Joe Morello's impeccable drum-

CHARLIE PARKER



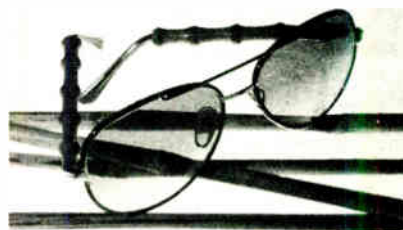
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ming, and Paul Desmond's suave saxophone. The sound is slightly echoey at times, and there's a bit of distortion audible in Gene Wright's bass. Meanwhile, *Music From West Side Story And . . .* (Columbia CK 40455, 42:19) is merely an excuse to collect dribs and drabs from the storehouse of Brubeck's Tin Pan Alley performances—better they had reissued the quartet's Cole Porter collection (Columbia 9402) in toto.

I've long defended **Billie Holiday's** later Verve recordings against those who complain of her vocal decline. *Lady In Satin* (Columbia CK 40247, 44:32), one of her last studio recordings, is often painful to hear, though, despite her touchingly worldly-wise phrasing and the

way Ray Ellis' string arrangements provided a satin cushion to that aching voice.

It's not surprising that **Miles Davis** receives the lion's share of releases. Chronologically, *Sketches Of Spain* (Columbia CK 40578, 41:24) is first, and sound-wise, the best. The textures of Gil Evans' difficult writing are clearer than ever before, as inner voices and subtle details blossom and cohere. Miles is moving, Gil is masterful. 'Nuff said. Unfortunately, *Kind Of Blue* (Columbia CK 40579, 45:10) doesn't fare as well. So *What* kicks off with a fuzzy, echoey ensemble, Jimmy Cobb's drums are over-enhanced, and Bill Evans' piano takes on an almost-electronic reverberance at times. But Miles is front-and-center, the ear gradually

grows accustomed to the sonic vagaries, and the powerful music shines through.

As Teo Macero has related in various interviews, all of Miles' post-'69 music was spliced together from varying studio takes. The seams show especially on *In A Silent Way* (Columbia CK 40580, 38:02), as the sound emphasizes the textural transparency by boosting the high-end of the dynamic spectrum—the interaction of the three keyboards, John McLaughlin's guitar "comping," and Tony Williams' hi-hat on *Shhh/Peaceful* is remarkably lucid, and Miles' trumpet obtains a new sheen, but the music now sounds tame. Especially when compared to the bubbling cauldron of *Bitches Brew* (Columbia G2K 40577, 47:02/46:55). Unfortunately, there's no significant sound improvement from the original LPs, and some audible pre-echo on *Sanctuary* has crept into the mix. The session must have been an engineer's nightmare; nevertheless, this first plunge into Miles' most audacious period of experimentation remains an ungainly, exciting, still surprising experience—not the least for McLaughlin's unclipped, ear-opening guitar.

Meanwhile, Miles' early-'50s acoustic groups are among the highlights of the 10 compilations in the 60+ series from Fantasy. The artists are the creme of the Riverside/Prestige catalog, but producer Ed Michel has—for better or worse—avoided a Greatest Hits series, preferring to mix-and-match performances with an eye for variety and surprise. This leads to some enlightening—and some dubious—programs. Sound quality varies slightly from disc to disc but is more than acceptable throughout—and revelatory in a few cases. The playing time, in excess of 60 minutes, is generous.

Miles Davis *And The Jazz Giants* (Prestige FCD 60-015, 68:46), as mentioned above, feature more bop than pop, and cuts off in '56, with no samples of the "classic quintet." (Presumably these will be released complete.) The intimacy of Miles' musings is caught marvelously here. *The Essential Sonny Rollins On Riverside* (Riverside FCD 60-020, 61:08) neglects his more prestigious Prestige sides like *Blue Seven*, *Moritat*, or *Saxophone Colossus* in favor of more obscure outings, some as sideman. Only *The Freedom Suite* is truly essential here. Much of the music sounds its age—fuzzy, occasionally harsh, with a hard, unyielding quality to Sonny's sax. Fortunately, the sound is solid on **John Coltrane** *And The Jazz Giants* (Prestige FCD 60-014, 68:14), as Michel's selections reflect an aggressive, questing period in Trane's development—including defiant, perverse, impossible tempos for *Soft Lights And Sweet Music* and *Lover* (hearing Donald Byrd work so hard makes one wonder what Wynton would have sounded like alongside Trane). Included are one cut with Miles' "classic quintet" and a pair from Trane's regrettably brief sojourn with Monk.

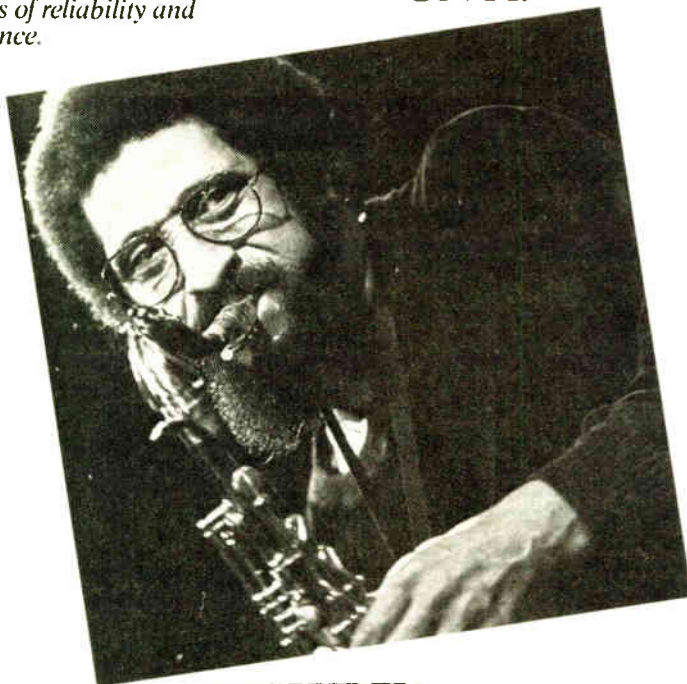
Speaking of Monk, nothing short of everything he ever recorded would be released on CD, if I had my preference. **Thelonious Monk** *And The Jazz Giants* (Riverside FCD 60-018, 67:58) is a quirky collection—Monk and Gerry Mulligan's *I Mean You* instead of their 'Round Midnight? *San Francisco Holiday* instead of *Brilliant Corners*? *Nutty* (with Coltrane) instead of *Ruby My Dear*? *Clark Terry's Pea Eye*? You can't knock *Bernsha Swing*, *In*

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Walked Bud (with Johnny Griffin), or *Little Rootie Tootie* (Phil Woods' solo on the latter inspires regrets that he never recorded with a Monk small group). Well, the answer is obvious—buy all of Monk's original sessions as soon as Fantasy releases them (including alternate takes—and soon, please?).

Of the many recordings **Bill Evans** made for Riverside, Michel wisely limits his selection to performances *At The Village Vanguard* (Riverside FCD 60-107, 65:01). While I regret the omission of *Alice In Wonderland*, I can't really carp on the choices. This is certainly the most honest of the CDs, sound-wise; not attempting to clean up the live sound, but rather reuniting the music with its original ambience, placing you in the middle of the Vanguard, having to listen over the talk at the next table. A superb achievement, musically and sonically. Similarly, **Dave Brubeck's** quartet was recorded *In Concert* (Fantasy FCD 60-013, 65:29), and there's no loss of presence in the relatively primitive '53 recordings—including some over-enthusiastic fans. Paul Desmond's alto has even more sinew and muscle and dry wit than usual, and Brubeck gives a good accounting of himself. *The Artistry Of The Modern Jazz Quartet* (Prestige FCD 60-016) is likewise heard to good advantage via Michel's selection—*La Ronde* is altogether more forceful than we sometimes give the MJQ credit for, thanks in no small part to Kenny Clarke's ferocious drumming. Elsewhere there is an honest job of balancing the group's more baroque stylings with four meaty cuts where they back Sonny Rollins. The sound seems overly bright on the first few tracks, but improves steadily.

The advantage of CD is heard immediately on *The Essential Eric Dolphy* (Prestige FCD 60-022, 63:23), as Roy Haynes' drums explode out of the speakers on the opening *G.W.* Dolphy benefits too; there's more warmth to his alto, more breath to his flute, and more chilling transparency to his bass clarinet. I'd willingly sacrifice one of the two cuts with Oliver Nelson in favor of the heartfelt *Warm Canto* with Mal Waldron, and couldn't we have had one of the live cuts from the Five Spot? Still, the music substantiates the best description of Dolphy's playing I've ever read (from Hale Smith's liner notes): "He was playing rattlesnakes on a hotplate."

A pair of guitarists close out Fantasy's series. *The Artistry of Wes Montgomery* (Riverside FCD 60-019, 65:36) is a workmanlike selection which few will find fault with; the sound is solid but unspectacular. And *The Artistry Of Barney Kessel* (Contemporary FCD 60-021, 64:46) might be a surprise entry given the previous lineup, but Kessel played with a wider cross-section of "West Coast-style" jazzers than anyone excepting perhaps Shelly Manne, and his hip Christian riffs and bop leads sit well alongside offerings by Ben Webster, George Auld, the Lighthouse All-Stars, Art Pepper, et al.

Pepper's passionate alto hasn't been neglected on CD, thanks to Fantasy's importing of five Contemporary dates (including alternate takes!) from Japan. The earliest of these, **Art Pepper With Warne Marsh** (Contemporary VDJ 1577, 55:00), is also the least known, since only four of its 10 cuts have been previously released. Making attractive use of the

contrapuntal style of Marsh and Lee Konitz, the two work well together, Pepper sacrificing a bit of Lee's purity for intensity, inspiring Marsh to do likewise. The highlights are romps through *Avalon* and *Tickle Toe*, and Pepper's remarkable *What's New*. With the altoist's periods of incarceration, recordings were on a catch-as-catch-can basis, accounting for the following three sessions dating from 1960. *Gettin' Together* (Contemporary VDJ 1579 58:42) features the crisp yet casual rhythm section of Wynton Kelly, Paul Chambers, and Jimmy

Cobb, coaxing relaxed solos from Pepper, who nevertheless could bite, as on *Rhythm-A-Ning*. *Smack Up* (Contemporary VDJ 1580, 51:06), with its wry title, finds Pepper digging in a bit more—due perhaps to Frank Butler's gutsy drumming. Jack Sheldon tries hard to keep pace, and his most striking statements occur when he incorporates expressive sputters and snorts and squeezed-valve notes. *Intensity* (Contemporary VDJ 1581, 54:48) presents Pepper's alto tone with an almost clinical compulsion, and the naive optimism of his *I Can't*



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cd reviews

Believe That You're In Love With Me contrasts with the gritty realism of *Long Ago And Far Away*, where sheer speed negates any possibility of romance.

Which leaves us with the, yes, classic *Art Pepper + Eleven*. But here, miracle of miracles, we have a choice. Mobile Fidelity (MFCD 805, 41:10) has issued a version with superb sonics—adding an exciting brightness to Mel Lewis' drums, a depth to the baritone and trombone growls on *Groovin' High*, and more dynamic range throughout. This music contains some of Pepper's most optimistic, joyful playing, and Marty Paich's arrangements swing with a vengeance—all captured with sparkling sound. Admittedly, the Contemporary version (VDJ 1578, 54:45) while improving on the LP sonically, can't quite match Mobile Fidelity's flash. But they sweeten the pot by adding three alternate takes not heard previously. One of these, a second *Donna Lee*, is a nice bonus but no revelation. However, the two additional takes of *Walkin'* are performed not on alto sax, à la the accepted take we're familiar with, but on clarinet! The second take is especially juicy—possibly my (new) favorite Pepper clarinet solo on record. This is quite a discovery, and tips the scale in favor of the Contemporary—unless you're an audiophile fanatic.

Savoy's entry into the CD market couldn't exactly be considered an audiophile decision, considering the age of their first three releases.

Lester Young's *The Savoy Recordings* (Savoy ZD 70819, 44:58) contains attractive but less-than-transcendental Lester, in a variety of Basie-inspired big band and small group outings from 1944-49. **Dizzy Gillespie's** *Dee Gee Days* (Savoy ZD 70517, 73:02) chronicles the '51-52 sides Diz cut for his own label, explaining the concessions made toward popular success—the r&b and Eckstine-ish vocals, the pulling back from bop freneticisms to a more relaxed pace, the silliness of *School Days* and *Swing Low Sweet Cadillac*. Actually, it's a light and entertaining program, and sounds just fine.

Charlie Parker's *Bird/The Savoy Recordings/Master Takes* (Savoy ZD 70737, 71:26) are, of course, staples of the jazz canon, and on this CD they have received a sonic setting which befits their classic status. Digital remastering has brought up the level of the bass and drums—heretofore only a rumor on some of these sides—so we can more clearly follow Max Roach's contribution to Bird's rhythmic impetus. Parker's alto tone is revealed with stunning impact, making it easier than ever to discern the logic behind Bird's fantasy. And you can literally hear Miles' tonal control and confidence grow with each session. Of course, some noise remains from the original transfers, there are no liner notes at all, and five tunes (*I'll Always Love You Just The Same*, *Romance Without Finance*, *Buzzy*, *Sippin' At Bells*, and *Meandering*) were omitted to fit this wealth of music on a single CD (for the sake of continuity, wouldn't it have been better to omit the Tiny Grimes material completely and add the latter three cuts?). Nevertheless, if you have even the slightest interest in contemporary music—and if you don't, why are you reading this magazine?—you *must* hear this CD. This should be the cornerstone of any jazz CD collection. Oh Lord, give us the Dial masters in comparable sound next!

—art lange

1 WYNTON MARSALIS.

J Mood (from J Mood, Columbia). Marsalis, trumpet; Marcus Roberts, piano.

Stacy: I don't recognize the horn player; I liked his sound and the modal thing he went into. I enjoy melodic playing more—modal playing sometimes gets monotonous after a while, but it's nice. I thought it might be Woody Shaw. It sounded great to me, excellent—four stars.

Jimmy: I'd rate that very highly, and I thought of Woody Shaw. I haven't heard enough of Wynton Marsalis, but I know he plays note-perfect. I've heard other players that I thought played with a little more soul—I don't know if that's the right way to put it. A little more natural, unschooled. I thought the pianist might be Michel Petrucciani. Also maybe Ronnie Mathews, or Kirk Lightsey. Anyway, it was very tasty, I liked it.

2 HERBIE HANCOCK.

DRIFTIN' (From TAKIN' OFF, Blue Note). Hancock, piano; Dexter Gordon, tenor saxophone; Freddie Hubbard, trumpet; Billy Higgins, drums.

Jimmy: Is that Roy Haynes? I thought of George Coleman, the tenor player from New York; I thought of him, thought of [Hank] Mobley, and like Stacy said, Dexter, but then he got too involved for Dexter, for me, but he had the laidback sound. Could it be Junior Cook? I liked it, it sounded like a *band*, like either one of Blakey's new bands.

Stacy: I thought of Blakey too, the Messengers—I loved it, it was a real nice groove. The trumpet player had an excellent sound, sort of like Lee Morgan.

Jimmy: We looked at each other when it started, and both thought it was Lee.

3 LOUIS ARMSTRONG/EARL HINES. WEATHER BIRD

(from LOUIS ARMSTRONG & EARL HINES, Vol. 3, Columbia). Armstrong, trumpet; Hines, piano. Rec. 1928.

Stacy: That was great! In the last part I strongly thought of Louis. I really wish that sound and feeling were still here; I feel like I missed out on a whole bunch of stuff. The piano player, I don't know. Dad threw out a couple of suggestions... the style was great though. I'd go all the way, five stars.

Jimmy: I'd go five. That was Louis and Earl. That's when Earl was getting away from too much running the notes together and octave stuff. When I started buying his Decca Records it was like he said, he was trying to play more like a horn. Some of the solos he'd put down on those records when the band would stop, those octaves, boy—he'd make you stand up in your chair. I'd never heard anybody play the piano like that! I've loved everything I've ever heard Louis play.

JIMMY & STACY ROWLES

By Leonard Feather

Jimmy and Stacy Rowles constitute the only celebrated father-and-daughter team in jazz. Though they both work in other contexts, much of their activity during the past two years has found them co-leading small groups in the Los Angeles area, with occasional side trips to New York and the Northsea Festival.

Rowles *pere*, with piano credits that go back to the Slim & Slam group and to Lee & Lester Young's combo in 1940-1, got his first break (at Ben Webster's recommendation) when he joined Benny Goodman. He later moved on to Woody Herman, Bob Crosby, and countless small combos. He has accompanied almost all the most distinguished female jazz singers from Holiday and Fitzgerald to Peggy Lee and Carmen McRae.

Stacy Rowles once picked up a trumpet her father had played in the Army, later persuaded him to buy her a flugelhorn. She worked in Clark Terry's



SAVONARD SCHAFER

band and toured with Alive!, but is best known for her work with Ann Patterson's Maiden Voyage. With her dad as a sideman, she made her record debut on Concord Jazz in 1984, and guested on his 1986 LP for Contemporary.

This was the first Blindfold Test for both Rowleses. They were given no information about the records played.

4 DIZZY GILLESPIE. LOVE

FOR SALE (from ENDURING MAGIC, BlackHawk). Gillespie, trumpet; Dwiki Mitchell, piano; Willie Ruff, bass, french horn. Rec. 1970.

Stacy: Well it was definitely Dizzy, no doubt about it, but as far as the piano player and the bass player, I don't know. I thought it might be Major Holley on bass for a fleeting moment. Maybe in-between-to-late Dizzy. I think he was a little more precise in his notes earlier, as we all are! The longer you play, pretty soon the ideas are there but the notes aren't quite as precise. But his attitude and feel are great. Five stars.

Jimmy: I agree with her. I was just trying to pick out the piano player. His dexterity was very good; he had a nice touch, especially on his solos. I'd give it a very high rating, it was a good record.

5 HANK MOBLEY. STRAIGHT

NO FILTER (from STRAIGHT NO FILTER, Blue Note). Mobley, tenor saxophone, composer; McCoy Tyner, piano; Freddie Hubbard, trumpet.

Jimmy: At first I started thinking about Stan Getz, then I stopped. Then I started thinking about Freddie Hubbard, and I stopped. Then I started thinking about Liebert Lombardo, and I quit [laughs]! Then I thought of

Woody Shaw, Ronnie Mathews, the different pianists I heard in New York; I even thought of JoAnne Brackeen. I enjoyed the record anyway, they all played very well.

Stacy: I went from person to person and couldn't pick out any of the players. It was very good though. The saxophone player reminded me of Stan Getz. Four stars, anyway, it was great.

Jimmy: Yeah, four stars.

6 MILES DAVIS. PERFECT WAY

(from Tutu, Warner Bros.). Davis, trumpet; Marcus Miller, various instruments.

Jimmy: Well, once is enough for me. Some guy with a big band that's playing, what do you call it—fusion, synthesizers, it's not my bag at all. Full credit to everyone who was playing it. Very well played, just not my style at all.

Stacy: I liked it; it definitely reminded me of Miles. He's the only one who's doing that. It's not my favorite kind of music, not really the kind I'd want to get involved with. I'd call it funk or r&b rather than jazz, but it's selling jazz records and making people listen to jazz radio stations and I'm all for it. I love diversity and all kinds of music. It sounded good, had a nice feel. I'd probably give it three-and-a-half, four stars.

Jimmy: Yeah, I'm in there. It was very well done. db

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profile

DENNIS CHAMBERS

FORMIDABLE FUNK POWER HAS MADE THIS DYNAMIC DRUMMER A HOT COMMODITY.

by Bill Milkowski

John Scofield's band is tearing it up at the Bottom Line in New York City. They're taking it out full throttle, burning on the frantic funk groove of *The Nag*, a high-powered set-closer that features a bit of soloing from each member in the quartet. Bassist Gary Grainger flaunts his wicked slap technique, keyboardist Robert Aires gets off some sizzling synth lines, Scofield does his thing on the fretboard, and finally it's time to give the drummer some. A hush falls over the excitable crowd as the focus shifts to Dennis Chambers. The other band members leave the stage. The lights dim. A single spotlight falls on the lone figure behind the jet black set of Pearls. He begins with some double-time bass drum pedal thumping. No sticks yet, just the relentless bass pedal workout. He's taking his time, building anticipation.

Suddenly, like a powerful cat, he attacks the snare, throwing in crisp hi-hat phrases here and there between whacks. The combination of power and control is awesome.

He's well into his lengthy solo now. The crowd is stunned by this mighty man, the Mike Tyson of drummers. Vicious cymbal crashes, slick strokes, tricky fills, all executed with startling conviction—and that amazing double-time bass pedal action all the way through. The crowd erupts into a thunderous ovation. Just like they do wherever Dennis Chambers plays these days with the Scofield band.

The formidable funk power of this mighty drummer has also recently caught the eye of other notable bandleaders. Miles Davis called him. Joe Zawinul called him. But—for now—Dennis remains loyal to Scofield. At least through the fall tour of Japan. Then, who knows?

Saxist David Sanborn has also had the pleasure of playing on top of Chambers' muscular backbeats. Earlier this year they did six weeks in Europe together with guitarist Hiram Bullock, bassist Steve Logan, keyboardist Ricky Peterson, and percussionist Neil Clark. Dennis has also appeared in concert and on record with Special EFX. He's bound to be even more visible in the future, but he seems satisfied to be playing with his old Baltimore buddy Gary Grainger in Scofield's current edition.

"Gary's been a friend of mine for years. We grew up together in Baltimore, so we



ALDO MAURO

have a special thing together as a rhythm section. And playing in John's band is great because everybody gets a piece of the music. We all get to solo a bit, and as a drummer I get to play a little swing along with the funk, which I really like. Having played with George Clinton and Parliament/Funkadelic for all those years, I guess people have put the label on me as strictly a funk drummer. So they're totally amazed to see me do some swing feels and some country feels in John's band. And I like playing it all."

Chambers grew up in a musical environment. His mother, Audrey, was a background singer for Motown Records and later a featured vocalist with her own band. As Dennis recalls, "One day her band had a rehearsal at my grandmother's house, and I was so amazed just watching the drummer. I started picking up forks and spoons, banging on chairs and trying to imitate him. And that's how it all started with me."

He got his first set of drums at age four-and-a-half, and was already performing in nightclubs at the ripe old age of six. A heart murmur confined him to the hospital for periods on and off between birth and age seven, but he eventually grew out of it and began focusing on the drums with great intensity.

"I was always in the hospital," says Dennis. "I missed a lot of school because of that, and I couldn't go outside and play with all the other kids, so I'd spend my days up on the third floor of our house, practicing the drums. That was really all the exercise I could handle at the time. Then as I grew out of that condition I began playing in bands. I became the house drummer at a club in town where some big name artists came through. Guys like Eddie Kendricks, David Ruff, The Spinners—I played behind them all through junior high school. I even got an offer to go out on the road with James Brown when I was still in elementary school, but I couldn't do it because of school."

Basically self-taught, Chambers gained inspiration from listening to records of great jazz drummers. "Tony Williams with Miles

Davis, Elvin Jones with John Coltrane, Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers—I'd get their records and try to learn from that. I never did study any drumming books. A book is not gonna show you how to feel, but those records did."

He mentions Billy Cobham, Bernard Purdie, and Melvin Parker (drummer with James Brown) as other influences. But one player in particular seems to have made a lasting impact on Dennis—the Meters' funky drummer, Joseph "Zig" Modeliste. You can hear some of Zig—those cool funk phrases, unpredictable hesitations on the snare, nasty hi-hat statements that are Zig's calling card—in Dennis' playing with the Funkadelics, Sanborn, Special EFX, and Scofield. Like Modeliste, Chambers is an exquisite funk craftsman.

His association with the Clinton gang began in 1978. For eight years and a whole bunch of albums (beginning with *Uncle Jam Wants You* to 1985's *Computer Games* and including side projects with various members of Clinton's extended family—The Brides Of Funkenstein, Bootsy's Rubber Band, et al) Chambers laid down thick fat-back funk rhythms to die for. Another old Baltimore buddy, bassist Rodney "Ski" Cur-



tis, got Dennis into the band and served as a kind of big brother to the drummer in the early years of the Funkadelic experience.

"I was just 18 years old, fresh out of high school," Dennis recalls. "I had been picking up a few gigs here and there, then suddenly I'm playing in Madison Square Garden. That can do a lot of negative things to your head if you're not prepared for it. But Ski was there to keep my head on straight."

Chambers toured relentlessly in the early

years, but the grind gradually wore down around 1981. "When I first joined P-Funk, I'd go out for like six months, then go home for a month, then go right back out for another five months. It was tough, but all that stopped around '81. We'd go out and do one tour a year, which might be only three or four months. So that got me into the habit of not working as much. But now, playing with John and David and sometimes with Special EFX, it can drive me crazy. My wife just had a little girl, and I haven't had that much time to spend with her yet, which is bad."

Maybe he'll watch his daughter grow up a bit more before jumping back into the fire with Miles or Weather Update. The offers keep pouring in. The man is in demand. And he hints, with a sly grin, that something big is on the horizon. But he's not letting on just yet.

Perhaps, like another homebody from Baltimore (drummer Chester Thompson, who currently plays with the mega-bucks band Genesis), Dennis has his eyes on a bigger prize. But for the moment, he seems happy enough tearing it up with the John Scofield Band. Catch them in concert when you can—and stand back. The man is ferocious when he bears down. **db**

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PAUL SIMON RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL/ NEW YORK

Paul Simon's traveling musical extravaganza, the Graceland Tour, hit New York's Art Deco palace, Radio City Music Hall, boasting Hugh Masakela, Miriam Makeba, and Ladysmith Black Mambazo as additional names on the marquee. The show, as Simon announced onstage in a carefully dichotomized description, was intended to be "a presentation of South African music and the *Graceland* album."

It succeeded on both counts. Ironically, the aesthetic division between South African forms and his hybrid that Simon is so rightly keen on maintaining was undercut during the course of the performance in several, some of them deliberate, ways.

From the moment the rich blue computer-driven haze suffused the cavernous Music Hall stage, everybody on the bill was out front. Ladysmith danced out to lead the chorale, Masakela worked with the two saxes to make a section, Makeba sang with the three backup female vocalists, and Simon himself strummed a black Everly Brothers-style acoustic Gibson. For the remainder of the two-and-a-half-hour show, the musicians—two guitars, bass, keyboards, two congas, traps, two saxes, trumpet/flugelhorn, and vocalists, many of them from the *Graceland* LP—came and went, forming into different configurations to back different leaders. No opening acts and headliners here; more along the lines of a revue or, for that matter, an African gig where the show spins on seamlessly for hours while various members of the cast appear and leave as their services are needed—the evening was structured to present non-stop, interwoven performances by the various marquee sharers. The result was a fascinating and buoyant evening that journeyed across a vast musical terrain: Ladysmith's churchy heart-stopping harmonies, vocal effects, prancing and dancing; Makeba's unique blend of indigenous folk tunes and techniques (her famous Xhosa clicking was much in evidence) and Western pop; Masakela's own brightly burnished mix of African and Western jazz-pop; and, of course, Simon's fusion of Tin Pan Alley and mbaqanga.

Introduced by Simon as exiles from their native land because of their longterm outspoken opposition to apartheid, both Masakela and Makeba took the opportunity to reiterate that opposition. Masakela, for example, introduced a bluesy vamp called *Stimela* with a long recitative that recounted the harrowing lives of blacks forced to work the South African mines, beginning with a list of places they came from and then telling of the horrors that grind them down in the



DONNA PAUL

filthy, funky barracks which, shorn of family and neighbors, they are forced to call home. Makeba ("She's been in exile 27 years," Simon pointed out) opened with Masakela's *Soweto Blues*, which memorializes the riots of June 16, 1967 when, as she put it, "The children said no to apartheid." Those children—their numbers have nearly hit 1,500 now—still languish in South African jails.

But if there were political points to be made, there was also a great deal of entertainment to be had. The band was honed and tight, seguing from one musical style to another without either a slip or a loss of energy, and the sound was excellent, allowing the vocal riches to pour out over the several thousand seats like molten gold. Too bad Radio City doesn't have a dance floor. By the time of the encores—Simon's *The Boxer*, *Amazing Grace*, and the African National Anthem, with all hands onstage—the audience, which had been clapping along with its faves all night, rose to a huge ovation that grew when Makeba announced, "We here onstage know that someday we will have the honor to invite Paul Simon to perform with us in a free South Africa." —gene santoro

GIL EVANS ORCHESTRA ZELLERBACH AUDITORIUM/ BERKELEY

There's already a big band called the Thundering Herd, but this runaway pack of highly trained musical cattle assembled by Gil Evans could roar with anybody. They proved that here, but could have proven a lot more if it weren't for the poor sound in the hall. Guitarist Hiram Bullock was too loud all night; on the other end of the dynamic spectrum, Shunzo Ohno had one flugelhorn solo completely lost.

Tenor player George Adams practically blew his eyeballs out for five minutes, as altoist Chris Hunter sat staring in disgust at Adams' dead mic.

Even with the sound problems, it was fascinating to see how this world-famous garage jazz band operates. Evans arranges with cushions of air built in, so that players in each of the sections (trumpet, sax, 'bone) can imagine parts during songs, lean over and play the line for fellow section members—and three-part figures are born. One guy with a good idea can influence the parts the band plays on the spot.

At the end of written arrangements, songs dissolve into random shouts from within the orchestra, synthesists Peter Levin and Gil Goldstein trading space choruses, the talented John Clark fluttering out unusual sounds from his french horn and effects units. Then Gil brings it back to life with a count, or by playing a pattern on the electric piano. Dressed in moccasins, a beaded Indian headband, and loose-fitting white clothes, the 75-year-old Evans would occasionally stand up and hold his palms out to quiet the raging orchestra, sit back down shushing his cohorts all the way, but shortly after his trousers hit the bench they were back up to full volume again. Evans' piano playing was seldom heard when the rest of the band was blowing.

Drummer Danny Gottlieb showed considerable sensitivity over the variations in tempo, dynamics, and feel the band goes through. Between solos he let things rest, then built back up again to wailing climaxes. Bassist Victor Bailey's first gig with the band saw him keep a close eye on Bullock for cues, and still play with his customary bounce and enthusiasm.

Evans' Jimi Hendrix arrangements (parts of *Up From The Skies* and *Stone Free*) were received very well, partially I fear, because of Bullock shamelessly wiggling his butt and laying on the stage to finish a blazing and blaring blues solo. The flute arrangements brought the sound down to a manageable level, where Lew Soloff labored over his trumpet solo, working hard but pausing between blasts to let things sink in—and the reward was much greater. The band plays Mingus with a respectful disrespect. Chris Hunter's alto cried on *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*, and they closed with *Orange Was The Color Of Her Dress*.

After the last wave of sound bounced off the back wall at Zellerbach, Evans returned a pencil to Shunzo Ohno, just as if they were back at their weekly Sweet Basil gig, running down a chart for the 87th time and getting a brand new idea about it. But none of the musicians thought about playing an encore, and for some reason the enthusiastic Berkeley audience didn't push the issue much. The musicians quickly packed up their horns and left the stage.

—robin tolleson



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LEARNING TO LISTEN

by Eric Kloss

Eric Kloss is a much-respected alto saxophonist, flutist, composer, and clinician based in Pittsburgh. He performs frequently with his vocalist wife, Candee, and his album *Sharing* (Omnisound 1044) received a five-star review in these pages in 1983. He can be contacted regarding private instruction in the fundamentals of Music Theory & Improvisation by writing him at 1346 Merryfield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15204, or phoning (412) 922-9730.

Learning to listen is learning to hear with awareness. Awareness distinguishes listening from *merely* hearing.

For example, if I am typing, I am only vaguely conscious of the sound of the bell that tells me to go to the next line. I have performed this act for many years, and only now, as I *listen* to the sound of the bell, do I realize that it is a sounded concert B^b. The sound takes on a new dimension at this point.

This article hopes to cultivate awareness of the musical environment through isolating basic musical elements and exploring them in an ensemble context.

My first Pro Session, published in January '87, dealt with the concept of "Playercise"—a method through which individual practice can be enlivened. Now we turn to "communal practice"—that is, practicing together.

Before proceeding, I would like to present to you a principle that is the basis of any creative group interaction. This is the concept of "call-and-response." It is as simple as a greeting: Call, "Hi Jim!" Response, "Hi Dave!" This form of communication has its roots deeply embedded in the soil of our culture and music. Exploration of any of the following "Playercises" for ensemble almost of necessity requires some form of call-and-response.

Let us now turn to a brief discussion of some basic musical elements to see in what practical ways awareness of these can be heightened.

Rhythm: Rhythm is probably the most basic element of music. It usually implies pulse. It can be regular, as in walking or deep breathing, or it can be irregular, as in the sound that most people make while typing. Pulse Exercise: Have the ensemble leader establish a pulse. (By tapping, clapping, or snapping the fingers.) Have everyone say the number "one" in time with this pulse, accenting freely. Then divide the group into two sections: One saying "one," and the other half saying "and," placing their accents either before or after the original pulse. This introduces the concepts of delayed and anticipated syncopation. See examples 1, 2, and 3.

Meter: Meter emerges from pulse. It merely divides pulse into even numerical units. Meter makes phrasing possible. Metric phrasing exercise: Traditional jazz accentuation is on the second and fourth beat of a measure or measures of 4/4 time. Practice this feel by chanting the two-bar phrase in example 4. Most rock or funk music is felt by accenting the first and third beats of a measure or measures of 4/4 time, as in example 4A. Remember that the eighth notes in the rock example are evenly spaced.

Melody: Melody implies a sequential arrangement of tones of complementary pitches and durations. It can be simple and heartfelt, like humming. Whistling and singing are a wonderful part of most lives. My wife, Candee, a vocalist and composer, has this to say on the subject: "Melody ties all other parts of a song together. It must be strong. You can put different chords to the same melody, adding effects and colorations to give it some spice. You can also vary the tempo and the feel of the melody within the song to create variety. Through all these different changes, it remains itself—the melody." Exercise: Practice the phrases of a simple melody in pairs. Exchange the one-bar phrases of *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*.

Harmony: Harmony is usually the most pre-determined element in a composition. Some stunning exceptions to this rule are found in the Miles Davis Quintet of the mid-'60s. Herbie Hancock and Ron Carter blend in extrasensory understanding in which root and chordal alterations occur as a matter of course. The Keith Jarrett band of the mid-'70s shows the same type of rapport in the pianist's close connection with bassist Charlie Haden.

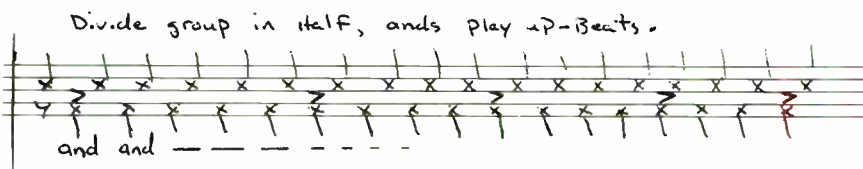
We can now put the basic elements that we have discussed in this way: Use a 12-bar blues in B^b. Begin by having the bassist and drummer play time together until they are tight. Bring in any chordal instrument to supply the harmonic structure. Have the horns play in pairs exchanging the call-and-response. (See example 5.)

Here's hoping that these "Playercises for Ensembles" will help to introduce the elements of spontaneity and communication into your group. Professional bandleaders as well as middle school, high school, and college teachers may find this approach useful in helping their players to learn to listen.

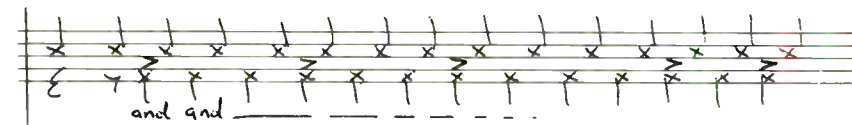
EXAMPLE 1: PULSE EXERCISE



EXAMPLE 2: ARTICULATED SYNCOPATION



EXAMPLE 3: DELAYED SYNCOPATION



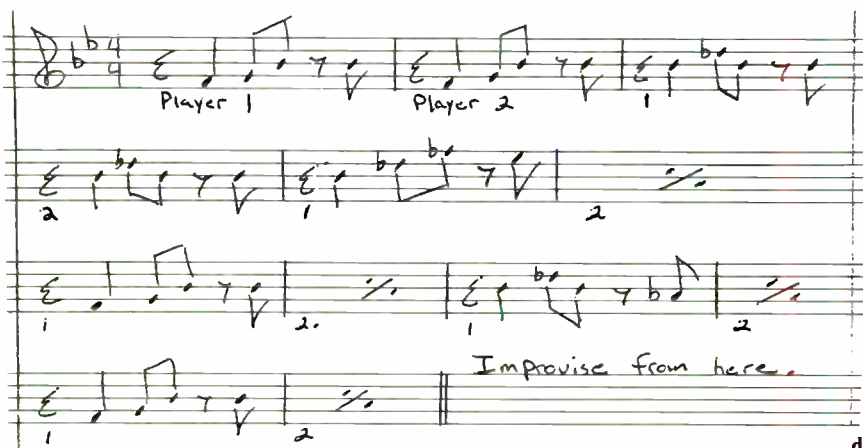
EXAMPLE 4: METRIC EXERCISE, JAZZ FEEL



EXAMPLE 4A: METRIC EXERCISE, ROCK FEEL



EXAMPLE 5: CALL-AND-RESPONSE BLUES PATTERN



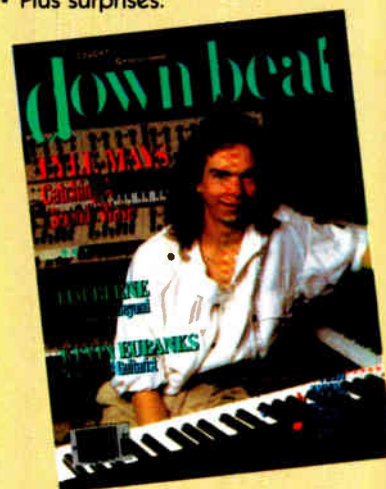
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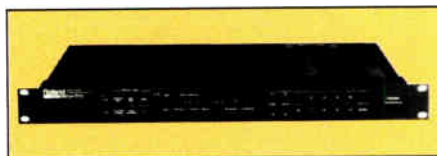
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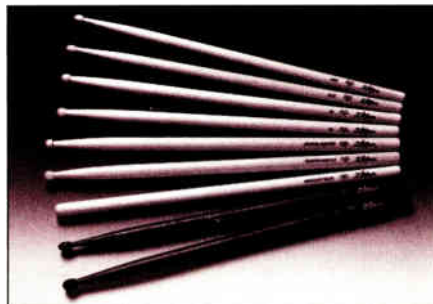
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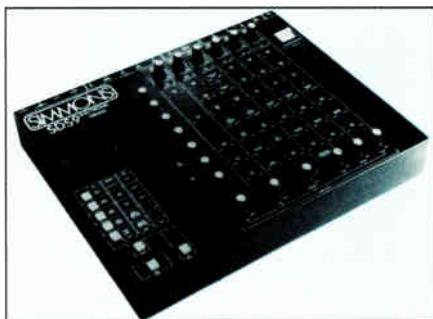
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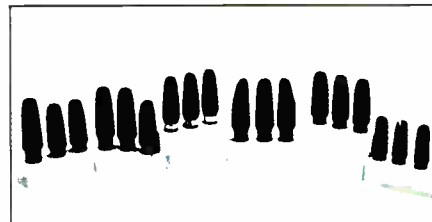
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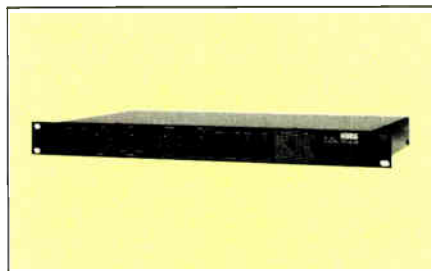
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vessels, but respiration as well—hiccup and cough and sneeze and speech and song—and even the silent spasms of digestion, peristalsis, and the brain's light show, sweet clangor of cells, the intricate workings of the central nervous system itself. The body is an extended drum solo, and vice versa.

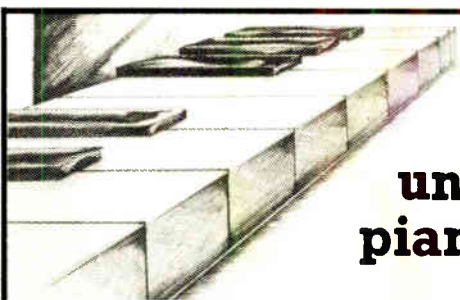
Percussion, like dancing (its sister art), celebrates externally what we are internally: a system of buildup and breakdown, of sudden starts and stops, of asides and layovers, surprise and the lack of it, deliberations, detours, delays, the jag, jolt, and jitter of life, human hesitation and animal shove, all the intricacies, the tributaries, of our very blood and breath being extolled in the essential act of *drumming*: that recurrence that makes us "tick," the variety and divergence that makes us interesting.

It looks so effortless from where I sit, just as the smooth silent work of the body's interior does, taken for granted. That's the secret of top performers, of course—the hands of Buddy Rich a blur of *control*. After, when the display of cool but blazing pyrotechnics is over, he smirks. He's still Traps, the Boy Wonder, and he knows it—a kid accustomed to winning drum contests. When the steady applause starts he slides out from behind all those drums and comes down to chat with the standing-ovation crowd. "Why don't you sit down?," he says. "I'm tired."

We went home to a house without drums. I sold mine back in 1963, to go to graduate school. For once, I truly missed them. But could I do with a full set of Slingerland drums what Rich did at 67? No way.

I had other heroes, too, when I owned those drums. Rich was not as legendary as Krupa, as large as Sid Catlett, subtle as Jo Jones, or steady as Cozy Cole. He was not as adventuresome as Louie Bellson (who had the audacity to first use two bass drums), forceful as Stan Levey (I once sat directly in front of him at a Kenton concert and never heard a note the rest of the band played), interesting as Max Roach, essential as Chico Hamilton, surprising as Art Blakey, versatile as Shelly Manne. Perhaps. Yet if music is vibration embodied, and drumming—music without notes—its most animate, visible form, the gymnastics of sound, the structure of our bodies at work, it was hard to top Buddy Rich for sheer kinetic release and excitement: the master of means, of speed, of the full arsenal of percussive devices.

One of my jazz encyclopedias called him a "controversial figure," and went on to state that while some people rate him as the greatest drummer of all time, others found him intensive and flashy. The authors of the book admit that "technically, he is phenomenal; fast, accurate, and endlessly driving." I agree. And to me, he'll always remain a hero. db



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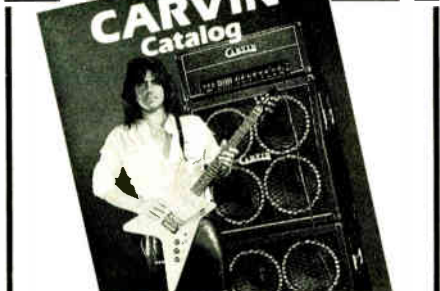
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REMEMBERING BUDDY

by William Minor

He was one of my heroes: small and lippy and snappy, full of percussive savvy I might have aspired to if—of medium height, reticent to the point of shame, and just tepidly talented—I'd only known how. However, the drums were within my reach.

If you hailed from Detroit, as I did in the early '50s, one of the first presents you were likely to receive in your Christmas stocking was a toy car, or, in the case of the happy few, the real thing. The auto was king, but I was a heretic. I didn't want a car. I wanted, from the first time I saw them in the window of Grinnel Brothers Music Store, a full set of Slingerland drums. And I wanted to play them as well as my hero, Buddy Rich, whose life-size cardboard mockup stood beside those marine-pearl wonders.

Now, 34 years have gone by, yet there they are—set up before me at The Club, a walkup night spot in downtown Monterey, one more atune to disco music perhaps (the interior resembles a set for *Dance Fever*), but housing, for this evening at least, Buddy Rich. And his drums, which are just as I remember them: 14×22-inch bass, floor tom, mounted tom, Rocket snare stand, five-and-a-half × 14-inch snare, Dynamo hi-hat. It's a marine-pearl flashback for me, a genuine time warp, right down to the tea saucer-sized cymbal mounted on the bass. And how about Rich, my hero, the Man himself—will he be the same?

Outside, waiting in line, I overheard talk about the 1951 Metronome All-Stars, of music that's "4/4 straightahead." I watched aging drummers, all fans of Rich, check each other out.

"Hey, man, is that . . . wow, all that gray hair . . . say, all the old drummers are here."

"You know, Blah-blah at work doesn't even know who Buddy Rich is."

"She should—she was an R.N. during the war."

Which war? I wonder. But the talk about "squares" starts up ("Hey, Blah-blah's a square; how could she dig Rich?"), and I know it's the war I was too young for, the one with the affix *II*. How about my hero—just how old is he? I've done my homework. Bernard "Buddy" Rich was born in Brooklyn in 1918, and was on the stage 18 months later, in his parents' vaudeville act. At age six he toured Australia, billed as "Traps, the Boy Wonder." Now, standing in line outside The Club, I spot a member of his band, a young man just about the age I was when I bought my drums. He's toting a trombone case that



RON HOWARD

says, "For This I Went to College?"

Jazz shows never start on time. They're not supposed to. It's part of the Cool, the snobbery, that separates us from the squares. The crowd gets impatient of course, but you can't show it. And when the band comes on, the Master mounts those marine-pearl drums the way a preacher climbs into his pulpit. For me, it's time warp time again. Those drums are way out front, in the spotlight. The band is behind, and off to one side: five saxes, four trumpets, three trombones, keyboards, and bass. It's a big band that will accompany the man in the pink sweater, white shirt with hip curled collars, one who only takes time out to fine-tune, key tighten those drums—and then it's 4/4 straightahead nearly all the way, an hour's worth and just as I remember him—from Jazz at the Philharmonic days, those exciting, seemingly endless drum duels with Gene Krupa—generous and hard-driving and impossibly fast still, doing it his way, the oriental squint of the eyes, puckered lips, the face of Mickey Rooney, Sinatra, and your favorite aunt combined—all lights on The Man, a steady sassy rocking beat (*uh-huh uh-huh uh-huh uh-huh*), the horn ensemble and tenor solo locked to it, and Rich, after, breathing hard, like a distance runner, towling his face, huffing, fast hyper fingers scratching his chin. Just as I remember him . . .

"We love you," someone calls out after this first number.

"What do you say?" Rich responds. "Well, how are you?"

"Great!"

"Wish I could say that."

He seems more comfortable with those marine-pearl drums than with speech, so he's back to work again: three flute beginning, stuttering soprano sax solo, Rich gazing off into the drummer's "interior" space, a place he has been investigating for years, a sharp, steady, precise rhythm behind, within, around the band. They are mostly a young bunch—the trumpet section rising in age and size it seems, the midget kid on the left end looking about 14—dressed in dark blue jackets, standard stripped crimson ties. And it's a good freewheeling program, a good band built around a great drummer, as if Uncle Buddy has invited some talented nephews in for a night around the old drums, and gives them a chance to play. A pulsing *Love For Sale*, solid meditative tenor enclosed. Rich flails, precisely, nimble, arms crossing cymbal to cymbal, his left hand executing an infinite number of chores most drummers wish their right could do. There's a short flurry at the end, and he's back into the scratching again, a hyperactive child, then picks up wire brushes. "Suffer, suffer," he says, falling in, tastefully, with excellent keyboard work on *Days Of Wine And Roses*.

Drum solos. Some drummers don't like them. I knew one who said he didn't trust anyone who was even willing to trade fours. He didn't like Rich, who's never exactly established a reputation as a subsidiary, who never merely underlines the band (it's called "shading"), merely coaxing and nudging the way a fine drummer like Dave Tough could. Yet there is an athletic rightness to jazz, a physiology, a gymnastics of sound. You can see it in the jowled exertions of some trumpeters and stevedore labors on stand-up bass, even at times in the thinking fingers of pianists. And nowhere is it more apparent than in a drum solo.

It's obvious in volcanic disruptions that involve nearly every human appendage and piece of hardware the drummer owns, but you can find it also in the small effects performed with the fine fretfulness of high-strung dogs, the speed of the hands, concentration on the face, cool crisp enclosure of hi-hat, sudden but subdued "pop" and "plop" and "poot" on bass drum, expert left hand stutter on snare, the religious observance—the insistence—of ride cymbals; not to mention the truly showy stuff: crossed arms and elegant rim shots, tock smack of stick on stick or the click executed with the metal loop of wire brushes—all the tricks of musical narcissism. And Traps, the Boy Wonder, is still a master, no matter what age.

It's a celebration of what one poet has called "the multitudinous unity of the organism," the body itself. It's a commemoration of energy and the miracle of metabolism, of ultimate coordination—not just the heart, that monotonous pump with its network of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 59

auditions

down beat **SPOTLIGHTS YOUNG MUSICIANS DESERVING WIDER RECOGNITION**



TIM OWENS, 18-year-old vocalist, received a \$2,500 scholarship to the Berklee College of Music in Boston and was named a vocal All-Star at the first annual Musicfest U.S.A. competition. He is also part of the vocal jazz choir from Arts Magnet High School in Dallas, which earned a silver award at the same competition. Owens has also received an outstanding musicianship award from the National Association of Jazz Educators, a first-place performance in the NAACP's Act-So Competition, an outstanding performance from the North Texas Lawyers' Wives Inc., and a Level 1 Music Award from the Arts Recognition and Talent Search.

Besides performing with the Arts Magnet Lab Singers, Owens sings in the school's show choir, advanced choir, and opera workshop; he is also lead vocalist in Playback, a group that performs at Dallas-area nightclubs. Owens plans to major in Music and Psychology in college, after which he hopes to sing professionally. He enjoys "singing classical jazz with a pop/gospel influence," and his influences include Bobby McFerrin, Al Jarreau, David Sanborn, Stevie Wonder, and Anita Baker.



SCOT BRADLEY, 18-year-old trumpeter from Portage, Indiana, was recently named a member of the McDonald's All-American High School Band and is currently a member of the All-American Jazz Band, directed by Robert Curnow, with which he plays lead trumpet. He has been principal

trumpet with the Indiana All-State Honors Band and the All-State Jazz Band the past two years, and has won outstanding soloist awards from several jazz festivals in the northwest Indiana region, including the Elmhurst Jazz Festival and the Bloomington Jazz Festival this year.

Bradley has attended Jamey Aebersold's Jazz Workshops the past four years, where he has studied with Bobby Watson, Tom Harrell, Bobby Shew, David Baker, John McNeil, and Aebersold; he is currently studying with professionals in the Chicago area. Bradley also plays principal trumpet for his high school band, jazz band, and orchestra, and plays in his own combo throughout the Chicago area. His influences include Tom Harrell, Miles Davis, Freddie Hubbard, Dizzy Gillespie, Lee Morgan, Kenny Dorham, and Clifford Brown.



DARIN SCOTT, 24, started playing guitar seven years ago in his hometown of Saginaw, Michigan, studying with Jack Bruske and Ron Lopez, and taking music classes at Saginaw Valley State College and playing with its big band at the 1981 Detroit-Montreux Jazz Festival. Scott graduated from the Guitar Institute of Technology in Hollywood, California, last September. Among his many instructors there were Larry Carlton, Steve Morse, Allan Holdsworth, Joe Pass, Scott Henderson, Jeff Berlin, Eric Johnson, and Tommy Tedesco; he also performed with Eddie Van Halen, Jeff Beck, and others at the school, and he did additional studies with studio guitarist Tim Pierce.

The February issue of the Michigan entertainment magazine *The Review Magazine* named Scott as the region's best rock and funk/r&b/blues guitarist as well as its number two jazz guitarist. Scott is currently teaching privately and doing local recording sessions and occasional club work. He'd eventually like to move back to L.A. as a studio guitarist.



JOHN MEDESKI, 21-year-old pianist, had many years of classical training before choosing jazz as a career. Recently graduated from the New England Conservatory in Boston, Medeski has performed with the Hollyday Brothers for the past four years, including appearances at the Montreal Jazz Festival and at the Blue Note in New York City, and on Jazzbeat Records. Medeski also recently completed a six-month gig with the Boston blues singer Jellybelly.

Medeski's future projects include recording his first album as leader on Jazzbeat Records and staying busy on the Boston club scene. While in high school, the Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, native was a member of the McDonald's All-American Jazz Band and an ARTS awardee of the National Foundation for Advancement of Arts in 1982. Medeski cites McCoy Tyner, Bud Powell, and Bill Evans as his major influences.



CARL MENK, 23-year-old guitarist from Mankato, Minnesota, began his music studies on organ at age six with an instructor from Vassar College. He became interested in guitar at 11, and during high school played percussion and double bass for the concert band and wind ensembles. In 1981, he was awarded his school's Louis Armstrong Jazz Award; the previous summer he took part in an extensive tour of the southern United States and South America with an ensemble from San Bernardino, California.

Menk's first year of college was spent studying Jazz Guitar Performance and Music

Education at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh; he has since transferred to Mankato State, where he performs with the school's jazz ensemble and directs, arranges, and plays guitar with the Ellis Street Singers, a vocal jazz group, while working toward a double major in Music Merchandising and Classical Guitar Performance. Menk has been the recipient of a NAJE outstanding musician award, and he performs with a Top 40-cover group called Silver Blue. His influences include Pat Metheny, Allan Holdsworth, Larry Carlton, Phil Keaggy, Chopin, and Billy Barber.



TOM GULLION, who turns 22 this month, performs on the most recent album by David Baker's 21st Century Bebop Band, featuring original compositions by Baker and reharmonized arrangements of jazz classics. Gullion was a student of Baker's at Indiana University, from which he recently graduated with a degree in Music; his other teachers there included Harry Miedema, Eugene Rousseau, and Larry Kirkman. Last year, Gullion performed with the I.U. Jazz Ensemble at New York City's Symphony Space in a concert that featured Slide Hampton.

A Kokomo native, Gullion also free-lances around his home state, having performed with Jack McDuff, the Supremes, the Temptations, the Nelson Riddle Orchestra, Lou Rawls, and the Lettermen, as well as several Top 40, funk, and blues bands in the Bloomington, Indiana area. Gullion first began playing saxophone in 1976, adding clarinet, flute, and piano to his repertoire soon thereafter. His major influences include John Coltrane, Michael Brecker, and Joe Henderson.

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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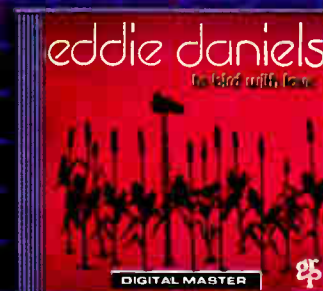
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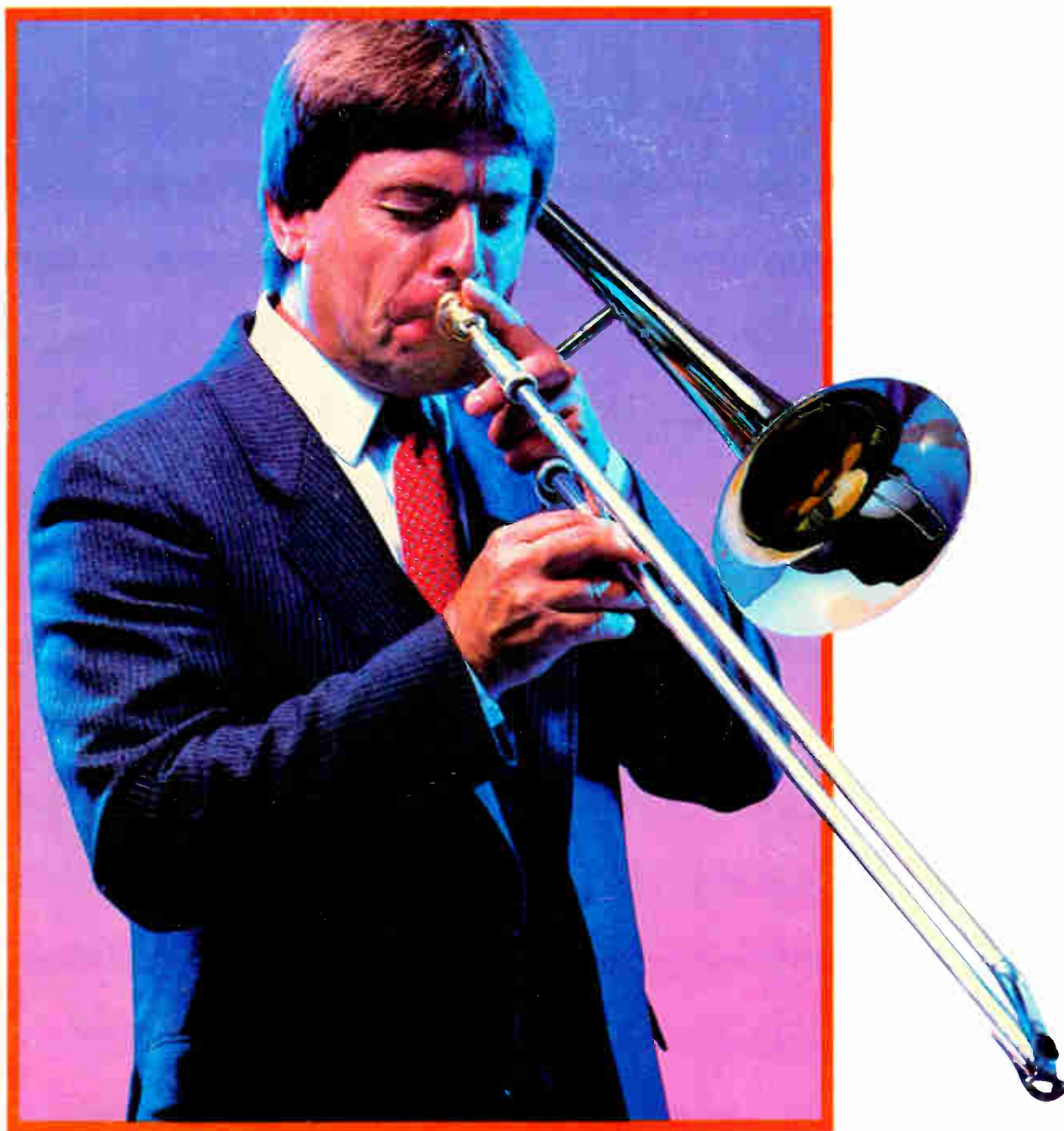
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