

MUSICIAN

PLAYER & LISTENER

Brian
Eno
Exclusive

No. 21 November, 1979 \$1.25

Jamaican Reggae Sunsplash
Verlaine, Weather Report, Talking Heads and Bears
Horace Tapscott and L.A. Jazz



BRIAN ENO



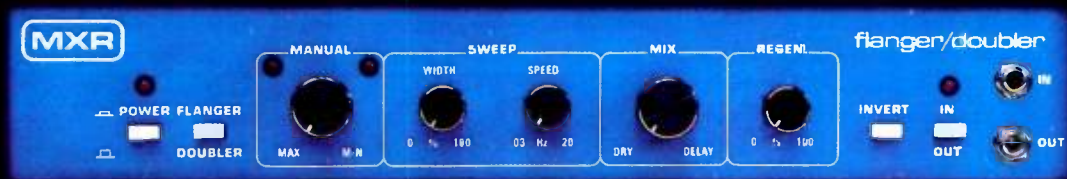
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WORLD

PLAYER & LISTENER

NO. 21, NOVEMBER, 1979

Jamaica Reggae is an incredibly alive and deeply felt music comprising many individual styles. Cris Cioe visits the five day Sunsplash festival in Jamaica and reports on rastas and reggae from whence they come.



The Bear is soulful, friendly and cool, but the world knows him not. You think it's easy to play with a snout for an embouchure? Rafi Zabor writes from Turkey.



Brian Eno is a perplexing figure in the rock music scene. He's probably had more influence on modern rock than any one person, yet doesn't consider himself a musician, never tours and barely sells any records. Lester Bangs explains the enigmas.



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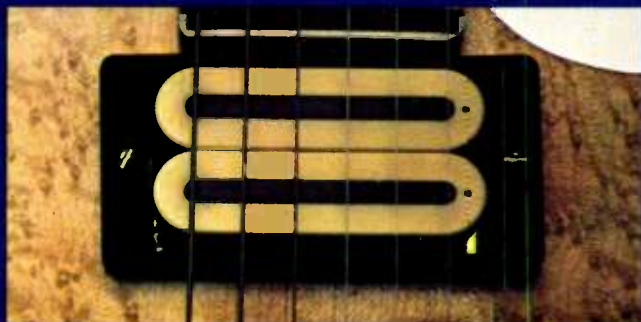
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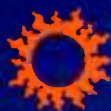


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Publishers Letter

This month's cover of Brian Eno in some way marks the beginning of *Musician's* coverage of the Eighties. We feel that Eno is particularly appropriate not just because of all that he's done, directly or as a producer, but more because of the manner in which he works and the way that work affects us. Even with the more obvious ambient music aside, elements of Eno's music, and even the people he produces, have their greatest impact on the unconscious, subliminal side of our senses. It calls up images we can't quite grasp, feelings just beyond our reach, yet somehow familiar. What is most fascinating is that when Eno describes how he creates his music, the process revealed is one seemingly full of chance and blind gropings, especially when held up against the rigid methods of most "serious" musicians. Yet this is precisely the point — it seems that to find these places one must approach them obliquely, much like night vision where a quick sidelong glance reveals far more than any direct stare. Eno is composing for others' unconscious through the use of his own. It's a fascinating approach and the results, when they succeed, take us to another level of listening, from the inside out, so to speak. It is on this level that we at *Musician* feel the truly powerful music of the Eighties will be created. The same subliminal crafting could be applied to jazz's future in some ways, though jazz has always been in touch with more unconscious levels because of its improvisatory nature, but then that's a whole 'nother story.

Next month these stories of the future will be continued with the decade-end Special Issue. Included will be a unique survey in which working and recording musicians from Ornette Coleman through Mark Knopfler will rate which groups and artists they feel will be the most important and influential in the decade ahead. Also a complete retrospective of rock and jazz in the Seventies, plus a new column exclusive written by Robert Fripp in which he examines the future of the record business, progressive music and a few surprises. This Special Issue will be out in mid-December, so watch for it.

Letters

RASTA REPLIES

Apparently Okino made reference to himself as well when he described the Rastas as "far-out".

The somewhat accurate article is typical of the quick-fried hamburger (topped with American processed cheese) way of thinking. Referring to Caribbean Holy Herb as "dope", summing that Blacks don't dig Reggae because it is reminiscent of Africa and Slavery and boasting American middle class whites as the "rabid reggae faithful" is a bit far-out to lunch in my opinion.

Moreover, by rolling another number, spinning another reggae tune and shouting "Jah Rastafari" may mean you are hooked, but it doesn't mean that you are saved or accepted in the Rasta viewpoint.

"Woe to the downpressor, they eat of bread of sorrow."

Jaruba
Oakland, CA

DIGITAL DELIGHTS

Next time you see Donald Fagen, tell him he can finger my keyboards anytime! Loree Arnold
Houston, Texas

We were afraid we'd get letters like this if we started covering rock. Ed.

THAT'S THE BLUES

I don't know where these "Acknowledged" Writers/Reviewers are dug up, but Jon Parelles give Steely Dan credit for the lyrics "there ain't nothing in Chicago for a monkey woman to do". This inspired line was ripped off admirably by Steely Dan and presented to an audience that is either too young or too damn stupid to know that the exact line appears in "Going to Chicago Blues" (sometimes titled "Chicago Blues") recorded by Count Basie in the "forties" and sung magnificently by Joe Williams.

Jesse H Kirkland Jr.
Washington, D.C.

THE LOWER THE BETTER

How can Roy Trakin possibly think that Devo's new album is better than Nick Lowe's *Labour of Lust*? Lowe's awareness of musical history, sense of humor, and creativity cuts those Akron androids any day. I'm forced to admit that I did enjoy watching Trakin build his arguments and weave his theories, even if I didn't agree with his conclusions.

Scott Yaroslav
London, Ontario

ANOTHER DAN FAN

Congratulations to Jon Parelles for managing to pry open Steely Dan a bit.

They fought a good fight, but I think the depth of Parelles' musical knowledge must have won them over in the end. I'm also glad to see they have a sense of humor under all that world-weary cynicism.

Tony DiLorenzo
Ocean City, New Jersey

WE'RE NOT GLAMOROUS?

Your magazine is a great addition to the music world, I like the thought in it. *Rolling Stone's* music section is starting to get like *Billboard* and those other kiddy-rock magazines are mostly glamor and bullshit. Nobody is covering both rock and jazz in such an intelligent and entertaining manner.

Arthur Symons
New York City, N.Y.

BLOOD'S ON THE TRACK

As a guitarist myself, I was intrigued and delighted by Chip Stern's article on Blood Ulmer. Finally someone seems to be making a fusion music that's more than the sum of its parts. Deborah Feingold's amazing photo now graces the inside of my guitar case as a reminder. I was also glad to see somebody give Mark Knopfler and Dire Straits the credit they're due, especially now that it's trendy in some quarters to underrate them. Keep up the good work.

Randy Alexander
Watertown, Massachusetts

LET US KNOW . . .

I've been a faithful reader of *Musician* for over a year now and have always hoped you'd extend your excellent coverage of the progressive music scene to include rock. The recent features on Fripp, Steely Dan, and Zappa have all been first class, and the columns and record reviews are uniformly entertaining and informative. I was afraid your jazz coverage might suffer, but it seems to be getting better all the time. My only complaint is that I often have difficulty finding your magazine.

Ellen Benoit
Kensington, Maryland

Unfortunately, it's often hard to find. If you'll send us a note with the name and address of a store or newsstand that should be carrying us, we'll be glad to send them a sample copy and give them a chance to carry us. Ed.

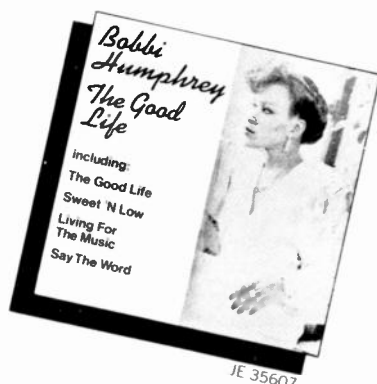
HAD TO BE HIM . . .

To Rafi Zabor: Didn't I see you in Carthage — bag of salt in one hand, Tunisian woman in the other, selling what falls beneath a dog as the final word of ? Sowing exaltations of salt and manhood like wild oats into the wind, like ancient arsenic kings, like Three Mile Island steam. Would you advocate a slow turn under a pork pie hat? G.K.

Montreal, Canada
Read "The Bear" for Rafi's response to this an other intergalactic fan mail. Ed.



IN EACH CASE, THERE'S A HISTORY



Weather Report At "8:30," Peter starts crackling. Jaco spins around and roars in. Wayne smiles softly and his horns shout. Then, Zawinul throws the Big Switch.

And the stage is set for a two-record collection featuring three sides of Weather Report in concert and one glorious side of new studio material.

Produced by Zawinul. Co-produced by Jaco Pastorius. Assistant Producer: Wayne Shorter.

Lonnie Liston Smith "A Song for the Children," an album for the ages, is Lonnie's third LP for Columbia.

Featured is his group, The Cosmic Echoes, which now includes the mellifluous vocalist James Robinson. In addition to a very funky, hard-driving rhythm section.

As always, they combine with Smith's melodic, energetic keyboards to create a sound that's truly mind-expanding.

Produced by Bert deCoteaux & Lonnie Liston Smith.

Dexter Wansel "Time Is Slipping Away," but Dexter Wansel's time is definitely now.

This is his fourth solo album for Philadelphia International. And on it he proves that as a pianist, producer, arranger, writer and musician—he's definitely come of age.

Included is the memorable new single, "It's Been Cool."

Produced by Dexter Wansel.

Steve Khan His reputation as one of the most versatile of guitarists has been greatly enhanced by Steve's work with the Brecker Brothers and Billy Joel.

"Arrows" is Mr. Khan's third album as a leader. Backed by an impressive group of colleagues from the N.Y. studio scene he points the way through a diverse program consisting almost entirely of his own compositions.

Produced by Steve Khan and Elliot Scheiner.

Bobbi Humphrey On her new album, the First Lady of Flute gives us a guide to "The Good Life." And that's something we need.

Once again producer Ralph MacDonald has provided the bountiful Bobbi with Fun City's top studio musicians.

The collaborative result, including the single "Love Where I'm in Your Arms," is undeniably upscale.

Produced by Ralph MacDonald and William Eaton.
Executive Producer: Bobbi Humphrey.

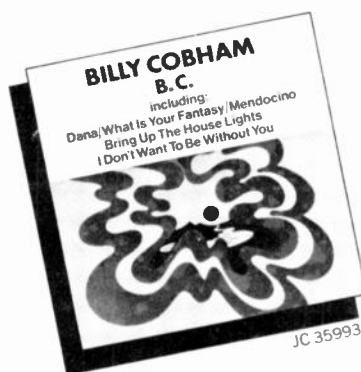
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Bob James It's a lucky thing for all of us that Bob has a new album out. Because "Lucky Seven" is a record not so much of luck but of talent. A talent that attracts other great musicians.

Joining Bob on this, his follow-up to "Touchdown," are people like Eric Gale, Steve Khan and Ralph MacDonald.

Produced, arranged and conducted by Bob James.
Associate Producer Joe Jorgensen
Ralph MacDonald appears courtesy of Marlin Records, A Div. of TK Productions, Inc.

Billy Cobham There were great drummers before Billy Cobham came on the scene with the Mahavishnu Orchestra and the Cobham/Duke Band. But few who could match his technique or his imagination.

On "B.C.," his third solo Columbia record, history-making Cobham teams with the legendary Wayne Henderson to produce a very timely album.

Produced by Wayne Henderson & Billy Cobham

Maynard Ferguson On his "Hot" album, the champion of the high-note trumpet leads his aggressive big band in some heavyweight numbers.

Included is everything from John Coltrane's classic "Naima" to a smashing rendition of "Rocky II ... Knockout!" the theme from the movie, featuring special guest star Sylvester Stallone for extra punch.

It's a combination that can't be beat.

Produced by Maynard Ferguson.
Co-produced by George Butler.
Sylvester Stallone appears courtesy of United Artists Pictures.

Michael Pedicin, Jr. Mike is a second generation saxophonist who's been a success from very early on in his own right. He's worked in the studio with everyone from David Bowie to Lou Rawls.

But Gamble and Huff knew that he was too good to remain behind the scenes. So they signed him to their Philadelphia International Records.

And thanks to them, you can hear the solo album "Michael Pedicin, Jr."

Produced by Michael Pedicin, Jr., Bill Bloom and Frankie Smith.

JoAnne Brackeen True music mavens have been keyed into JoAnne Brackeen for years now. They've heard her work with people like Stan Getz, Art Blakey and Joe Henderson.

Well, JoAnne has been a leader herself for quite a while. And on her debut album for Tappan Zee, "Keyed In," she leads bassist Eddie Gomez and drummer Jack DeJohnette.

Together they unlock a masterful group of Brackeen compositions.

Produced by Bob James and Joe Jorgensen.
Jack DeJohnette appears courtesy of ECM Records.



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RECORD NEWS

Slump Stabilizes

NEW YORK — Well, if you believe the industry moguls, the great slump is over. Recent releases from superstars like Led Zeppelin, Earth Wind & Fire, Fleetwood Mac, The Commodores and Bob Dylan are bringing people back into the record stores and black ink back onto the label ledgers. But while we told you two issues ago that the major factor in the industry-wide depression was the lack of superstar product, we will not try to delude you into thinking that things are back to normal. The slump revealed an underlying weakness in the record business that has not gone away. Most labels make all of their money on a few major names that in effect finance the whole operation. Even the big labels admit that 30% of all recording projects that they enter into lose money. 80%!!!! While dealing with pop art will always be a risky business, an 80% failure rate is absurd. Most of the labels, while heralding the end of the slump, are continuing to tighten their belts. The massive numbers of people who were thrown out of work by the slump will probably never work for a label again as hiring policies remain tight. Fewer new acts will be signed as labels will be very careful with whom they record. However, all is not bleak. Mtume and Reggie Lucas, two former Miles Davis sidemen who are, in spite of the slump, red-hot producers, (Stephanie Mills, Roberta Flack, Phyllis Hyman) feel now is an excellent time for new talent. "The labels are looking for something different and anybody with fresh new ideas should be welcomed at most record companies," claims the producing songwriting pair. Mtume, son of sax man Jimmy Heath, feels that the trimming of label personnel

and artists will be most beneficial. "The industry was overweight and the diet will do a lot of good."

Brits Battle Cassette Threat:

The British music industry is losing hundreds of millions of dollars because of the boom in cassette taping at home, off the radio or from friends' LPs. Now the industry is calling on the government to increase the price of blank tapes. According to John Baldwin, an official of the British Phonographic Industry, the measure was needed for the record companies to be able to compete successfully with the tape industry. He noted that the B.P.I. also planted special investigators in companies suspected of producing bootleg copies of LPs by David Bowie, Elton John, and Bob Dylan. But our English cousins aren't the only ones with financial troubles: leading American stereo retailers and manufacturers have also fallen on hard times during the last few months with most major retail chains reporting sales off by 15 or 20 percent. The rising cost of records and less shopping due to rising gas prices are the suspected culprits. All this could spell good news for consumers though, many stores are selling off equipment at near cost.

Paramount-EMI Deal Dies

The big, big \$168 million deal between Paramount Pictures and EMI Records announced here last time has fallen through. Once the Paramount accountants got a good look at the EMI books they realized that the asking price for half of the British-based recording operation was much too high. This is not altogether surprising since a label's only real asset is its artists and if you can find any one who can name 10 acts on the market

Capitol-EMI you should give that person a big cigar and every record Grand Funk Railroad ever made. It is doubtful that EMI will find another sucker to finance its failures and its only hope is out and out sale. But why would anyone want to buy this struggling record operation when they can buy out the contracts for the handful of worthwhile EMI artists for a fraction of what the whole thing would cost? As for Paramount, they say they are still interested in getting involved in a big way with the music industry but with almost every major record operation snugly hiding under someone else's corporate umbrella it will be difficult for the entertainment arm of Gulf & Western to find a big company to purchase. Maybe Paramount will purchase one of the few remaining independent operations like Motown or TK and use it as a base to build a major record operation. It is hoped that Paramount finds someplace in the record business to spend its millions.

Steve Wax has resigned after two years as president of Elektra/Asylum Records. This should surprise no one as Elektra, once one of the most consistently successful labels around, has done badly during Wax's tenure as it has attempted to expand into all fields of contemporary music. Elektra was built in the 60's and early 70's on folk, country pop and soft rock but it has been unable to cope with the intricacies of jazz, disco or mainstream pop. One problem, particularly in the now defunct jazz division, was that Elektra paid out unrealistic advances to its new artists. You can't expect to make too much money when you pay out (as sources inside the company claim) \$150,000 to a limited attraction like Oregon. Wax's duties will be assumed

by former Warners prexy Joe Smith who has been Elektra's chairman of the board

Catalogue Prices Drop

Most major labels are getting stingier with their credit policies to retailers and cutting back on the numbers of returns they accept. The new tight return policy is a real about-face for an industry that has always encouraged overbuying with all sorts of quantity discounts and product bonuses. In one positive move for the small retailers and the heavy record buyers, many labels have lowered the price of their older catalog items from the standard \$8.98 to \$5.98. This should spark sales and help bring dollars into the beleaguered small record stores. The ever escalating cost of album jackets is resulting in a cut-back by major labels in the money invested in the cardboard that covers the records. You won't be seeing too many more elaborate fold out die-cut album jackets from the big labels. Other label extravaganzas that have bitten the dust are the lavish press parties and the flood of promotional toys.

Disco Duck — Peking Style

Last spring the Peoples Republic of China banned all western dance steps, especially "decadent rock and roll" and disco. But recently several spontaneous dances have sprung up in at least one Peking park, replete with Chinese John Travoltas dressed in Western clothes who execute every dance step from the waltz to the hustle. So far Chinese officials have done nothing to stop the spontaneous discos — some feel the official inaction springs from criticism of the fact that state sponsored dances used to exclude unmarried couples or those without politically sound credentials.

prod-i-gy \ˈpräd-ə-jē\ *n*, *pl* -gies [L *prodigium* omen, monster, fr. *pro-*, *prod-* + *-igium* (akin to *aio* I say) — more at ADAGE] 1 **a** : a portentous event : OMEN **b** : something extraordinary or inexplicable 2 **a** : an extraordinary, marvelous, or unusual accomplishment, deed, or event **b** : a highly talented child

pro-dro-mal \(\)ˈprō-ˈdrō-məl\ or **pro-drom-ic** \-ˈdrām-ik\ *adj*
: PRECURSORY *esp* : marked by prodromes
pro-drome \ˈprō-drom\ *n*, *pl* **pro-dro-ma-ta** \(\)ˈprō-ˈdrō-mət-ə\

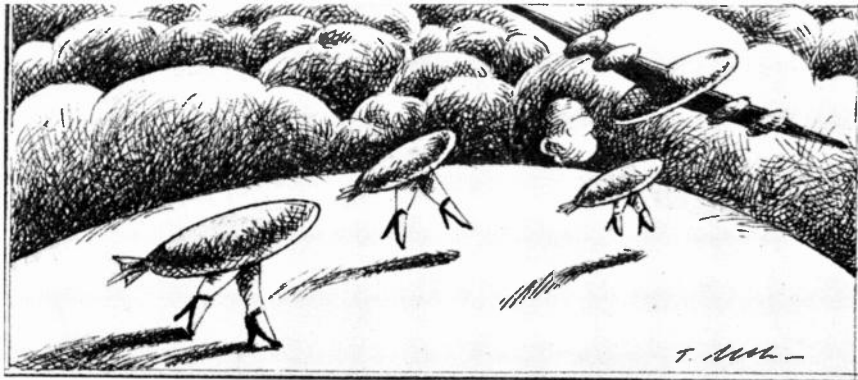


LISTEN. IT LIVES UP TO ITS NAME.

product \ˈpräd-ˌ(ə)kt\ *n* [in sense 1, fr. MF, fr. ML *productum*, fr. L *producere* to produce] 1 : the number or expression resulting from the multiplication together of two or more numbers or expressions 2 : something produced 3 : the amount, quantity, or total produced 4 : CONJUNCTION 5

pro-duc-tion \prə-ˈdāk-shən, prō-\ *n* 1 **a** : something produced : PRODUCT **b** (1) : a literary or artistic work (2) : a work presented on the stage or screen or over the air **c** : an exaggerated action 2 **a** : the act or process of producing **b** : the creation of utility; *esp* : the making of goods available for human wants 3 : total output *esp* of a commodity or an industry — **pro-duc-tion-al** \-shənəl, -shən-əl\ *adj*

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TERRY ALLEN

During rock's first twenty-five years, there has been an increasing tendency toward reflection and self-consciousness which seemingly peaked with the emergence of the New Wave renaissance. No longer is rock 'n' roll merely an expression of blind libidinal urges... with the feminization of culture that women's and gay liberation has brought, popular music has likewise undergone a healthy transformation. Two relatively new bands crystallize this neo-intellectualization rock 'n' roll is experiencing as it enters middle age. While the B-52's debut effort effectively transforms junk cultures into irresistible diamonds-in-the-rough, the Talking Heads' third album, *Fear Of Music*, takes on the traumas of the western world and reduces them to an incessant dance beat. Both albums rely on a raised awareness of not only current popular culture, but the cumulative history of fads, past, present and, with luck, future.

Athens, Georgia's B-52's are precisely the type of naive/wise dyed-in-the-wool country rubes who seem to capture the hearts of oh-so-sophisticated Manhattanites. Starting as a college-town, frat party band who played along to pre-recorded tapes for their friends' amusement, the B-52's hit New York City by storm in late '77, bringing along an unadulterated dance-beat with them — half Telstar, half-Nino Rota — a stimulating synthesis of high and low culture. Songs about volcanos ("Lava"), outer space ("Planet Claire"), beach parties ("Rock Lobster") and the latest dance crazes ("Dance This Mess Around") underlined the B-52's concerns. The lyrics, sometimes nonsensical, always adamantly anti-intellectual, were reinforced by the band's rayseed/hip appearance and demeanor.

Like some hyped-up version of the Mamas and Papas, the B-52's (named after the southern slang term for a bouffant hairdo) managed to integrate males and females into a friction-free, post-sexual organization. The gurls (sic), keyboardist Kate Pierson and bongo-player Cindy Wilson, are the focus, with their early-60's pop art costumes and high-pitched vocals, but the three men, lead singer Fred Schneider, guitarist Ricky Wilson and drummer Keith Strickland, are equally indispensable in their hard-working anonymity. The B-52's music, unlike most rock 'n' roll of the past, is not fueled by the clash of sexual opposites, but rather the collaboration of asexual equals, which is both its strength and its weakness.

Produced by Island prexy Chris Blackwell at his personal studios in the Bahamas, the B-52's album is intentionally monophonic — the sick yellow colorforms record jacket proudly proclaims it "High Fidelity," and the implication is "Play It Loud." There is a self-conscious attempt by the B-52's to return to the innocence of the pre-Beatles '60's, with the added knowingness of the late '70's, all fueled with a four-stringed Mosrite guitar and an unrelenting backbeat. This is dance music that combines great fashion sense with clever naivete — Fiorucci's meets the New South.

The B's do not strike the listener on a visceral level like most heavy metal, mid-'70's arena rock. There is a thinness to the sound, an intentionally fragile brittleness which insists that the listener make up the difference in his own mind. The glorious simplicity of the B-52's requires the outside input of bobbing, sweaty bodies to fully flower.

This music cries out for participation, and that is one of its strong points. Whether that participation takes the form of physical or mental activity is up to the individual. Like jazz, rock 'n' roll is travelling the path to self-awareness and knowledge. The B-52's combine artiness with a funky backbeat — a classic synthesis for the '80's.

The Talking Heads' *Fear Of Music* insinuates itself into your cranium slowly, the various peculiarities of Brian Eno's eccentric production gradually revealing themselves in layer upon layer of carefully defined nuance. Unlike the B-52's, David Byrne reduces the complexity of Funky Western Civilization to its basics — consciousness ("I think therefore I dance"), the (heart) beat, forward movement. There is an air of resignation in *Fear Of Music* that suggest the inevitable dissolution of endings. Mild-mannered Byrne's neurotic drive lurks right below the surface, seeping into his worldly observations.

The topics covered by the Heads include most everything of importance in the Modern World. The song titles are litanies like "Air," "Animals," "Cities," "Drugs," "Electric Guitar," "Heaven," "Mind," and "Paper." Sounds like a roll-call for reality. Like the B-52's, the Talking Heads include a female member, bassist Tina Weymouth, who grounds the beat with her naturalistic, sinewy style. Alongside drummer Chris Frantz, her real-life husband, Tina punches out a solid base for Mr. Byrne's catalogue of whoops, hollers, yelps, shrieks and hiccups. This is dance music for neurotics, and it is a measure of rock 'n' roll's long reach that it can express both total abandon and constricted constriction at the same time.

Although the Talking Heads' art-school background and intellectual pretensions seem antithetical to the purist notion of rock 'n' roll, it is a tribute to the energy of repressed tension that it can produce a music as exciting as that of total release. Rock 'n' roll is no longer a simple reaction to sexual frustration. What David Byrne tells us on *Fear Of Music* is that the needs engendered by modern society are much more complex than the striving for physical satisfaction. Today, one could get hurt by the air, changed by one's own mind, frustrated by a piece of paper or saved

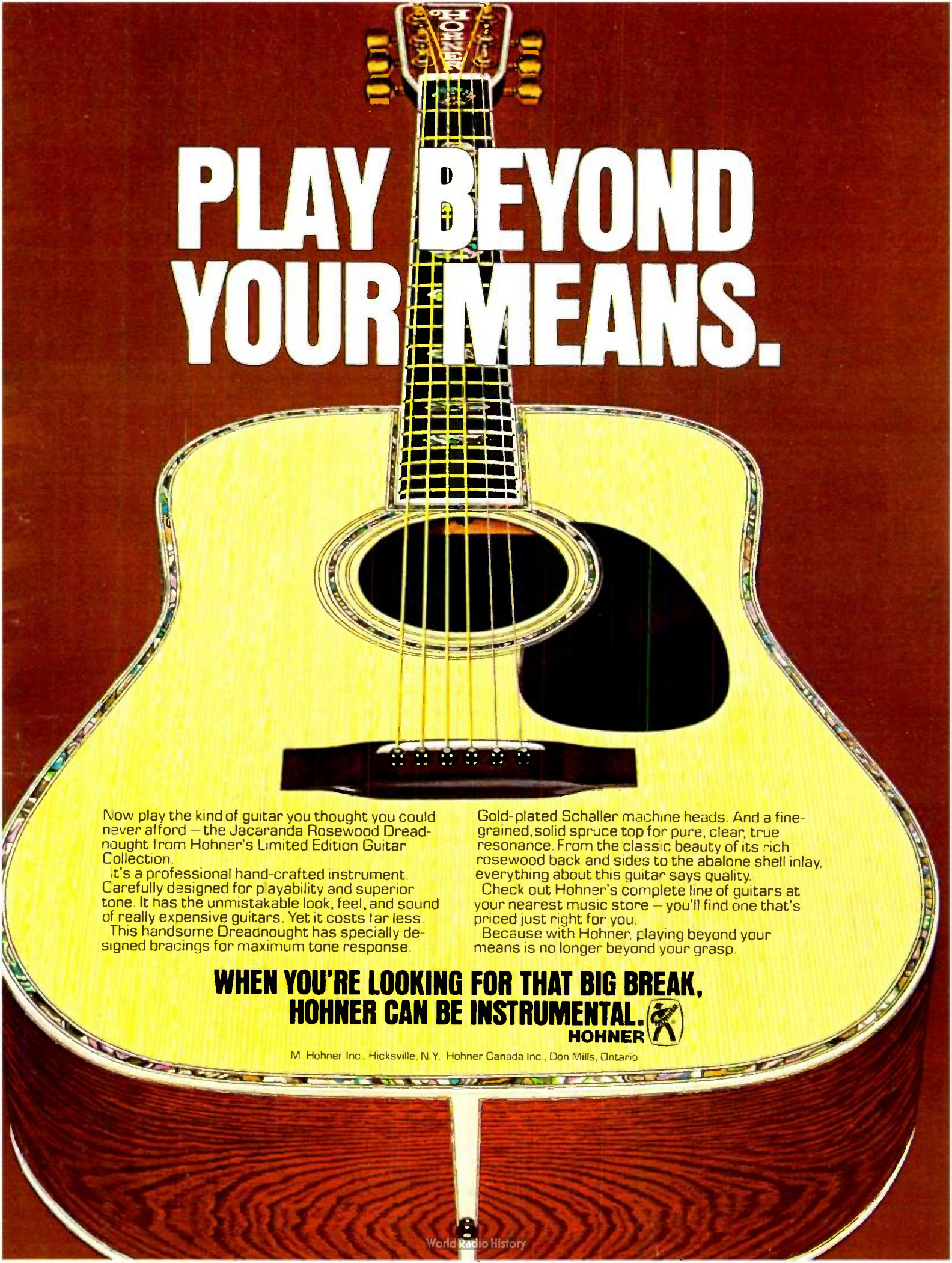
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Intellectual Dance Music:

Talking Heads and The B-52's incorporate both teenage nostalgia and adult angst into their danceable odes to the Apocalypse;

By Roy Trakin

Rock



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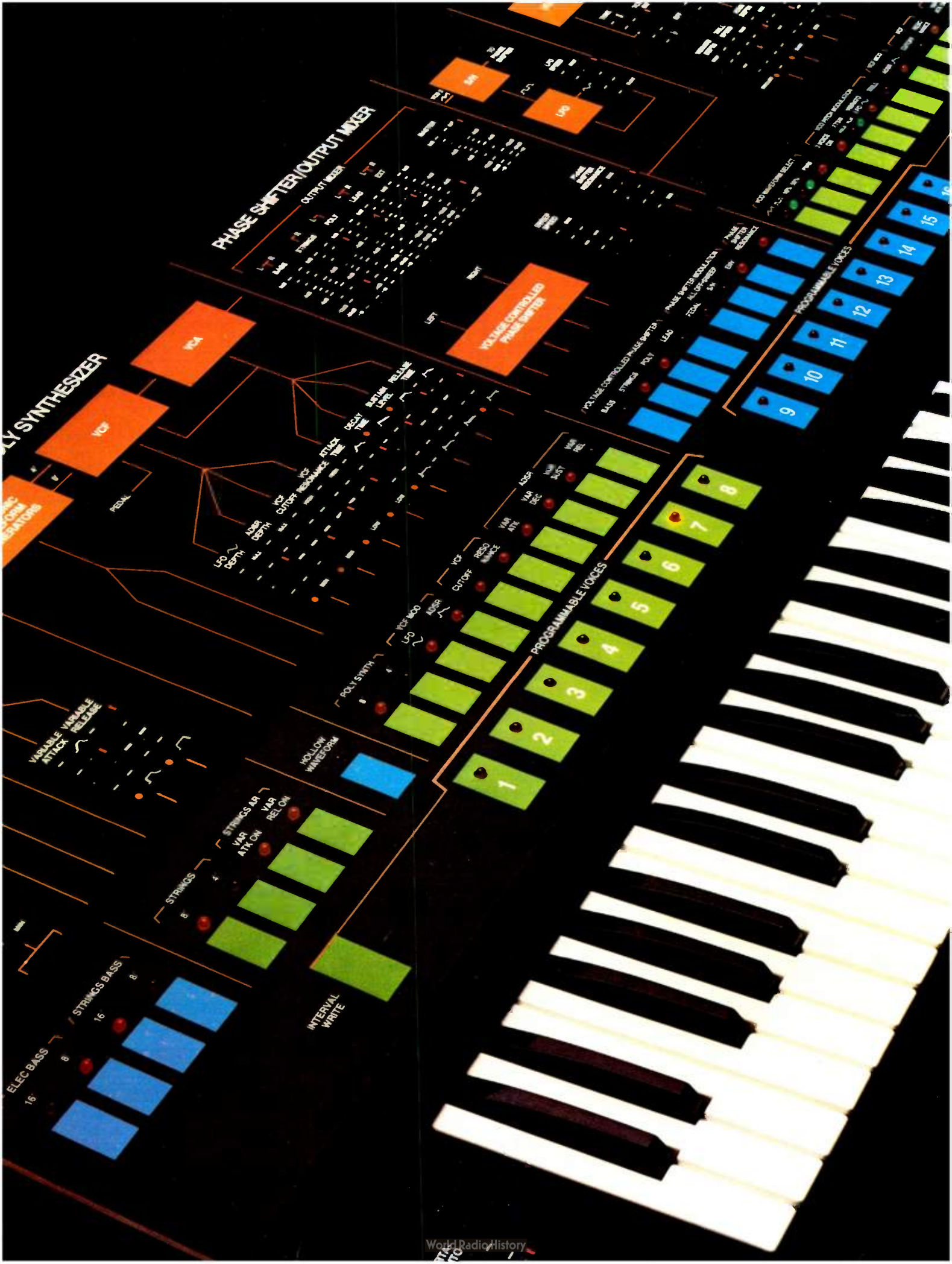
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PROGRAMMABLE VOICES

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STRINGS

HOLLOW WAVEFORM

INTERVAL WRITE

Take a closer look at the differences between the ARP Quadra and all other polyphonic synthesizers.

At first glance, you may believe that all programmable polyphonic synthesizers are the same.

Look again. The ARP Quadra is fundamentally different in design, function, and musical application.

It's a difference you can hear, see, and feel the minute you play the Quadra. And it's a difference that demands close examination.

Many voices vs. many synthesizers.

All other programmable polyphonics offer 4, 5, up to 10 voices. The result of chording these types of synthesizers is similar to playing an organ or piano—all notes played have the same tonal characteristics.

The new ARP Quadra places *four separate synthesizers* under your control. Chording the Quadra is much like playing an entire orchestra. Each key depressed on the Quadra can produce up to four completely distinct sounds simultaneously. The Quadra's four separate synthesizers are tailored to certain kinds of sounds—string synthesizer, poly synthesizer, bass synthesizer, and lead synthesizer.

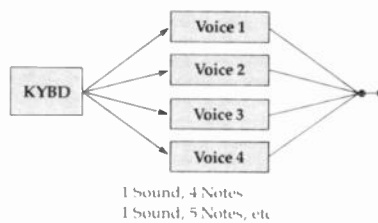
The effect created by mixing and blending these four sections is known as "layering," and is at the heart of the Quadra's tremendous commercial success. It explains why musicians and composers like Joe Zawinul, Ramsey Lewis, Styx, Billy Cobham, Kansas, Neil Diamond, and Electric Light Orchestra, have selected the Quadra for performing and recording.

Programming and live performance.

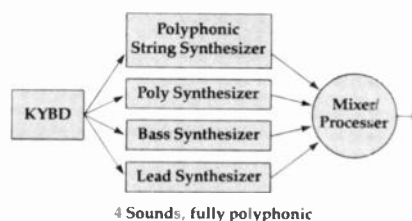
Programming—the ability for a synthesizer to store pre-determined sounds in memory for instant recall—can be a great benefit in live performance. In essence, programming allows you to change quickly from one sound to another. Yet, if not implemented in a sensible manner, programming can lock you into an inflexible group of preset sounds that cannot be changed easily in live performance.

No matter how many programs a synthesizer can store—and some allow as many as 40—it seems there are never enough programs to allow for the subtle changes in texture that live performance ensemble playing requires.

ALL OTHER POLYPHONICS



ARP QUADRA



An illustration of the basic design difference between the new ARP Quadra and other programmable polyphonics

Here again, the Quadra is different. With 16 programs for *each* of its four synthesizers, the Quadra is uniquely suited to live performance control of the "final touches"—the balance between sections, animation, articulation, and so forth. A simple change in the mix produces a dramatically different sound from the same program position. Multiple use of each program, plus the multitude of live performance controls *always active*, makes each of the Quadra's program positions a source for numerous variations and textures.

How to control programming before it controls you.

When there are too many things to do in succession, *programming can control you*. For instance, take the following typical sequence: "Press button one, press button two, press button three, play the keyboard." To change sounds, repeat this operation. Such serial operations seem more akin to computer programming than musical performance. ARP learned long ago that the best operational concept is the direct approach. That's why the Quadra makes extensive use of "parallel" control—you can get at any part of the instrument, change any sound, any aspect of any sound, *directly*. No sequence of complicated operations is required on the Quadra. And by using the 59 LED status lights, you

will know what's going on inside each program you are using. You can be spontaneous, and change with the flow of the music.

The Quadra's microprocessor works harder.

All the big programmable polyphonics use microprocessors to scan the keyboard and operate the programming. The Quadra's microprocessor does much more.

For instance, try out the Quadra's live performance sequencer. Play a chord on the keyboard, hit the footswitch, and suddenly you have a sequence of the notes in the chord. You can transpose the sequence, extend and modify it, and alter its notes without missing a beat.

The Quadra's microprocessor also makes intelligent decisions, like splitting the keyboard so you never get bass and lead synthesizer parts mixed up, or helping you with phrasing on the string parts. The microprocessor plays trills, intervals, and transpositions, controls the phaser and stereo animation, and even determines what the foot pedals do. In other words, the ARP microprocessor is programmed to let you concentrate on the music.

Creative outputs (and inputs).

The Quadra's rear panel has 24 jacks for uncompromised flexibility. There's an XLR mono output, animated stereo outputs, and even quad outputs for studio work. Systems interface jacks will make the Quadra "control central" for slave units and remote synthesizers. Five audio inputs bring outside signals into the Quadra or allow processing of the individual sections of the Quadra with outside effects devices.

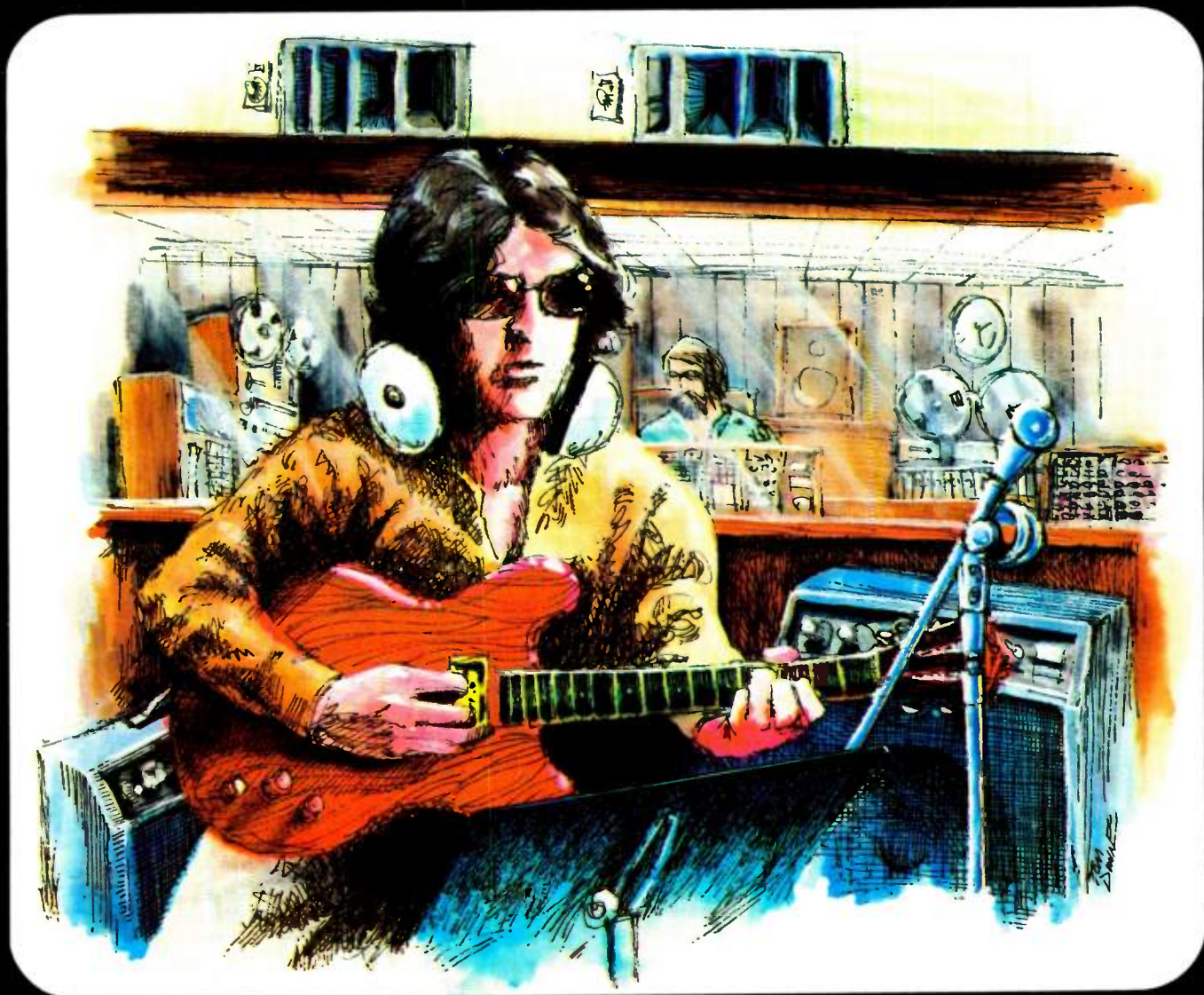
Sound is the bottom line.

No question about it, four synthesizers sound different than one. It's a difference you'll appreciate the first time you put your hands on a Quadra.

Take a closer look at the new ARP Quadra at selected ARP Dealers throughout the United States and Canada.



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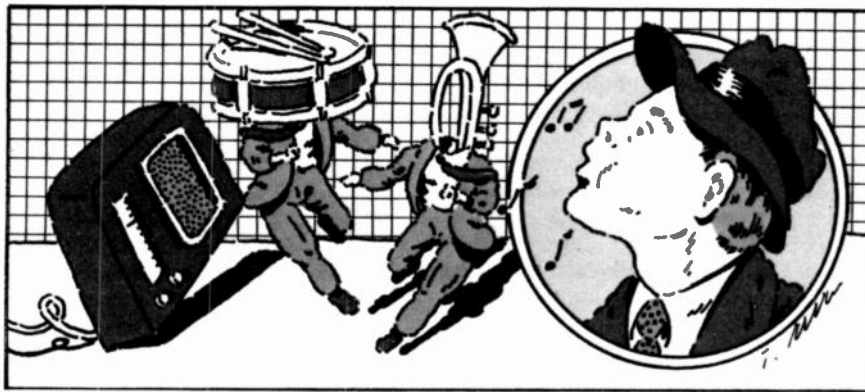
In a session, there's no margin for error. Guitar or bass strings that are too stiff or play out of tune up the neck can be disastrous.

Designed to perform in all crucial situations, D'Addario Chromes are fast fingering, super smooth flat wound strings. They're ultra flexible, more so than any flat wounds you've ever played. Their low finger noise makes them ideal for recording. And they give you a pure, mellow sound, with subtle harmonics and the accurate intonation you expect from all D'Addario strings.

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From Scott Joplin to Chuck Mangione, the best pop instrumentalists prove that you don't have to sing to swing.

Let us now praise the noble top-40 instrumental, for it is almost a thing of the past. Whether it be Clifford Scott's monumental tenor sax solo on the Bill Doggett classic "Honky Tonk" in the 50's, or Booker T and the M.G.'s steaming those "Green Onions" ten years later, the best pop instrumentals are like sublime musical shorthand, 3-minute jewels that perfectly define their moments in time. Fifteen seconds into the Brecker Brothers' horns humping along with the Average White Band on their 1974 chestnut, "Pick Up The Pieces," and even the most jaded pop aficionado is flooded with delolent memories of that bygone year. From Duane Eddy and Link Wray (whose "Rumble" is a guitar classic of early distortion effects) to Jr. Walker and Grover Washington, the great pop instrumentalists have always had their own special niche in the pop pantheon, and rarely have they received their due. Popular music, as it's purveyed and dispensed by radio stations, has always emphasized the vocal as the great mass communicator. But the very thing that distinguishes the best pop instrumentals is their ability to speak directly, without words.

Strictly speaking, popular instrumentals predate records, since piano rolls and sheet music of songs like Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag" were big sellers in the early 20th century. But starting in the 20's and 30's, first-rank jazz players began to record popular songs of the day. Coleman Hawkins' "Sweet Lorraine," Bix Beiderbecke's "In A Mist," and countless Duke Ellington

and Count Basie sides firmly established the tradition. Then in the 40's, with the advent of the jukebox and juke-joints, the genre really took off. Paul Williams' "The Hucklebuck" (a blatant cop of Charlie Parker's "Now's the Time" of a few years earlier), along with the aforementioned "Honky Tonk," became two of the biggest selling records of the late 40's/early 50's. And Parker himself was on several classic pop instrumentals. His version of "Just Friends," with the tumbling cascade of notes he plays in the intro over a maudlin wash of strings and oboe, is quite simply one of the finest blendings of pure kitsch with high art that's ever been recorded.

In the 60's, when rock and roll burst open like a raging oil spill, pop instrumentals became more bizarre and, in retrospect, energetic. The Mar-Keys from Memphis set the stage in 1961 with "Last Night." The chugging organ, full-bodied horn punches and nasty tenor sax solo by Andrew Love gave the then-current twist beat a new push. Guitarist Steve Cropper and bassist Duck Dunn left the Mar-Keys to form the MGs (Memphis Group) with organist Booker T. Jones and drummer Al Jackson Jr., in the early 60's. The MGs perfected a form, and to this day their songs stand as masterpieces of expressive simplicity. Cropper's slashing guitar attack, Jackson's mastery of the pile-driving, deep-snare backbeat, Booker T.'s incredibly biting-yet-tasteful registrations and tone settings on the Hammond B-3, and Dunn's loping bass lines — all these elements combined to make songs like "Soul Limbo," "Red Beans and Rice," "Hang 'Em High" and "Groovin'" absolute cookers. A "Best Of" collection, still available on Atlantic Records, is a rewarding investment.

The James Brown band had a big influence on 60's instrumentals, especially albums like *James Brown Dances and Directs The Popcorn*, other major purely instrumental groups emerging from the 60's include the Meters and Jr. Walker and the All Stars. Walker's instrumentals (usually his screaming vocals were bridges between sax solos) were based on the organ combo format, an style with roots back in the early 50's groups of Bill Doggett and Earl Bostic. Walker's album *Soul Session*, which is still around in record bins and cutout stores on the Motown-Soul label, is the one to buy. A later album, *Peace And Understanding* is also highly recommended, especially the title track and an instrumental called "Soul Clapping." Junior, along with King Curtis and Maceo Parker of the James Brown band, laid the foundation for most pop-rock sax playing today. Walker's screaming high notes in the sax's altissimo register extended a great tradition, started by Illinois Jacquet in the 40's with Lionel Hampton's band, into R&B and rock.

The Meters, from New Orleans, were producer Allen Toussaint's house band, backing singers like Lee Dorsey and Irma Thomas. On their own, the group cut a string of spare, raw and eloquent instrumental albums (a "Best Of" collection on Warner-Reprise is a good place to start listening). Zig Modeliste, the Meters' live-wire drummer, combined rock-solid time with outrageously inventive and quirky fills. The group's lone hit single, "Cissy Strut," is one of the all-time great party tunes.

For pop music in general, the 70's have been a time of standardization, of stylizing previous forms and energy into smoother, more "marketable" sounds. When British bands like Cream and Led Zep came into vogue, with their stress on instrumental prowess (to the point of overplaying) along with rock vocals, the pop-rock instrumental all but became obsolete. Only the occasional random oddity, like Edgar Winter's "Frankenstein," slipped through to garner coveted top 40 or AOR airplay.

On the other hand, early 70's funk groups and funk-jazz players developed a party sound that filled this void, and for a hot minute, enriched the pop instrumental genre. Kool and the Gang from

cont on next page

Pop Instrumentals:

An underrated and endangered species, pop instrumentals have rarely received the appreciation they deserve.

By Cris Cioe

Pop

award, first with "Funky Stuff," and their first two albums on De-Lite still smoke. Along with B.T. Express, groups like this were the heirs of Jr. Walker and Booker T., and inadvertently paved the way for what's happening today in instrumental popdom.

The strongest, most enduring instrumental group on the scene today is the Crusaders. Starting with "Way Back Home" and "Put It Where You Want It" in '71, the Texans Joe Sample, Wilton Felder and Stix Hooper have turned out smooth Southwestern funk. As polished and unabashedly slick as the Crusaders have become (and remember that in the '50's this group was playing and recording songs like Coltrane's "Impressions," as the Jazz Crusaders), their music is consistently based on gospel and blues harmonies overlaying a gritty Texas backbeat. Felder, the principle soloist, has one of the great pop instrumental "voices" on sax. His open, powerful sound, using the classic R&B tone that a wide-open Berg Larsen mouthpiece projects, constantly juxtaposes passionate cries in the upper register with liquid, boppish runs of notes always over chord changes that are nodal and familiar enough sounding to the virgin pop ear). The newest Crusaders album, *Street Life*, adds vocals on the title track, but the sound is still the same: familiar but tough melodies that are dramatic yet emotional. Without the emotion, the Crusaders would probably lose the edge and their music would peter on the edge of film-score and shock-funk. To their credit and prosperity, the Crusaders still sound like they know just what real street life is all about.

Tom Scott, on the other hand, really does score music for TV shows, like *Baretta*, and his solos on lyricon and saxes goose the rhythm tracks of everybody from McCartney to the Blues Brothers. As much as I like his playing style — a virtuosic updating of Jr. Walker riffs and funk-jazz tenor from various places — he's never really connected with a pop instrumental smash of his own. This is largely due to over-Dolby'd smoothness in the mix and sound of his albums. His former band, the L.A. Express, established a sound that really stood out when backing up Joni Mitchell, but couldn't click on its own. Scott's most recent album, *Intimate Strangers*, is even more somnambulistically mixed than previous outings, but on the tune "Breezing Easy," he cuts loose with the kind of genuinely soulful, flat out blowing over soulful chord changes that puts him in the first rank of pop instrumentalists. Given the right setting and tunes, Scott's work could reach a much larger audience than just musicians.

Which is, of course, just what Chuck Mangione is all about. As a single musician, this fluegelhorn player is certainly the most widely known and

adored pop instrumentalist in the country today. He has achieved this feat with a carefully programmed oeuvre that raises the musical concept of "pretty" to near-dizzying heights. Unfortunately, Chuck is also deep into saccharine, and as tight as his band is (the current *Live At The Hollywood Bowl* is ample testament to the quintet's chops), as comfortably relaxed as he keeps his own rhythmic pulse and solos, I always yearn for a tad more bite in his approach. The lacy, light-funk of "Feels So Good" may have been the perfect tonic for the summer of '78, but in the long run, I like my simplicity with a little raunch. As a guitarist friend of mine quipped the other day, "his music is like a smile button."

Ironically, another instrumental group which started in the same Buffalo-Rochester area as Mangione has achieved phenomenal crossover jazz-pop success lately. Spyro Gyra comes on with a fairly dense, Afro-Latin sound in its rhythm section. The group gets away with this on radio by keeping the melodies bouncy and hookish. Saxist Jay Beckenstein, mostly on alto, has a lush tone that combines the airiness of Paul Desmond with a spunkier R&B edge, and even when merely stating a melody, he manages to get real feelings across. Spyro Gyra's second album and single, *Morning Dance*, is doing well on the charts and in the stores, and it's a testament to this band's ability that they keep the musical energy high while satisfying the MOR demographic realities in the music business today.

Finally, a whole slew of mature jazz players with serious R&B backgrounds have tried to break through on their own with pop instrumentals, with varying degrees of success. No one, for instance, would deny Gato Barbieri's amazing sound and facility on tenor sax, and I certainly can't fault him for trying to get a little mass appeal going for his music, even in the discos. What's too bad is that his albums have become increasingly crammed with filler and overblown arrangements, while his actual playing time on wax gets watered down. A case in point is the song "Carnevalita" on his newest LP, *Euphoria*. This is a traditional Argentinian melody that Gato recorded several years ago on an early album, *Fenix*. The sounds on that album were live, giving the exciting feeling that the music was actually taking place in a room somewhere. Even though non-Latin players like Lenny White and Joe Beck were on the session, the feelings were cohesive and authentic. Today's version of the same song has great players on the session too, but the cut itself *sounds* like a rhythm track that Gato walked in on, blew some notes, and then split. As a disco track, it cooks along, but as a great pop instrumental, it just doesn't wash.

cont on page 26

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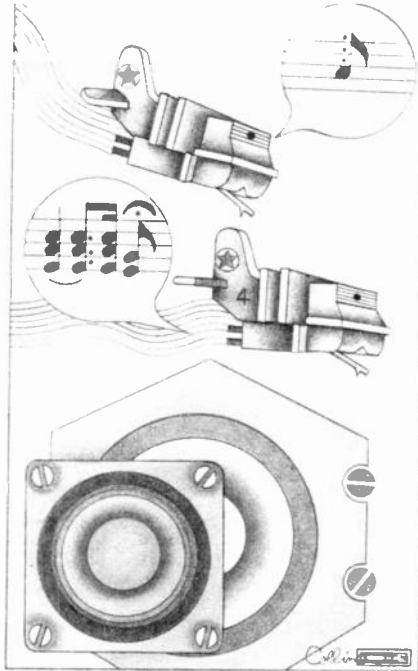
though at opposite ends of the audio component chain, are actually very closely related in their operation. In an area dominated by the magic of electronics, these two components do much of their duty mechanically.

It is the phono cartridge that takes mechanical energy — the wiggling of the stylus in the record groove — and converts it into electrical energy. The signal winds its way through your preamplifier and power amp (or receiver) and is sent off to the loudspeaker where the electrical energy is transformed back into mechanical energy — the movement of the speaker cones which you hear as music. I'd like to explain the basic specifications for cartridges and speakers, treating them at the same time since their specifications are rather similar.

The phono cartridge is the first component the musical signal encounters on its path through your system. It's also the most often overlooked component by most people, which is unfortunate since it can make a remarkable difference in how reproduced music sounds and greatly affects the life of your records. If the signal supplied by the cartridge to the rest of the system is muddled or distorted, the preamp will simply amplify the problem, sending it on through the speakers.

One of the first specs you'll come across in looking at phono cartridges is tracking force. This is the required downward force that will keep the cartridge in the record groove and properly trace the undulations. Lighter tracking force reduces wear on both records and stylus. Therefore, smaller figures are preferred. Yet, if it's too light, the stylus can jump out of the groove, or at least not make proper contact with the groove wall, losing some of the signal. Tracking force is given in grams and specified over a certain range. It should not exceed three grams and in most cases will be much lighter.

Tracking force is directly related to compliance, which can be called a cartridge's freedom of movement. The greater the compliance, the lower the required tracking force. Thus, with a high compliance cartridge you can get away with a lighter cartridge and save wear on your records and stylus.



Compliance is the ability of the stylus assembly to move when a force, measured in dynes, is applied. It's the movement of the stylus in the grooves that generates the signal in the cartridge, so high compliance is desirable since it means more accurate reproduction of the groove modulation and less record wear. Figures are given in millionths of a centimeter — expressed as 10^{-6} cm. A high quality cartridge might have a compliance of 15×10^{-6} cm/dyne. This means that with an applied force of one dyne, the stylus is displaced a distance of 15 millionths of a centimeter. But you needn't worry about that. Just remember, the bigger the number times 10^{-6} , the more compliant the cartridge.

Frequency response appears as a prominent spec when considering cartridges, as it does for most any other hi fi component. This is the range of frequencies (from low to high) to which the cartridge will respond and should be accompanied by an indication of how uniform the response is across the frequency band indicated. This is expressed in terms of plus or minus so many decibels (dB) and describes the range of variance in output across the frequency band. Severe peaks will color the sound. As with all references to

frequency response, you want the widest response, ideally from 20Hz to 20,000Hz.

Output is generally supplied as a measurement in millivolts and abbreviated as mV. Output varies from cartridge to cartridge, but its most important meaning for you is that it be greater than the sensitivity of the phono inputs on your amplifier, receiver or preamp. You'll find this, stated in millivolts, on the spec sheet for that component. Output voltage is stated in millivolts delivered for a certain stylus-to-groove velocity with a 1000Hz signal. The standard measuring velocity is 5 cm/second. Another spec you'll often see for phono cartridges is load impedance. Don't concern yourself with it. This is the preamp's input impedance as seen by the cartridge. It does affect a cartridge's frequency response, however the load impedance of the phono inputs on nearly every preamp, integrated amp or receiver is 47,000 ohms, the value for which most stereo cartridges are designed.

Finally, there is separation — the ability of a cartridge to separate the two channels of a stereo signal. The greater, the better. It's expressed in decibels (dB). Stereo separation varies across the frequency range and tends to fall off at higher frequencies. Thus, separation should be given at several spot frequencies, though not all manufacturers do this. If given at only one frequency, it is usually 1000Hz, in which case it should be at least 20 dB. You'll discover most high fidelity cartridges do much better than that. Sample separation figures for a top cartridge show it measures 25 dB, 30 dB and 20 dB at 100Hz, 1000Hz and 10,000Hz, respectively.

Turning to loudspeakers, we come to what is definitely the most subjective of all fidelity components. There is no standard for specifying loudspeaker performance, yet it really doesn't matter all that much. Frequency response is usually always given, but there's no simple or agreed upon method for measuring a speaker system's frequency response. So many factors influence the resulting data, that comparing frequency response figures for several speaker systems is virtually meaningless. In fact, most specs you

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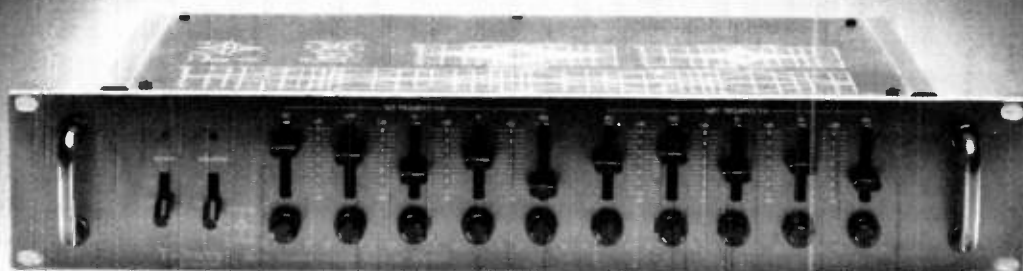
Cartridges and Speakers:

Getting specific about specs: a layman's guide to compliance, impedance and other audio esoterica.

By Terry Shea

Hi-Fi

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An awkward and fragile songwriter leaves a musical legacy of transcendent power and beauty.

In the summer of 1970, I played a professional club for the first time, opening for Nick Drake at Cousins, a dark underground club on Greek Street in London. I got the job through the good graces of Nick and of Andy the Greek, who ran the place. I'd met both of them through John Martyn, an extraordinary guitarist and songwriter. When I arrived in London that spring, fresh from school, I somehow had the good fortune to stumble through his doorway in Hampstead, and for much of that summer he and his wife Beverly took care of me: fed me, nursed me through an unhappy romance, and listened with dignity if not patience as I began trying to write songs on an oversized Gibson Hummingbird that seemed, in the London of 1970, an overt display of opulence. (When I opened the case at Cousins, my guitar got an ovation).

For all of my enthusiasm, angst, and earnestness, I was terrible, and in retrospect the kindness of that audience seems formidable, almost an act of international good will. Nick Drake was also very bad, but for different reasons. His shyness and awkwardness were almost transcendent. A tall man (he stood over 6'3"), his clothes — black corduroy jacket and pants, frayed white shirt — hung around him like bedclothes after a particularly bad night's sleep. He sat on a small stool, hunched tight over a tiny Guild guitar, beginning songs and,

halfway through, forgetting where he was and stumbling back to the start of that song, or beginning an entirely different song which he would then abandon mid-way through if he remembered the remainder of the first. He sang away from the microphone, mumbled, and whispered, all with a sense of precariousness and doom. It was like being at the bedside of a dying man who wants to tell you a secret, but who keeps changing his mind at the last minute: Come closer; no, on second thought, go away.

There was a new song that he sang that night that he kept starting and stopping, never completing; he finally just sang the opening lines over and over again: *Do you curse where you come from?/Do you swear in the night?* (from "Hazy Jane I").

It was chilling and morbidly fascinating. No one took their eyes off him for a second — there was a real sense of keeping him there with our gaze and our attention, that if we looked away, however briefly, he might disappear or forget that we were there and go to sleep.

He could quite literally disappear from rooms, from people, from situations, just as he eventually disappeared from his life. Once, late at night, I was out driving with John & Beverly and a guitarist friend of theirs, Paul Wheeler, on our way to an all-night Indian restaurant; we passed Nick driving along in an old white Chevy and signalled for him to join us. It was my first time at an Indian restaurant. I was still used to the pot roasts and rubber chickens of American boarding schools, so I remember the smell of curries and hot breads very clearly, remember the white linen tablecloths and the white linen turbans on the waiters, the ubiquitous cats sliding back and forth from the kitchen, and the strong smell of hashish being smoked upstairs. We sat for hours, eating, drinking wine that Paul had brought, and only when we stood up to pay the check did I realize that Nick was with us, that he in fact had been with us for the entire meal.

None of which would mean very much if his music weren't extraordinary. In the course of a very short life (he out-lived John Keats by about a year, which, with his slightly morbid sensibility and his devotion to the whole Romantic ethos, would have both amused and irritated

him — in certain ways, he was very competitive.), Nick Drake recorded three albums of unmatched beauty and power that have actually moved people and touched people in ways that few records ever do. In concert and on record, his songs, his voice, and his arrangements seem so fragile and delicate that you'd think the slightest breeze or sound from the street would blow them away or obliterate them; but five years after his death, the songs seem stronger, more full-bodied and more fully-rooted than they sounded six, seven, eight, or nine years ago. Like operas made of stone, they sing and they are quiet.

In his best work (and none of his recorded songs are less than good), there are moments of true feeling and pure vision which easily transcend the influences — Van Morrison's *Astral Weeks*, Tim Buckley's jazz-inflected vocals, Jim Webb's melodic patterns, the sambas of Jao Gilberto, John Martyn's rolling, percussive guitar style — turning them into extended moments that are purely cinematic, dense with images of every sort. The songs are hypnotic, narcotic, black holes that it is possible to fall into and lose yourself in.

The songs are completely adolescent, but adolescent in the same way that Rimbaud is, in a way that magnifies adolescence. There is very little self pity and no anger whatsoever; the songs vacillate in mood between wonder and dismay. These are songs of barely remembered grace, of accumulated loss, of being in a shadow world where emotions are impossible (or unreachable — the cuckoo locked inside the clock that emerges to mark the occasional hour) and change is unlikely; the songs of a man who is deathly afraid of angels, but who does not want to bother with anyone or anything less.

Five Leaves Left, Nick's first album (released in 1969, when he was 21), remains his most seductive record, probably the best introduction to his music: the arrangements are sparse but elegant, and the songs are haunting without having the desperate edge of *Pink Moon*.

Bryter Layter, recorded and released a year later, contains Nick's most beautiful songs ("Northern Sky", "Hazy Jane I"), but was the album he was least satisfied with. To compensate for *Five*

continued on page 26

Nick Drake:

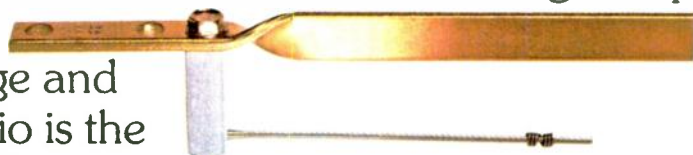
Five years after his death, his haunting songs continue to retain their hypnotic fascination.

By Brian Cullman

Edges

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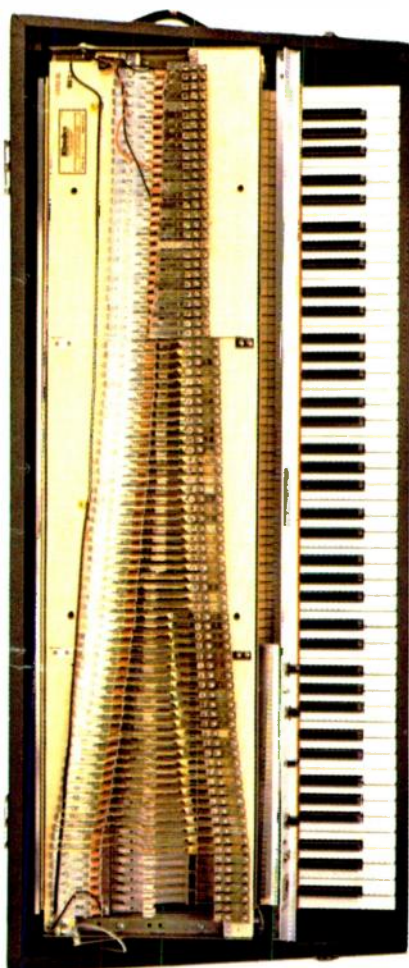
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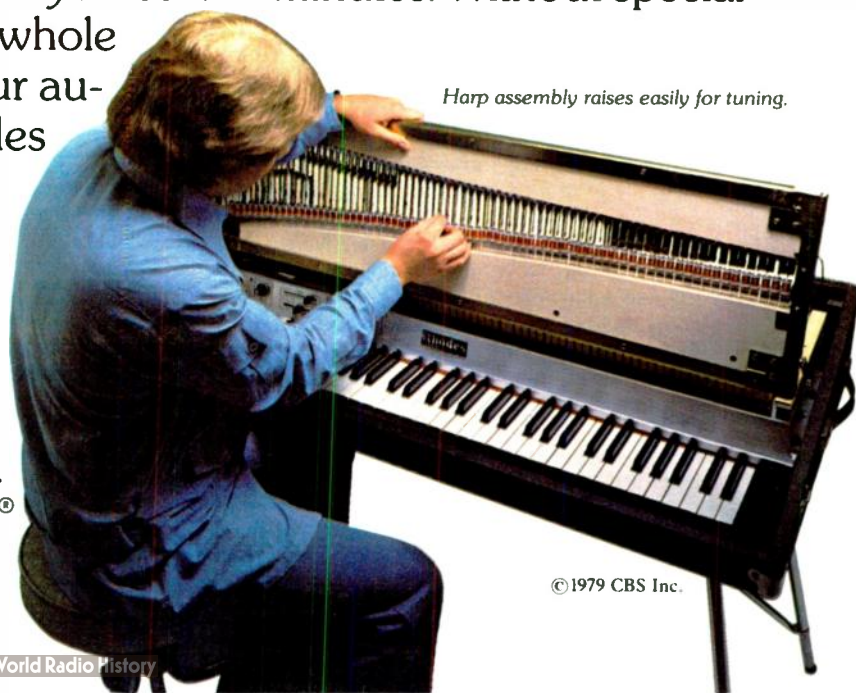


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by the right city. In other words, anger lurks everywhere — like in Alfred Hitchcock, the everyday is merely a cloak for thinly-disguised evil. What the Talking Heads reveal about rock 'n' roll is that happiness is no longer just a matter of sexual pleasure — meeting someone you can get along with is so much more complicated than merely being attracted.

While the B-52's attempt to return to innocence with their insistent asexuality and child-like pantheism, the Heads realize there is no turning back. *Fear Of Music* is a chilling collection of observations that is both fatalistic and riotously funny — chuckles on the way to the Apocalypse. As Iggy Pop sings in "Raw Power," "Dance to the beat of the living dead . . ."

Edges *cont. from page 24*

Leaves Left's lack of success, *Bryter Layter* was slicker, more polished, more "commercial." Individually, the songs are wonderful; more varied in tone and style, and if possible, more cryptic than the songs on *Five Leaves Left*. Still, the album feels slightly askew, off-center; the arrangements are sometimes too pretty, and the sense of desolation (which is deeper here, more rooted) is glossed over by the production, as if it were no more than a light breeze blowing through the record.

By the time of *Pink Moon*, two years later, what may have started as a light breeze had become a full-scale tempest. Recorded in two days, most of the songs recorded in one take, it is completely bare and unproduced, just Nick and his guitar with no other instruments, no overdubs except for several notes of a piano that punctuate the title song.

A few years later, and he really wasn't there. On November 25, 1974, he was found in his bed at his family's home in Birmingham, dead from an overdose of a very strong anti-depressant, an apparent, though debated, suicide.

At the time, his death was not reported over here, did not even warrant mention in *Rolling Stone*'s Random Notes. Slowly, over the last few years, though, a following has grown up around him: his songs turn up on the radio late at night; imports of his records turn up more and more consistently in stores; and last year Arthur Lubow published an excellent and painstakingly researched eulogy in *New Times*. This November, Antilles will release a three-record set of his music: *Five Leaves Left*, *Bryter Layter*, and *Pink Moon*, along with four songs he recorded for an album he began just before his death.

"When men have gone away," James Hanley wrote, "you may see clearly what they have left behind."

Pop *cont. from page 20*

Ronnie Laws, another very gifted sax

tone that's dry and screaming at the same time, also falls prey to occasional gigantic waves of strings and vocal choruses. The Brecker Brothers have a different approach, one based more on their virtuosic chops, and when they connect with the right material and arrangements, Michael and Randy create exciting pop. I still think that "East River (La Di Da)" from their last album *Heavy Metal Bebop* should have been a hit single. David Sanborn, the premier R&B-rock-pop alto player of our time, has never had a hit pop instrumental, and yet his sound has virtually made it happen for a number of pop stars over the last few years.

The point is that for players like these to break through in pop music on their own requires that they project a vision and a concept within a song. Two players, one quite well known and another just coming into his own, have grasped this elusive quality in their music. Grover Washington, Jr. started recording as a sideman for Prestige and Kudu Records, on albums by such as Boogaloo Joe Jones and Johnny "Hammond" Smith. His biggest hit to date, "Mister Magic," was a masterpiece of dead-on funk that was hiply understated. His continuing ability to mesh subtle phrasing with street rhythms puts him at the top of the heap right now, and the newest single "Doo Dat," mixes clichés and common-sounding elements from current R&B with delicate inflections and subtle phrasings from Washington's tenor sax. The song is unmistakably funky, keeping the groove simple and uncluttered, placing emphasis on shading and subtleties, like the eloquent African talking drum that chunks along throughout the tune, another human voice in the concrete jungle.

Neil Larsen is a keyboard player, notably organ player, who has been a session regular in L.A. for years. His two albums, *Jungle Fever* and recently, *High Gear*, make no pretensions at being "blowing" jazz dates. Instead, Larsen puts the emphasis on voicings, arrangement, and the emotions they engender. His main instrument is the Hammond, and he's virtually the only young player today with a recording contract who's trying to keep alive and update that wonderful instrument. The songs, like "Jungle Fever," combine elements of Latin music with American rock and funk leanings, and with his partner and guitarist Buzzy Feiten, Neil Larsen is a fresh and potentially influential pop instrumental hybrid.

So, that's the state of the art today. I don't know what the future holds for the pop instrumental, but this is one fan who's always ready to shake and fingerpop and doesn't need a vocalist to tell him when.

encounter in speaker advertisements and product spec sheets are there simply because these measurements can easily be made, not because they tell much about how a speaker sounds.

Yet, there are a few important items to note when perusing a speaker's spec sheet. One is impedance. Look it up and you'll find some incomprehensible technical definition. Suffice it to say it's the total opposition to the transfer of energy. Speakers are rated at four, eight or 16 ohms impedance. The lower a speaker's impedance, the more current will flow into it from the amplifier. However, the amplifier can be damaged if speaker impedance drops below four ohms. This can happen if you add additional pairs of speakers to your system, such as for another room. When connecting extra speakers in parallel across a single amplifier output, the way it's normally done, the effective impedance divides in half. So if you are using speakers rated at four ohms, the impedance will drop to two ohms. Therefore, speakers with at least an eight ohm rating must be used if connecting extra speakers.

Another bit of information to check out when looking into speakers is the minimum power recommended and the maximum amount of power the speakers can handle. This is rather self-explanatory. Sending more power than is recommended through a speaker threatens to send the system up in smoke. Minimum power recommended on the other hand, is the minimum amount of power the manufacturer feels is needed to obtain adequate sound levels.

If appearing in a glossary, efficiency would be defined as the ratio, expressed in percentage, of signal output to input. What it refers to is the approximate power needed from an amplifier to drive a speaker system. Different speaker designs are more efficient than others. More efficient speaker systems require less power to produce a given level of sound than does a less efficient speaker. What you get involved in is deciding how loud you like your music, what size your listening room is, and then what speakers you like. If you've chosen a fairly inefficient system, you'll likely spend a bit more money purchasing a higher powered amplifier or receiver. If the added cost is of importance to you, you may want to reconsider your choice of speakers.

This quick run down on the meaning of all those scientific terms, abbreviations and numbers you encounter on spec sheets for cartridges and speakers certainly isn't meant to arm you to run out and shop for these items. There are several different types of cartridges and loudspeakers available, each with their own advantages and drawbacks. It depends on your needs.

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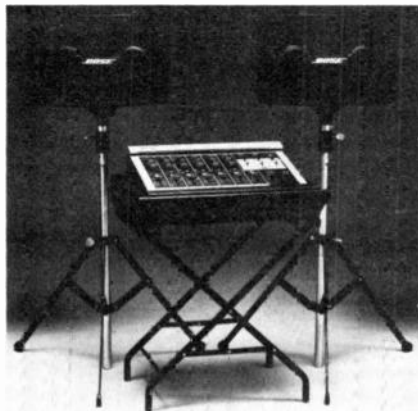
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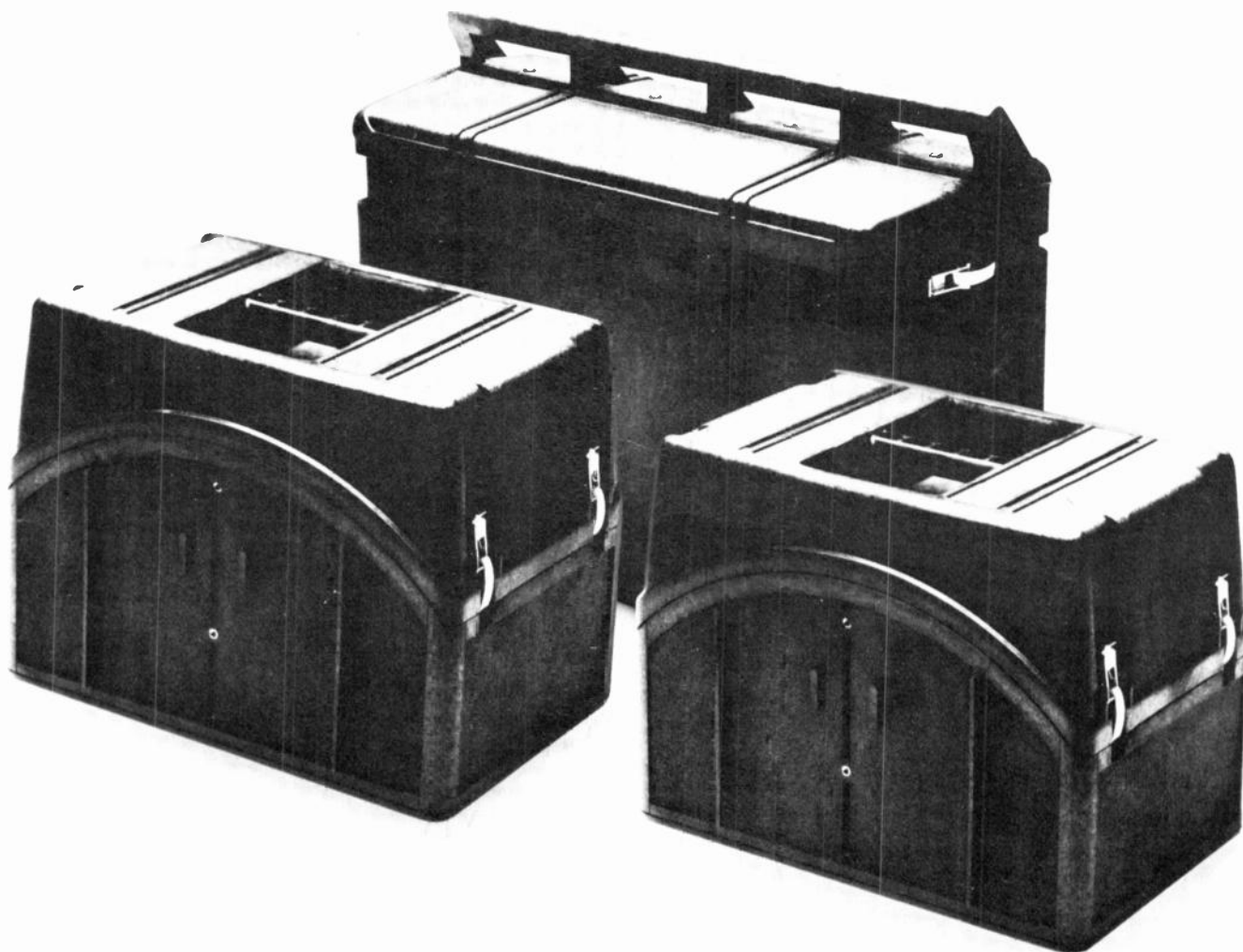
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FACES

Dizzy Gillespie

The patented up-turned horn came down momentarily from the patented squirrel jowls. The jowls scowled. "President Carter said he wasn't going to run in 1980 on tonight's news," said Diz backstage. "He said he was goin' to back this guy —" and he flashes this snapshot of grinning Jimmy sporting a big button that reads Dizzy Gillespie For President. Guffaws all around, but if the jazz world were to elect a leader, the voluble, well-loved, and extremely influential Mr. Gillespie would score a landslide victory. And the Latin bloc would number among his staunchest supporters. The musical Puertoriqueno percussionist, Ray Barretto, gigging for the first time with Diz at Lulu White's in Boston, voiced strong sentiments for the community: "Dizzy is my inspiration. He has done more than anyone to bring

Latin music before non-Latin audiences. We Latinos owe him a great debt.

Diz responded with the most torried live set I've heard from him in years — nearly all his own Afro-Cuban classics. Dizzy blew with fire and zest, pacing himself marvellously, sailing in over the rhythm at crucial moments with lightning bursts, playing "in the cracks," squeezing out those benders and leap-frogging the changes. Wow! And I was beginning to think he was saving himself for concerts and records! He limited raps and cowbell, came roaring back for second choruses, obviously getting a spurred boot out of Barretto, much as he did from Chano Pozo, Luis Miranda, and Candido nearly 35 years ago.

His quartet of spunky youngbloods communicated more Latin than a classicists' convention. Woody Dinard slammed rimshots as if his traps were timbales; guitarist Michael Howell spun out sinuous 6-on-4 on Fender bass, Ed Cherry trailblazed with slash-and-burn blues chords (and some country pickin'); Barretto, wonderfully lyrical on his four tuned congas, brought his solos full circle to melody statements at the takeouts of

"Nights In Tunisia," "Tin Tin, Deo," "Manteca."

Diz was also grooving high on the first wave of his long-awaited autobiography ("To Be Or Not To Bop," Doubleday \$14.95, perforce a history of bebop itself) in which he brings us from Cheraw, S.C. to Carnegie

and no-holds-barred energy remain. The spear carriers for what was once called punk but has since been euphemized into New Wave, the Clash were always deemed by the U.S. record industry as being a bit too colloquial for our tastes. The lads' insistence



Hall thousands of gigs and musicians and miles of Al Fraser's tape later. One bit of Gillespiana, perhaps in the book, came to life on Lulu's stand Diz took a ripping cadenza over open strings and perucssion tremolo on the coda of "Tunisia." Then he took his horn down, laughed a bit, wiped his chops, made an appreciative "mot," then inflated his balloons again and popped a really fat finale. Diz, who balances candor with put-on as deftly as he does tension and release in his arrangements, then fessed up to the delighted audience: "What I did just there was a trick, you know. Pops taught me that. He told me: 'Don't try to overdo it. You'll fart your note! Take a break and you won't hit no sour note. Take down your horn and rest a little before you play the end.' I'm an old man," groused Diz amiably. "I'm 61 goin' on 22. I'm not goin' to work too hard for any-damn-body" — Fred Bouchard

The Clash

The question is: can four English working-class yobs grow gracefully into middle age without becoming the very same rock and roll dinosaurs they so ardently oppose? Well, almost.

When the Clash first hit our shores back in February, the sheer awesomeness and intensity of their drive and power made all criticism seem superfluous. But now the initial thrill is somewhat gone, —even if the steely commitment

on a Cockney dialect that required subtitles and a blue collar identification which upwardly mobile middle class American society found absurdly naive were the main culprits. The first Clash album was not released in this country until a few months ago, and at that was rearranged to include the group's latest single smashes like "I Fought The Law" and "White Man In Hammer-smith Palais", noble additions to be sure, though they did disturb the flow of what was in its original form a keg of dynamite. Indeed, the uninitiated might find the revisions somewhat puzzling, as the band no longer spews just unreflective anger, but moral confusion as well. Their recent concert at the Palladium in N.Y. ranked as one of this year's major disappointments. Granted, there was plenty of Sturm und Drang and Us against Them posturizing, but little of the quasi-magical intensity that advance word had promised. Even older fans admitted that the band lacked the fire they had evidently displayed on their earlier tour. It seems the Clash have entered that limbo-like period wherein a band loses the burning intensity of their innocent youth, but have not yet fully established their identity as musical craftsmen and showmen. Technical sloppiness and the lack of a refined sense of dynamics may not make much difference when a band is in the



full flower of its initial creative blossoming, but a ragged presentation without the compensation of inspiration just doesn't cut the mustard. Nevertheless, the Clash potentially offer hope to anyone who ever thought that rock music was more than just music, for those to whom rebellion is not merely fashionable, but essential. — Roy Trakin

John Handy and Rainbow

When Yehudi Menuhin brought North Indian sarod master Ali Akbar Khan to New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1955, he ushered in an era of East-West cultural exchange that, in its own quiet way, has had lasting effects on the aesthetics of contemporary music. Not surprisingly, jazz found a certain affinity with the music's improvisational, intuitive approach, and before long people like Coltrane, Yusef Lateef and Don Cherry were utilizing the chant-like atmospheres and "odd" meters with surprising, stimulating flair. Likewise, the seventies brought us the acoustic, detail-rich fusion of Oregon and Shakti.

In 1971, John Handy first teamed up with Ustad Khan and tabla wunderkind Zakir Hussain in one of the most rewarding cross-fertilizations since Dizzy imported Chano Pozo from Cuba. Occasional tours and an album (*Karuna Supreme*, on MPS) followed, and now Handy has expanded the context's possibilities by adding the reclusive guitarist Bola Sete and South Indian violinist L. Subramaniam, to create a rather astonishing Rainbow.

The band's debut performance at San Francisco's Great American Music Hall in late July provided a display of such glowing virtuosity and piercingly direct

expression that, after awhile, one closed one's gaping mouth, stopped clapping at the solos — strung together like finely cut jewels — and concentrated more on the spirit that guided each player's statements. Indeed, it was more a show of individual musical personalities, than a harmonic, intricately orchestrated approach, with a gentle, incisive Khan; a silken Subramaniam, and a soaring, discrete Handy.

Of particular delight was Sete's re-emergence, one of the first since his mid-sixties association with Vince Guaraldi. The guitarist's 7/4 "Dance of the Jungle" opened the set. Sete's percussive rhythmic sense and delicate intensity have done nothing but flower during his extended sabbatical, and it was often via his dynamic lead that the pieces rose and fell like mountain winds. Hussain's highly tuned intuition was simply awesome, as he bantered joyfully with Khan and Handy, echoing melodic flurries, urging and twisting the shape of the rhythm.

It is altogether good news that John Handy is out of his commercial ensconcement with Warner Bros., now freer to pursue projects such as the Mingus Dynasty band and Rainbow. One hopes to see him, and other group members compose specifically with the tonal and textural possibilities in mind. Until then, the solos will do just fine. — M. Zipkin

Roberta Baum

There is an underground of female jazz singers in New York: strong, often inspiring vocalists who float just beneath the surface of public recognition in the Stygian netherworld of the lofts, clubs and cabarets. On the few occasions when

they rise into view, listeners are treated to a deeply personal view of the human voice, quite unlike the saccharine fantasies so prevalent on records today.

I'm thinking of women like the fascinating avant gardist Joan LaBarbara, the redoubtable Sheila Jordan (currently working with an excellent trio of pianist Steve Kuhn, bassist Harvie Swartz, and the great Bobby Moses on drums), and the legendary Abbey Lincoln, who just made a triumphant return to the New York scene after an absence of nearly a decade.

Add to that list Brooklyn born Roberta Baum. Baum is one of the most fascinating vocal stylists to emerge in many years, with an exceptional feeling for rhythm and textures, a dry, pingy voice, and a commanding sense of swing. Roberta's been working her way through the competitive Manhattan scene for five years, but considers her singing background before that so mundane she's reticent to even talk about it. She cites Abbey Lincoln, Betty Carter, Billie Holiday and Laura Nyro as her major influences, and though she is at home in bebop, she feels more aligned with punk jazzers. The night I heard her at Sweet Basil in the Village she was wearing a outfit worthy of the B-52's. "I love your pants Roberta. You look like a bohemian Annette Funicello." Thank you," she said looking at her reef leopard leotards. I feel so comfortable this way." Wondering out loud about some costumes with more flair for her trio she asked pianist Anthony Davis if he'd wear diapers. "Only if you change me," Davis decided, after thinking it over.

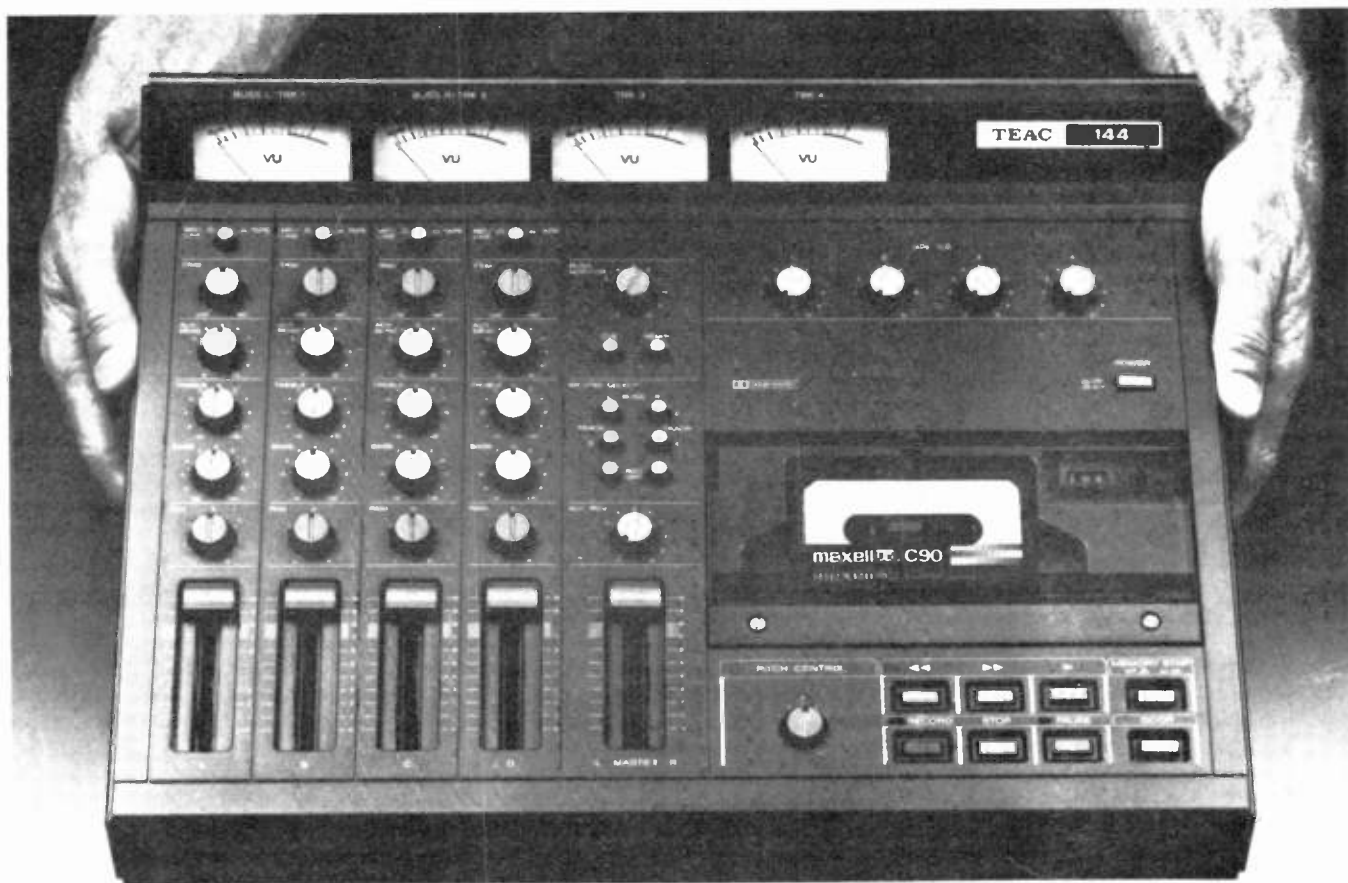
There was humor in her singing too, but of a more



sardonic nature. Like Abbey Lincoln, she has great theatrical presence — relying more on subtle renderings of the lyrics than on diva's chops — and often interjects conversational tones and cadences into her choruses, going more for emotional effect than the scale tones of the song. It's always music because she has an uncanny way of modulating into neighboring key centers, like she did on a unique rendering of "My Favorite Things," sounding more like the illegitimate daughter of Fanny Brice and Miles Davis than Coltrane. Whenever she went outside, pianist Davis was with her every step of the way with Wynton Kellyish chord movement and bouncing clusters. On "Like Someone In Love" she dueted with the fine bassist Mark Helias, hanging on to slightly vinegary long tones, and letting the chords gradually catch up to her; then calling in master drummer Ed Blackwell with a vibrating elastic shriek, she took a series of occasionally wordless choruses that escalated into a percussive conversation — her ear for drum patterns alone sets her a notch above most singers.

And in the tradition of the great jazz vocalists, Baum can make a ballad bleed, as she and Davis did on Duke Ellington's lovely composition "Heaven." Roberta Baum — wit, swing, a sense of drama, and a feeling for freer forms. You may not have heard of Roberta before, but you'll certainly hear of her again. — Chip Stern





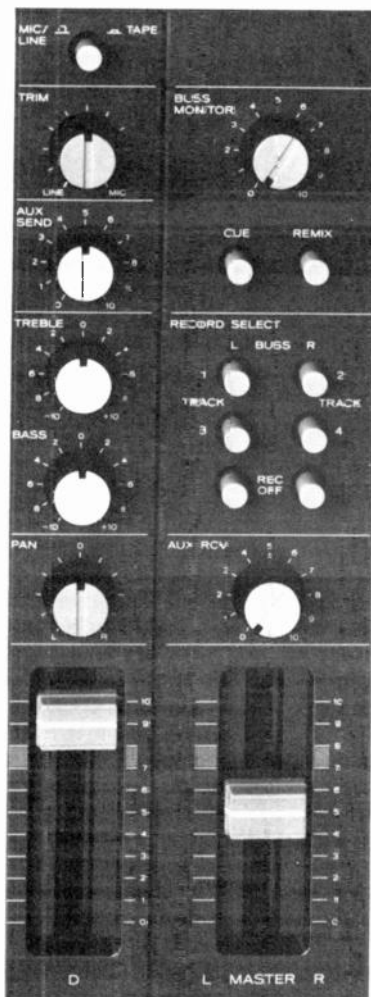
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MONTREUX '79

By Clint Roswell

Blue skies, snow-capped mountains, glistening lakes, pastoral countrysides — but Weather Report didn't give a damn about preserving the natural harmony and tradition at Montreux, Switzerland where Europe's oldest and most prestigious international jazz festival was breezing along with its usual cloudless perfection.

Amidst the tranquility, Weather Report came to play on the 12th of the 17 days of music with thunderbolts of arrogance. Along Rue de Stravinsky, where the Russian composed "Rites Of Spring" in tribute to the inspiring setting, sits the stage overlooking Lake Geneva. It is here that musicians from Stravinsky to Mendelssohn right up through contemporary statesmen like Les McCann, Charles Mingus and Miles Davis have come to let music ring out of their souls, beauty inspires reverence.

The Swiss have worked hard to preserve this setting. Each morning gardeners

Wayne Shorter hovered uncomfortably in the wings...



manicure the more than 200,000 flowers especially planted to bloom during festival time in July. Store owners arrive at 7:30 a.m. to scrub their sidewalks, a habit of centuries, before showcasing albums by Grover Washington Jr. or Al Jarreau or the day's performers, along with their gold and silver timepieces and jewelry. Gas station attendants obediently hand wash windows while gas at \$2.80 a gallon pours into tanks. There are no complaints and there are no lines; the Swiss have great respect for order and precision, whether it be clocks or train timetables.

Schedules fascinate them, too, and each day of the festival a new set of lineups with rehearsal times, sound-check times and performance times are posted in the press-room with exacting measure. By noon.

The Americans, who by far dominated the lineup of 600 musicians, made shambles of these schedules with unending pleasure. In the opening weekend, Taj Mahal's band didn't get on to the Casino stage until 2:30 a.m., precisely two hours and 15 minutes after B.B. King was supposed to wish all a Bon Nuit. In the meantime, Albert Collins, Gatemouth Brown, Lonnie "Guitar" Brooks, Roy Clark, Little Milton, Taj and B.B. shook the blues out of a cheering, foot-stomping crowd.

Backstage, festival producer Claude Nobs was jumping up and down with a permanent smile on his face, telling all who would listen, that it was "the hottest show in Montreux history." Nobs went to congratulate a tearful Albert Collins, so moved by being reunited on stage with the man who first showed him the wonders of an electric guitar, Gatemouth Brown, and also the man who was more a father than a legend, B.B. King, that when all seven

The festivities at Montreux were inspired, except for Weather Report, who stepped all over the traditions, the management and the fans.

American bluesmen traded riffs, Collins took one step back to pay homage before taking off on a blues run that accompanied him as he waded 50 feet into the audience.

Music is one merriment the Swiss allow to get the best of their fundamental doctrine of prudence, viewing it as an aesthetic ritual that, like wine, should be served as long as there is a calling for more. Encores, standing ovations, nights of music lasting until sunrise are often seen as magical encounters by the mostly French and German-speaking European crowds who come with the hope of rising above the barriers of language and into the universalities of music.

The musicians are touched by this, themselves sharing in the heightened communication, the possibilities of freedom and expression suddenly dancing in their heads, and invariably proceed to play their asses off. Music performed with heart, soul, but above all respect — no matter the format — always has been embraced by the Montreux audience.

Night after night, the cheers could be heard for an incredible procession of diverse talent and style that included Peter Tosh, Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock, Hermeto Pascoal, Spyro Gyra, Oscar Peterson, Grover Washington Jr., Ella Fitzgerald and Count Basie, Scott Hamilton, the Mingus Dynasty, Steve Howe and Al Jarreau.

"There's something about Montreux that makes it the highlight concert of the year," says Jarreau, who was called back for three encores on closing night. "I guess it's because music is the language of the spirit here."

Yet of all these talents, the act that was most anticipated was Weather Report. Their influence on fusion and jazz in the seventies could be measured by the line-up which culminated with five days of music created in the image of Weather Report. Fusion owes much of its successes, both artistically and commercially, to Wayne Shorter and Josef Zawinul, Weather Report's founding members. Innovation of sound and rhythm, coupled with electronics, opened the musical door to a new format in 1971.

And now, eight years later, the recognized giant was shaking its head like a monster. Rumors of Weather Report cancelling the gig spread in gasps and gloomy faces around the festival complex where all 3000 seats had been sold out for months. Campers who travelled from all over Europe coveted their admission tickets (\$25) along with their passports. The word by noon, however, was that there would be no music by Weather Report. Business and management problems. Tour problems. Problems. Black clouds could be felt, if not seen.

If there would be music this 12th day, insisted Weather Report's European road manager inside a conference room, the natural order of things must be changed. There would be no television, he warned, regardless of the contract. The custom and the tradition of filming all performances by Swiss national television for European release during the coming year is longstanding, with the artists, of course, getting royalties and negotiation rights. The reason, claimed the group spokesman, was that they

were'n prepared and didn't know about the filming. In 1977, however, Weather Report performed in Montreux and were filmed along with everyone else.

There was also another demand. There must not be

This was unheard of, but accepted with patient Swiss gentility. But the spirit and goodwill created by the 11 days of the festival — which until now had run as smoothly as a Swiss timepiece — was absent on the face of the

Things got a little too far out even for Wayne Shorter who wasn't comfortable on or off stage. He called the music "wish-for-surprise-jazz".

any sound recording of their concert — another custom that musicians embrace since the acoustics have been impeccably engineered by ElectroVoice and the tapes are given free to the artists; the only stipulation being that it appears somewhere on the album that it was recorded live at the Montreux jazz festival; a good public relations move by the Montreux organization which has built a jazz archive by encouraging this sort of mutually beneficial cooperation. This year alone, there were no less than four record labels planning to issue live albums from Montreux in addition to the series Polygram releases each April.

Weather Report said absolutely not. The group will have its own live LP from Japan released in the fall and it would therefore be unnecessary. The Montreux organization was aghast. In effect, Weather Report had broken the standard contract only hours before they were scheduled to appear. Swiss neutrality was being tested. Festival producer Nobs and director Michel Ferla were visibly shaken, but acquiesced because, "in the long run, they'll remember, we weren't fussy."

With pained smiles the two parties left the conference room and prepared for the sound-check. When Nobs returned to oversee the sound-check, however, he found the stage lights had been broken so that it would be impossible for any filming to be done. Later, Nobs called it "an accident", but Weather Report's roadies boasted outside the Casino that they had "fixed things." Then they kicked everyone out, including Nobs, press and photographers

usually sprightly emcee Nobs by showtime.

Was Weather Report really this ugly or were its band members hiding something?

It wasn't until the group performed a highly controversial two-hour set, which saxophonist Wayne Shorter has called a "projection of the rainbow effect with all its colors," that all the arrogance and pushiness of the day revealed the true nature of Weather Report.

There was an underlying discordant theme to their musical presentation, a mix of rhythms and solo excursions that were often more jarring than synchronized. Co-founder Shorter, who met keyboardist Zawinul in a New York City coffee-shop near Birdland in 1959, and who both played together later with Maynard Ferguson and Miles Davis, appeared to be reduced to a side man for Zawinul and bassist Jaco Pastorius' penchant for egotistical exchanges.

At one point, during a duet that Shorter tried to sound in on with his tenor sax, the music abruptly changed course so that Shorter put his tenor down for the alto. Once again the music soon changed keys. Shorter, anxious to blow, put it down for his tenor. He didn't get a note in, and finally left the stage.

This was the recurring theme all night, Zawinul and Jaco both taking painfully long unaccompanied solos on stage; not overtly trying to upstage Shorter, but too involved with their own passages to worry where and how all the musicians of Weather Report would mesh together. Drummer Peter Erskine had trouble supplying percussive support to the tangential duets and only

seemed to add uplifting thrust when all four members of the band played thematic sequences from songs like "Birdland," "Scarlet Woman," and "River People." After that, each member was on his own, and Shorter appeared to be the biggest casualty.

"I think after we did 'Scarlet Woman' I couldn't even begin to count how many times we went into complete improvisation," said Shorter, later, still smiling. "Yes, there were many surprises. I think I'd call it wish-for-surprise jazz. Don't try to dissect it, you'll just get blank pages."

Shorter giggled. "I remember when I was in high school and every time I was supposed to go to biology, I cut class," said Shorter. "I cut most of my art classes, too, which I majored in, but the principal only caught me when I cut biology. Yea, don't figure how all the parts add up. Look at the whole."

It all didn't add up for most of the Montreux crowd either, which has been called the most knowledgeable and receptive audience in the world by everyone from Count Basie to Taj Mahal. For the most part, the audience often didn't know when to applaud or sometimes even when a song was over.

The show was not without flashes of genius; there were points that overpowered the senses. But the cohesiveness of Weather Report, their ability to fuse a crosscurrent of rhythms and melody into a unified musical direction was sidetracked by indulgent indifference.

Shorter, for all his efforts in infuse a soulful sense, was merely an alien to what was going on around him. It unfolded more like an experiment in frigidity, almost bizarre in the contexts of fusion jazz.

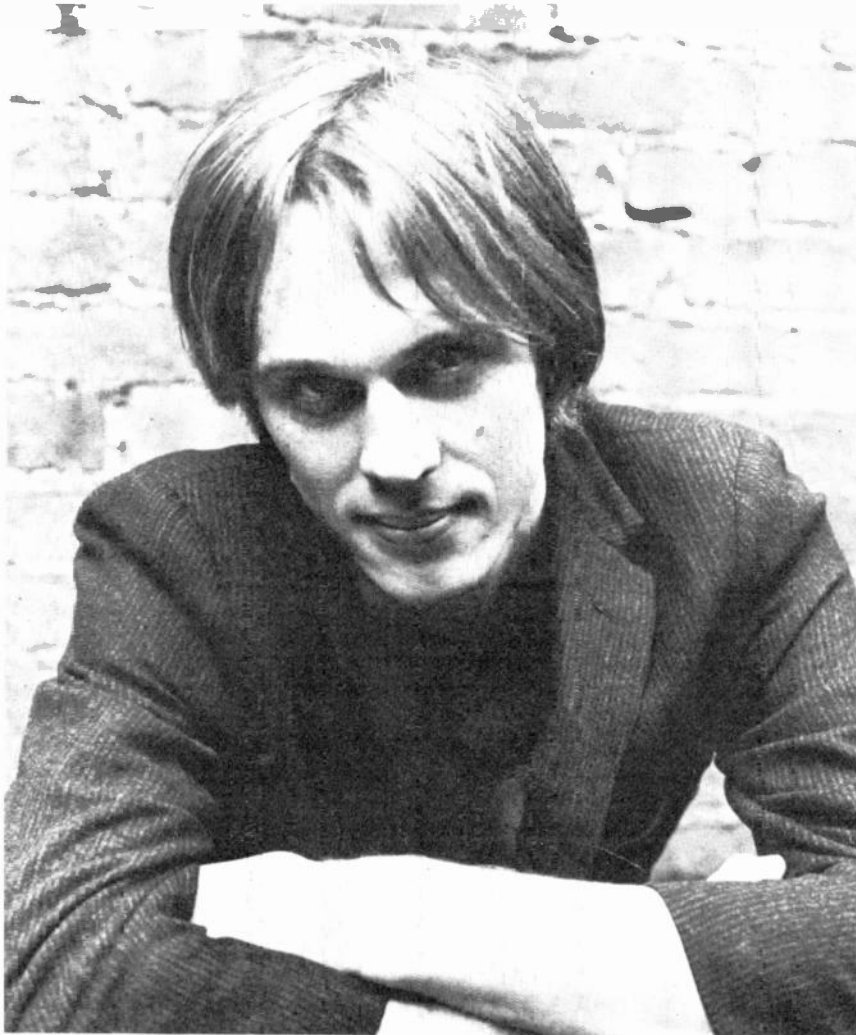
Downstairs, in the musicians bar, where parties of performers and press could usually be found after a show, people were shaking their heads. Yes, it was incredible, most thought, but what was it? Some said it was the most free they had ever heard Weather Report, but they weren't too sure if they liked it. Mingus Dynasty drummer Dannie Richmond and sax-man John Handy said they walked out on it. They weren't the only ones. Randy Brecker searched for a suitable phrase, but just twitched his eyebrows.

The "blank pages" that Shorter talked about were now staring back at him. Something was missing, all

cont on page 80

While Pastorius and Zawinul traded tempos and solos on and on and on . . .





ELVIRA MYERS

TOM VERLAINE

By Chip Stern

With influences ranging from the Byrds to Ornette Coleman, guitarist Tom Verlaine's music with Television was physically immediate, ringing, ironic, and somehow not of this world. He's the most respected new guitarist to come along in years, breaking away from the Claptonesque clichés that have plagued the genre.

There are rock guitarists, and then there are rock guitarists. You're all familiar with the garden variety type: concussion-level volume, a lot of flashy notes, maybe a bionic tongue for good measure — but not too much thought. Some people think they have to play a mile a minute to create excitement, but in the best rock, as in jazz, the dictum is that if you can't say it with a few well-chosen notes . . . well . . . you can't say nothin'.

As has been pointed out in other places, Tom Verlaine has the courage and integrity to play simply. With guitarist Richard Lloyd, drummer Billy Ficca

and bassist Fred Smith, guitarist-composer-lead vocalist Tom Verlaine made Television one of the most precocious, far-reaching rock bands of the 70s. They were genuine rock modernists. Coupling Verlaine's twisted, adenoidal vocals and oblique, visionary lyrics with the soaring, elemental tension between guitarists Lloyd and Verlaine, Television's music was physically immediate, ringing, ironic and somehow not of this world. Television produced two brilliant albums for Elektra before disbanding last summer: the raw, searching *Marquee Moon*, and the more textural, reflective *Adventure* — the latter

classic 60s rock bands, the former more evocative of post-Velvet Underground experimentation and turmoil. Writing in *Rolling Stone*, Mikal Gilmore likened the group's sound to "Ornette Coleman coming through a Rolling Stones barrage" and the *Village Voice*'s John Piccarella has observed that they brought a quality of "rural surrealism" to the landscape of urban rock.

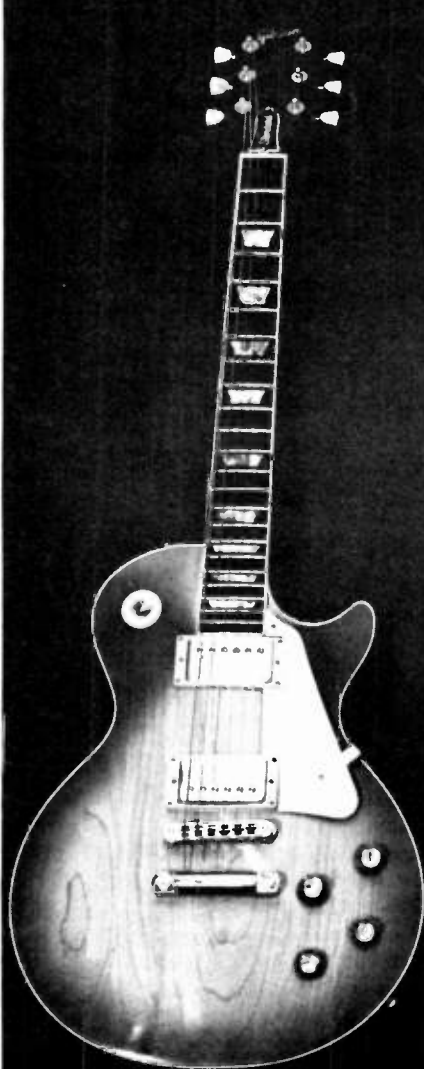
Television's final New York concerts in 1978 at the Bottom Line still reverberate warmly in the back corridors of my mind — in the final analysis, Television's most lasting impression was of a live band. With all due respect to Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page, those concerts cemented my opinion that Tom Verlaine is the finest rock guitarist alive (Jimi Hendrix is, after all, technically dead). Hearing Verlaine's solo on "Marquee Moon" grow from the recorded version to his expansive improvisations at the Bottom Line, I had the sensation of watching someone learn how to talk. His lines had an effortless, unhurried sense of flotation — a sweet vocal quality to every note — yet there was something unbearably urgent about his improvisation. Slowly, methodically, he built bird-like flutters, church-bell hammerings, wrong-is-right vibrato effects and singing distortion tones to an elliptical, double-timed climax, rapidly cross-picking notes so that his lines seemed to be going in two directions at once — like John Coltrane. Certainly Verlaine doesn't have the rhythmic sophistication or cascading techniques of Coltrane, and many of my rock-inclined friends derisively compare Verlaine's achievements to the more quantitative rave-ups of their favorite guitarists. All I can say is, that for my tastes, Verlaine is among the most natural melodic guitarists you're likely to hear — his syllables are more interesting than other players' paragraphs.

"There's a theory about the voice, how you voice the guitar, how you bring out that note," Verlaine mused, thoughtfully choosing every word. "An instrument is a voice — an extension of your inner self. There's a real voice inside the instrument that you can bring out. You know, I listen to a lot of saxophone players and cellists. If you listen to someone like Pablo Casals you realize that he knows how to *breathe* with the instrument, which is the necessity of the horn, and that might have something to do with the way I approach the guitar — putting something out on your breath instead of going whango and pouring out a million notes. I played saxophone for two years — not very well — and that might have something to do with the way I voice my guitar. I don't really think that my guitar playing is that different from that of a lot of other people, either."

"It is, really," I countered.

"Yeah," Verlaine shrugged, "that's what people say."

WHY?*



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emotion something else is that as a youngster growing up in Wilmington, Delaware he was attracted to an unusual variety of musics. "I like weird sounds, you know," Verlaine said with a twinkle in his eye. "I'm a great lover of weird sounds, the weirder the better. As a kid I liked classical music a lot, then around 1961 or so I had this friend who had a bunch of jazz records, and I remember that I really fell in love with jazz. The first guy I really loved was Roland Kirk, especially the early things with Jack McDuff and Horace Parlan. Then around '64 or '65 I saw these ESP records advertised in *down beat* and I thought 'gee these things look great.' So when my mother asked me what I wanted for Christmas I said all I wanted were these ten ESP records. Well, she didn't know what they were, so Christmas day I started blaring these Albert Ayler records on my father's stereo, and they couldn't believe it — it was really hilarious. Albert Ayler was the greatest thing I'd ever heard, I couldn't get over it. And my parents said 'do you think maybe you could wait a few days before you play those records again.' I listened to the early Ornette Coleman Atlantics a lot, too. I particularly liked his drummer Eddie Blackwell. The way he tuned his drums you could tell he was really in the *sound* of the drums; some of those solos he took on *Ornette*, God, they were great. I also loved Coltrane and Eric Dolphy — I still love them. The only trumpet player I really liked was Miles Davis. Miles is another one of those musicians who knows how to voice an instrument so it's coming from the whole person and not just one part."

So how did rock and roll come into all of this?

"My brother was buying Motown records and I really liked the way they sounded. Then he got "All of the Day, And All of the Night" by the Kinks and "19th Nervous Breakdown" by the Rolling Stones, and those were the songs that really get me in terms of rock. It was a super kind of aggressive quality in those records — not a macho aggressiveness or any stupid stuff — but just a real push, a real drive. I also loved the Byrds and Love. The Byrds just had such a sound. The Band did some nice things, too. Robbie Robertson is a really special guitarist. Cream and Hendrix were great; Cream just had such incredible energy; I tried to play some of the things off of Hendrix's records and I'd get so frustrated because I didn't realize they were using overdubbing. There were a lot of things I listened to, but so-called pop music never killed me, you know, the type of stuff that always seems to make it on the radio. The whole radio thing seems so . . . it's like they've accepted the whole "new wave" thing only because this kind of non element

emotion, but here it's like 'let's stay away from it because we might cry or something.' "

With all of Verlaine's feeling for music, and his fascination with the guitar (starting in 1966), Wilmington offered little inspiration. "I would just characterize it as a lack of ambition in any direction — it's just sort of a place to float, a pretty standard American place in a lot of ways. The reason I left there is that nobody wanted to do anything. I was just starting out myself and I wanted to have a band, but it was always 'well maybe we'll get together Saturday or I've got to mow the lawn Sunday.' "

So Verlaine came to New York City in 1968. "It was a learning experience for 5 or 6 years of finding things out that you wouldn't get to in a place where no one was interested. Everyone here was an individual, with a sense that they're unique." Verlaine put together an abortive early version of Television called the Neon Boys. That failing, he went on to perform as a solo electric guitarist which led to his meeting one Terry Ork, who was to be something of a patron; convincing CBGB's owner Hilly Kristal to feature rock and roll instead of country and western music. Television became the regular Sunday night band, and in a way, progenitors of the whole Manhattan "new wave" scene which was to give birth to Patti Smith, Blondie, Talking Heads and the Ramones, to name a few. Original bassist Richard Hell split to form his band the Voidoids and was replaced by former Blondie bassist Fred Smith (a subtle type of melodic player, the kind of musician who provides an underpinning so unobtrusive you don't even notice him unless you take the time to listen) and the band solidified into a powerful rock entity, albeit an emotionally unstable one. These personal tensions, particularly between Verlaine and Lloyd, were to tear the band apart just as they were beginning to peak.

By way of clarification, Verlaine hastened to add, "People have got a wrong impression about those tensions in regards to our performances. Friction doesn't play a part in the music once you hit the bandstand. I can't presume to speak for the others, but I never felt anything negative from anyone when I was onstage with Television. When I played rhythm behind Lloyd, the only thing that concerned me was to push him as hard as I could so that he'd go beyond what he was capable of and come up with something new, and vice versa. That's the only thing that mattered.

Still, it seems apparent from a listen to the guitarist's solo album *Tom Verlaine* that something is missing, or perhaps it's just that something else is emphasized. In retrospect, it would seem that *Adventure* was actually the first Verlaine solo album. Verlaine's concern for the

and textual — the creation of a multi-layered set of songs that give Verlaine's lead guitar voice less primacy and electrical intensity than we'd have liked. Maybe. Personally, I like the relaxation and increased humor ("Souvenir From a Dream," "Mr. Bingo," and "Yonki Time"), although Verlaine's recurring fascination with dreams and night, and his sense of — dare we say — divine mission are much in evidence on "Las Night" and "Kingdom Come" ("The river is muddy/But it may come clear/And I know too well what I'm doing here/I'm just a slave of the burning ray . . . And I'll be breaking these rocks/Until the kingdom comes"). The fact that Verlaine played nearly all the guitar parts reduces the amount of exquisite tension that occurred onstage with Lloyd — everything is more self-contained. On "Yonki Time" (written with the help of the famed New Orleans session turtle Professor Hardshell), amidst the sound of breaking glass and general mayhem, Verlaine's chorded solo infers the seminal 1930s electric guitar work of Eddie Durham and Charlie Christian — it sounds like Japanese reggae. On "Mr. Bingo" the influence of Ayler, Coltrane and Hendrix is felt in the highly vocalized guitar breaks, and on "Breakin' In My Heart" the seed pod of Verlaine's "Marquee Moon" solo has grown into an exquisite small plant. On the latter two songs and "Red Leaves" Verlaine's achievement is a sort of technicolor Americana, like the perspective of the small town boy come to the big city, with all the prismatic irony that implies. Quite plainly this puts Verlaine in the same quasi-country space as the Byrds, the Band, Neil Young and the Grateful Dead.

At this suggestion the affable, introspective Verlaine shifts his eyes slowly in frustration. "I can see the Byrds, the Band and Neil Young . . . but the Dead? People are always making that comparison, and I can't see why. The only Dead song I ever listened to was "Dark Star," because I liked the relaxation, the way the guitar seemed to just float through. But if you listen to most Dead songs you'll hear that they favor this one tempo most of the time, a kind of medium speed. There's a lot more rhythmic drive in my music, a lot more push, and I ought to know, because I'm doing most of the pushing. I think it's more like the Stones. Where do you hear country?"

"Certain pastoral overtones on songs like "Glory" and "Days," a kind of ringing, open sound," I offer.

"Well, "Days" is just "Mr. Tambourine Man" played backwards, but I don't hear the Byrds as being country."

I push on. "Perhaps what I hear is that rural sounds transfigured by the city, a sort of countrified response to the pace and varied pressures — a kind of

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ROBERTA BAYLEY

ENO

By Lester Bangs

Brian Eno is a confounding original. He's a serious composer who doesn't read music; a rock star without a band who never tours; a major musical influence who's never sold more than 50,000 copies of any of his records. His artistic partners are machines (usually in need of repair) and pure chance. His working process is a series of barely controlled accidents that are expanded and polished only after the fact. He's everybody's favorite synthesizer player, though he says he hates the instrument.

The other day I was lying on my bed listening to Brian Eno's *Music For Airports*. The album consists of a few simple piano or chordal figures put on tape loops which then run with variable delays for about ten minutes each, and is the first release on Eno's own Ambient label. Like a lot of Eno's "ambient" stuff, the music has a crystalline, sun-light-through-windowpane quality that makes it somewhat mesmerizing even as you only half-listen to it. I had been there for a while, half-listening and half-daydreaming, when something odd happened: I started thinking about something that didn't exist. I was recalling a conversation I'd had with Charles Mingus, the room we were in at the time and the things he'd said to me quite clearly, except that I had in reality never been there and the conversation had never taken place. I realized immediately, yet calmly that I was dreaming, though I had no memory of even the preliminaries to sleep and had in fact passed over into the dream state as if it were an unrippled extension of conscious reality. So I just lay there for a while, watching myself listening to Mingus while one-handed keyboard bobbins pinged placidly in the background. This went on until I was jolted out of all of it by the ringing phone. I stumbled in disoriented to answer it, and hearing my voice the caller asked: "Lester, did I wake you?"

"I'm not sure," I said, and told her what I'd been listening to. She just laughed.

Brian Eno, one of the true originals of contemporary music, is unique enough to be truly confounding. Everything about him is a contradiction. He's a Serious Composer who doesn't know how to read music. A rock star who doesn't have a band and never tours, also enjoying the feat of being allowed by his various record companies (mostly Island) to put out an average of two albums a year since 1973 when none of them has sold more than 50,000 copies. (In the midst of this prolific output, he was quoted in pop papers everywhere, insisting he was not a musician at all.) A man who (artistically speaking) goes to bed with machines and lets chance processes shape his creations, yet dismisses most other modern experimental composers as lacking heart, "dead from the neck down." Everybody's favorite synthesizer player, who says he hates the instrument.

Listing all the projects he's been involved with in his career is a bit like trying to enumerate the variegated colors and patterns on a lizard's back. With Bryan Ferry, he was a founding member of Roxy Music, one of the watershed groups of the Seventies. He's played clarinet in and produced the Scratch Orchestra and the Portsmouth Sinfonia, two famous experiments at mixing musicians from the entire spectrum of technical facility, from virtuosi to people who couldn't play at all, in the same performing situation. He's engaged in several ambient collaborations with Robert Fripp, co-piloted the last three David Bowie albums, and guested on sessions all over the map, from Matching Mole to Robert Wyatt to a remake of *Peter and the Wolf*. He has produced Television, Ultravox, Devo and Talking Heads, and his standing with New Wave rockers in general is summed up by the graffiti which recently appeared all over the New York subway system: "Eno is God." And yet, for all his support of musical primitivism (he produced Antilles' controversial *No New York* anthology of Lower Manhattan saw-off-the-branch bands), with his interest in the sociology of mechanical systems he's an avowed cybernetician, which he calls his "secret career."

His compositional method is entirely dependent upon tape recorders, as he neither reads nor writes music, and has occasionally complained about getting an idea for something when he's out somewhere and being unable to write it down; except that, as he has also noted, some of his finest pieces (say, "St. Elmo's Fire") are impossible to write out. He "writes" by picking little things out on various instruments, running them through electronics, bringing in other musicians who more often than not have nothing in common with each other, and subjecting the basic tracks to as many overdubs as they'll

need to be finished to his satisfaction. If everything runs smoothly and the chemistry doesn't have to be reached for, or if he doesn't want anything very complicated in the first place, the results are things like "Discreet Music" and the Fripp-collaboration "The Heavenly Music Corporation," one-take deals taped at home and obviously very cheap (he claims to have made the *(No Pussyfooting)* album with Fripp for the price of the tape: \$14). More often, his methods make him one of the highest-priced talents around, with huge studio tabs: when he went in to cut *Before and After Science*, he got spooked by favorable press response to *Another Green World*, the last album before it, and kept endlessly recording, revising, editing, stripping tracks and overdubbing on them again and again, writing and recording endless new ones till he'd cut over 120 individual tracks, out of which he finally released ten. And with some anguish: he ultimately realized that this one was not going to just resolve itself, that he'd have to stop and release it at some arbitrary point or he'd just go on laboring over it forever.

When I said "resolve itself," I meant just that: Eno likes to believe that his music has a life of its own, and on the evidence, it probably does. He likes to bring the music to a point where he can sort of step aside and let it develop of its own accord, and he has all sorts of devices for making this happen. Some are mechanical, like the tape-delay system he uses with Fripp and in his other ambient sessions, wherein the soloist plays off echoes of lines just completed. Others are more tactical and organizational — one of the more recent in this vein involved getting the musicians on the session in a situation where they were playing simultaneously in separate circumscribed areas where they could just . . . barely . . . hear each other at all. He recognizes that leaving at least part of the creative input up to chance processes and machines is asking for a certain otherness in your music, as if an outside entity were codetermining it with you, and that one of the hazards of working this way is the loss of some of the more intensely passionate edges. "On the one hand the music sounds to me very emotional," he says, "but the emotions are confused, they're not straightforward: in things that are very uptempo and frenzied there's nearly always a melancholy edge somehow. What people call unemotional just doesn't have a single overriding emotion to it. Certainly the things that I like best are the ones that are the most sort of ambiguous on the emotional level."

"Also, one or two of the pieces I've made have been attempts to trigger that sort of unnervous stillness where you don't feel that for the world to be interesting you have to be manipulating it all the time. The manipulative thing I think is the American ideal: that here's nature, and you somehow subdue and control it and turn it to your own ends. I get steadily more interested in the idea that here's nature, the fabric of things or the ongoing current or whatever, and what you can do is just ride on that system, and the amount of interference you need to make can sometimes be very small."

Of course, this is the sort of thing that could lead someone like New Wave guitar virtuoso Lydia Lunch to say: "Eno's records are an expression of mediocrity, because all it is is just something that flows and weaves, flows and weaves . . . it's kind of nauseating. It's like drinking a glass of water. It means nothing, but it's very smooth going down."

Eno himself not only recognizes such criticism but carries it further: "The corollary point is that if you're not in the manipulative mode anymore you're not quite sure actually how to measure your own contribution. If you're not constructing things and pushing things in a certain direction and working towards goals, what is your function? In fact, one of the reasons cybernetics keep coming up is that it does talk about ways of working that are different than that. It does talk about systems that are self governing, so which may not need intervention. They look after themselves, and they go somewhere which you may not have predicted precisely, but which is generally in the right direction. But the assessment of

may be that Eno has created all his systems as a way of protecting himself against a larger one. If it seems like he's all over the map (he also dabbles in video and writes occasional prose pieces for English journals), he wouldn't have it any other way, and it's not just a matter of being intensely creative, but of knowing what identification in the rock marketplace can do to anybody's creative drives. "The best thing for me would be to release each album under a different name," he said in one interview, and like many (most?) real artists he treasures his privacy. The chameleonlike quality of his whole solo career could be seen as one huge defensive tactic against being backed into corners and turned into a cliché by stardom. "I see myself often maneuvering to maintain mobility," he says. "And I'm certain one of the reasons that my whole kind of selling thing is so uncoordinated and clumsy is that in fact it acts as a kind of non-constraint to have it be so. The way most bands work is that they release an album, and then the next one, and then the next one, and there's this kind of linear thing, which tells them what the next album's got to be like. But what's happened with me is that since there's things coming out in all sorts of different ways, like there's Fripp and Eno and then there's *Discreet Music* and then there's collaborations of various kinds, then there's the occasional solo album, there isn't that kind of linearity in the development. I still do retain the option of moving around, and people are gonna say, 'Well, what can you expect, he's never been consistent.' And it strikes me as a better position to be in."

"It's something that started happening almost by accident, and then I decided it was worth carrying that on. I often work by avoidance rather than by having a sense of where I want to go, and what's often happened is that I've been faced with an option that careerwise looked tempting, and yet for some reason I didn't want to do it, so I'd just avoid it, and by avoiding I'd find that I'd gone somewhere else which can suddenly become interesting. One specific case of avoidance was the rock superstar thing, because when I first left Roxy Music the obvious future was a kind of solo career fronting a band, and I even started trying to do that. But as soon as I'd started I thought, 'I hate this, I really don't want to do this, it's really boring.' And so I started doing something else. But it wasn't what people think about artists, that you get these noble aspirations that 'I'm going to do this' and soldier out like that. It was more a question of the other being dumb and boring and exactly the wrong role for me because I was the lead singer of his group and I felt extremely uncomfortable as the focal point, in the spotlight. I really like the behind the scenes role, because all my freedom is there. The reason I don't still tour is not that I have some ethical objection to them, but that I don't know how to front a band! What would I do? I can't really play anything well enough to deal with that situation."

This brings up the famous "I'm not a musician" quote from early in his career, which confounds fans and critics alike to this day. It seems like a conceit turned inside out, inasmuch as he's got almost a dozen albums of his music sitting here. "Again," he almost sighs, "it was a case of taking a position deliberately in opposition to another one. I don't say it much anymore, but I said it when I said it because there was such an implicit and tacit belief that virtuosity was the *sine qua non* of music and there was no other way of approaching it. And that seemed to be so transparently false in terms of rock music in particular. I thought that it was well worth saying, 'Whatever I'm doing, it's not that,' and I thought the best way to say that was to say, 'Look, I'm a nonmusician. If you like what I do, it stands in defiance to that.'

"When I say 'musician,' I wouldn't apply it to myself as a synthesizer player, or 'player' of tape recorders, because I usually mean someone with a digital skill that they then apply to an instrument. I don't really have that, so strictly speaking I'm a non-musician. None of my skills are manual, they're not to do with manipulation in that sense, they're more to do with ingenuity. I suppose."

One of the interesting things about having little musical knowledge is that you move to places you wouldn't go to if you knew better."

And yet one wonders still how disingenuous all this might be. So I asked him point-blank: "Have you ever had any formal music or theory training at all?"

"No."

"Have you ever felt the pressure that you should get some?"

"No, I haven't, really. I can't think of a time that I ever thought that, though I must have at one time. The only thing I wanted to find out, which I did find out, was what 'modal' meant; that was I thought, a very interesting concept."

Remembering how amazed I'd been to discover that I (who play harmonica and zilch else) could play prime Eno compositions like "The Fat Lady of Limbourg" on piano, asked him, "How well can you play, say, guitar?"

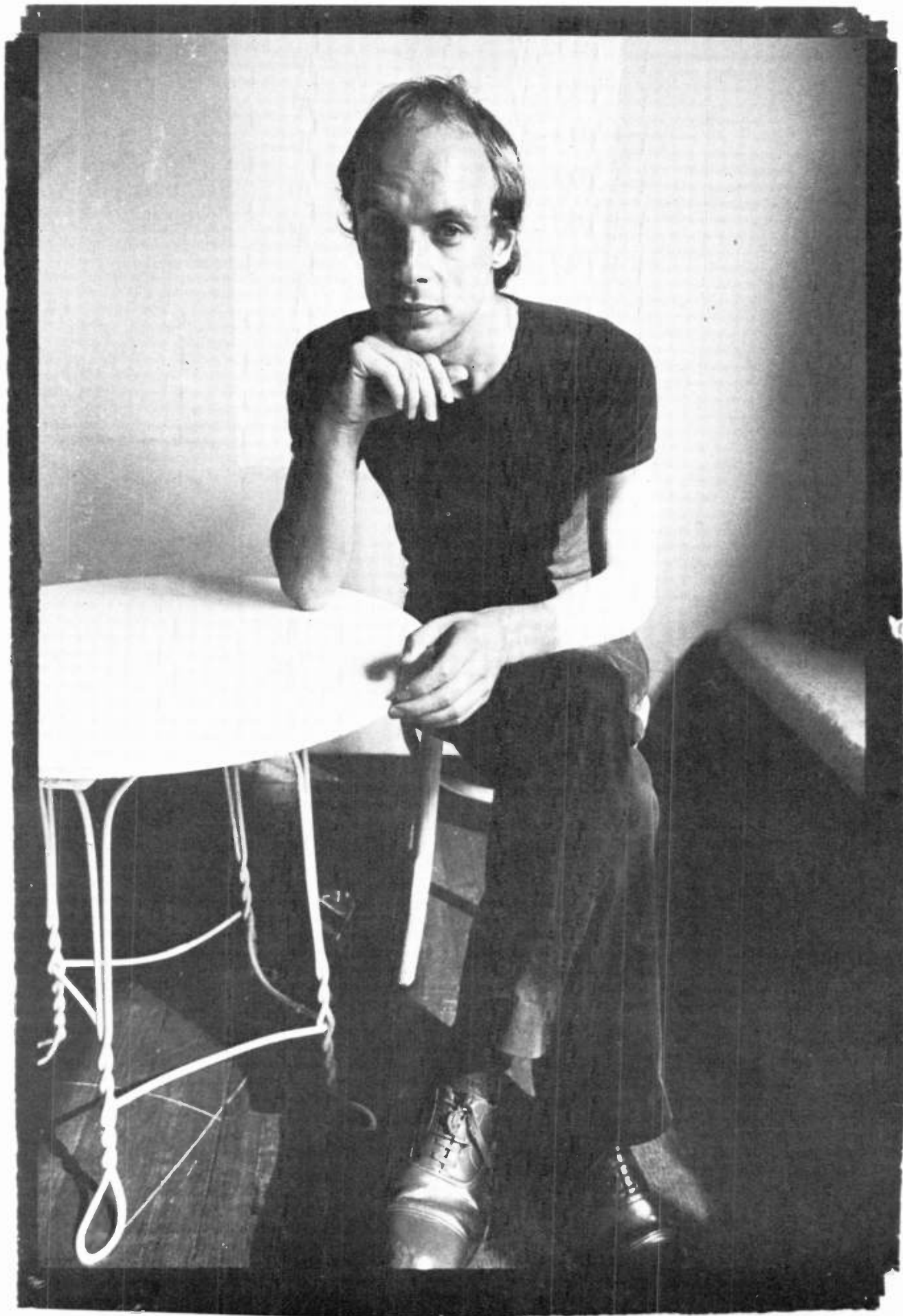
"Well, I always use the same guitar; I got this guitar years and years ago for nine pounds called a Starway, which I never changed the strings, it's still got the same strings on it. Fripp knows and loves this guitar actually, it's got a tiny little body really small, and the reason I never changed the strings was that I found that the older they were the better they sounded when they went into fuzzbox and things like that. I never used it except through electronics, and the duller the strings were the more that meant they got to sound just like a sine wave, so the more I could do with the sound afterwards. It's only got five strings 'cause the top one broke and I decided not to put it back on: when I play chords I only play bar chords, and the top one always used to cut me there."

"One of the interesting things about having little musical knowledge is that you generate surprising results sometimes you move to places which you wouldn't do if you knew better and sometimes that's just what you need. Most of those melodies are me trying to find out what notes fit, and then hitting ones that don't fit in a very interesting way. This happened the other day in this session, when we were working on a piece and I had this idea for the two guitars to play a very quick question and answer, threenotes-threenotes, just like that, and Fripp said, 'That won't fit over these chords.' He played it slowly, what that meant, and it made this terrible crashing discord. So I said, 'You play it, I bet it'll fit,' and it did and it sounded really nice, too. But you see I think if you have a grasp of theory you tend to cut out certain possibilities like that 'Cause when he explained it to me I could see quite plainly that technically it didn't fit at all. Each note was a discord with the chord that was there, not one note fitted, in almost all the six notes."

"For me it's always contingent on getting a sound, the sound always suggests what kind of melody it should be. So it's always sound first and then the line afterwards. That's why I enjoy working with complicated equipment, because I can just set up a chain of things, like a lot of my things are started just with a rhythm box, but I feed it through so many things that what comes out often sounds very complex and rich, and as soon as I hear a sound it always suggests a mood to me. Now most sounds that you get easily suggest moods that aren't very interesting; or have already been well-explored. But working this way, I often find that I'll get pictures. I'll say, 'This reminds me of . . . ' like 'In Dark Trees' on *Another Greener World*: I can remember how that started and I can remember very clearly the image that I had which was this image of a dark, inky blue forest with moss hanging off and you could hear horses off in the distance all the time, these horses kind of neighing, whinnying . . ."

"Was this an image from your personal experience?"

"No, it was just what the rhythm box suggested. You know, if you're in a forest the quality of the echo is very strange because echoes back off so many surfaces of all those trees"



Since he was on the subject of *Another Green World*, I decided to ask him about some of the instruments listed on that album's liner, with such exotic appellations as "snake guitar," "digital guitar," and "desert guitars." In the case of the first, for instance, I had often thought that given Eno's reputation it would not be out of the question for him to lay a guitar down in the middle of the recording studio and tape the sound of a reptile belly crawling slowly across the strings.

He laughed. "Well, I certainly wish I could live up to some of these fantasies! All those words are my descriptions of either a way of playing or a sound; in that case it was because the kind of lines I was playing reminded me of the way a snake moves through the brush, a sort of speedy, forceful, liquid quality. Digital guitar is a guitar threaded through a digital delay but fed back on itself a lot so it makes this cardboard tube type sound. Wimshurst guitar: on 'St. Elmo's Fire' I had this idea and said to Fripp, 'Do you know what a Wimshurst machine is?' It's a device for generating very high voltages which then leap between the two poles, and it has a certain erratic contour, and I said, 'You have to imagine a guitar line that has that, very fast and unpredictable.' And he played that part which to me was very Wimshurst indeed."

"Do you find," I wondered, because I really didn't know it could be done this way, "that with musicians you often can give them verbal instructions like that, just sort of paint a picture and they'll be able to do it?"

"That's normally how I do it. And I describe things in terms of body movements quite a lot. Particularly with the people I've been working with lately, I say, 'I don't want something that makes you do this, I want something that makes you do *that*!' Or I dance a bit, to describe what sort of movement it ought to make in you, and I've found that's a very good way of talking to musicians. Particularly bass players, because they tend to be into the swirling hips. I'm more into the sort of puppet thing, as if you're strung up somehow."

Only when he's completed the instrumental tracks does he go to work on the lyrics, and his method of arriving at them is as unique, even controversial, as everything else about how he works. What he does is sort of *deduce* them, in a way that can be infuriating to us word jockies. As with most of his music, Eno "finds" his lyrics by setting up a situation in which the words are produced through an interaction between his subconscious and colorations suggested by the music itself. I asked him if, working this way, he sometimes discovered a year or so later that something he hadn't even realized before was what he was getting at. "That's nearly always what happens, because the lyrics are constructed as empirically as the music. I don't set out to say anything very important. It's like a painter friend of mine says about when he starts working, 'It nearly always starts off with me just wanting to play paints.' It's getting excited about a sound or a rhythm or something very straightforward, and pushing it along and saying 'Well, what would happen if I did this or tried that and then that and that, and at some point this set of ingredients that you've combined in a fairly dabbling fashion suddenly produce an interaction that wasn't predicted. That's the point at which it starts to take off, because as soon as that point happens it starts to dictate its own terms. With the lyrics I have all these tricks and techniques which were first conceived as a way of defeating self-consciousness about writing lyrics, and because I don't have anything to say in the usual sense. I prefer to let the music prompt something from me, see what that prompts and then examine it after the event. So what I do first is work on the track till its identity is fairly well established. I already know how its gonna sound in terms of textures and time and speed and all that, then I take all that home, a rough mix version of it, and I just keep playing it very loud and just singing along with it, just singing anything really, and sometimes that anything is just right for it. It's the only thing I do, I guess, that approaches improvising, because everything else is very pedestrian in the way it's made. What often happens is that I

be rhythmically, so I start singing or placing the syllables in a certain way, and they're just nonsense at the beginning. Then certain types of sounds will emerge, like a particular vowel sound will suit a particular song. Like, for some reason, the vowel sound 'i' suited 'Baby's on Fire,' it's a sharp kind of thrill sound; so then I'm working around two things, which is this vowel sound and this syllable construction, and quite soon words arise from that, and you only need to get about six words out of that for you then to have a good clue of what the song is going to be about. And I know it sounds extremely perverse whenever I explain it, to finally at the end of it all sit down and read it and say, 'Ah, so that's what it's about.' But what strikes me is that following this process, the preoccupations that manifest are not ones that you're necessarily conscious of at any earlier point."

"But isn't it difficult and mysterious enough to try to understand why you love a certain person?" asked another there present. "Isn't that feeling worth writing about?"

"No, not for me. I'm not interested in it. I mean, I'm not interested in writing about it. It's certainly not something that I would ever use music to discuss, at least not in clear terms like that. You see, the problem is that people, particularly people who write, assume that the meaning of a song is vested in the lyrics. To me, that has never been the case. There are very few songs that I can think of where I even remember the words actually, let alone think that those are the center of the meaning. For me, music in itself carries a whole set of messages which are very, very rich and complex, and the words either serve to exclude certain ones of those, or point up certain others that aren't really in there, or aren't worth saying, or something. It's like David Byrne said to me the other day: 'Sometimes I write something that I really can't understand, and that's what excites me.' I felt such a sympathy with that position."

It appears that the great and true love of his creative life is the tape recorder, and all of the things it can do. When he joined Roxy Music, he didn't even, strictly speaking, audition; they asked him to come and make some demos of the band, and while he was there he started fooling around with a synthesizer that was in the room; when they heard what he was getting out of it, they asked him to join. "I'd never touched one before, but Andy (McKay, sax player) knew that I had been doing things with electronics for a long time, five or six years, particularly using tape. Since I was about fifteen, really, I had wanted a tape recorder since I was tiny. I thought it was just like a magic thing, and I always used to ask my parents if I could have one but I never got one, until just before I went to art school I got access to one and started playing with it, and then when I went to art school they had them there. I thought it was magic to be able to catch something identically on tape and then be able to play around with it, run it backwards; I thought that was great for years," he laughs.

"I can remember the first piece I did at art school; the sound source was this big metal lampshade, like they have in institutions, and it was like a very deep bell, and I did a piece where I just used that sound but at different speeds so it sounded like a lot of different bells. They were very close in pitch and they just beat together. It's not unlike many of the things I do now, I suppose."

"I'm very good with technology, I always have been, and with machines in general. They seem to me not threatening like other people find them, but a source of great fun and amusement, like grown up toys really. You can either take the attitude that it has a function and you can learn how to do it, or you can take an attitude that it's just a black box that you can manipulate any way you want. And that's always been the attitude I've taken, which is why I had a lot of trouble with engineers, because their whole background is learning it from a functional point of view, and then learning how to perform that function. So I made a rule very early on, which I've kept to, which was that I would never write down any setting that I got

on the synthesizer, no matter how fabulous a sound I got. And the reason for that is that I know myself well enough to know that if I had a stock of fabulous sounds I would just always use them. I wouldn't bother to find new ones. So it was a way of trying to keep the instrument fresh. Also I let it decay, it keeps breaking down and changes all the time. There are a lot of things I've done before that I couldn't even do again if I wanted to."

In fact, though, if there has been one criticism of Eno's music over the past few years, it's Lydia Lunch's: that all his music does is "flow and weave," over and over again. That his quiescent, anti-emotional or emotionally ambiguous mode seems to dominate; that what we have in all these "ambient" recordings and scores for unmade films and endless overdubs might just be still waters that don't necessarily run deep, a placidity so resolute as to be almost oppressive, fascist. Everybody who felt that way should be excited to hear that in the album he's working on now he's returned to what he calls the "idiot energy" of his first album and the dancehall classic "Baby's on Fire." "I found a new streak of idiocy! I'd lost confidence in the old one. To write those types of songs



requires a really peculiar type of energy. The other thing is to set up a situation that presents you with something slightly beyond your reach. I did these backing tracks with a group of musicians who had never worked with each other before. In fact, some of them didn't even know each other and they're from very different disciplines. David Van Tieghem (an extreme conceptual avant-gardist whose "A Man and His Toys" was one of the highlights of the recent New Music, New York festival at Lower Manhattan's Kitchen Center for Video, Music and Dance) was one of them, and Bill Laswell, who's a bass player in a band called Zu, and then Tim Wright from D.N.A. who used to be in Pere Ubu, David Byrne (of Talking Heads) on guitar, then a percussion player I discovered in Washington Square Park, Edward Larry Gordon. And myself. So it's quite a large group.

"What was so weird was that at first I thought I'd wasted my money. I just couldn't understand it at all. I kept listening to it, and did some rough mixes where I was kind of sculpting the track, because there was just this barrage of instruments playing all the time. I just chopped it about so there was more space in it and I'd have instruments coming in in little sections. So it's just starting to have a shape now, and I've been writing some of the songs, which at this moment are taking very interesting form. The tracks kind of have a foot in three camps: one is sort of disco-funk, another is Arabic/North African music, another is black African music. And there's a very interesting tension between those three types of black music, and then the vocals which are extremely European, like the vocals on Talking Heads' 'I Zimbra,' deliberately choral and cut off. It'll be me and some other people singing. I don't want it to be just one voice in most cases, I want it to be a group of synchronized voices.

"There's one of the songs that at the moment — all of these things will change — is a discussion that starts off with a group of women singing, and then it alternates with a group of

men/women, men/women, like that, and each party goes through subtle changes on each verse until the Voice of Reason enters. The Voice of Reason is another voice of indeterminate quality, indeterminate humanity really, a highly rational, cold, precise type of voice, which throws the thing into confusion, after which the men's syllables start becoming scrambled. I've discovered this new electronic technique that creates new speech out of stuff that's already there."

I wondered aloud if this stuff had been influenced by the Contortions, D.N.A. and other bands like those on the *No New York* album.

"Yes. As you'll see, there's a certain quality of sound that's common to those people. For a start, things sound really messy, and it's a kind of mess that I've never had on anything before. I like it a lot, it's a sort of jungle sound, really. And there's a peculiar perspective to it, so that everything's upfront but there's this very wide space behind it — it's a new production technique I've discovered."

He puts on a tape of the backing tracks. It sounds like nothing we've ever heard from Brian Eno before; like nothing



As with most of his music, Eno "finds" his lyrics by setting up a situation in which the words produce an unpredicted interaction, they then grow on their own.

ever heard before, period. The influence of the move to New York is unmistakeable: a polyglot freneticism, a sense of real itching rage and desperation. The stylistic mix is just as he described, with some of the roiling collective blasts reminiscent of free jazz, funk springing everywhere and unmistakable Arabic strains, which he says he got from listening to and recording North African pop stations on shortwave. It gives intimations of a new kind of international, multi-idiomatic music that would cross all commercial lines, uniting different cultures, the past and the future, European experimentalism and gutbucket funk. Not the first step in such a direction, of course, but likely one of the firmest yet. Walking home, we wished we'd had the nerve to ask him if we could tape a copy of it, because knowing the way Eno works, what finally appears on the record will probably bear as little resemblance to this particular mutant spew as this bears to his past recorded output. As for Brian Eno himself, he is one of those of whom it might truly be said that his real estate is the future. But he is too self-effacing a genius to ever make such extravagant claims for himself. What he will say instead is, "Nearly all the things I do that are of any merit at all start off as just being good fun," and, "I think, um, I'm sort of building up to doing something else quite good soon."

SELECTED BRIAN ENO DISCOGRAPHY ***With Roxy Music***

Roxy Music and *For Your Pleasure* (both Warner Brothers, released 1972 and '73 respectively); Eno himself feels that

napeless. Maybe, but in that album Roxy stopped being a vessel strong enough to hold both sonic experimentalism and Bryan Ferry's fashion flash, and settled instead for being the most lapidarily aristocratic pop group of the Seventies. For 'our PLeasure's "The Bogus Man" may be a failed experiment, but it at least points the way for others. This atmosphere of risk made the first album a bit cluttered yet diffuse — too many people trying to do too many things all at the same time — but the first side of *For Your Pleasure* is the pinnacle of the Ferry-Eno marriage, great songs in a luxurious setting.

Song-Type Albums

Here Come the Warm Jets (Island, 1974): Today some of this solo debut sounds inconclusive, the overreachings of a whiz kid. But the predominant feel is a strange mating of edgy dread ("Driving Me Backwards") with wild first-time-out exuberance. "I was just in a mad mood, really, when I did it," says Eno today, "and also had this feeling of incredible freedom." There's a Beatlesy pop sentimentality (and Sgt. Pepperishly cinematic sound) to things like "Cindy Tells Me," "Needles in the Camel's Eye" still sounds to me like some previously unimaginable mix of Buddy Holly and the Velvet Underground, and the underground standard (?) "Baby's on Fire" features perhaps the greatest guitar solo Robert Fripp will ever play in his life.

Taking Tiger Mountain (By Strategy) (Island, 1975): This is the absolute incontestable Eno masterpiece to date. Probably still a decade ahead of its time, this record's rich textures, rhythms dancing against each other, and exotic synthesizer treatments of standard rock instrumentation revealed that Eno had already mastered his ultimate instrument: the recording studio. As the overdubs pile up in Byzantine splendor, it's easy to forget that he made this awesome tapestry with a lineup of guitar, bass, drums and percussion. Guests from Roxy Music, Portsmouth Sinfonia and other sources provide seasoning, and perhaps more than his ambient efforts, *Tiger Mountain* demonstrates what riches may be mined from the simplest musical materials. Eno says, "For me *Tiger Mountain* is a kind of magic album; there's so much in there that I just wasn't conscious of putting in at all."

Another Green World (Island, 1976): First application of his ambient experiments to actual (and often quite pop-oriented) songs, while the instrumental etudes between them have more content than their ambient cousins. Where *Tiger Mountain* had the density and lushness of a thousand-hued tropical forest, *Another Green World* investigates various possibilities for small ensembles; it's chamber music reconciling the pastoral dells of Eno's geographic origins with the technological Alphaville that's his workshop.

Before and After Science (Island, 1978): Career neurosis time: the weakest of his four "song" albums, as he admits, this lacks the peaks of its predecessors, and (on the first side, anyway) sounds a mite disjunct. But still a fine, fine record. Foretells his current return to "idiot energy," with unmistakable (and previously undisplayed) funk influence in places. The second side is classic autumnal fairytale music, and Fripp tears out another coruscating solo in "King's Lead Hat."

Ambient Records

FRIPP & ENO: (*No Pussyfooting*) (Island, 1974) and *Evening Star* (Island import, 1975): (*No Pussyfooting*) may have had as much to do with Eno's departure from Roxy Music as Ferry's paranoia. It's comprised of two long jams, the first of which took place when Eno invited Fripp over to fool around in his home studio late in 1972. What they got was so interesting and they had such an obvious chemistry that they cut another a few months later and put this album out concurrent with *Stranded*, over the vigorous objections of Eno's management, who thought it would damage his "image" and/or chances for solo pop stardom. Fripp was one of the few instrumentalists

sparse playing when it was going to be channeled through all the echoing corridors of Eno's tape-delay system. *Evening Star* contains a retort to those who'd accuse Eno's ambient phase of being pleasantly placid to the point of the insipid: "An Index of Metals," has a quiet malevolence that's chilling.

Discreet Music (Obscure, 1975): Depending on your point of view, Eno's most passive piece is either the definitive unobtrusively lustrous statement on ambient music or a wispy treacly bore that defies you to actually pay attention to it. Perhaps the garden without the sombre reptile that is Fripp. Also Eno's very favorite of all his recorded works (perhaps because this assiduously disciplined artist had to put the least effort into it). "In a way, I think my most successful record was *Discreet Music*, in a sort of economist's terms of success, because that was done very, very easily, very quickly, very cheaply, with no pain or anguish over anything, and I still like it

Music For Films (Antilles, 1978): 18 short pieces written either for films he was hired to score or films unmade yet outside of his mind. Each of these little vignettes paints a palpable mood conjuring mental images that vary from listener to listener, but seem to run to the sylvan, pastoral or aquatic. Good drug album, needless to say. Also features more players than any of his other ambient albums.

Music For Airports (Ambient, 1979): His biggest seller and the album that is beginning to try some people's patience in that there are now more ambient albums out under his name than "regular" ones, and this one doesn't add a whole lot to what he's already said in the genre. Still, it's very pleasant, as any album explicitly designed to "get them prepared for death" well ought to be. Eno says "I wasn't joking about that. I mean: that one of the things music can do is change your sense of time so you don't really mind if things slip away or alter in some way. It's about getting rid of people's nervousness."

Collaborations

DAVID BOWIE: *Low*, "Heroes" and *2The Lodger* (all RCA 1977, 1978 and 1979 respectively): The trilogy co-written and performed with the famous dilettante remains controversial even among Bowie and Eno fans — many in each camp feel that the other guy should never have entered the picture. The first side of *Low* is really interesting and some people consider *The Lodger* a masterpiece, but in general these sound like half-baked imitations of the Real Stuff as in *Tiger Mountain*, *Green World* etc. They sound half-baked probably because unlike Eno, Bowie's not real big on the long, arduous hours of disciplined craftsmanship; like Bob Dylan, he likes to just nip to the studio, let the music appear magically in his head, cut it and run off to the next party.

Productions

Talking Heads, Devo, Ultravox, *No New York* (various labels) In the past few years Eno has been much in demand as producer, various (mostly New Wave) groups counting on his touch to highlight their own strengths. Ultravox is a band too fundamentally uninteresting for anybody to save, Devo are there if you want 'em (sounds like tinkertoy music to me), and the second and third Talking Heads albums are so far the pinnacles of his production career. He says Talking Heads are "the best working relationship I've ever had within rock music," and it definitely shows: he sounds like a fifth (and crucial, on the evidence) member of the band. As for Antilles' *No New York* compendium (The Contortions, Teenage Jesus and the Jerks, Mars, D.N.A.), these are some of the most interesting — though brutally inaccessible — new groups around. They've pushed rock experimentalism to a number of its absolute extremes, which Eno calls "doing research" that'll be helpful for everybody else. I listen to them for fun, too, but must say that they've been produced far better elsewhere: he deliberately mixed them muddy, hoping to reproduce the hazy

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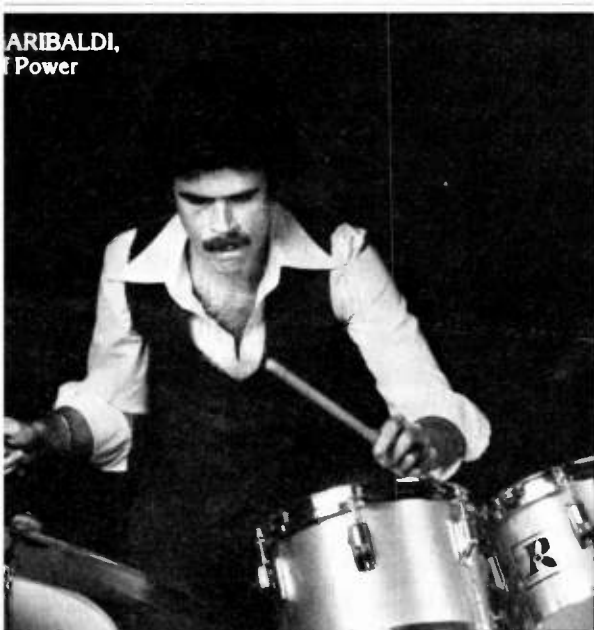
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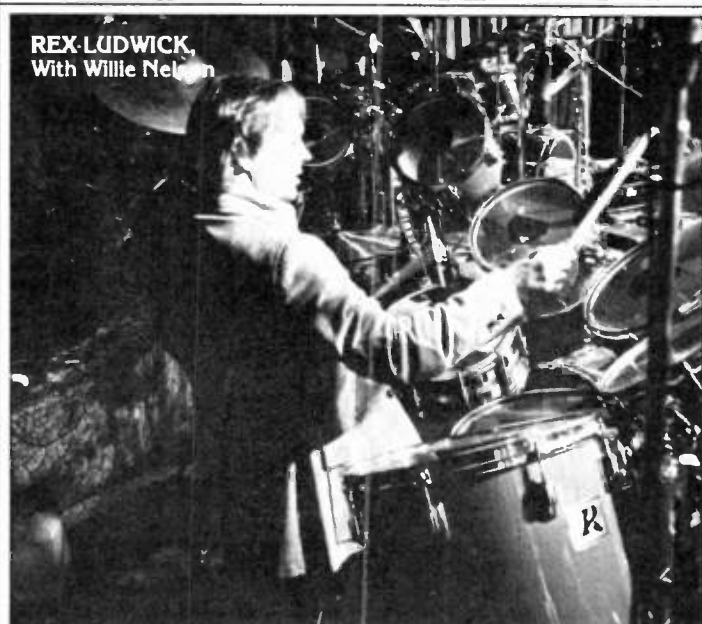
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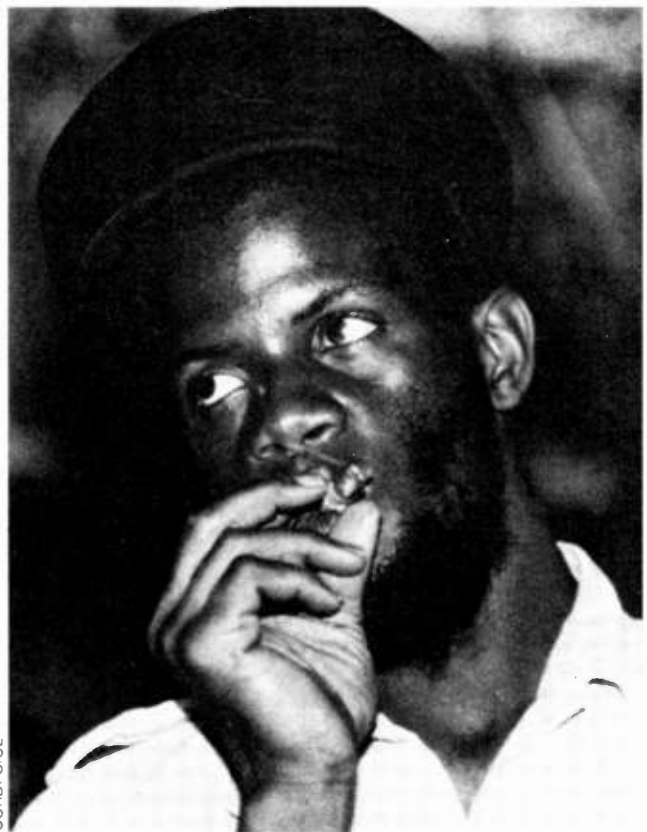


JAMAICA

REGGAE SUNSPASH FESTIVAL

By Cris Cioe

Five days of dub, mento, reggae, rastas, and spliff that revealed the religious power and drama of Jamaica's African roots. The tremendous variety of indigenous music built steadily, climaxing in Bob Marley's awesome full-moon performance before a crowd of 20,000 ecstatic rasta brethren.



CORDI CIOE



CORDI CIOE

Reggae Sunsplash, a five-day festival in Montego Bay last July, was the ultimate reggae jam, a panoramic view of Jamaican music on its own turf. This was also my first time in Jamaica, and as much as I'd always appreciated the reggae groove, to hear and feel this music on the island itself, was, as Jamaicans say, the "irie ites," the ultimate. The delicate percussion rhythms, skanking "chinka" guitar sounds on the upbeat of every bar, the toasting bass lines — these qualities always sounded incredibly mellow and funky to my American ears (especially in this era of disco overkill stateside). But in Jamaica, reggae's cultural importance goes way beyond mere entertainment. With most of the major stars playing reggae Sunsplash, including Bob Marley, the event was the main topic of conversation for Jamaica's two million inhabitants. And standing among 15 to 20 thousand of them every night, moving to reggae's mesmerizing sway, I got a strong dose of the tremendous positive power this music holds.

As soon as my wife and I touched down at Montego Bay airport, we felt Jamaica's slowed-down pace. The Caribbean is deep blue and green, and the island's mist-shrouded hills begin to rise less than a mile from the beaches, stretching the length and width of the island. Montego Bay is a town of 80,000 on Jamaica's northern coast, in the heart of its tourist hotel belt. As beautiful as Jamaica is, it's a country with all the near-overwhelming problems of an emerging Third World nation: massive unemployment (American-owned hotels and British-financed bauxite mines are the major industries, with the profits reaped abroad), soaring inflation (gas was \$4.00 a gallon when we were there — all oil must be imported), and a history of severe colonialism. African roots have remained very close to the surface in Jamaica, dating back to when British investors established their huge sugar plantations in the 1600s. These absentee owners remained in England and let overseers run the farms, deeming it cheaper to work the imported Gold Coast African slaves to death and then replace them, rather than to treat them as human beings. The result was three hundred years of bitterness and revolution. One group of slaves, the Maroons, actually won their freedom from the British in 1738, and established a nation of their own in the eastern mountains of the island. Even today, the Maroons form a kind of separate nation within Jamaica, and get little

interference from the democratic socialist government which runs the country.

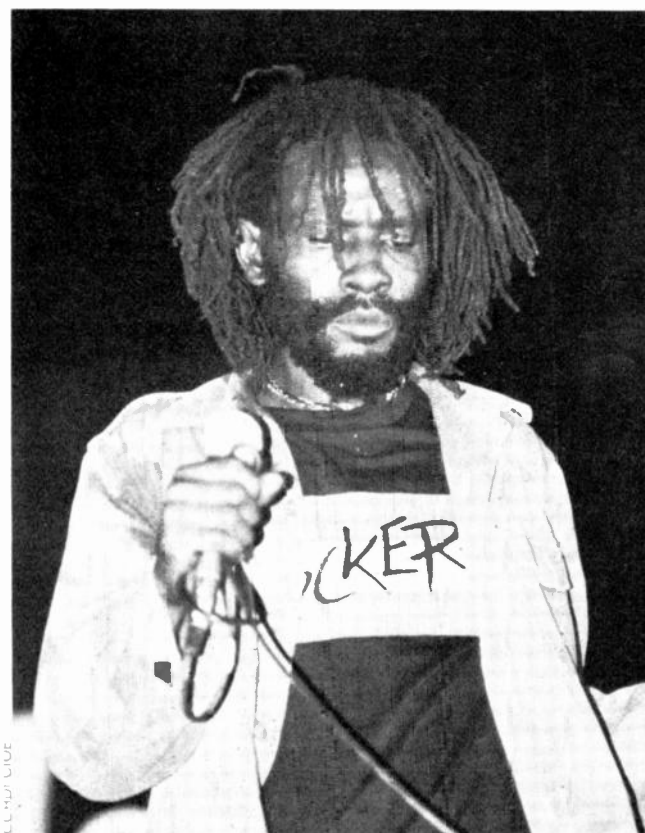
Reggae's African influences were much more obvious at Sunsplash than, say, the influence of American R&B. This fact is virtually in spite of the government's efforts to play down reggae. There are two radio stations on Jamaica, which is about 200 miles long. Both stations are government run, and they play a mix of American disco, Caribbean soul music and MOR a la Johnny Mathis. The only government-sanctioned reggae program, hosted by dj Michael Campbell (known as "Mikey Dread") had been recently taken off the air because the station had claimed his listenership was "too small" and he "refused to play non-reggae music" (which is all the station programs the other 22 hours a day). Even more surprising was the fact that not once, in the newspapers or on the radio, was Reggae Sunsplash promoted or even announced. Later in the week, when I asked one of the festival's promoters, Tony Johnson, why the Jamaican establishment took this position, he replied, "It's the same neo-colonist attitude here that looks down on Rastafarians. Besides preaching a message of love, peace and anti-oppression, the Rastas are on the bottom of the economic scale, and we hired them to work the festival because they need the jobs as much as anybody in Jamaica; and yet that same neo-colonialist attitude refuses to recognize reggae as the positive force that it is in this country."

We arrived early the first day at Jarret Park, a large cricket field in the center of Montego Bay, as a big Rastafarian crew was still setting up chairs and booths that would sell coconuts, ital (whole) food, all manner of fruit juices, a potent mushroom tea, and even a "magic sex potion made from guava root (promoter John Wakefield claimed "half a bottle of this should just about repropagate the world"). We quickly met a Rastafarian "guide," named Ray, who showed us around and answered questions. Lots of police, who obviously looked down on the proceedings, already patrolled the park with dogs and rifles, but the crew coolly went about its work, albeit slowly (Jamaican time is definitely more relaxed than Eastern Standard Time).

One man we met, Elkanah, was up from Kingston and the Twelve Tribes of Israel organization of Rastas. After some very powerful introductory totes on cigar-length spliffs, he explained that "this festival is quite important, especially since



The immaculately tailored Lone Ranger (above) is the ranking dub dee-jay, toasting (or speed rapping) over a heavy instrumental track. Winston Rodney of Burning Spear (below) is a powerful, trance-like performer considered a true prophet along with Bob Marley (facing).



told us, "the first thing to do, to become Rasta, is to read and contemplate your Bible, a chapter a day. In three years, you'll have finished, and then you start over again. And then, to live each day with music, with these vibrations, will keep you righteous."

Actually, Rastas have been around Jamaica since the 1930s, but the precedent for Ethiopianism on the island goes back to the 1700s. Rastas named themselves after Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie I's original tribal title, Ras Tafari; the name "Ras" in Amharic is the title given to Ethiopian royalty, comparable to "Duke" or "Baron" in England. Haile Selassie himself claimed to be the biblical "Lion of Judah" (from Revelations 2:2-5). When Rastas refer to "Jah," it is a ritual, shortened form of Jehovah, whose biblical precedent is in Psalm 68:4: "extol him by his name Jah." My own impression of these people was immediate and held fast throughout our stay: Rastafarians are the only religious zealots I've ever met with a consistently holistic and positive approach to living. They eat healthily, they're in excellent physical shape, and wonderful music and marijuana are both at the core of their day-to-day spiritual life. For all the hardship and negativity surrounding Jamaican life, the Rastafarians are really about feeling good in the here and now.

The festival began Tuesday night with the 1979 National Awards Song Contest, and featured the island-wide finalists in this event. Edward and the Upsetters Mento Band, an extremely wild and energetic group in striped pants, played top shelf mento, an older amalgam of African and British folk songs that sounds like calypso run amok. Another group, Prince Tibor and the Sound of Thunder, was a drum ensemble from deep in the Blue Mountains, and gave the crowd a taste of the heavily "cultural" percussion sounds to come that week. There was also a good dose of Jamaican soul music that night, vocal groups backed up by a fine band featuring Tommy McCook, the great Jamaican sax player. His sweet and funky tone, a slightly toughened-up Stan Getz-ish approach, has become an accepted feature of Jamaican music.

The next night, as the concerts proper began, Toots and the Maytals headlined, playing the classic soul-tinged reggae that established Toots as one of reggae's premier voices in the 60s (his 1964 single, "Do The Reggay," first coined the word). There's no doubt that he has the vocal depth to justify his being compared with Otis Redding. On song after song Toots would do two or three break-down choruses, never repeating himself, coaxing the crowd to join in on endless "Can you feel it" variations. After an hour and a half of this I grew a little weary, though in all fairness, the singer poured energy into every note he sang. "Funky Kingston" and "Famine" were standout numbers. Towards the end of his set a fan on the ground just beneath him screamed out, "Tootsie boy, you're still the greatest," and a lot of people cheered in agreement. Although Toots doesn't sport Rasta dreadlocks (which are really nothing more than hair that's never combed or brushed, only washed and left to grow), he considers himself a "Rastaman, a kind man." His soul roots go back to the days when American R&B stations, often from New Orleans, would drift down the Caribbean at night. From these, Jamaican musicians borrowed and learned what they needed to strengthen their own musical vocabulary, paying special attention to the funky Stax-Volt sound in the 60s.

Other soul-influenced acts that week included Pam and Woody, a slick soul duo, that performed songs like McFadden and Whitehead's stateside summer hit, "Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now." The audience was polite for the duo, although not particularly moved. At one point, however, Pam dedicated a song to "all the Rastafarian brethren here tonight." The song was "Rivers of Babylon," and the crowd exploded in cheers. Later in the week, 12-year-old Junior Tucker sashayed through an American-style R&B set. Tucker works the crowd like a pre-pubescent James Brown — jumping around the stage, directing the band, and still retaining his cool in an impeccably tailored three-piece suit.

But for all the solid surface flash of these sequined, suited-up, would-be Teddy Pendergrass's, the deepest audience response at Sunsplash came in response to the other two major musical styles in Jamaica: reggae and dub (or "dj" and "rockers", as it's also called). With reggae, the African influence is more pronounced than the R&B connection, and Ras Michael and the Songs of Negus, Wednesday night, showed more overt African links than any other act at the festival. Using six drummers and a conventional rhythm section, back-up singers and, at times, three women dancers in flowing white robes, the group played surprisingly mellow and soothing anthems, mostly dealing with the Ethiopian-Jamaican connection and the Rasta path to righteousness.

I spoke with Michael, a warm, articulate man, after his set. He has become something of an intercultural spokesman for the Rastafarian movement through its music, and he told me that "if you went to certain places in Africa — like Ghana, Nigeria and parts of Ethiopia — you would find these kinds of rhythms and instruments also. We use a mixture of ancient and modern sounds to convey the message of universal love, the only way for the future. We do this through roots music. The big bass drum, the *akete* drum, is actually the forerunner of the modern bass drum used in a trap set. The higher-pitched *funde* drums produce that 'whoof, whoof' sound. The small repeater drums are called the talking drums, used to send messages 'puck, puck, puck.' We also use a row of small paper drums that are tuned and pitched differently, and these are the forerunners of the modern xylophone. African music, the art of the drums, is so entwined with modern music today. Roberta Flack came to Jamaica recently and looked me up, and she said, 'This music really re-energizes a person, you know.'"

An astounding vocal trio, the Israel Vibrations, followed Ras Michael. The trio is three men, all disabled with polio since

childhood, who first performed together at the Mona Rehabilitation Center in Kingston. They came onstage with walking braces, to boisterous applause, and proceeded through an hour of sweet, riff-trading harmonies. Melodically, their format is for one to sing lead while the other two echo lines and sentiments. They sang their first hit, "Why Worry," and several other tunes that have been hit singles on the island, including "Babylon Must Fall." On "We Will Walk The Streets of Glory," all three broke into a hopping, skanking sidestep dance. One of the Vibrations, named Apple, pumped out a chugging lead vocal, describing a glorious future of "equality for all," and the crowd literally roared its appreciation. The man standing next to me turned and said, "They could break your heart." For the Israel Vibrations discovering the Rastafarian movement and faith and its expression in music has lifted them to a higher plane, as well as to a recording contract.

Throughout that night, a cooking three-piece horn section accompanied various acts, which dispelled any nefarious rumors I'd heard about reggae horns always playing out of tune. This section, led by a mellifluous fluegel horn player whose intonation was superb, completely destroyed those rumors. He was the brass equivalent of Tommy McCook the night before, wafting jazzy, biting-yet-sweet obligato snatches between the vocals, and his presence gave the evening a lush melodic continuity.

Both Wednesday and Thursday nights, announcer John Wakefield introduced an act "specifically for the rockers, dj enthusiasts and dub fans: the current ranking dee jay in Jamaica today, Lone Ranger." Onstage bounded a young guy dressed in a three-piece 19th century undertaker's suit complete with bowler hat, saying stuff like: "I the Lone Ranger, born next to Jesus in the manger." He introduced his "backup" singer, who added a few squawks and sound effects here and

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were dressed in Arabic headress, football shoulder pads and jockey shorts. The crowd bellowed and rushed toward the stage as Lone Ranger continued, "Soul-to-soul is he station, I deal in musical appreciation." Even the many cops and soldiers in the stadium, normally somber and vaguely threatening in their tapered high-rise black slacks with revolvers and billy clubs, grinned and moved up closer for a look.

This is Top 40 music, "risque reggae," if you will, in Jamaica. A guy like Lone Ranger or his contemporaries — Big Youth, Clint Eastwood, Mikey "Dread" Campbell, Dillinger, Tapper Zukie — get their start singing at parties and following around the portable sound systems that set up to play in halls, on beaches, or just in the road. When they get good enough, they approach a producer, like the venerable Sir Coxone Dodd (himself a former dj), who will produce a disc of the dj "toasting" and carrying on over an instrumental track. Since Jamaican radio won't play this kind of music, even if it is the people's choice, the sound systems and dj's fill a huge gap in the popular market, and top dj's are big stars in Jamaica. Dub music features a wild, heavily reverbed and throbbing bass, insanely repeating horn figures, and the rocker himself coasting along with an incredible seemingly stream-of-consciousness rap.

Lone Ranger's breakthrough single is "Barnabas Collins." The tune is about a country boy who moves to the city: "Me come from the country . . . me could not get no work and me started to choke . . ." The song also deals with vampires and exorcism, the ancient "obeah" witchcraft of Jamaica (the word comes from the Ashanti "oba" — a child, and "yi" — to take: the idea of taking a child was the final test for a sorcerer). Meanwhile, onstage, the Ranking Scarecrow acts out the verses in hilarious detail. In terms of fashion, Lone Ranger was the most impressive and bizarre performer at the festival. When he came out the second evening, he dressed in battle fatigues, à la General Westmoreland. Later in the week, Lone Ranger and another top dj, Leroy Smart, had a showdown at a beachside sound system party, trading insults and gibes, trying to prove who is the ranking toaster on the scene today.

Other strong support acts, in the undiluted reggae idiom, included the Mighty Diamonds and the Abyssinians. The Diamonds have been around a long time, and took the stage in flashy red, green and gold suits, all smiles, and hard-hitting harmonies. Their songs, like the current "Identity," focus on day-to-day strife and the righteous way to deal with it. The Abyssinians deal with equally serious subjects (including the use of the Ethiopian language, Amhari in places), and came across as both somber and energetic at the same time. Songwriter Joe Higgs, who penned the classic "The World Is Upside Down," turned in a strong and direct set Friday night, and his gruff style (he is said to have been Marley's first and strongest musical mentor) focuses on more political, nonreligious themes, like poverty and the ghetto.

Thursday night the main musical event was Winston Rodney of Burning Spear, performing without his usual partners, Delroy Hines and Rupert Willington. For me, this was the strongest performance so far, and Rodney's trance-like rhythmic possession was on a different level than the music that had gone down before. Indeed, Jamaicans consider Rodney and Marley the only major prophets working in reggae. I'd never seen him live, but earlier in the week a new film called *Rockers* had previewed in Montego Bay (it will be running in the States later this year). The movie is a very up-to-date view of the Jamaican music scene, featuring Justin Hines, Jacob Miller, Bunny Wailer, the Heptones and many others. The most haunting cameo in the film was Rodney singing a *cappella*, while sitting on a beach. This is a voice that hovers like a spirit, and heard live, it's a spirit that pulls others towards it. Rodney makes proclamations in his songs, but they're not handled like diatribe. Statements such as "We should follow Marcus Garvey everywhere he go" and "Do you remember the days of slavery?" have in the air like

upwards, as if he is going to float away, and the people tend to get caught up in his trance and searing tenor voice. The barrier between performer and audience quickly fell, so that when he sang, "They beat us, they beat us, they used us refused us," it became a meditational chant, fraught with near-cinematic meanings and resonances. Musically Burning Spear sings over the ultimate one-chord jam or hypnotic groove; but for all its repetitiveness, not once was I bored or distracted, and that's what the groove is all about, in any language.

On Saturday night the Third World Band headlined, and I found them to be at least 20 times more powerful live than on record, although their newest album on Island Records shows off the group's chops better than the first two. These musicians are classically trained and have also been playing in reggae bands since their early teens (lead guitarist "Cat" Coore played on Marley's *Catch A Fire* LP). The group is the first reggae unit to seriously attempt a fusion of reggae and non-Jamaican R&B, and had something of a hit earlier this year in America with a disco-oriented remake of the O'Jays "Now That We Found Love."

The band was well-received at Sunsplash, despite the fact that it was the only group on the entire bill to venture into non-reggae stage presence and theatrical flash like American and English rock and soul acts. Besides their obvious prowess as musicians, a big reason this worked so well for Third World Band at Sunsplash is that the group constantly returns to a reggae beat, even after forays into Brazilian or American R&B rhythms. The band melds these forms usually within the context of one song, and percussionist Carrot Jarret leads these excursions by smoothly switching off between congas, afuche, and more traditional Jamaican/African drums. For Jamaicans, this group is like a bridge to the outside world and back. When lead singer Bunny Clarke opened the set with "Talk To Me," the song's meaning was immediately and achingly clear. In Jamaica, the emotions of mistrust and love are both painfully close to the surface. The song says: "It ain't easy to sit down and watch my brothers lose their brains . . . But if you don't find it absolutely necessary/Don't stand there and act so strange/Come on over and talk to me." On one level, the song is urging an end to the political strife and gunplay that has marred Jamaican life for years; on another level, the group represents a chance for Jamaica to move into the world at large peacefully, away from the mistrustful and violent past of slavery and exploitation.

Third World Band has also started putting these principles into action, by setting up music schools and classes on the island, allowing kids to start playing who normally wouldn't get the chance. What with Marley's Tuff Gong label building its own studios in Kingston and its own distribution deals world-wide, reggae musicians are clearly some of the most positive and progressive forces working in Jamaica today. Along the same lines, Winston Rodney owns a store in St. Anne's, the Marcus Garvey Lawn and Garden Center, and will be adding a grocery store soon. These also function as a social-educational-solidarity center for local rastas and citizens, and do so, as Rodney says, "with no apologies."

In the end, though, it all came down to Bob Marley on Friday night. Jarret Park was jammed, but thousands of people outside the gates and throughout the island who couldn't afford tickets wanted to be inside. When Marley bounded onstage and yelled "Jah," in his first Jamaican performance since 1976, the audience surged up and remained standing for more than two hours.

If, in Jamaica and to Jamaicans, Burning Spear leads an awakening collective spirit, then Bob Marley most certainly represents an individual soul's joys and sufferings. Marley's onstage persona and character is earthbound, the man who's been kicked around and still has stories to tell. And he's definitely got the right band for the job. No other instrumental

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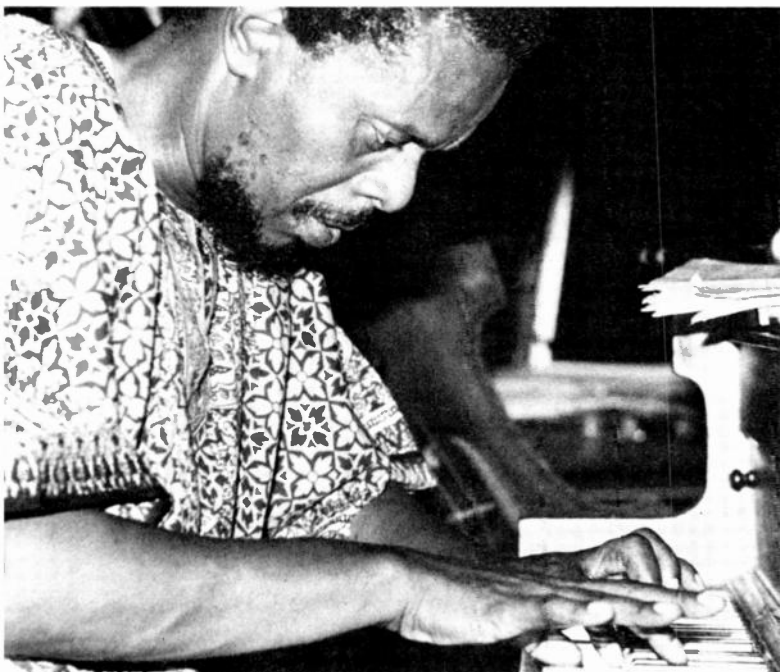
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World Radio History

HORACE TAPSCOTT

By Zan Stewart



Horace Tapscott is a great, though largely unknown, composer and musician. His energies for the past 20 years have gone into a Los Angeles community orchestra dedicated to playing and preserving the great black music that grew out of the almost unbelievably fertile L.A. jazz scene of the 40's and 50's.

It's a Tuesday night at the famous Lighthouse in Hermosa Beach, California, and a dark, lanky gentleman sits hunched over the piano, his hands working the keys feverishly, sending out sparkling clusters of sound which suddenly drop away to a quiet hush, much the way fireworks dazzle with spectacular bursts of color that quickly wane. Then the hands become frenzied again, skittering over the ivory bars, finally settling into a ten-finger tremolo so powerful that the room is filled with sound, as if a freight train were passing next door. The magnificence of the moment moves the audience to spontaneous applause. A nearby listener directs a question to no one in particular. "Why hasn't anyone heard of this cat? He's

Outrageous, fantastic, genius, living legend, these are but a few of the words that have been used to describe Horace Tapscott, a unique pianist, composer, arranger and leader who's been ardently engrossed with music for 35 years. The reason most people haven't heard of this compelling ingenious player is that he hasn't sought the recognition. He's been dedicated to something more important than his own personal stature: the Pan-Afrikan People's Arkestra, a community-based band from the black neighborhoods of Los Angeles that has been playing free public concerts for almost twenty years, and through whose ranks have passed such notables as Arthur Blythe (a nine-year member from 1963-72), Charles Lloyd, Gary Bartz, Lester Robertson, Azu Lawrence, Leon Thomas and Red Callender. The Arkestra is the musical arm of the UGMAA Foundation (Union of God's Musicians and Artists' Ascension), formed in the late 50's to keep black non-commercial music alive.

Tapscott's career began as a trombonist in Houston, Texas. Moving to Los Angeles, he studied with Samuel Browne at Jefferson High, Lloyd Reese (mentor of Charles Mingus and Eric Dolphy), Melba Liston and Buddy Collette, and has worked with and alongside the cream of L.A.'s musical crop: Dexter Gordon, Wardell Gray, Art and Addison Farmer, Dolphy, Collette, Gerald Wilson, Onzy Matthews, Harold Land, Phineas Newborn, and others forming a seemingly endless list. The Tapscott story certainly contains a large chunk of the jazz history of Southern California from the late 40's to the present.

As a trombonist, Horace toured for a year with Lione Hampton, and also did some arranging for the Hollywood studios, but he has shunned commercial endeavors since the founding of UGMAA.

Tapscott's recording dates have been few. He was on one of Lou Rawl's first sessions, and on a pair by trombonist Lew Blackburn but his first solo appearance was *The Giant is Awakened*, produced by Bob Thiele for Flying Dutchman in 1969, and featuring Arthur Blythe (Thiele just produced Blythe's *Lenox Avenue Breakdown* for CBS). The disc is long out-of-print though it is considered such a classic that Leonard Feather included a cut, "The Dark Tree," on *Encyclopedia of Jazz in the 70's* (RCA), on which Feather commented that Tapscott was an "unjustly obscure figure... his name and music are little known, in proportion to their importance." Horace remained underrecorded until Tosh Taenaka put down a solo piano album on Interplay in 1978. Since then, the artist has recorded five albums, three with the Arkestra on Tom Albach's Nimbus label.

Tapscott lives in Los Angeles with Celia, his wife and companion of 30 years. They have five children and five grandchildren. Tapscott's schedule includes three rehearsals a week with the Arkestra and whatever jobs fall in between plus the monthly concert. He takes his time these days, since an operation for an aneurysm on the brain nearly brought his life to a premature end in August, 1978.

We begin this conversation with his upbringing in Houston, Texas.

HORACE TAPSCOTT: I was born in Texas in 1934, lived there until I was nine, and then came to California, because my step-father, Leon Jackson, got a job in the shipyards in San Pedro. The church I was in in Texas had two bands... Tricky Lofton, the trombonist, and my mother were in one of the bands. So the music was church music and drum beats.

MUSICIAN: Drum beats?

TAPSCOTT: We used to have these oil stoves, kerosene buckets and things and I had a band, when I was five or six years old, and I was playing buckets. All of this came about because of my mother being a pianist, a jazz pianist.

MUSICIAN: Did she just play around the house?

TAPSCOTT: No, she'd gig. She played tuba in the church orchestra and 1920's jazz bands around East Texas, that was



Dexter Gordon



Sonny Criss



Melba Liston



Eric Dolphy

JOSEPH JOHN

The Los Angeles jazz scene probably surpassed New York as a breeding ground of great musicians. Dexter Gordon, Eric Dolphy, Sonny Criss, Don Cherry and Charles Lloyd were all in the same high school band as Tapscott, while at the Black Union down the street played the likes of Art Tatum, Clifford Browne, Wardell Gray, Melba Liston, Red Callender, and a score of other greats.

So in the house, everything was set up for me to be a musician. The piano was right inside the front door. I would get on the piano and my mother would try to teach me 'I like coffee, I like tea,' things of that nature. I wouldn't play it, because in those days you were a sissy if you played piano.

MUSICIAN: So how'd you get to the trombone?

TAPSCOTT: I liked it because it was more masculine. I heard an orchestra at a Sunday afternoon concert playing the William Tell Overture and the trombone line, near the part that everybody's familiar with from the Lone Ranger, sounded so strong to me that I pulled on my ma's coat and said 'That's what I want.' It cost \$40, so she saved up all her paychecks, \$9 a week, and bought me a horn. She sent to Chicago for the ax and I didn't get up off it for 15 years straight. (Laughs). I just played, all day and into the night, with everybody, in bands. That's all we used to do. Guido Sinclair, a saxophonist who I was raised with here in L.A., that cat would never take his instrument out of his mouth. He's still playing in Chicago. He'd be here, playing with Bird, and they'd be playing from sun-up to sundown. That's the way it was.

MUSICIAN: You came here when you were nine and you were playing all the time?

TAPSCOTT: Yeah, they even had a teacher for me when I got here. I went from the train to the pad and the next day went down on 51st and Central Avenue to this barber shop, where an old barber, an ex-musician, named Harry Southern, and he told me how to play. Whew!, he knew how to play. Then I was at Lafayette Jr. High and Mr. Samuel Browne came into my life. They used to come over from the high schools to recruit young players, just like they do in sports. Sam Browne would come over to Carver Jr. High and Lafayette, all-black schools, and he'd find kids to go to Jefferson High for his band. That's what happened to me. I wanted to be in his band because I'd heard it, and it was hot. I used to go over and Sonny Criss and Dexter Gordon would be playing, because they were in school at Jeff. Sam Browne had half of the cats that are playing today in his band from the time they were 14 years old. Alvin Ailey, the dancer, came through Samuel Browne, Anne Lee, who's an opera singer in Europe, and lots of jazz players.

MUSICIAN: What was Browne's background?

TAPSCOTT: He came from Jefferson High, too, and then on to SC. He used to help William Grant Still with his music, and in turn, Still helped him. Mr. Browne always seemed to stay in the

background, but he was in front as far as helping. He's a master musician. He's still alive. I wrote 'Ballad For Samuel' for him and recorded it with Sonny Criss on *Sonny's Dream* (Prestige 7576).

MUSICIAN: Who else was at Jeff when you were there?

TAPSCOTT: There was Troy Brown, the trumpeter, who's still around town playing, and Don Cherry, too. Then Lester Robertson used to try to sneak down from San Pedro High to play in the band, and Eric Dolphy used to come down from Poly High after school to play. Then to put all this off, the Black Union was right down the street from me, so all of us from the school would be hanging out down at the Union. I'd see Art Tatum there everyday.

MUSICIAN: Who played at the union?

TAPSCOTT: All the cats that you can think of. I'd be there all the time. Then me, Lester Robertson, Eric Dolphy, Frank Morgan and Lawrence Marable, we were the youngest cats in Gerald Wilson's 1949 band. I was in that band with Art Farmer, Ernie and Marshall Royal, Wardell Gray, Dexter Gordon, and Lawrence Marable. I was in the bone section with Melba Liston, Keg Johnson, Jimmy Cheatham and John 'Streamlined' Ewing. Melba turned my whole thing around, seeing her, hearing her play, and so feminine, too. She helped me with my writing.

MUSICIAN: Was Sam Browne introducing you to theory in school?

TAPSCOTT: Right from the tenth grade I was learning arranging and composing. And from Lloyd Reese, too. Sam Browne used to send his best students to Lloyd Reese's studio. I went for lessons with Eric and some other cats. We'd work for our time. To get our lessons there, we'd have to clean up his place and Eric was in the house and we'd be out in the yard and Eric would come out to the porch and laugh at us. He was the house nigger, we were the field niggers, that's what we used to call each other. If you didn't have your lessons together, Reese wouldn't fool with you. He'd get mad and then you'd go to Sam Browne and he'd be mad as hell, too, because Reese had told him what happened. Then your mama wouldn't let you out of the house until you'd put in at least four hours. Reese and Browne wanted to polish us up, have our music just right.

So the musical thing around me was strong. My sister was going to give her college money to me so that I could go to

Reese. I went from Reese to Buddy Collette, and from Buddy to Gerald Wilson. All these cats I've mentioned, I played and studied with. I made sure that everytime they were playin', I was there. There's always something to do here in Los Angeles. You know there's a myth about this city, but I grew up here and that's the difference. But I do know that this city's a proving ground and if you can remain with whatever you want to do here, in an art area, then you can do it anywhere.

MUSICIAN: Then you think this is the toughest place?

TAPSCOTT: That's what the other musicians tell me. But 'ein' raised up here, you look at things differently. Most of us are into music for different reasons. Basically it's to be heard and seen at a showcase . . . basically, we like to have people enjoying us. But for me, I'm trying to build something that's going to last a little bit. It's for the grandchildren. Somewhere you have to make a stand on the music side, because when I was growing up and all these cats were dyin', you know, man, that almost took me out. Ernie Henry, Elmo Hope, Tadd Dameron.

MUSICIAN: Did you have associations with those people?

TAPSCOTT: Yeah, well not with Ernie Henry or Tadd, but with Elmo, yeah. Elmo was on my case every night when we were with the Gerald Wilson band in Vegas . . . in fact, we lived together. Charlie Lloyd, Harold Land, Elmo, myself we were all together and Elmo and I'd be up all night learning tunes. I loved the way this cat played, his technical ability was so strong. And, as Harold Land said, he was a hard writer, difficult tunes that made you think.

Now what happens to all that music . . . nobody ever hears it. Maybe every now and then some cat on a college station might dig up some historical material and let the young cats know what's happening. So we try to make our little contribution by playing at the United Immanuel Church on the last Sunday of the month. We've been there for the last six years, trying to bring the music closer to the people that are not hip to it. And they're not hip to it, because how are they going to like something they've never heard? We know about radio. If there were radio stations devoted to our classical music, then people could surely get closer to the music.

MUSICIAN: So is giving the community-at-large a glimpse of some of the great black music the main purpose of the JGMAA Foundation?

TAPSCOTT: Yes, we want them to hear the music that's already there. The only way we'll get anywhere is for people to contribute together, and that's not just for a little while. The records that we are making I hope my great-grandchildren's children will be listening to. A hit record is here today and gone tomorrow, you'll never hear it again. 'All The Things You Are' has been played for 50 years . . . that's the kind of music I'm talking about. And that kind of music is hard to play . . . if you're not up on your ax, those tunes, like tunes by Cole Porter, they'll make you right out. And anything that's good music should always be heard, or so I feel. That's really what the Foundation and the Arkestra are about — good music. And once good music is heard, then it can be appreciated.

Like now we have people who are ten years late in their conception and their hearing, but they're here. Now people have some of Trane's heavier things, like 'Ascension,' in their homes, and they're listening. Why are they getting into it . . . because so many people are into that kind of music now.

MUSICIAN: What influence did Coltrane have on you?

TAPSCOTT: He was a beautiful person. Lester Robertson and I were in New York with Lionel Hampton and we didn't have any bread and Trane and Elvin and McCoy and Eric tried to help us out. There are so many cats that are like Coltrane but they aren't going to be heard because they aren't on a record. And there aren't enough jazz writers to write about the cats. I mean to really write about it.

MUSICIAN: You think L.A.'s just as hot now as it ever was?

TAPSCOTT: Actually, yeah. The only difference is that the

widespread. There's still segregation and there's always going to be segregation. But at least now the people can talk to each other and understand each other much better than they did.

One of the problems is that today, young players are told that they have to do certain things, like learn someone's style in order to be a success. I don't agree with that. One of our main problems is that we don't know enough about ourselves as people, as a nation and its roots and what the music, like the blues, means . . .

MUSICIAN: What do the blues mean to you?

TAPSCOTT: Well I've always thought that they mean a way of expressing emotions and if you're raised up that way, then you don't think of them as being anything academic. I was raised in a house where we sang the blues, made up songs, whistled while we were working, so it just sunk in . . . hearing Billy Eckstine coming out of the big megaphone wake you up every morning, Jay McShann and his band. That's the way I was raised.

MUSICIAN: Who else did you listen to on the phonograph?

TAPSCOTT: We didn't have a phonograph. I grew up right across the street from the record store in Houston and the cat used to play the records out into the street. In our area a lot of people were talented. So when I heard music, it was just a part of my everyday function. I was raised up with T-Bone Walker Jr. His daddy used to play for us all the time. Amos Milburn used to come to my house when I was a kid . . . Floyd Dixon, the world's greatest Blues singer, they used to live down the street from us in Houston.

MUSICIAN: Did you start playing professionally right out of school?

TAPSCOTT: I wasn't even out of school yet. This cat got me on the way home from school. Gerald says, 'Hey man, do you know how to play that instrument?' I said 'yeah, I know how to play it.' He said, 'Can you read on it?' And I said, 'You put something in front of me, I'll read it.' I was young, fifteenish, got in the band and Melba Liston gave me the first trombone part. And they kicked it off and the only note I hit was the first one. It was all over before I even realized it. I had to learn how to read charts, not just music. Now I had to learn how cats write, it took me a couple of weeks. Then I used to play in the Union Symphony Orchestra where they had cats like Brit Woodman, Bill Green, and Red Callender. My musical background was rich, you know what I mean?

MUSICIAN: How did your professional career ascend after you got out of high school?

TAPSCOTT: I played my first job with Monroe Tucker at 15 on trombone. I got ten dollars and that was big dough. Then I played at the Bucket of Blood, and I was on a big hit record 'Pachuco Hop,' by Chuck Higgins, for which I received not one dime. I was also in Mac Davis's band with Wardell Gray and Arnette Cobb, a lot of other heavy players. Then I went into the service and I had my own band in Cheyenne, Wyoming with Billy James, drums, who played with Basie for a time. We didn't do anything but play and rehearse and play for WAF's. I came out in 1957, but they tried to keep me in. After the Air Force, I went to L.A. City College and I was the only black cat and the leader was a real prejudiced cat. Bob Florence, Jack Millman, Bob Edmundson, a lot of other white cats that are still top names were there and Bob MacDonald said to me 'Each time you guys come over here from Jefferson High and Sam Browne, you think you're God's gift to jazz.' That provoked me to say, 'Well, don't worry, man, I may be the only one here today, but they'll be others.' He was talking about Eric Dolphy and others. MacDonald was the training cat for a lot of people that made it into the studios. Les McCann was there, Bobby Gross the drummer, Lou Rawls was there at LACC, too. McCann and Ra used to work together. I made an album with Lou Rawls that had arrangements by Onzy Matthews, a good writer but a wild, angry cat. Onzy's in Houston, now, and doing ok

there was any real blowin'. Worked six nights a week. I made \$68 a week. I was there with Charlie Lloyd; Walter Benton the tenor player who had been with Max Roach; bass player named Bill Pickens, Jimmy Woods. A lot of the stars would come in there and hide, or be with some cat they didn't want anybody to see them with. Ava Gardner used to sit right in front of the band, stretch those long legs out across the chairs. I'd have trouble concentrating on my playing.

Doug used to say 'If you cats don't know jazz, then I don't want you in here.' And we were near Hollywood High School and that's when those young white kids started smoking weed.

1958 and 59 was when Ornette started working with Don Cherry, though Charles Brackeen, the tenor player, was the first one to really play outside, like back in 1957. Ornette used to come to Sam Browne's rehearsals at Jeff with his hair down past his shoulders, and a long beard. He was living up in the mountains with some other brothers. He had that funny plastic horn. And Eric was just one of a number of cats around here that could really play, but the others never recorded so we don't know about them. Walter Benton was one of those hot cats, and Frank Morgan, too. Frank's getting himself together these days and playing good again.

In 1960, I left and went with Lionel Hampton for a year. Lester Robertson and I lived in New York, that's where we traveled from, but Hamp often took a small group and he didn't take the bones so we didn't make out too good. Only \$125 a week, when we worked. So I came back to town because my youngest son, Niles, had just been born and I wanted to be with him. Then a little studio stuff, but not much, until the Arkestra really got rolling.

MUSICIAN: Why and when did you start UGMAA?

TAPSCOTT: It started as an alternative around 1958 because of cats dyin', and music not being heard and families starvin' and kids not knowing anything about their fathers and the whole prejudice thing, all this has something to do with it, because I felt I had to do something to head things the other way.

MUSICIAN: Being a black organization, did people ask what your motives were?

TAPSCOTT: People were asking 'what kind of a group is this you're getting together? Is it a radical group,' they'd be asking, because this was the time of other groups like the Panthers and Stokely Carmichael's SNCC, and sometimes these people would visit our place when they were in town. We had our music, our band, called the Community Cultural Arkestra at the time. We played for all functions that had to do with blacks, and we'd be playing music only by blacks. If a wedding came up, someone would probably know someone in the Arkestra and they'd hire us to play. We played everything that had to do with the black community and most of them were free, except for the weddings or an occasional college date. The reason we were into it, and are into it, is to preserve music by black composers. You see, we just want to take what we have to offer the people. 'Everybody likes music that's good music. It's got to be organized. I don't like haphazard things. We do need more writers to talk about what's happening wherever it's happening. People say nothing's happening, then that means that people are dead, but people are alive, man.

Our music is written for particular individuals, which is something we learned from the maestro, Duke Ellington. And it's easy to write that way. We also rehearse three times a week so that when charts are brought in, they can be quickly played and if changes are needed, then we can have those made and play the chart again at the next rehearsal.

MUSICIAN: How did you come upon the name Pan-Afrikan Arkestra?

TAPSCOTT: The Ark, from Noah, like a new beginning and for black people, the Pan-Africans. I did this long before I knew about Sun Ra and when I found out he was the Arkestra, too, I was pleased.

MUSICIAN: What have you written lately?

TAPSCOTT: I haven't written anything in two years, except

maybe adding a little something to an arrangement that someone would bring in. Actually, I'm in the process of writing three things but they're all for very large ensembles with strings and a choir, like Ancestral Echoes and Mothership. Ancestral Echoes was done with the Watts Symphony, on Ethnic Music Day at the L.A. Music Center about 3 or 4 years ago. It wasn't organized so that people would hear the music — they came too late, came too early. There was an American-Indian group going on right outside the door. They told them to play, they told us to play, both at the same time. Anyhow — that's when we did it with a full orchestra. I have the tape on it. All the kinds of music that I've composed, it's black oriented. — It has to do with my life, my experiences — what I've heard and what I've been told. All together, I've written about 50-55 compositions and I intend to do more writing in the next 3 or 4 years.

MUSICIAN: What other jobs are working besides the Ark?

TAPSCOTT: Well, in the last three years, I've been doing some solo recitals in the South, playing the music of Stanley Cowell, Charles Tolliver and myself, other black composers. I've also been playing a few club dates, either as a solo or with a trio. That's good exposure.

MUSICIAN: Who influenced your piano playing?

TAPSCOTT: Oh, there have been so many. Art Tatum, Monk, Duke, Andrew Hill, Randy Weston, Jaki Byrd, Tommy Flanagan, Sonny Clark, Elmo Hope, Amos Trice, Bud Powell, Richie Powell, Roosevelt Wardell. Roosevelt was the cat that really turned me around and you'll never hear of him. He and Phineas Newborn and I used to practice together. He was a terrible piano player! Outside of Art Tatum, it was Roosevelt Wardell and Samuel Browne that influenced me the most.

MUSICIAN: Do you buy records or listen to the other folk's music?

TAPSCOTT: No, not actively, but if I were going to buy albums, they'd be by Andrew Hill and Randy Weston. They've both really hung in there, and not changed their styles for the times. I honor that dedication and commitment.

MUSICIAN: How'd you meet Celia?

TAPSCOTT: At school, we were 14. She had those big eyes... drove me wild. The reason I've made it this far is my family. Right or wrong, they've stuck by me. And that's it. With a family, nothing can destroy you. My children all knew me. They didn't have to like me, but they knew me and they didn't have to be afraid to say anything. What I'm saying is that I love my life, because I'm living and I had another chance at it.

MUSICIAN: Because of the aneurysm? How close was that?

TAPSCOTT: Pretty close, about this close (puts his fingers about an inch apart). It was like at the end of a play and everybody was taking their bows, it was like that. I was told that if I didn't go under the knife, it was 'goodbye, Horace, period.' So I had no choice, but I loved life before the operation anyway. Now I have a more panoramic view. I am not in a hurry at all, but I have my pace that I have to keep, so I know when I'm going to arrive where I'm arriving at.

See, I'm over the hump. It's been too long, 22 years, for some guy to come and offer me any wealth I want for playing something I don't want to play.

Horace Tapscott — Discography

Leader

The Giant is Awakened, Flying Dutchman FDS-107. One track available on 'Leonard Feather's Encyclopedia of Jazz in the 70's, RCA APL -2-1984

Songs Of The Unsung, Interplay IP-7714

Horace Tapscott in New York, Interplay IP-7724

Conducting the Pan Afrikan People's Arkestra:

Flight 17, Nimbus 135

The Call, Nimbus 246

Live at IUCC, 'Nimbus 357

With Sonny Criss

Sonny's Dream, Prestige 7576. All compositions by Tapscott.

THE BEAR



"Bears are very soulful people. We're friendly, we're cool, but the world," he told Jones, "knows us not."

By Rafi Zabor

It was a hot day, and the Bear worked hard for his money, dancing to Jones' harmonica, a disco cassette, a couple of Austrian marches and some belly dance music. He guzzled a bottle of beer and shambled around groaning and pawing at the air. He let Jones wrestle him to the ground and then plant his foot on his chest to let out a victory cry. He was led around in a circle by a chain from his nose so that the shoppers could laugh at him and applaud. He rolled in the gutter twice and never looked up. They made about forty dollars.

The Bear was a good act. He was a muzzy, yellow bear who looked small enough to be safe when on all fours and absolutely huge when he reared up and stretched out his arms to get the oohs and aahs, that moment of awe without which no artistic production, even one that rolls itself in the gutter, can completely succeed. It was a small transfiguration, enough for what was needed, and it was probably what the people on the corner, after they had stopped laughing and wiping their faces, took home with them when they left. Otherwise, the Bear knew

his cues, never gave Jones any trouble on the job, and didn't pee in the street. When Jones led him home towards evening the Bear's walk rolled him shoulder to shoulder, his head swayed genial and empty, his face was vacant and his eyes were glazed. Passersby were interested but seldom afraid. They may even have wondered more about Jones a lean-faced, spiffy man who apparently owned a dancing bear. The Bear knew how to behave in company. He had the social number down.

When they got home and upstairs — a three flight walkup with bare bulbs in the hall, tile floors, old red paint and roaches — Jones undid the locks on the door and went in. The Bear came in after him, unsnapped the chair from the ring in his nose and sprawled in the old green armchair next to the door.

"Another day," said Jones.

"Another dollar," completed the Bear.

"Want a beer?"

"Whatever's right," the Bear said, and started drumming his nails on the threadbare arm of the chair.

Jones opened a couple of cold Beck's and sat down on the steamer trunk across from the Bear. "How you feeling," Jones asked him.

"If I have to do another day of this shit," said the Bear, "I'm gonna lose my mind."

"You think people are gonna accept you as you are?" said Jones, getting shrill. "They'll put you in a fucking freakshow, a museum. They'll stick your head so full of electrodes you'll think you're Goldilocks." He took some beer. "The act's good. Who loves ya, baby."

"It's undignified," pronounced the Bear.

"Don't I do it? Don't I do it too? All the same shit you do?"

"Tomorrow," the Bear told him. "I step on your belly and yell like Tarzan and you roll in the gutter."

Jones frowned elaborately.

The Bear continued: "You get to wear the chain but I still drink the beer. By the way," he said more seriously, "I want you to work another beer into the act. And I want it cold."

Jones said nothing. Clearly.

"Whatsamatter," said the Bear.

"I worry," said Jones.

"About?" the Bear prompted.

"About you."

"About li'l ol' *me*?" the Bear said with a servile grin and little bow. "You think I'll be an unruly beary-poo? Sexually assault the clientele? Crap in the gutter? Go public and break into *King Lear*? Why ursine, wherefore base? Blow ye winds and crack your cheeks and break all molds that make ungrateful man? Y'all worried about *me*?"

"Sometimes," said Jones, "you can be a real pain in the ass."

"Whereas the rest of the time I'm merely your bread and butter?"

"Bear . . ." Jones pleaded.

"One lousy beer is all I ask. Is that so temperamental of me?" I don't think I'm playing the prima-donna. Really. Come on."

"Drinking on the job," Jones shook his head.

"It's that kind of a job."

"Exactly," said Jones. "I wouldn't want to see you getting dependent on the beer to stay happy. Bad precedent, man."

"I ain't," said the Bear, "a man."

There was a silence. They drank their beers, which were ideally cold, and allowed themselves to relapse back into friendship, as they always did after the ritual tiff about work. Sometimes they wondered if they had been together too long — where else could the Bear go? — but mostly they were friends.

It was getting twilight out, and the streets were making twilight noises: fewer cars, a few kids, a bucket being kicked around, Cronkite on TV, someone whanging away at a street-lamp with a stick.

"What's for dinner?" asked the Bear.

"Can you deal with spaghetti again?"

"I can deal with spaghetti."

"I'll get some salmon and berries for you tomorrow."

"Aarh," said the Bear, "they're only good fresh. You got maybe some chopmeat?"

"I got."

"Then make me a steak tartare appetizer."

"I was saving it for the sauce."

"You make a very nice meatless sauce. Make me the appetizer."

"Okay, you're the appetizer."

"Aarh," said the Bear.

"You said it twice: Make me an appetizer," quoted Jones.

"All right. You're an appetizer."

"What kind," Jones perked up. "Beluga?"

"Salmon and berries, man. Salmon and berries."

Jones and the Bear laughed softly and opened two more beers. Jones lit a cigarette and they sat across from each other as the summer evening came on, bringing the first cool air of the day.

"Ah," said Jones.

"Come with me," sang the Bear, "if you want to go to Kansas City." A decent pause followed, for the piano break.

"*I'm feeling so sad and blue and my heart's full of sorrow,*" sang Jones, who did not sing well.

"*Got to go there.*"

"*Really got to. Really wanta go there.*"

"*Wanna go there sorry-but-I-can't-take-you,*" finished the Bear. There had been some mistakes.

"Heh heh heh," said Jones. "And heh."

"Heh. Make dinner."

Jones got up. "All through thick and thin," he said.

"*Parker's been your friend,*" sang the Bear. "*Shit!*" he cried out, slamming his fist on the arm of the chair. "CHARLIE PARKER!" The Bear beamed, he glowed from head to foot. "BIRD!"

Jones busied himself with the steak tartare, grumbling at the inadequacy of the beef, and the Bear laid his case out flat and unpacked his alto. He checked the reed, worked the keys and blew a couple of phrases. Satisfied that both he and it were in working order he began to play "Parker's Mood" with some of his own comments and variations. After a couple of choruses, his eyes still closed with pleasure, he stopped. "Shit," he said, "I don't even have to play any weird shit to be happy. There's so much wisdom in bebop I can't get over it. All the things you have to know to make just one chorus work right. You have to know life pretty good. Not to mention the axe."

"You play ail right."

"I know I play all right. Not the very first rank maybe, not world class, but good enough to make a living in New York."

"You phrase nice."

"Of course I do. Bears are very soulful people. We're friendly, we're cool. But the world," he told Jones, "knows us not."

"I know you."

"You. Yeah. You know me." The Bear put the saxophone to his mouth and played a couple of scales. "*You try that with paws, mutha. You develop an embouchure for a snout. Yeah, you know me. Sure. Could you do that?*"

"Steak tartare," said Jones, presenting him with the plate of raw chopmeat and spices. "You're in a lousy mood."

"I'm sorry," said the Bear. "That last bit was unfair. I just get so frustrated. You want a hand with the spaghetti?"

"Naw. Thanks."

"I could give you a hand with the spaghetti."

"That's all right," Jones cleared his throat. "I like to cook."

The Bear played more scales while Jones diced garlic, chopped onions, peppers and parsley. Jones heated the oil and put the spices in to *saute*. "You want to go up to Woodstock this weekend and jam with Julius? Julius is cool. I could call Julius."

"Yeah Julius is cool," said the Bear, "but when a guest comes over I have to go in the yard and make like an animule."

"We could go."

"And I think Julius is in Europe this month."

"Good for Julius," said Jones, beginning to *saute* some tomatoes and stirring with a broad wooden spoon.

"Yeah. Good for Julius."

"Bored, huh," said Jones.

"To death," said the Bear, and downed the steak tartare in a couple of mouthfuls. "I mean, dance is all right, even street dance. It's the poetry of the body, flesh aspiring to grace. But music." He shook his head. "That's different. Put it this way. If the universe is vibration, and after Einstein who is gonna deny it, matter converts to energy and vice versa, then before something sifts down to the material level and becomes life, it becomes sound, which is one level more subtle. Playing. Playing well," he corrected himself, "it's like, it's like being the future."

"Obscurant," commented Jones. "You been reading the wrong magazines."

"Bears have a good head for metaphysics, Jones, but our feet never leave the ground. I know what I'm talking about."

"You understand me perfectly well," said the Bear, licking his muzzle and putting the sax across his knees. "You're just afraid I'm gonna wig out and get unmanageable."

"I just don't want you getting funny ideas."

"I got 'em," said the Bear. He got up and started walking around the room. "Shit I'm restless."

"I could give Mirelle a call," said Jones.

"I'm sick of hookers," said the Bear, "and they can't stand me. The ones that dig me, I think they're sick. They wig out so much on doing it with a bear that I'm not even there, me. That's perverse. Later for Mirelle. Maybe we should go upstate and I can nose around in the woods."

"That's the spirit," said Jones. "A nice she-bear from Big Indian."

"A nice country bear," said the Bear. "No mind for ideas, just roots and berries. A hippie. What will we have to talk about after? This world was not made for me."

"Uh huh."

"Or I for it. Howard the Duck." He laughed. "Remember the days I used to jam in Harlem with the guys out of Lionel Hampton's band?"

"Who could forget."

"They didn't know what to make of me, did they... Uh, where you, uh, from..." The Bear trailed off into laughter. "But I could play, couldn't I? And I kept your ass safe in Harlem. *140th street*, mind you, not one two five."

"The whole thing," said Jones, "was a calculated risk."

"I even made that record date."

Jones, easing the stiff spaghetti into the boiling water, laughed. Then he mimicked the voice of the Union man. "Uh, who is that artist with the ring in his nose. He uh plays uh alto? Alto saxophone?"

Jones and the Bear cracked up.

"They passed me off as a witch doctor in full gear. Totemism. Bantu. The masks of God. God that man was stupid. But persistent."

"All good things," Jones told the Bear, "must come to an end."

"And then begin again," said the Bear. "I got the itch to go out again and take a few chances."

"Just cause you're round and brown," said Jones, "don't mean everybody's gonna take you for Arthur Blythe."

"I'm itchy," said the Bear. "Anything on TV tonight?"

"It's Friday. *Rockford Files*."

"*All right!*" said the Bear. "Save my life. Let's hear it for James Garner."

"Dinner's almost ready," said Jones. "Want to eat in front of the television?"

"Does a bear shit in the woods?" said the Bear. "Present company excepted."

"I liked the show better before they wrote Bev out of the script," said the Bear, "but it's still about the best thing on the box."

"Bev? Who's Bev?"

"Rockford's lawyer, dummy. A good actress, a nice presence."

"Her name was Bess. Or Beverly."

"Bev is short for Beverly, shithead," said the Bear.

"Her name was Bess."

"Yeah," said the Bear. "Bess Myerson."

"Myerson?" said Jones. "Myerson?"

"You sure get stupid come evening," said the Bear.

"I get tired. I'm getting middle aged. Leave me alone."

The Bear regarded Jones' hairless white chest, on which his shirt was open. "That was nice spaghetti," the Bear said, thinking Poor Jones.

"Thanks. I like Angel," said Jones.

"I like Dennis," said the Bear. "Dennis Becker, the cop."

"He looks like a bear," said Jones. "That's why you like him."

"The hell I do," said the Bear. "And the hell he does."

"Nya nya," said Jones. "Lea' me 'lone."

Poor Jones, poor Jones, thought the Bear. Poor weak Jones.

— then went to the closet, put on baggy khaki pants, a raincoat and a hat.

"What are you doing?" said Jones, sitting up and rousing himself, trying to be equal to the occasion.

"*Sorry but I can't take you,*" sang the Bear. "Don't worry I'll be back around two. We can work tomorrow but I got to get some air."

"Where you going."

"Tin Palace maybe and jam. Maybe I'll just do like Sonny Rollins, go up on the bridge and play. Stand there, suspended between heaven and earth and wait for something to happen."

"I'll go with you."

"What I do," said the Bear, "I must do alone. Go quickly. Robert Jordan felt his heart beating on the pine floor of the forest. Gary Cooper. The End."

"Don't talk crazy."

"Look, if I go up on the bridge we'll be famous. Which bridge was it?"

"Brooklyn. Williamsburg. I forget."

"Rainbow. See ya."

The Bear was out the door and trundling down the stairway when Jones started buttoning his shirt and looking for his socks. Shit, he thought, I knew this was gonna happen. He's going out there looking for trouble. *Looking* for it. Thank God he can handle himself in a fight but New York's changed since the last time he was out alone. Too many people carrying heat...

But the Bear was already standing outside the glass doors of the tenement, adjusting the brim of his hat. I may be wearing a hat and a raincoat, he said to himself, but no one's gonna take me for Paddington. I am, after all, one heavy bear.

He came down the seven steps to the pavement and turned right, towards the Avenue. From behind he looked like an enormous, burly man in a coat, thick with power. The weight of the alto case, which was considerable, did not affect his walk in the least. He didn't roll, didn't lean or sway but went straight along the pavement. Maybe, someone seeing him from behind might think, he's carrying a gun in that case, or a bomb, or the secret of my life that I myself have lacked the courage to live completely, or the secret of this great and terrible city. Perhaps someone behind him might have thought this, and perhaps for a moment, flickering wholly in and then wholly out, the sax case might actually have contained the sole and abiding principle, the locus of revelation — who knows? — but at the moment the only person behind the Bear was Jones, coming scattered and dishevelled down the seven steps to the street thinking: I'll run up to him and bring him back — no, that won't work — I'll follow at a distance and when the right time comes I'll, I'll... But only when the right time comes.

In the meantime, the Bear had attained the Avenue, where blinding, brilliant traffic travelled like a line of light from north to south, as if between two worlds. But it was Jacob who saw the ladder, wrestled with the angel, and obtained a birthright under false pretenses. The Bear had done none of these things. He pulled the hat further down on his face and walked south under the great darkness, above him like guardians or heralds the high electric signs of bars and stores — white, yellow, red, gold, brilliant blue, green — as if they were angels that had descended to earth only to hire themselves out as lures for businesses, possibly for reasons of pity. The Bear walked beneath them like a resolute and powerful man, the sax case swinging at his side like a cache of fate, love, gold or vengeance. When he realized that he could have his pick of them — that all options, attributes and possibilities actually were open to him, that he was, at the moment, exalted, liberated, free — he stopped walking for a moment, put down his case, looked gradually around him, raised his snout and smiled broadly, and there on the sidewalk stretched out and aloft his great and inevitable arms. Ah. The night entered him like honey, and he began, so heartily and with such a depth of pleasure that it might have been for the first time in his life, to laugh out loud.

"The Leblanc has a fat sound."



Leblanc Duet No. 4, featuring Pete Fountain

It's prior to show time at Pete Fountain's new bistro in The Hilton on the River in New Orleans. We're relaxing at a table near the stage, and Pete's describing what he enjoys doing when he's not here.

Fountain: I love to fish. I have a small fishing boat, and go out on it a lot. Around home, my hobby is just tinkering with my cars. I have twelve antique cars, including a '36 four-door convertible like Roosevelt's. Could be his, because it has an oversize trunk, maybe for the wheelchair. I enjoy my Rolls, too. My Rolls and my Mercedes. Those two cars I run a lot. And I started collecting trucks. Have a half dozen of 'em. I'm really interested in old planes, too. The biplanes. And I love race cars. Got into motorcycles for awhile, too, and still have my Harley 1200cc. Big Harley. I kick it, and it kicks me back. It's tough.

That's one of the things I like about my clarinet, too. My Leblanc.

It takes more of a beating and more of a workout than any instrument I played before. I started on a Regent, then a Pensamore, and then some others. But the Leblanc's keys are harder. They'll take more of a beating. And that's especially important in my work. It's twenty years since I began playing Leblancs, and to show you how great they are, this is only my second one. This one's two years old, and has about five albums under its belt. The other one, which still plays, I recorded 43 albums with. I'm so proud of my instruments!

Leblanc:

What kind of sound do you like out of a clarinet?

Fountain: Well, I don't

like a high, screechy sound. I like it more mellow, like Irving Fazola was known for. I have his clarinet, you know, but I can't play it too often. When Faz died, his mother put it away in the case, and then left it there for possibly six years. Well, I got it and sent it to Leblanc, and I said, "Could you just recondition this, because it's my idol's." Well, after they sent it back, I started playing it, and when the wood gets warm you're reminded that Faz used to like his garlic. This garlic comes out, and it grabs you by the throat, and, I tell you, it fills up the whole bandstand. So we always say, "Fazola still lives every

time somebody plays his clarinet."

Anyhow, as I said, I don't like a high, screechy sound. The Leblanc has a *fat* sound. They say it's *my* sound, but it's got to come from the instrument

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LEBLANC 

RECORD REVIEWS

Weather Report



Tower of Power



Sonny Rollins



John Scofield



WEATHER REPORT

8:30, Columbia PC2 36030.

Let's face it, when Weather Report, starting with the *Tale Spinnin'/Black Market* days, took a turn for the funkier, the daring experimentalism of *Sing The Body Electric* became a thing of the past. Ironically, the music they've made since then — cerebral yet loose-limbed and fluidly danceable — could fittingly be described as "electric body music."

At its best, that is. To face another fact: Weather Report have become vic-tims of treadmill-itis, the malaise that seems to plague every distinctive band that gains an audience, sells a lot of records, and graduates from small clubs to the big-buck concert hall circuit. And the music has devolved gradually from provocative malange to predictable formula. The commodity fetish strikes again. The best indicator of this is that, in spite of a career laden with personnel changes, each succeeding Weather Report album has sounded remarkably the same. It got so that only the occasional inspired Wayne Shorter sax solo mitigated the complacent mood.

And now we have 8:30: a slickly packaged double album, three live sides and a side of new studio tracks. Such a package is a sure sign of the creeping corporate trappings surrounding Weather Report. Check out the cover: disco dillies and Travolta types in line outside the gig, done up in flat, cartoonish colors. And they're all *faceless*, features undistinguished or even underlined. An all-too-accurate indicator of the music inside.

It's really a painful paradox, that this band could make a record so despicable in some ways, yet still enjoyable in others. It's despicable that they so often fall into

calisthenic displays of chopsmanishp, as in the live "Badia/Boogie Woogie Waltz" medley or Jaco Pastorius' "Teen Town." Equally awful are pointless indulgences like "Scarlet Woman" and Jaco's bass solo, "Slang," which is hardly worth the adoration it draws from the rabid hordes. Then when you think all is lost, they light into a swinging "Birdland," which is lovely in spite of its Mangione/Muzak overtones. Or: the liquid funk of "Black Market," or the soothing, narcotized noodling of "A Remark You Made." Pleasant, if not too inspired. There's a sedated nod at "In A Silent Way" that's so passing you'll miss it if you blink. Shorter's a *capella* "Thanks For The Memory" is a toss-up: Jeez, Wayne, couldn't you have picked a better tune? Do I detect resignation in this solo?

The studio side veers in a similarly erratic manner. "8:30" is slight, if pleasant, and "The Orphan" is unbearably weighty (I can only echo the voices of the children's choir on this one, chanting "No more, no more!"). Yet, "Brown Street" is a good demonstration of Weather Report eclecticism at its best: a Bach-like synthesizer melody floats through a souped-up Enoesque timewarp haze, over crackling pseudo-Brazilian percussion. And then there's "Sight-seeing," 5:34 of burning hard bop that cooks — the only Shorter composition on the lp, natch, and the only chance they take (it's to their credit that it's a big one that works well).

But overall, you can forget about chance-taking; there's hardly even a sense of *commitment* here. The band sounds comfortable, smug, just takin' care of business. Given the recent reports of Shorter walking offstage in the

middle of a Montreux Festival set, it seems safe to say that the Weather Report looks cloudy and ominous. Or well, thanks for the memories, guys. —

Michael Shore
RY COODER

Bop Till You Drop, Warner Bros. BSK 3358

R&B for audiophiles. This is the first all-digital recording by a rock artist, and Warner Bros. seems to be hyping the album more as a technological event than as Cooder's eighth stellar effort. That's a little unfortunate, because music (especially Cooder's) should never take a backseat to technology, as revolutionary as it may be. Briefly, the digital process samples sound 50,000 times per second and records its characteristics numerically — unlike analog equipment which "models" sound into magnetism. It can encode and play back from 20 to 20,000 cycles without noise and harmonic distortion, and there is no generation loss, noise build-up or loss of presence through mixdown and tape transfers. Well, that's all well and good, but I swear, I can't hear that much difference between digital, direct-to-disc and good old analog on my middle-of-the-line home system. As an experiment, I played *Bop* for a half a dozen or so unsuspecting friends, and not a one jumped to their feet and shouted, "What presence!" However, to a man/woman they remarked on Cooder's superior taste and powerful repertoire. *Bop* is probably the guitarist's most (perhaps only) commercial LP to date, but it's also his best. The material is, for the most part, gospel-flavored, and Ry does an admirable job of holding his own vocally (never considered his strongest suit) with R&B masters Bobby King and

Chaka Khan. Instrumentally, Ry is backed mainly by one band throughout, made up in part of players from the Crosby, Browne & Nash camp — particularly bassist Tim Drummond and guitarist David Lindley — who prove more than worthy of the task at hand. It's all difficult in spots to discern which guitarist is playing lead — Cooder's electric bottleneck sounds a lot like Lindley's lap steel — but whoever it is, he's a virtuoso. For that matter, so is the guy playing rhythm. Cooder, as always, unpredictable, has come up with yet another pleasant surprise. Whatever he

Ornette Coleman. "Buddy Bolden Blues" is a traditional New Orleans progression that was handed down to Morton, and Threadgill's plaintive tenor is dark and nostalgic, rising to the brooding accompaniment before wafting back to his original lament.

Joplin's St. Louis style of ragtime was more melodically inclined than the stomping ragtime of Morton's New Orleans, but not so staid and desiccated as 75 years of interpretations have made us believe. Air gives Joplin back his proper proportion of heat without sacrificing any of the music's charm or

hot.) Despite today's r&b success standard of overproduction, they've stuck to it, even after a label change. Which is why, completing the circle, Tower's not significantly rippled the charts in more than five years (and has had only one hit single in their entire career).

And now, with cult bands becoming recessionarily luxurious God only knows what will happen. Because even though *Back on the Streets* was "worked on" by two producers (McKinley Jackson and Richard Evans), it's *still* Tower's best album since the mid-70s. "Rock Baby" is a concession to a recent dance

Air



Joanne Brackeen



Frank Zappa



Talking Heads



decides to follow up with — whether it's hog calls or whaling songs — there can be no doubt that he'll do it up right. — Dan Forte

AIR

Air Lore, Arista/Novus AN 3104.

The group Air is true to their name, creating a matrix of motion and sound that rises and falls like some force of nature. Rather than functioning in a traditional soloist-accompanist format, Air creates equilateral structures in which reedman Henry Threadgill, bassist Fred Hopkins and drummer Steve McCall can swell and recede in a manner that give priority to simultaneous creation and an ongoing dialog. Composer Threadgill can deal with tunes and melody or set up extended forms that liberate the players to make vocal intervallic leaps and jagged mobiles of rhythms and color.

Given the challenging, amoebic nature of Air's music, *Air Lore* is a revelation. This is a most profound affirmation of roots, as Air serves up a vibrant selection of ragtime classics by Jelly Roll Morton and Scott Joplin. *Air Lore* helps to focus our attention on the rich, thematic and melodic gifts of these great American composers, and provides a traditionally structured setting with which to trace the origins of freedom music back in time.

Within the melodic contours of Joplin and Morton, Air interjects a remarkable degree of swing and bluesiness. "King Porter Stomp" is one of the most buoyant, powerful trio performances I've ever heard; riding along on the high-stepping groove of Hopkins and McCall, Threadgill essays a tenor solo that is remarkable for its compactness, splendid development, and shouting fervor — he sounds like Sonny Rollins paraphrasing

humor. As epitomized by McCall's glorious parade-flavored solo intro to "Weeping Willow Rag," Air drags Joplin — not at all unwillingly — through the mud and funk of Congo Square. McCall and Hopkins are impeccable, dainty and acrobatic by degrees, and always singing. Listening to Hopkins's burnished, springy solos one never loses the feel for the rhythmic parameters of the melodies, even when he's tight-roping in a torrent of notes. And McCall is among the most melodic drummers alive. Listen to his brushes take the lead voice on Threadgill's somber, evocative chamber piece "Palli Street," and dig the way he complements the cold blue dynamics of the flute and arco bass while building contrasting clouds of accents.

There's not really much I can say other than to urge you to check this music out. It doesn't much matter what your musical inclination is; this is timeless art containing the seeds of American popular music of the past century. Those who cannot dig it would be advised to take an immediate pulse reading, because you may already be dead. — Chip Stern

TOWER OF POWER

Back On The Streets, Columbia JC 35784

Since leaving Warner Brothers (in 1976) for supposedly more supportive pastures at Columbia, Tower of Power's become even more of a cult band. Their unique *gestalt* has always been their uncluttered sound, which spotlights their soulful lead singer and razor-sharp, awe-inspiring musicianship. (And, not just by their world-famous horn section; anchored by drummer David Garibaldi, their rhythm section is also incredibly

craze, but Michael Jeffries' lead vocals and the tune's arrangement are so raw, so funky that I suspect you can forget the disco market. And, a dance-oriented remake of "Nowhere To Run" (with a bass line too alive for me:ronomic comfort) faces much the same problem. And who can dance to the group's ballads and semi-ballads, songs that take the time, 60s style, to develop lyrically and emotionally? And (shudder) there are even a pair of tracks ("It Takes Two," and "Just Make A Move") that completely fulfill one musician's definition of funk: "The bass, drums, guitar and keyboards lock into a common element, and this generates a propulsive, forward-moving pattern." These days, you have to wonder who wants to go "whew" over a groove like that?

Well, I do. And even if they eventually have to make all their music in Oakland bars, I hope these Bay Area behemoths stay around forever. — Michael Rozek

SONNY ROLLINS

Don't Ask, Milestone M-9090.

The saxophone colossus seems doomed to walk among the pygmies, at least as far as his albums are concerned. Live, as his greatest fans will attest, Sonny is transcendent. But or many of his recordings during the 70s — as pleasant as they've all been — one gets a feeling similar to watching the elder Muhammed Ali do his rope-a-dope routine. There's the element of suspense in never knowing when the champ is going to suddenly explode with a flurry of combinations and footwork, or if he will at all.

Part of the problem is that Sonny Rollins, like Louis Armstrong, is primarily a great soloist. Unlike Ellington and

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that doesn't appeal to Sonny, perhaps he'd consider just going out and playing by himself. I can't conceive that the crowds would be smaller or the record sales diminished by an onslaught of uncut Sonny. "Why not?" I think. "Don't ask" is the response. To be continued.
— Chip Stern

that doesn't appeal to Sonny, perhaps he'd consider just going out and playing by himself. I can't conceive that the crowds would be smaller or the record sales diminished by an onslaught of uncut Sonny. "Why not?" I think. "Don't ask" is the response. To be continued.

— Chip Stern

TALKING HEADS.

Fear Of Music, Sire SRK 6076.

The best rock records of 1979 have been pop albums for psychotics. The music of Bowie, Parker, Pere Ubu and Fripp seems to key in on the pain, uncertainty and near desperation of people as we lurch into the post-technological age. Ironically enough, rock is a music of the technological age, defining itself through recording studio techniques and electric instruments, yet seeking to transcend those elements to make a universal statement — which is that madness is the order of the day.

"Everything seems to be up in the air at this time," David Byrne sings on *Fear Of Music*, which, as Lester Bangs has observed, could just as well mean fear of everything. Talking Heads depict a hostile world full of distortion, impending chaos and rigidity. "Try not to look so disappointed," Byrne counsels, "it's not what you hoped for, is it?" Fatalistic yet bemused by it all, the Talking Heads have chosen a dangerous artistic stance, teetering obliquely between the role of critical observers and becoming that which they depict. That their robot-like demeanor should convey as much musicality and humanism as it does makes *Fear Of Music* one of the great rock albums of 1979.

Talking Heads has always been an exemplary pop band, with a real feel for textures and bouncy dance beats. What made them different ("new wave," so to speak) was their instinct for abstraction and the singular concerns of singer-songwriter David Byrne — I've often likened their sound to James Brown, Steve Reich and Jean-Paul Sartre meeting in the junior high school men's room to discuss existentialism and smoke cigarettes.

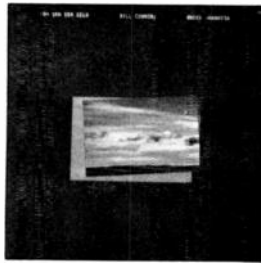
On *Fear Of Music* Eno and Talking Heads have evolved their music into ever more sophisticated realms reaching towards the future while at the same time taking a more inclusive attitude towards the best elements of rock's past. In Talking Heads Eno has found a perfect anagram for his group, sound nurturing their musical proclivities like a rock Ellington, adding just the right brushstrokes at the key moments: the diabolical echo on "Memories Can't Wait;" the graduated volume level on the entrance to "Cities;" and the subterranean pulsars and birdcalls on "Drugs," which cuts anything Herbie Hancock has done in years. The Heads' musicianship has taken a quantum leap as well. Byrne's guitar work has become sharper and

Perhaps that is by design, though. The other problem with recent Rollins albums is lackluster material that occupies a limbo space between funk and straight-ahead jazz, somehow lacking conviction as one or the other. This has led to a certain rhythmic stasis which undermines Sonny's greatest strengths. Besides his peerless tenor tone and melodic gifts, Rollins has an uncanny rhythmic sense, unraveling fascinating rhythmic variations with accents going against the pulse.

This sort of rhythmic interplay and freedom seems to be the main thing missing on *Don't Ask*, which is basically a very pleasant album. On "Harlem Boys" Sonny unwinds long, gruff melodies with the inherent logic that has become his trademark; but the groove is so stolid and unvarying — completely devoid of nooks and crannies or jagged edges — that it deprives Sonny of any real tensions to play off of. Sonny states the themes with his customary emotional boldness, but the only solo that he really sinks his teeth into comes on "And Then My Love I Found You" where he has the space to build brawny contrasts between themes and variations. Elsewhere a lot of the solo space is given over to guest artist Larry Coryell, which is a mixed blessing. Coryell's hands seem to be ever out-running his imagination, and rather than constructing a melody the guitarist is content to toss out a few bent notes, and a few quotes, then take off on a series of unending cadenzas and stock calisthenics.

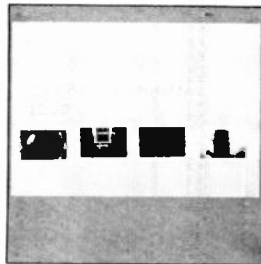
Perhaps I'm being too harsh on Coryell and overly picky with *Don't Ask*, but shit, this is Sonny Rollins. By anybody else's standards this is a good record, but while I was writing this review I saw Sonny play unaccompanied tenor on the *Tonight Show* of all places — completely out of sight. So why does he even need a band or to fool around with a lyricist as he does on the charming "Tai-Chi"? What's a jazz fan to do? Two suggestions. First, in a *Soho Weekly News* interview James Brown expressed great admiration for what Rollins was trying to do and said he'd love to produce him; the Godfather even went so far as to try and call Sonny on the phone. James Brown seems like he could give

Tom van der Geld
Path



Tom van der Geld, vibraharp. **Bill Connors**, guitars. **Roger Jannotta**, flute, soprano saxophone, oboe. ECM-1-1134

Egberto Gismonti
Solo



Gismonti performs on eight-string guitar, piano, cooking bells, surdo. "Gismonti is a uniquely talented performer whose scope reaches far beyond the limits of jazz." (*Stereo Review*) ECM-1-1136

Paul Motian
Le Voyage



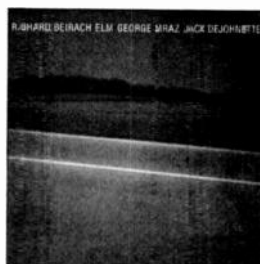
Paul Motian, drums. **J.F. Jenny-Clarke**, bass. **Charles Brackeen**, tenor and soprano saxophones. "This is music that must be savored and grown comfortable with; it is an effort, however, that is well rewarded." (*Good Times*) ECM-1-1138

Gary Burton/Chick Corea
Duet



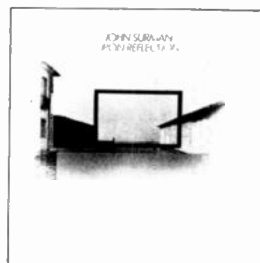
Gary Burton, vibraharp. **Chick Corea**, piano. Second duet LP for ECM; when the first, *Crystal Silence*, was released in 1973, *Billboard* accurately predicted "...the album may prove a classic for its revelation of the more delicate, contemplative, strengths of the men." ECM-1-1140

Richard Beirach
Elm



Richard Beirach, piano. **George Mraz**, bass. **Jack DeJohnette**, drums. "His playing is imbued with a harmonic lushness and a lovely lyrical bent." (*Hartford Courant*) ECM-1-1142

John Surman
Upon Reflection



John Surman, baritone, soprano saxophones; bass clarinet; synthesizers. ECM-1-1148

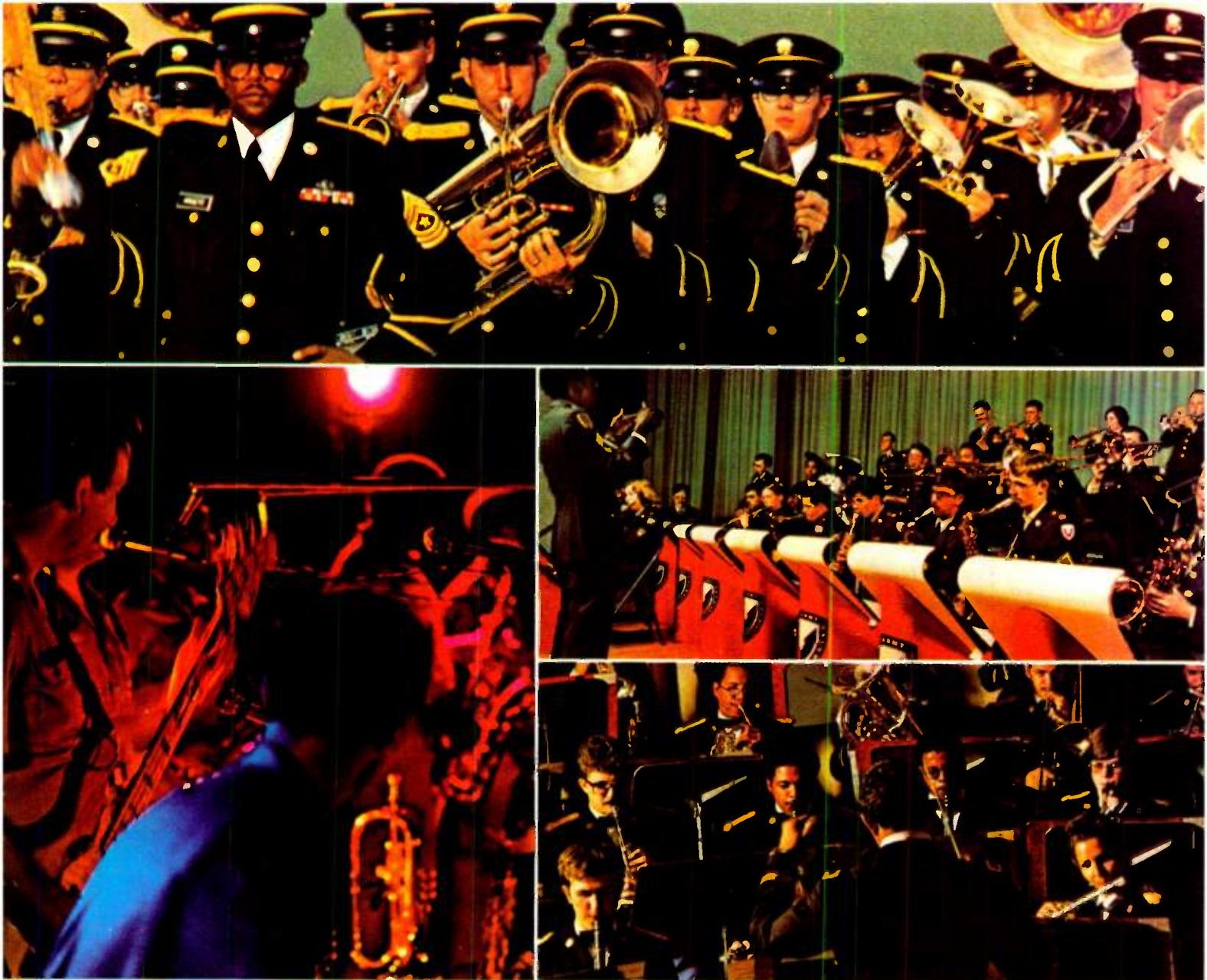
If, as Byrne propounds on a conspiracy theory called "Electric Guitar," 'electric guitar is copies, the copy sounds better - ...someone controls electric guitar', then we're going to need some strong

According to Davis *Of Blues and Dreams* — the pianist's third album recorded in 1978 — is a very personal statement because it includes music

Frank Zappa — *Joe's Garage Act 1*
Zappa Records, SRZ 1-1603. Uncle Frank wants to tell you a bedtime story that is a concoction of fantasy and truth, leaving you to distinguish between the two. The plot revolves around the "Central Scrutinizer," a big brother figure who "enforces laws that haven't been passed yet." Zappa also attempts to take the heat off the "Jewish Princess" fiasco by demonstrating his patriotism as an equal opportunity satirist and offering his outside insights into "Catholic Girls" where he asks the enticing question, "do you know how they go?" On the musical side, the arrangements bear Zappa's trademarks as he applies rhythmic variation, percussive tinkling and even finds time for some hot guitar playing on the instrumental "Toad-O-Line." Though you wouldn't regard "Joe's Garage" as

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tion) for the music serves it purpose as a backdrop for Act I of this zany audio-theatrical production. — p.g.

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Timeless Muse TI 304. If you love Keith Jarrett's solo piano, but not his frequent stylistic excess (or structural meandering) this album is for you. Montoliu, a Spanish bebopper (who's lately been well represented here on record) brings his disciplined approach to the highly lyrical compositions of Catalonian Juan Manuel Serrat. The result is romance without nonsense; satisfying coherent musical emotion. — m.r.

Dr. John — Tango Palace, Horizon SP 740. If you can get past the disastrous opening track "Keep the Music Simple," you might find something worthwhile here. His poetic humor and patented gruff vocals aid Dr. John in cutting through a production that's just a little too clean for the dirty Doctor. At times the point gets across, as on "Renegade"

New Orleans Say." Unfortunately, problems such as the typical background vocal arrangements hold this recording back when you think of the possibilities here. Why weren't the Meters hired to pump behind Dr. John on this one? Talk about funk! It might have made a difference. — peter giron

Ian Dury — Do It Yourself, Stiff/Columbia. This could almost be subtitled "Toc Funky In Here." The hard, uncut funk introduced on the rollicking "Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick" single dominates but this approach seems to work better for Ian in the compressed single format through the course of a whole album, it ultimately becomes wearing and one-dimensional. No fault of the band's — the ultra-adept Blockheads light a danceable fire under everything in sight — or the funk, it's just that Ian demonstrated a remarkable scope on his debut (*New Boots And Panties*), which was at once vulgar and sensitive, tough and delicate, and rockin' as well as funky. *DIY* almost undersells the man's talents: Dury's lyrical, guttersnipe humanity gets lost in the funky shuffle, submerged beneath waves of twanging Fender bass and thudding bass drums. The material is just not as strong as on *New Boots*, except for "Sink My Boats" and "This Is What We Find," where humor and pop hooks leaven the discoid mix. Still, Ian's on an interesting track here, and the results are at the least supremely bump-worthy. — m.s.

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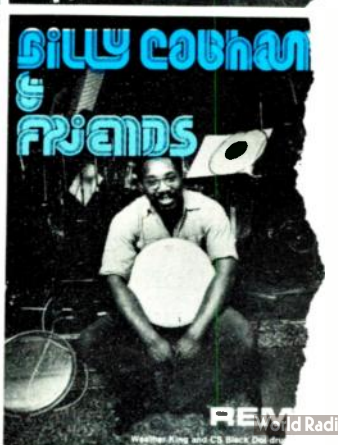
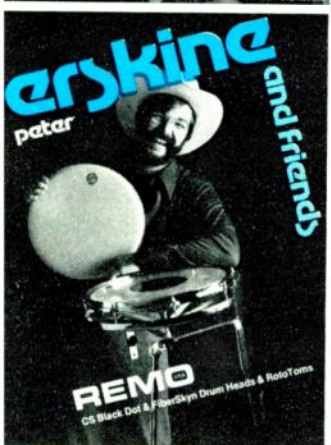
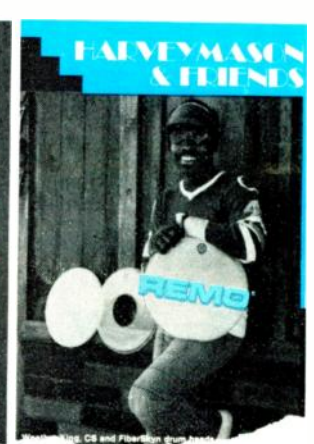
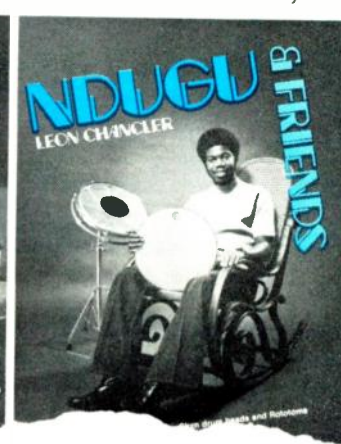
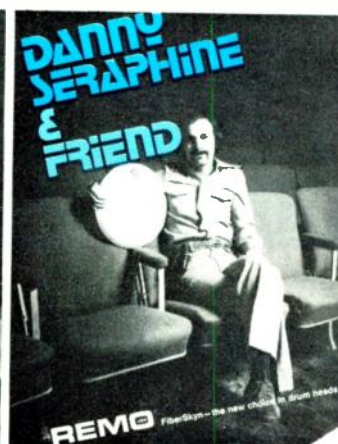
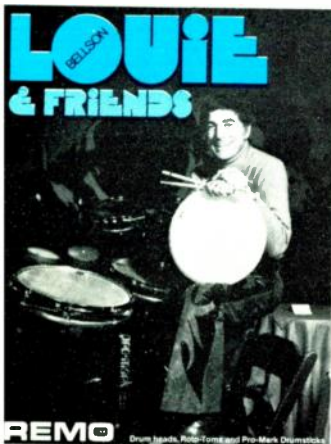
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Columbia/Tappan Zee JC36075. I must confess that I've been going through a phase where I don't enjoy listening to pianists very much. So many sound alike or else every solo sounds the same once you've gotten a taste of their pet resolutions for chord changes. I must also add that while Joanne Brackeen's music doesn't seem very original I find her piano playing very fresh — *Keyed In* is a primo trio date that explores various ballad, swing, free and latin moods. Brackeen transfigures shopworn stylistic conventions of the 1960s (as defined by Tyner, Evans, Hancock, Bley, Corea and Jarrett) through her aggressive rhythmic stance and her general disdain for the easy clichés. The Chick Corea influence is particularly evident, but compare Brackeen's Spanish tinge on "El Mayorazgo" to what Armando is producing lately. Eddie Gomez engages the pianist in a continuously unfolding dialog and Jack DeJohnette provides steady rolling volleys of color, both on and off the beat.

— C.S.

Sun Ra — *Disco 3000*, Saturn Research. Once you understand Ra's philosophical premise that man is just another speck in an infinite (and infinitely fascinating) cosmos, it's easier to comprehend his music, which is based on similar attitudes of forward-motion and exploration. In the 20-minute-plus title cut, Ra travels the spaceways, from disco to disco:

meandering to a firm, funky, pulse, various discoid rhythms pop up in the bubbling sonic stew as often as the more expected fragmented swing charts and mutated bop solos. Included are alarmingly accurate takes on Kraftwerk/Moroder pneumatics as well as hypno-trance African percussion choirs. If you still find it hard to handle, flip it over and side two presents dissections of the elements Ra draws upon: a hard-bop swing tune, a percussion jam (rhythm box duels with conga section) and a languid bossa-watusa shuffle. As they say at football games: "Ra, Ra, Ra!" — *Michael Shore*

Rova Saxophone Quartet — *The Removal of Secrecy*, Metalanguage 106. A stimulating record. The Rova Saxophone Quartet is a young California-based group composed of Jon Raskin, Larry Ochs, Andrew Voigt, and Bruce Ackley. While the ensemble will undoubtedly be compared with the World Saxophone Quartet, it has a distinctive sound and style of its own. The side-long "That's How Strong," for example opens with an effective dialogue among the four musicians. From then on, they produce a battery of sounds that communicates its structural and emotional design to the listener. (Available through New Music Distribution Service, 500 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012.) — C.J.S.

In New York, Interplay IP-7724. Tapscott makes the most of this trio session to demonstrate his considerable instrumental and compositional skills. With Art Davis and Roy Haynes providing sympathetic support, he unveils a percussive attack. "Lino's Pad" is treated to a dark, mysterious performance, while "Sketches of Drunken Mary" features darting melodic lines and powerful, jagged chords. Tapscott also displays a fresh approach to his musical heritage in a largely dissonant interpretation of Tad Damerson's classic composition "If You Could See Me Now." — C.J.S.

Bill Bruford *One of a Kind*, Polydor POLD 5020. It hurts to say it, but Bruford — long one of my favorite drummers — could be doing better. This is lovely accomplished, polished fusion, for sure but it also smacks far too much of format-think. A shame, since Bill's first solo shot, *Feels Good To Me*, did a fine job of reflecting all that's good about Bruford taste, restraint, careful attention to detail and a crisp, angular attack guided by acute, alert intelligence. Here, most of the tunes sound samey and bland, keyboardist Dave Stewart is utterly wasted and Bruford's ultra-clean precision finally sounds strung so tight he can barely breathe. Only guitarist Allan Holdsworth with his bittersweet warbling tone and unpredictable attack, shines; only the bouncy, succinct "Hells Bells" and voluptuously melodic "Fainting In Coils" stand out from what is mainly sleek powerdrive coasting. Time for a change — m.s.

Spyro Gyra — *Morning Dance*, Infinity INF 9004. Seeing as how I like contemporary fusion music about as much as camel breath, I put on *Morning Dance* fully expecting to hate it, but I must admit the boys from Buffalo are an engaging bunch of lightweights. They play their concoction of funk vamps, percussive effects, orchestral colorations, genteel improvisations and the like with taste, a tad of ingenuity and only a modicum of Mangioneitis, although "Rasul" did send me into insulin shock. Jay Beckenstein is no conceptualist on saxophone, but he's a good melodic player. The studio aces help out fine, and it plays well on the radio. Devotees of the post-Headhunters/Weather Report/Turrentine Washington generation will dig it thoroughly. — c.s.

James White and the Blacks — *Almos Black*, Zee ZE3303. This record is a bitch, but I can't justify my liking it in terms of redeeming social value because it has none — save perhaps dancing or background music for an Andy Warhol leather and whips documentary. James Brown, uhh White, mean Chance, is not a particularly accomplished alto saxophonist, with a tone that resembles a circus seal. He does, however, possess style, even though I find his style repellent. "Stained

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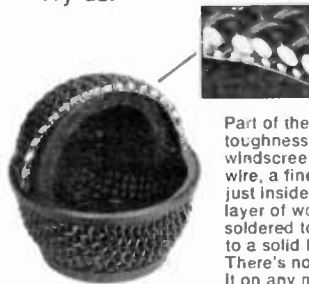
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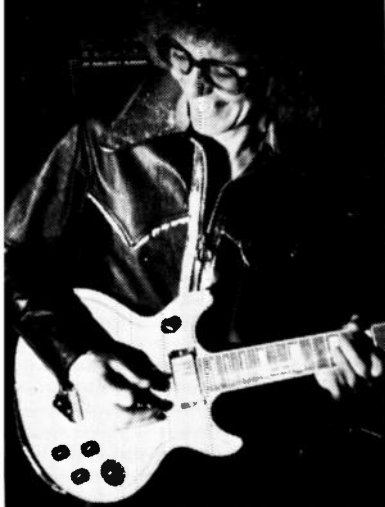


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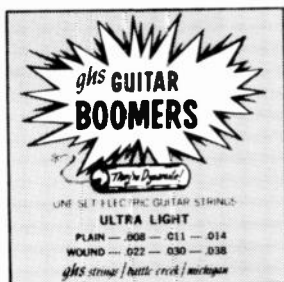


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sismarm as Chance engages in verbal bondage with one Stella Rico who suffers beautifully, and in pitch too. As a reedman, Chance owes a debt to Roscoe Mitchell and David Murray, but his greatest skill is as an arranger — creating a punk anagram of Prime Time, Beefheart and Miles Davis's "Agartha" band (which seems to grow more important with every year). When it works, which is most of the time, it is menacing, sexy and maddened as bizzaro slide guitars and distortion sounds belch and whine over a rock steady backbeat. If nausea persists, call your physician, but it's funny and has a beat you can dance to, Dick — I give it an 85. — c.s.

Steve Khan — *Arrows*, Columbia JC 36129. Sure, Khan's acoustic/electric axe sound and compositional approach are studio-precise, even at times coldly introverted. But they're never stupidly commercial nor pretentiously artsy. Instead, Khan's writing is based on almost theatrically catchy quirks (the single-line melody of "City Monsters", or the structure surrounding his acoustic work at the end of "Daily Village"). These set up lots of potential solo room; next time, I'd like to hear it really cut loose upon by some freer players, and Khan's guitar sound — a carefully miked and mixed trademark — loosen up. Meantime, this is another exceptional album from a fusioner who's his own man; that next one, though, could show his brilliance in fullest bloom. — m.r.

The Fabulous Thunderbirds — *Takoma* 7068. This legendary Austin, Texas band's made the best Chicago blues album I've heard in years. The key elements: Jimmy Vaughn's wailing but clean lead guitar; the fine harp work and dear vocals of Kim Wilson; and an exceptional choice of material, from the Slim Harpo classic "Scratch My Back," to the cooler-than-cool "She's Tuff," to five Wilson originals. The secret: no schlocky producer got his hands on the music and screwed it into r&b. — m.r.

Ted Curson — *The Trio*, Interplay IP-7722. Curson presents us with a fresh and somewhat uncommon setting for a brass instrument. He, bassist Ray Drummond, and drummer Roy Haynes play so well together that another horn or chordal instrument (i.e. piano or guitar) is not missed. From the electrifying opening on "Snake Johnson" to the closing ballad "Round About Midnight", Curson is in top form. His solo on "Pent Up House" is particularly noteworthy, employing long lyrical lines that expertly navigate the composition's harmonic progression. — C.J.S.

Clifford Jordan — *Hello Hank Jones*, East World EWLP-98003. As the album title implies, this record is as much a feature for Hank Jones as it is for the leader Clifford Jordan. Both musicians are supremely lyrical players who are masters at creating beautiful melodic

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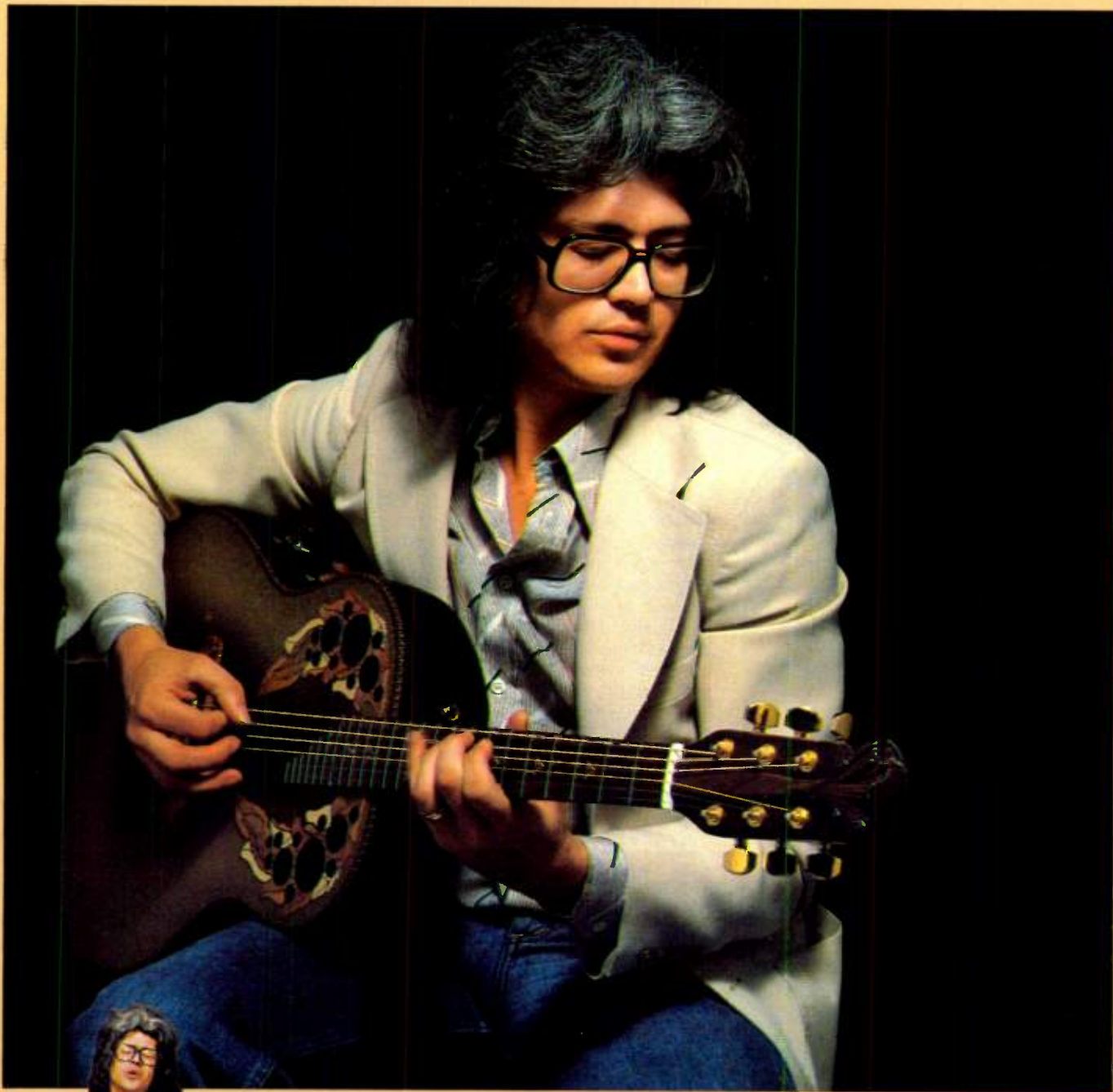
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...ings. Despite their numerous individual recordings, this quartet date captures the two at the height of their creative powers. "Vienna," a Jordan composition, receives a poignant interpretation spotlighting the saxophonist's and pianist's complementary singing styles. "Bohemia After Dark," on the other hand, is more intense, with Jordan's fervent solo highlighting the performance. (Available through Audio-Technica U.S., Inc., 33 Shiawase Ave., Fairlawn, Ohio 44314.) — C.J.S.

Egberto Gismonti — *Solo*, ECM-1-1136. Gismonti's steel strings and mobile two-handed technique, where the bass and treble strings answer each other, give us a thick tapestry, woven with many colors and feelings. Open-spaced and light, hard and dense, the man's guitar magically projects dancing stars of sound on pieces which seem to have

monti's pianistics are lighter in stature and have a Baroque flavor at times. He also uses his voice and cooking bells to advantage. This gem of an album is as soothing as a gentle breeze, and just as welcome. — z.s.

Richard Belrach — *Elm*, ECM-1-1142. This well integrated trio date, with George Mraz, bass, and Jack DeJohnette, drums, show Belrach to be a continually maturing pianist-composer (he wrote all the pieces) who is pursuing a clear-cut path towards singularity as an artist. Particularly enticing is the pianist's use of space in his solos: he'll air an idea, then pause, allowing Mraz and DeJohnette to converse, before re-entering with another thought. The tempos contrast. "Snow Leopard" is hotter than a sauna, while "Elm," for the late violinist Zbigniew Seifert, is autumn cool. The members of this band interact as an equal-share unit — there is no boss. All told, a first class record. — z.s.

Toshiko Akiyoshi — *Dedications*, Inner City IC 6046. For those listeners who regret that Toshiko Akiyoshi does not feature her provocative piano work enough in the band she co-leads with her husband Lew Tabakin, this album is a must. Here, the pianist — joined by a different rhythm section on each side of the record — solos extensively on seven tunes from the bebop repertoire. She demonstrates a beguiling sensitivity to color, placing as much emphasis on

does to melody. Chords of varying degrees of dissonance highlight her improvisations. Even on the torrid-paced "Tempus Fugit," Akiyoshi's left hand plays an active role in complementing her fluid, probing linear work — C.J.S.

JoAnne Brackeen — *Mythical Magic*, MPS 0068.211. One of the most provocative pianists of the 1970's, JoAnne Brackeen offers her strongest recorded performance to date. She fashions a stunning unaccompanied recital in which her highly percussive style generates the rhythmic intensity of an entire band. Brackeen's music is characterized by firm, ringing chords and energetic single note lines. On "Foreign Ray," for example, phrases and individual notes tumble over one another, painting a tension-filled sound portrait. (Distributed by German New Company, Inc., 218 East 86th St., New York, N.Y. 10028.) — C.J.S.

Rob McConnell and the Boss Brass — *The Jazz Album*, Pausa PR 7031. Recorded in 1976 by an aggregate of Toronto studio players, this is the classic record Buddy, Woody and more regional orchestras have been too busy "changing with the times" to make. It's full of powerpacked ensemble playing, burnished on ballads; crisp solos, and nothing ever so complete that it doesn't swing. — m.r.

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Chapter I — Les Jeune Chanteuses.

Caroline Mas — (Mercury). Mas is the most talented and compelling American singer-songwriter to emerge since Bruce Springsteen, and this is her *Born To Run*. She pumps more heart and soul into her superbly crafted three-minute pop anthems than anybody I've heard in years. Listen to desperate yet defiant hope in "Still Sane," as if she had to prove the song's premise with every breath. *Musician*: P&L's own Cris Cioe contributes some classic Memphis fatback sax, and hats off to producer Steve Burgh for his rich and vibrant production. **Pat Benatar** — *In The Heat of The Night* (Chrysalis). Benatar occasionally makes the jump into hyper-space as she sings her little heart out over Wunderkind-producer Mike Chapman's Blondie-esque bed of glazed power chords. In case the Parallel Lines still aren't clear enough, there's even a perfect "Heart of Glass" clone. Five points off for copying. **Karla Bonoff** — *Restless Nights* (Columbia). Listless nights are more like it. Bonoff's spare but elegant debut album amply displayed her prodigious talents as a songwriter — Linda Ronstadt covered three on one album). The fuller and more polished approach here could be meant to help establish her credentials as a performer in her own right, and it might have worked if only she didn't sound so dreamy and devoid of passion. Even a chestnut like "When You Walk In The Room" drags. Special to K.B.: *FIND-ASS* — *KICK-SAME*. We'll be looking for the Fire Next Time... **Bonnie Raitt** — *The Glow* (Warners). Bonnie's been shopping around for an appropriate stylistic vehicle for her considerable talents for a few albums now. She may

well have found a firm base in the R&B/Funk groove she carves out here. She's as convincing as ever as she burns her way through tunes by Isaac Hayes, Robert Palmer, Bobby Troup, and Mary Wells, among others. Her funky but chic voice continues to season like a good Scotch whiskey — goes down smooth but retains plenty of kick. A classy singer by any standards. **Ellen Foley** — *Night Out* (Epic). Why is it that ostensibly excellent back-up singers have such difficulties making convincing solo albums? Guess they need the tension and polarity of working with (or against) a foil. Ex-Meat Loaf-mate Foley's truly operatic set of pipes are somewhat mismatched with the tasteful but rarely challenging material here. **The Shirts** — *Street Light Shine* (Capitol). Five reformed Italian greasers from Brooklyn and a perky blond churn out catchy tunes that reflect three decades of musical influence: 50's Doo-Wop, 60's San Francisco/early Airplane and 70's punk/New Wave. Personally, I preferred their harder-rocking debut. How come the band sound is so thin here? Mixed down to far? "Can't Cry" is a real gum-snapper, however. **Long John Baldry** — *Baldry's Out* (E.M.I.). Baldry is to English vocalists what Mayall is to guitarists; Rod Stewart, Mick Jagger and Elton John are all alumni of his band. This Year's Model is Kathy McDonald, whose skyscraping vocals on "You've Lost That Loving Feeling" should give you goosebumps. The rest of the album is passable boogie-woogie and ballad fare. Catch him live.

Dave Edmunds — *Repeat When Necessary* (Swan Song). Lowe may be the brains behind the Rockpile mob, but Edmunds supplies a lot of the heart and muscle. His rockabilly stuff is merely

meat and potatoes serviceable, but the buoyant Costello and Parker covers really shine, and "Queen of Hearts" cuts Buddy Holly. **Iam Gomm** — *GOMM With The Wind* (Stiff/Epic). Gomm charts a middle course between former Brinsley Schwartz mate Nick Lowe's populist confections and the Parker/Jackson/Costello gang's angsty opera (plural of opus — look it up!). All the rough edges have been shaved off — the result is a little too bland for my taste, though the Moody Bluesish "Hole On" sounds like Justin Hayward at his best. **The Rumour** — *Frogs, Clogs Sprouts and Krauts* (Arista). Brinsley Schwartz and the boys lack dynamic tension and a firm sense of direction without Parker's incandescent intensity and cohesive vision "Emotional Entrapments" ain't half bad, though.

Chapter II — Aging Superstars

Led Zeppelin — *In Through The Out Door* (Swan Song). Vaughn Williams rocks out. Page & Co. prove that ever-saurian mega-stars can continue to evolve and mature. Jones' orchestral synthesizer lines lend a pastoral feel to the proceedings, while drummer Bonham makes sure nobody drifts off into the ozone. Page too is in top form, his surprisingly effective ersatz Middle Eastern musings add exotic coloration and atmospheric touches that nicely complement Jones' Romantic impressionism. Page also shows that he's still got a whole lotta chops, his solo guitar work is controlled yet lively, and never clichéd. The exuberant keyboard/guitar riff in "Foot In The Rain" is an unmitigated joy. **Mike Bloomfield** — *Between the Hard Place and the Ground* (Takoma). Bloomfield never strays far from his roots as he squeezes off those

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recorded in some sleazy but friendly bar Just A Little South Of Moline. Lotsa' integrity. **Tom Johnston** — *Everything You Heard is True* (Warners). Former Doobie Brother Johnston lays down some relaxed, mellifluous funk that calls to mind images of Little Feat with an antsy rhythm section, or a mellow white folk's version of Funkadelic. Not quite as interesting as I'm making it sound, but not bad for what it is. **Cheap Trick** — *Dream Police* (Epic). Blending Who power chord gymnastics with Beatlesque melodies is no cheap trick, but *Dream Police* does sound like Pete Townsend and Paul McCartney got together to re-write the Beatles White Album — and damn near pulled it off.

Chapter IV — New Wave

Interview — *Big Oceans* (Virgin). Graham Parker decides to leave The Rumour and is replaced by Crosby, Stills and Nash. Not altogether unpleasant.

with Television convinced me that he is easily the most brilliant and innovative American guitarist since Hendrix. (Lend an ear to *Venus* or *Marquee Moon* on their debut album . . .) He plays with unusual presence and integrity, exploring and caressing each note, wringing from them every possible nuance of tone, color, and depth. His solo effort is more of a composers' album than in improvisational tour-de-force. Only on "Breakin' In My Heart" does he begin to stretch out, and even then he barely gets into third gear. I hope he stops hanging around the studio and gets back to playing live so he can get the blood circulating in his magic fingers again. **Gary Numan And Tubeway Army** — *Replicas* (Atco). Nick Lowe meets Eno. Pop/Avant-garde synthesizer rock with touches of Hendrix and some simple but artful melodic hooks. A well executed mating of divergent but compatible forms. Glad somebody

Sound Of Sunbathing (Columbia). Stripped down Cars/Costello arrangements and engaging adolescent vocals enable Lene Lovich's former backup band to occasionally shut down Ocasel and friends on their own turf, notably on "Take Me To Your Leader" and a few other tunes. The rest of the time they fail the glucose tolerance test. Sincerity isn't enough; look what happened to Carter

Chapter V — L.A. Power Poppers

The Motels (Capitol). Leapin' Lizards, a L.A. band with more depth than flash. Deceptively simple, almost skeletal guitar/bass lines that merge the best features of the Cars, Doors, and early Jefferson Airplane. Dollops of narcotic sax and Martha Davis' restrained yet heartfelt vocals complete the picture. Seductive, mesmerizing, and at times quite moving, especially "Total Control". **The Pop** (Arista). These second-generation New Wave types have managed to absorb (if not entirely digest) bits and pieces from Devo, Talking Heads, the Cars — even the Raspberries. They confront the listener with an intricate jumble of oddball rhythm shifts and mock-heroic melodic choruses built from blocks of gleaming power chords. Their sophisticated sense of dynamics enables them to weave these various elements together into a coherent whole that you can snap your fingers or pop gum to, even if the end product doesn't always add up to more than the sum of its parts. **The Durocs** (Capitol). "It Hurts To Be In Love" was an inspired and daring choice for a cover, but not surprisingly, their version lacks the resonance of Gene Pitney's original. Fortunately the song's natural dynamics and their earnestly energetic attack pull them through in the end. "Seeker" sports a wonderfully viscera descending riff reminiscent of the Sex Pistols' "Holiday in the Sun" (though the lyrics are a bit sophomoric). The rest of this stuff is pretty much your standard FM fodder, but two near bullseyes ain't a bad percentage nowadays. **The Who** — *Quadrophenia* (Polydor). While there's nothing on *Quadrophenia* that packs the punch of "Pinball Wizard" or "See Me Feel Me" from *Tommy*, there's certainly enough good music here ("5:15," "The Punk and The Godfather," "I've Had Enough," and more) to justify the project. This movie soundtrack version adds a few bonuses like the delightfully Merseybeat "Zoot Suit" from the Who's early incarnation as The High Numbers. Plus there's a whole side of absolutely classic oldies, ranging from the rusty funk of James Brown's "Night Train," to the Ronettes magnificent "Be My Baby". Great stuff to flip on while you're hoovering the flat.

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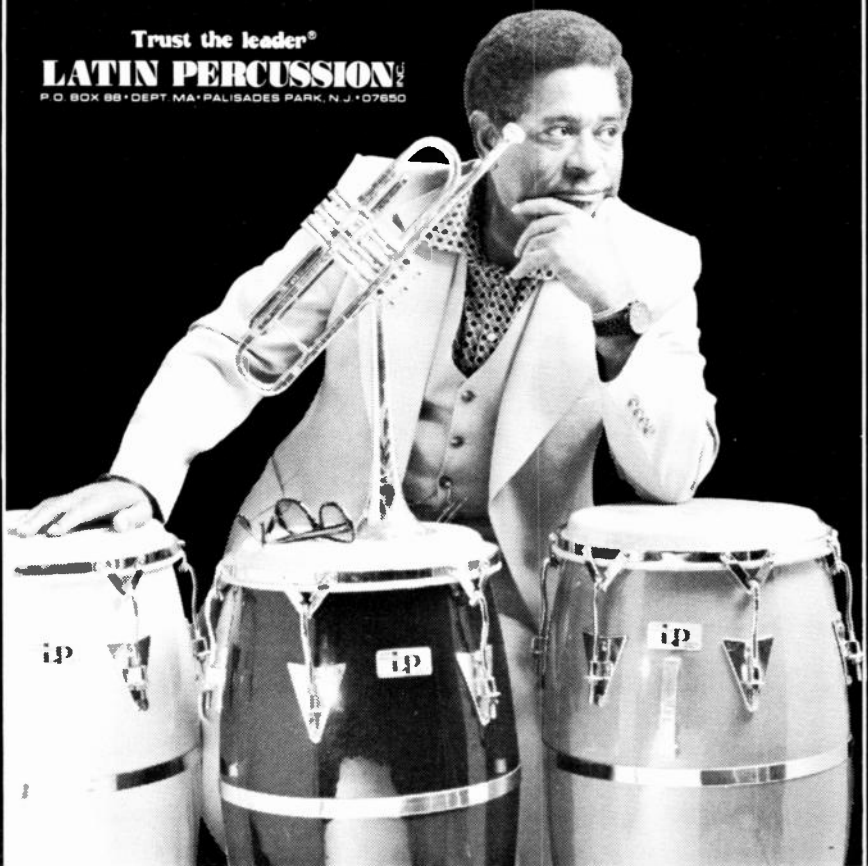
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Montreux cont. from page 33 right, and most thought it was heart. They were on target. The next morning Shorter told journalists that after eight years of playing with Weather Report, "we really had no place to go." Shorter then said he was leaving Weather Report in about three months and the group would disband. A live album would be released, but the group would not play together again after the summer.

Curiously, Shorter smiled as he talked about the apocalypse. Perhaps he was leasing the press, expressing confused thoughts in riddles and absurdities, making light of what could be serious anxiety over his future. It was obvious from the Montreux performance that Shorter had less and less to say about the direction of Weather Report.

Suddenly those blank pages explained Shorter's own feelings. When word of Shorter's remarks were relayed to Weather Report's management group in Los Angeles, American Recording Artists, exec Laurel Altman reacted with amused calm. "Oh, no one knows what Wayne is ever talking about," she said. "All I know is Weather Report will be touring the US in the late fall and Wayne is happy as a lark. At least, that's what he tells me."

Sometimes the thought is more an indictment than the actual event. Countless musicians have threatened to quit in the morning, only to play with renewed fidelity the same evening. Shorter, though, behaved as if he was wearing the strain of living too close to the edge for too long. At Montreux, he had trouble making decisions without the help of Zawinul or Pastorius.

It was obvious that personality had become a factor on and off stage for Weather Report. There was Shorter, vulnerable and indecisive, yielding to the intense and corrosive nature of Zawinul and Pastorius, and new member Erskine, who just followed the beat. While both Pastorius and Zawinul grunted when approached by the press, and ignored all the other musicians at Montreux to the point of being blatantly rude, Shorter came across as a jellyfish over his head in water when assuming the role as spokesman for the group.

The lasting impression at Montreux was that Weather Report was having trouble holding up to the turbulence and created a storm of their own to relieve their internal pressure.

But Montreux is not a climate conducive for turmoil. Nature is too uplifting or the spirit to be dragged down. Most would rather walk away than have to confront unnecessary problems. Midway through the Weather Report encore, more a courtesy call by the stunned audience hoping a warm response would inspire cohesive music-making, the crowd started to file out of the concert. They were disappointed

the empty feeling with a fresh breeze.

Verlaine cont. from page 36 enlightened boogie."

Verlaine looks truly aghast. "Boogie! I hate boogie, God. I mean, not the Chicago boogie like Willie Dixon or Howlin' Wolf, but all those awful white bands . . ."

Hmmmmmm, guess I better change the subject. "Let's talk about your, er, lyrics Tom. I get the impression from many of your songs that you're a kind of light-hearted Christian martyr. Like on "Guiding Light" where you sing "Tell me who sends these infamous gifts/To make such a promise and make such a slip . . . Never the rose without the prick." Or on "Friction": "If I ever catch that ventroloquist/I'll squeeze his head right into my fist."

Verlaine giggles. That 's obviously one of his favorite lines. "I don't like dumb lyrics. By that I mean lyrics where you can't feel that there's a real person behind it — unthoughtout, sentimental, conditioning type stuff. And people use the excuse 'well this is rock and roll' so they can turn out the same songs that everybody's heard for 20 years."

"Sometimes I get the impression you're weary," I interject.

"Of what?" Verlaine gently inquires. "Life."

He smiles as if to say not really. "If you read the poet Rilke or if you *really* listen to Coltrane . . . if you're interested in inward directions, Coltrane would say you have to be able to be alone and go into yourself. It's . . . it's really hard for me to talk about lyrics. Some of them are like me trying to describe something so I'll know what it is, instead of letting it all go by — so you focus on something to figure out what the hell it is. It's underneath your daily awareness, so to speak.

*"Chirpchirp
the birds
they're giving you the words
The world is just a feeling
you undertook
Remember?"*

"Prove It — Tom Verlaine

Reggae cont. from page 52

group at the festival came close to the Wailers' emotional depth. Aston "Family Man" Barrett's bass hits the listener deep in the chest and keeps on going. Wire Lindo's burbling organ and phased clavinet swells — especially when voicing quizzical major-minor ninth chords, created thick, cloud-like moods. Carlton Barrett's drumming left deep holes in space, usually two beats long, before he came charging back from the depths with a rattling ride around the tom-toms, always leading up the first beat of the next verse. Seeco Patterson, Marley's percussionist, concentrated on the woodblocks almost exclusively,

the kind of time that would make a metronome envious.

In the middle of it all, Marley acted out his stories for the brethren. Opening with "Positive Vibrations," he played rhythm guitar on about three tunes, and then shed it to concentrate on singing and dancing. On "Who The Cap Fit," his two young sons joined him onstage to dance, each doing a distinctive high-stepping tap-dance jig that raised the energy level another notch. But by this time, the singer was off into his own world. During a heart-rending version of "No Woman, No Cry," he would look up at the full moon, extending his arm into space with fingers splayed, and begin each verse, "I remember so many nights in Trenchtown . . ." Now the band's grooves had become elastic, subterranean and living masses of earth-bound, emotional sound, with no instrument protruding or disturbing the blend.

All this was leading to a quickstep version of "Exodus," where the band actually sounded like a large, mobile crowd, shuffling off to Addis Ababa. And yet not once during the song did Bob Marley or the Wailers give off an ounce of negative or hateful energy — the kind that could easily have stirred a crowd to violence — because the real drama, the ritual acting out and energy release, was all onstage, coiled in the body and voice of a prophet. Remembering the scene of the line from "Exodus" that sticks in my mind is this one: "We the generation that tries to break tribulation."

It's true that Jamaica is just a small island 200 miles long, with a population of only two million or so. But a lot of concentrated belief can go a long way. At one point near the end of his set Marley led the crowd through a call-and-response chant — "o yo, yo, yo — that you can still hear today among the Ashanti in Africa and, yes, in Ethiopia itself. Standing among 20,000 people feeling the weight and power of the chant and Marley's words, I'd say that Jamaica's importance in the spiritual and musical future of this world will be inversely proportional to its size. After all Israel was also just a tiny, backward nation a few thousand years ago. Reggae is already a potent pop music staple worldwide, despite its limited "cult" appeal in the States, and as much as I've enjoyed Jamaican music on records, seeing it live at Sunsplash was incomparable. In the flesh, reggae really is, to quote Marley again, "another bag," full of power, ritual, drama, and questions, releasing the tension built up in people's struggle to be free, by its very existence emerging victorious over oppression.

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With this issue I would like to get away from harmony, per se, and delve into arranging, which of course, includes arranging for piano, guitar, strings, etc. I think it will make more sense if I talk about horn arranging, so just remember that the techniques coming up are not necessarily limited to scoring for horns.

Let's assume you have a melody and two horns. Obviously, one horn will play the melody itself, so what we're concerned with is finding something for the other horn to play — something that will beef-up the melody and produce a bigger and (we hope) more interesting sound. There are five basic techniques for two-horn writing:

- 1) both horns in unison
- 2) horns in octave unison
- 3) accompanying horn playing in 3rds
- 4) accompanying horn playing in 6ths
- 5) accompanying horn playing independent part

Unison is obvious — both horns play the same notes. *Octave unison* means the second horn plays the melody an octave lower (usually) than the primary horn. Unison parts are most effective when 1) power/volume on the melody is more important than harmony, 2) the tune is so fast that harmony might glop-up the melody, and 3) when you can't think of anything else to do. There's an old saying among arrangers: "When in doubt... use unison." But there are many times you will want your horns in harmony.

Harmonized horn parts are primarily used, 1) when the melody is slow and/or there are a lot of long notes, 2) when you want the band to sound bigger than it really is, and 3) to take advantage of particularly nice (i.e., sexy, moody, funky, sophisticated) chord changes. 99% of all the music ever scored revolves around the use of 3rds and 6ths. We'll get to the independent concepts later on.

Harmonizing in 3rds

Harmony in 3rds means that the accompanying horn plays consistently a 3rd (major or minor) below the primary horn, using the same rhythm. The most important thing is to keep the progression in mind and adjust your harmony notes with flats, sharps or naturals as the progression demands. In the following example, harmonized in 3rds, notice that the D7 chord requires a sharp to be added to the F harmony note:



One other thing to keep in mind is the concept of *avoid notes* (MUSICIAN, Vol I, #9). Rather than get into a long discussion suffice it to say that certain notes, when sounded against a chord, produce an extreme amount of dissonance and/or confuse the function of the chord. We call these notes *avoid notes* as they should be avoided in the harmony when 1) they will occur on a strong beat (1 or 3 in 4/4), 2) directly on the chord change, or 3) anytime they will be accented or sustained. In a nutshell, the avoid notes are:

- 1) on a dom7th chord — the note a P4th above the root. (ex.: on C7 the avoid note is F)
- 2) on a maj7th chord — the note a P4th above the root. (ex.: on Cmaj7 the avoid note is F)
- 3) on a m7th chord — the note a maj. or min. 6th above the root. (ex.: on Cm7 the avoid note is A or Ab)

Look at the 3rd bar of the following melody. The first chord is Am7 with A in the melody. The logical harmony note would be F... but F is a 6th above A and thus the avoid note:



The solution: to avoid an avoid note, use the note either a step above or a step below the avoid note, preferably the one which is the 3rd or 7th of the chord. In this case we could use G or E: as G is the 7th of Am7 it is the preferable choice:



In the above example notice that a flat must be added to the A on Ab7. The next note, C#, is called a *chromatic passing tone* as it connects C to D. In such a case your harmony note also moves chromatically: Ab to A to Bb.

Harmonizing in 6ths

All of the above applies, except that the accompanying horn plays a 6th below the melody horn. On the melody we have been using there are no avoid note problems, but note the F# in the first bar and Eb in the 3rd, each adjusted to fit the chord symbol.

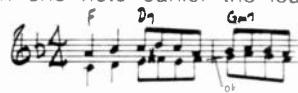


Harmony in 3rds produces a close sound while 6ths produce an open, more full sound. Exclusive use of one or the other can get boring so you may switch back and forth for variety. Sometimes, due to a horn's range, you may be forced to use one or the other.

Your ear will tell you when to use which interval as you do some writing and learn the sound of each. You can switch from 3rds to 6ths or vice-versa anytime you like *as long as you do it smoothly*. Your harmony part should never leap *unless* the melody also leaps, as a leap in the harmony can and will detract from the flow of the melody. Any leap in the harmony over a M3rd is considered bad. Here is an example of a bad switch:



By making the switch one note earlier the leap is avoided:



Here are a few examples of 3rds, 6ths, unison, octave unison and 10ths (a 10th is a 3rd plus an octave and is treated as a plain 3rd). Analyze these examples and try scoring a melody on your own for whatever horns you might have available. Use piano or guitar on the chords for a complete sound. (Remember: Bb and Eb horn parts must be transposed.)



cont on page 86



JAZZ AIDS

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□ **VOLUME 12 "DUKE ELLINGTON"**—Nine all time favorites. Int. level. Satin Doll, Perdido, Solitude, Prelude to a Kiss, So. sophisticated Lady, Mood Indigo, I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart, In A Sentimental Way, A Train. Rhy. section is Ron Carter, bass; Kenny Barron, piano; Ben Riley, drums.

□ **VOLUME 13 "CANNONBALL ADDERLEY"**—Eight songs made famous by Cannonball. Work Song, Del Sasser, Unit 7 Jeannine, This Here, Scotch & Water, Saudade, Sack of Woe. Rhy. section—S. Jones, L. Hayes & R. Mathews.

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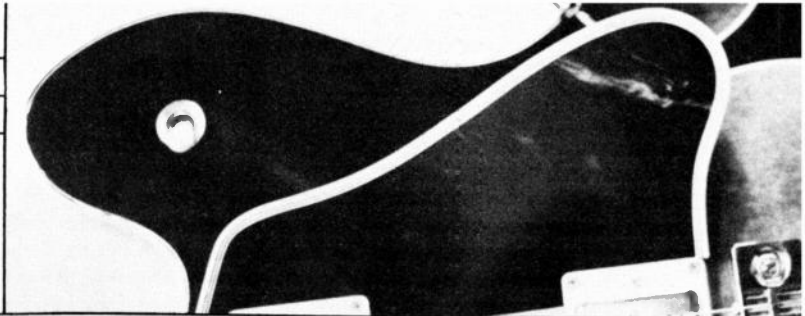
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□ **VOLUME 20 "JIMMY RANEY"**—Int. level \$9.95. Contains special EP recording of Jimmy playing solos. Chord progressions to ten standards. Great bebop study.

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JAMEY AEBERSOLD 1211-T AEBERSOLD DR., NEW ALBANY, IN 47150



Last month's column presented a general approach to guitar sightreading. This month we'll look at materials, including materials for sightreading.

Before 1970, guitarists had little published literature from which to choose that would help them prepare to play with other musicians. The guitar revolution of the last several decades has inspired many new books, some of which are beneficial to intermediate and advanced players. In addition, some older books written for other instruments are helpful to guitarists. Judicious selection of study materials is an important positive step to becoming a well-rounded player and is an absolute necessity for high level professional work such as movies, record dates and shows. The books listed here will save you time and help you absorb the ideas of many fine musicians.

I consider the books listed here to be the most helpful in each category. While preparing for a career as a professional guitarist and educator, I have made a point of researching old and new material, and I have a good idea of what's available and helpful. There are other good books, but these are excellent points of departure. Many of the general categories here will be treated in depth in future columns.

Harmony

Twentieth Century Harmony — Persichetti: Norton. A very good traditional harmony book.

Guitar Chordology — Amaral: Freelance. A logical, musical approach to chord voicings and applications, that is organized in the way that professional guitar players learn and think about chord forms and their applications.

Guitar Manual — Chord Melody — Howard Roberts: Playback. An excellent introduction to chord soloing by a true master.

Improvisation

Joe Pass Guitar Style — Pass: Gwyn. Contains some practical applications of chord-scales and voicings.

Guitar Modal and Tonal Improvising — Amaral: Playback. A thorough study of chord-scale relationships and their application to playing on standard modal and tonal tunes.

Sightreading

Guitar Manual — Sightreading — Roberts: Playback. Howard Roberts is a veteran studio musician and an expert on the psychology of high level sightreading and superfast learning. This book is full of tips and insight.

Melodic Rhythms — Leavitt: Berklee. Very good for straightening out picking problems while covering all the possible eighth note rhythms in exercise and standard tune form.

Classical Studies for Clarinet — Voxmann: Rubank. Good for developing note location ability, as it has few rhythmic surprises. Taken from the music of Bach.

Harmonized Chorales — Bach: Carl Fischer. Excellent practice in two, three and four note reading, bass clef, octave transposition, etc.

Jazz Conception for Saxophone — Niehaus: Swinghouse. A series of books for developing jazz sightreading and phrasing. Truly musical.

Thesaurus of Scales — Slonimsky: Charles Scribner's Sons. Used by many players as a source of melodic material and sightreading practice.

Melodic Lines

Although very few of the "lick" books available are musical, these are:

Chord Studies for Saxophone — Viola: Berklee.

Flute Book of the Blues — Lateef: Alnur.

Patterns — Nelson: Noslen.

Technique

Superchops — Roberts: Playback. Combines advanced learning techniques with the practical experience of a top studio musician and inspired educator.

Guitar Technique — Amaral: Freelance. A compendium of useful exercises which lead to the freedom to play what you hear.

Electric Guitar Classical Solos — Amaral: Freelance. Classical guitar, violin, and cello literature of specific technical benefit and great musical value.

Guitar Styles

Styles books are very rare, and useful. They can save you a great deal of time.

Country Guitar Styles — Inde: Berklee. Complete and excellent.

Guitar Ragtime and Fingerpicking Solos — Amaral: Freelance. Contains most of the basic repertoire and provides an important musical and technical link between right hand facility and fingerstyle improvisation.

Guitar Jazz-Rock Fusion Improvising — Amaral: Freelance. Provides source material of sequential melodic and rhythmic licks and explains the principles of development, while suggesting ways to develop a creative, individual style.

This month's exercise is another in the style of Pat Metheny's randomized chord scales. Playing these helps develop ear training, sightreading, technique, melodic sense, etc. Play steadily and don't stop, even if you can't get every note.



These columns will be capsule summaries of practical aspects of guitar playing, presenting essentials which will help you learn and save time. Next month: Recommended records.

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By the time most drummers have a few years of playing under their belts, they are faced with a new situation; namely a recording date. The recording industry is growing at such a fast rate that many geographical locales once considered remote now boast 4-track, 8-track, 16-, and even 24-track facilities. Even a home recording setup is not that difficult or expensive. Many schools and colleges have recording facilities as well, and offer courses pertaining to technique and practice. More than likely, then, most good drummers will eventually do some recording.

For these reasons, I would like to devote this article to the problem of tuning in the studio. One must realize that taking a set of drums into the studio and setting them up is only part of the preparation. Close miking for separation between the drums means that each drum requires special attention. Assuming that the nature of the music is in a Jazz-Rock vein, I'd like to outline some basic considerations in preparation for the recording date.

Regarding the bass-drum, often referred to in studio jargon as the 'kick', almost every Engineer and Producer who goes for a contemporary drum sound will prefer the kick drums with the front head removed, and with various amounts of padding applied to the batter side. The kick is usually packed with a blanket or pillow or some type of foam. Some Engineers will also put a weighty object like a brick or sand bag against the padding and push it tightly against the head to produce more punch and possibly more bottom. This most definitely affects the hitting response. If you feel that the affectation is adverse, try compromising with the Engineer. However, you should try getting used to it, if possible, since you will be faced with it most of the time.

Before the padding goes in, check the pitch at each tuning lug. Go for a low sound — maintain a tone rather than a flappy sound for best results.

The snare drum can assume a variety of different sounds depending on the nature of the music and the whims of the Producer. Usually, the kick and snare sound is the most important, so make sure you spend adequate time preparing these drums.

Generally, you will want to cancel out many of the overtones inherent in most snare drums. I favor not using any internal muffling device on the snare, or any of the toms. This applies pressure from the underside of the head and can actually distort a good tone. Rather, use a napkin, cloth, paper towel, kleenex, etc. applied with tape to the outer portion of the head near the rim. In this way you decide the location and the amount of muting that is needed. As with the kick, be sure to tune the snare, preferably with snares off, before applying the pads. Make sure that the drum is in tune with itself. The pitch at each lug should be the same. If not, you will get a sound that is not quite 'centered', creating an out-of-tune like quality. The bottom, or snare, head should be tuned medium to medium-tight. However, you may wish to experiment with bottom-head tension to find that 'just right' sound.

The wire snares should be examined for straightness and evenness in tension with each strand. If one seems a little loose or is bent, snip it out so that it doesn't interfere

with the rest. After throwing the strainer on, check both outside snare strands for uniform tautness. If necessary, make an adjustment to correct uneven tension.

The amount of tension of the snares against the bottom head has a great effect on the sound desired. As a rule, for a sloppier sound, keep the tension on the loose side. For a more typical sound tighten the snares up to the point they begin choking off the bottom head. To find this, simply tap the drum as you tighten the strainer and stop when you hear a distinct change in tonal quality. The tone will begin to spread with more tension, producing a fuzzy sound which is undesirable. If you continue, however, you will pass the undersirable stage and get a tone that is rather pointed, and can actually make the drum have more depth. But you will sacrifice any delicate playing due to the fact that you must hit the drum harder to produce a good sound. The best rule is to use your own discretion and try to please the Producer.

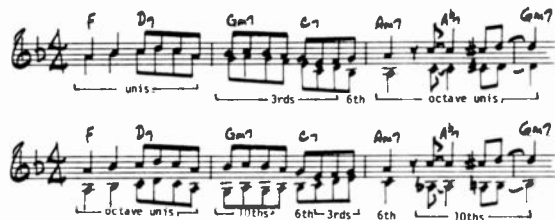
The number of tom-toms that you use will have a bearing on pitch spread desired. If you have three toms, you may wish to spread the pitches over intervals of a Major 3rd or Perfect 4th. For five or six toms, the spread will probably be in Minor 3rds or thereabouts.

The number of tracks assigned to the drum set will determine whether or note each tom is miked separately. Many times one mike will cover two toms. In any case, try to achieve a uniform tonal length and timbre so that none stick out as being distinctly different.

Whether you play single-headed or double-headed toms, always check each tuning lug for uniform pitch. For two-headed drums, the relationship between top and bottom heads is important. Basically, the top head is for pitch, the bottom for tone. However, the bottom head can affect pitch as well. I always start with the pitch of both heads about the same, then work from there, working with the top head first. A very effective way to achieve a 'dip' in the tone is to move one tuning lug down in pitch from the others. Do this with either the top or bottom head and experiment until you get what you are looking for. Remember, each tom-tom has its own natural range. Try to work within this range for best results. Incidentally, the toms that are mounted on the kick drum are commonly referred to by most Engineers as the 'rack toms'. Any toms above the rack toms are concert toms, and those below are the floor toms.

Next month's issue will deal with more specific problems of tuning in the studio, problems that plague even the best of studio drummers.

Guitar cont. from page 84



Ever Wonder What We Pay An Artist For His Endorsement?

Many drum companies pay thousands of dollars annually to have an artist endorse their product. However, we at Pearl believe that an endorsement given by an artist has far greater meaning and value than one which has been purchased. Over 100 respected names in the percussion world currently endorse Pearl Drums without financial gain*, for one reason...product performance. We listen to the artist and respond to his needs. As a result, Pearl Drums have and continue to earn these endorsements. We feel that says a lot... about our products and about the artists we're proud to be associated with.



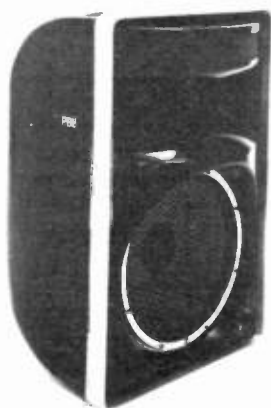
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Community Light & Sound announces an all new round-backed full range cabinet dubbed the PBL-90. Primarily designed for portable or fixed sound reinforcement in small clubs, the cab can be used also as an instrument monitor, playback monitor or PA monitor. Community has also developed a new 90 degree one inch exit horn for this cabinet. The entire system is phase-analyzed to perform best when used with Community crossover networks. Community Light & Sound, 5701 Grays Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19143.



Unicord presents their new Stage DE-1 Analog Delay for doubling and long repeat effects. The unit offers a wide delay time range of from 15 to 200 milli-seconds and is applicable to almost any instrument or amplifier. Unicord, 89 Frost St., Westbury, N.Y. 11590.

Norlin Music's Moog Division has refined their versatile Polymoog with 14 new instrument sounds in one sleek package. The technology of computer chips is at the heart of the instrument, plus the Poly features the famous Moog ribbon control and a velocity sensitive keyboard with 71 keys. Norlin Music, 7373 N. Cicero Ave., Lincolnwood, Ill. 60646



MXR Innovations is proud to announce the Stereo Chorus. Using advanced analog circuitry, the unit provides vibrato, chorus and stereo simulation with three independent controls for delay time, width and the speed of delay. The unit also provides two output channels for two amplifiers and the exact frequencies which are notched in one channel when using two amps. The Stereo Chorus is equally applicable for PA boards and music amps and is extremely rugged for field use. MXR Innovations, 247 N. Goodman St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607



The latest from **BGW Systems** is the 750B (pictured) and 750C professional power amplifiers. They feature a full 360 watts per channel at 4 ohms, unique protection circuitry, massive heat sinks and a low noise rear-mounted fan with removable filter element. They have virtually removed the threat of thermal shutdown even under the worst case loading conditions. The 750's also contain magnetic circuit breakers and BGW's arc-interrupting design to further protect speakers from sudden signal surges and momentary overloads. BGW Systems, 13130 S. Yukon Ave., Hawthorne, Cal 90250



Fylde Instruments is marketing a handmade English line of guitars that some observers rate at "the best". There are six basic models, including the Falstaff, shown here, and all carry a lifetime guarantee. Other models include four twelve strings, a small bodied guitar, cutaway 6-string, a cutaway 12 and acoustic bass, a mandolin, a mandola and a mandocello. Fylde guitars are collected and owned by some of the leading players of the instrument and are worth contacting at Fylde, 28 W. 69th St. #8A, NYC, NY 10023

JBL announces the Cabinet Series, three portable systems developed for club sound reinforcement applications. Shown here left to right are the Model 4622 (with cover), a lead instrument system suitable for lead guitar and keyboards (two twelves); the Model 4602 stage monitor (one twelve and a specially designed crossover); the 4680 line array featuring four ten inch loudspeakers and high frequency power pack; and the 4622 pictured without its cover. All are designed to withstand the usual drops, kicks, wear and tear of the road. JBL, 8500 Balboa Blvd., Northridge, Cal. 91329.



DiMarzio Instruments offers a new acoustic pickup, the Quick-Mount. A high output, humbucking pickup, it's easily installed on most acoustic guitars, fully shielded and comes complete with Belden cable and Switchcraft metal jack. Like other DiMarzio pickups, the Quick-Mount comes with a five year warranty. DiMarzio Insts., 1388 Richmond Terr., Staten Island, N.Y. 10310.



A/DA has brought out a Universal Battery Eliminator into which can be plugged up to 5 battery-powered sound devices simultaneously. What does it do? Provide power, with no modification necessary to those devilish little boxes. A/DA, 2316 Fourth St., Berkeley, CA 94710





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THE MASKS of GOD

By Vic Garbarini



I don't know of anyone who professed to be either shocked or outraged by Dylan's apparent conversion to fundamentalist Christianity. Bemused incomprehension or shoulder-shrugging indifference were more the order of the day, living as we do in these post-Watergate/Vietnam days before the Deluge. Most of us who care about Dylan and his music probably hope that he'll just eventually grow out of it. Although we're a profoundly spiritual generation in many ways, relatively few of us have turned to organized religion as a means of inner growth and development. Too many of us still bear emotional, psychological, and sexual scars from our own traumatic encounters with organized religion in childhood. Music has in fact been one of our primary vehicles of spiritual expression and experience, and Dylan, at least in the late 60's, has been our chief oracle. So it behooves all of us Mr. Jones's to find out exactly what's going on here — for by striving to understand Dylan we may manage to glimpse some of the currents and eddies of our own souls.

A Sufi musician friend from Istanbul believes that Dylan may indeed be a channel for higher energies and perceptions — a latter-day Shaman possessed by the Spirit who can help us reveal and articulate our generations' Zeitgeist. It's important to realize that all this may not just be mere imagery or convenient metaphor, but may actually correspond to the way things really are. "Sometimes" said J.G. Bennett, "music can come from a place that's more real than life." Dylan has certainly been cognizant of his visionary capacities in the past — indeed he often seemed to be simultaneously attracted and repelled by them. Blinded by his own light, he eventually retreated during the late 60's into relative seclusion — issuing now and then the occasional oblique statement — but always emphatically turning down the mantle of leadership proffered by his adoring fans. At some point (the motorcycle accident?) he may have come to the realization on some level that the origin of his luminescent talents lay somewhere outside the bounds of his own Ego. The history of the arts is littered with

the wreckage of those who were open to higher creative powers but were unable to handle the awesome forces that coursed through them. Dylan managed to pull back from the edge of the Abyss, but the realization of the impossibility of justifying his ego's claims for credit for this transcendent flow of creativity led to a profound sense of existential insecurity. The greater the critical and popular acclaim, the greater became his suffering — revered as he was for something that he somehow knew was not of his own making and whose nature and origins were as much a mystery to him as they were to his fans.

In a *Rolling Stone* interview a few years back Dylan in effect announced that he was again ready to confront his mysterious Muse. He confidently explained that this time he would consciously and intentionally learn to open himself to the forces whose passive receptacle he had previously been. He most likely found this to be a more difficult feat than he had initially anticipated. Considering the magnitude of Dylan's gifts, and his corresponding need for a secure inner anchor, it's not all that surprising that he should turn to fundamental Christianity. After all, as he admits in "Precious Angel" "You know I just couldn't make it by myself, I'm a little too blind to see." Security is one thing that such an overtly black and white belief system must surely provide. But does it really? Belief is much more than just blind affirmation or agreement. As Maurice Nicoll points out in "The New Man," belief or faith is actually the result of a *direct contact* with a higher level of Man/God/Nature. Has Dylan had a legitimate religious/mystical experience of true depth and substance, or is he merely clinging to the nearest seemingly solid metaphysical object in order to assuage his inner angst? My guess is that both statements may be true, though the strident proselytizing evident on much of *Slow Train Coming* ("Gotta Serve Somebody," "When You Gonna Wake Up," "Gonna Change My Way of Thinking") gives some weight to the latter interpretation. But it may not be as easy to resolve as all that; Dylan has always been somewhat of a preacher: ("Hattie Carroll," "Blowin' in the Wind," "Masters of War," "Hurricane," — need I go on?) It may not really be possible to gauge the depth and breadth of his realization merely from his ability to articulate it or even in terms of the particular style or form which such an exegesis might take. The world's great religions all have roots that reach far below their dogma-encrusted surfaces to tap rich reservoirs of objective spiritual power and strength. Hopefully Dylan can on some level absorb from his fundamentalist sojourn the sustenance he needs at this particular stage of his inner maturation and transformation. It may be happening on a level neither he nor his fans can directly perceive — and happening in spite of what I believe to be the limitations of the religious form he's chosen to work with (and in spite of his present inability to discriminate between outer form and inner content).

Will Dylan succeed in separating whatever finer substances he can glean from the coarser realms of dogma? The fact that he can still write music with the poignant grace and beauty of "Precious Angel" and "I Believe in You" is a good sign, and certainly his previous track record in these matters gives us ample cause for hope.

In the meantime we'll just have to put up with his strident pulpitering in the hope that he'll eventually realize that a man's actions and inner strivings are a far more credible measure of his true spirituality than any profession of dogmatic orthodoxy. After all, Bob, the text reads "by their fruits you shall know them" — not by their flak.

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