

BLINDFOLD TEST: Peter Erskine

August, 1986 \$1.75 U.K. £2.00

# downbeat

For Contemporary Musicians



**DAVID SANBORN**

*R&B Altology*

**RY COODER**

*Blues & Roots*

**BILL LASWELL**

*Jazz & Rock  
Renegade.*

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*34th Annual  
International  
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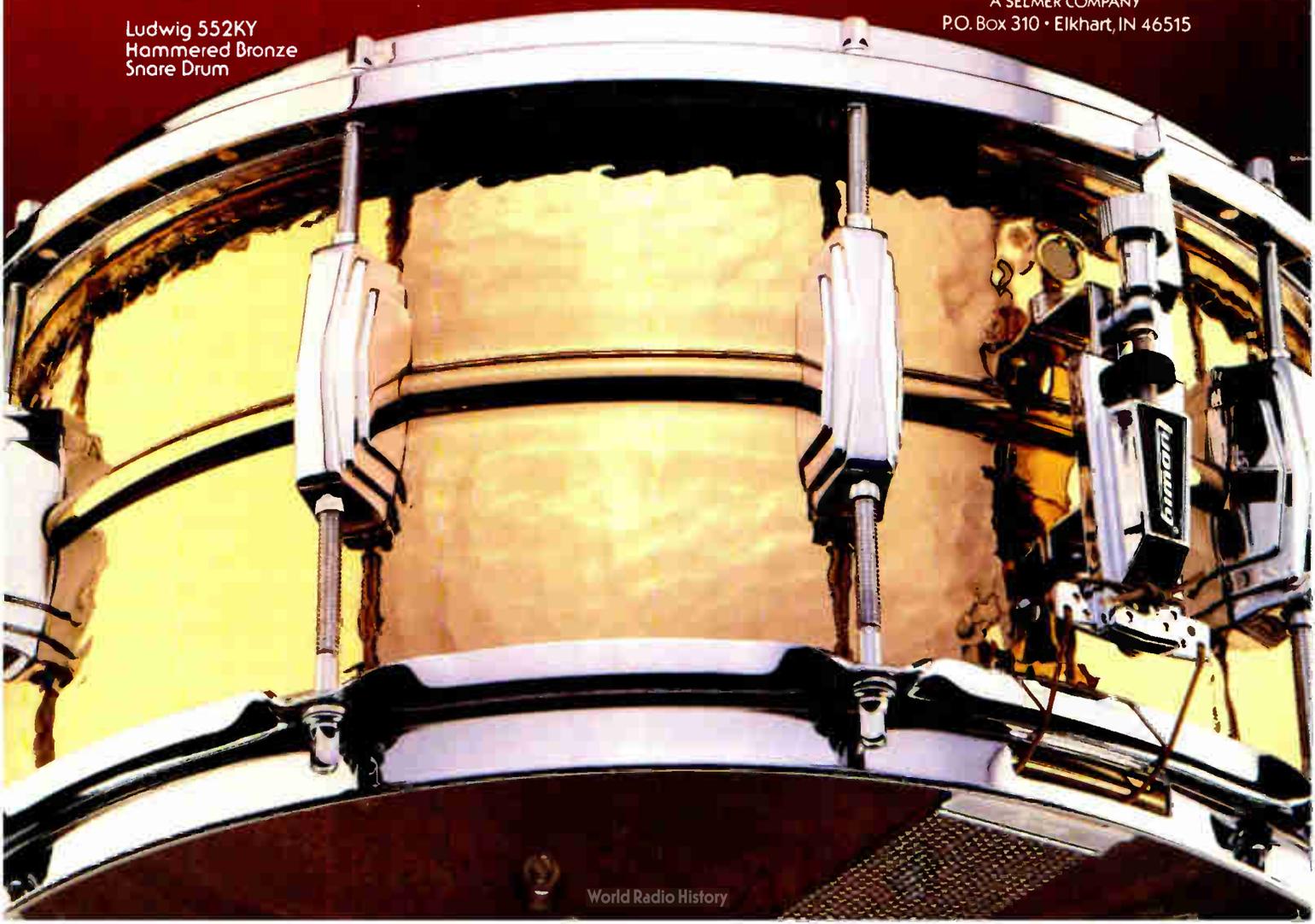
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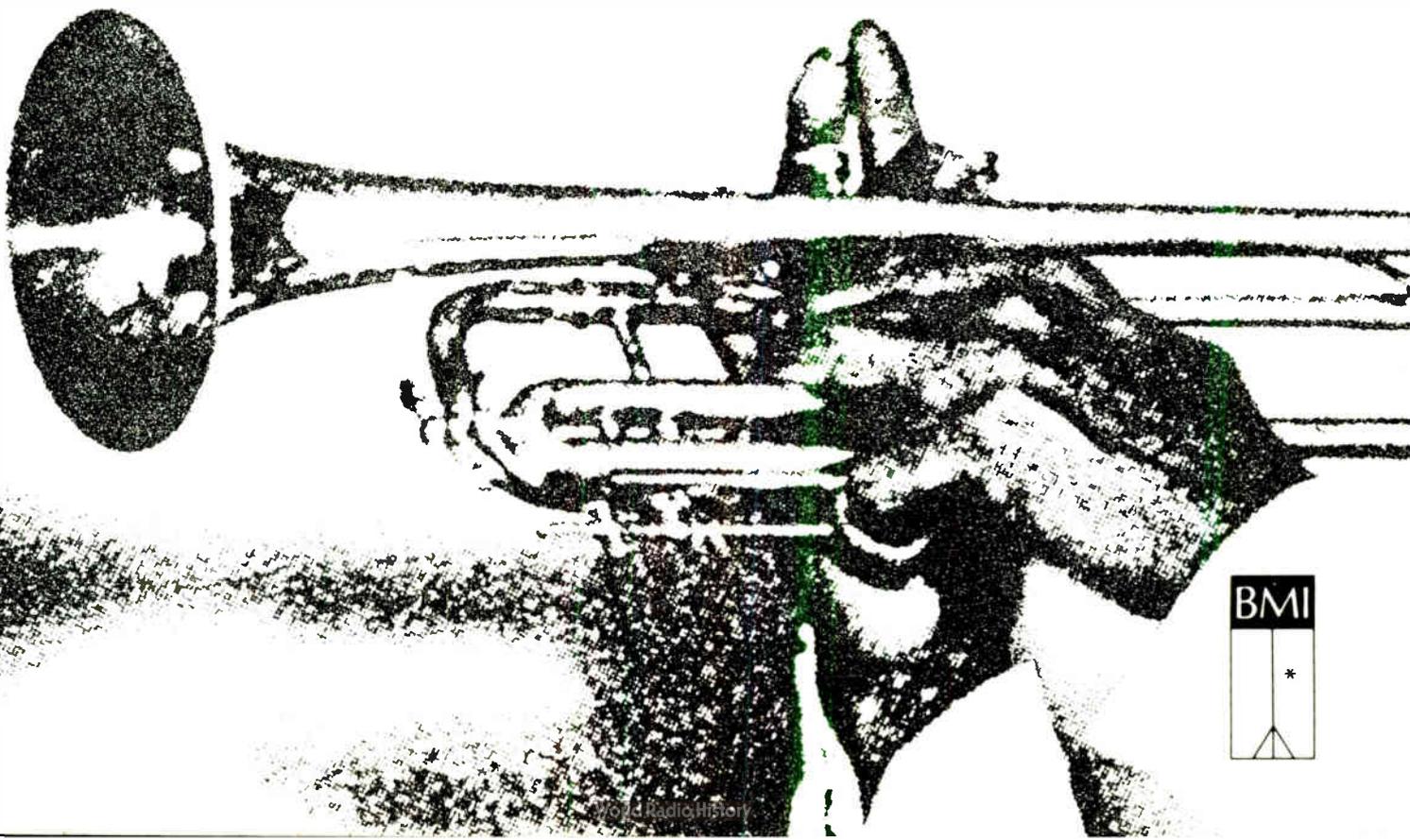
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**MILES DAVIS**  
to  
**PAT METHENY...**

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KNOW  
IT'S

**BMI**



# FEATURES

## 16 DAVID SANBORN: R&B ALTOLOGY

Searingly hot on cookers and expressively emotional on ballads, Sanborn's style has made him one of the most popular saxists on the scene. Now the altoist's a regular on radio, as Gene Kalbacher relates.

## 19 34th ANNUAL down beat INTERNATIONAL CRITICS POLL

New winners! Old favorites! The Lifetime Achievement Award. Record of the Year. And all the results of this year's worldwide Poll—including Gil Evans' entry into the Hall of Fame.

## 23 BILL LASWELL: CONFESSIONS OF A RENEGADE

Though he's been behind the board for a remarkable number of best-selling LPs, this bassist/producer's methods and message are anything but ordinary. Bill Milkowski gives us a look at the reclusive renegade.

## 26 RY COODER: BLUES & ROOTS

The recent trend towards rediscovering rock's roots goes back a lot further than you might imagine; guitarist Cooder was one of the pioneers, exploring the blurry boundaries of American music. Gene Santoro's our man on Ry.

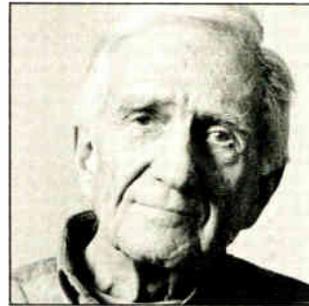
# DEPARTMENTS

- 6 **On The Beat**, by Bill Beuttler.
- 8 **Chords & Discords**
- 11 **News**
- 14 **Riffs**
- 29 **Record Reviews:** Pat Metheny/Ornette Coleman; Eddie Daniels; Ruby Braff/Scott Hamilton; Two Sides Of Genius; Return Of The Canaries; Marshall Vente; Paul Nash; Bop Chops; Kenny Davern/Dick Wellstood/Chuck Riggs; Allan Vaché; Lyle Mays; Tangerine Dream; Bobby Hutcherson; Gary Burton/Ralph Towner; Jay Hoggard; Shadow Vignettes; Philip Glass; Benny Goodman; Peter Gordon; School Bands On Wax.
- 45 **CD Reviews**
- 48 **Book Reviews:** *Recollections and Marion Brown Discography*, by Peter Kostakis; *Unfinished Dream: The Musical World Of Red Callender*, by Pete Welding; *The Contemporary Keyboardist*, by Jon Balleras.
- 53 **Blindfold Test:** Peter Erskine, by Michael Bourne.
- 54 **Profile:** Marc Johnson, by Michael Bourne.
- 56 **Caught:** Craig Harris, by Jim Macnie; Queen Ida/Flaco Jimenez, by Michael Point.
- 58 **Pro Session:** "How To Put Together A Home Studio For \$5,000," by Bob Christianson (With Pat Sims); "Kessel On Guitar," by Bill Milkowski.
- 60 **Pro Shop**
- 64 **Auditions:** Student talent deserving recognition.

Cover photograph of David Sanborn by Jaeger Kotos; Bill Laswell by Thi-Lihn Le.

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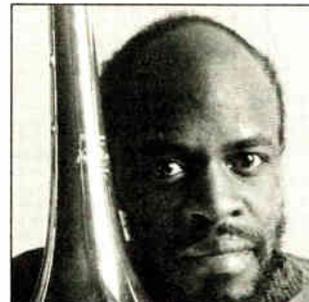
Gil Evans



Bill Laswell



Ry Cooder



Craig Harris

# down beat

For Contemporary Musicians

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# The Current Events of Jazz



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BKH 50901

**TOM HARRELL**  
*Play of Light*

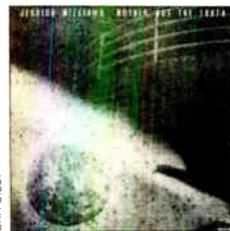
Tom Harrell is an heroic voice among modern trumpeters. This all-star band consists of Ricky Ford, Bruce Forman, Albert Dailey, Eddie Gomez and Billy Hart. Heralded by fellow musicians, this long-awaited LP justifies his rise to major status.



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**BRUBECK LAVERNE TRIO**  
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Chris and Dan Brubeck, two sons of the famed Dave Brubeck, speak out as two parts of a sparkling trio with Andy LaVerne. The unexpected blends of Chris' bass and trombone, Dan's drums and Andy LaVerne's keyboards paint exciting new sounds, pictures and feelings.



BKH 51301

**JESSICA WILLIAMS**  
*Nothin' But The Truth*

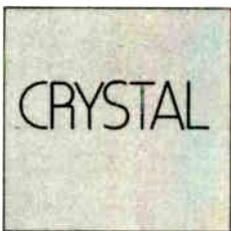
Pianist-composer Jessica Williams' return to the recording scene is a very impressive one. Her brilliance, imagination and emotional drive are all praiseworthy. John Witala and Bud Spangler interact with her as a tight, swinging band.



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**PAM PURVIS/  
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The elastic, exciting voice of Pam Purvis is joined by Bob Ackerman's woodwinds on ballads to bop classics. Their versatility and fresh jazz stylings are complimented by a first-rate rhythm team — Richard Wyands, Harvie Swartz and Akira Tana.



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New Orleans' French Quarter, in case you haven't heard, has a new bedtime. The same streets Louis Armstrong sang on for pennies near the turn of the century are now off-limits to musicians after 8 pm, the result of city council legislation passed late last year.

"No one in government wants to do away with street musicians altogether," insists Mike Early, the councilman heading the push to legislate street musicians (licensing the musicians is next on his

agenda). "We respect the positive contributions they have made." Early's efforts, he says, are aimed at curbing "abuses tourists and natives" were being subjected to by the more irresponsible street musicians, and at bringing the rest of the Quarter in line with Bourbon Street's already existing 8 o'clock curfew, which resulted from clubowners complaining about the musicians outside their doors "literally giving the show away."

It's a safe bet that the need to protect

tourists from street musicians can't be all that pressing; tourists come to the Quarter seeking the boisterous nightlife those musicians are a part of. And while there's little doubt about the clubowners' resentment of competition from the street musicians, there's another factor that appears to be at work here—the desire to lure wealthier residents to the area by toning down its rowdy lifestyle. Early notes that the Pontalba apartments, which flank Jackson Square and are said to be the nation's oldest apartment buildings, are now among the city's most "prized residential units," with a waiting list of a year or longer. People coming to the Quarter for its constant nightlife "would find things somewhat changed," he brags. "The 4,500-5,000 residents have come here for a higher quality of life."

But if the quality of life here is higher for some, for others it's lower. Musicians must now quit playing at what had once been their peak evening hours, when the setting sun has had a chance to cool off the city's hot, muggy streets, bringing the tourists and their money out in full force. Those who have refused to quit playing at curfew time have found themselves arrested and jailed. Trumpeter James May, 50 years old and a veteran of tours with Jackie Wilson and Ike & Tina Turner, is now on a year's probation with a 90-day suspended sentence. Charles Beasley, 35, best known for his trumpet duets with his 10-year-old son, Kenyatta, was sentenced to eight days in jail after being found guilty for the fifth time.

Beasley's performances on the Moonwalk, which runs along the Mississippi River near Jackson Square, have had him featured in newspapers, television specials, and promotional materials advertising New Orleans and the 1984 Louisiana World Exposition, and he's well aware of the irony of his subsequent arrests. "It's difficult to swallow seeing yourself on tv telling people to come to New Orleans when you know that when the tourists get here looking for us, they find we have to run from the police."

May and Beasley plan to fight the restrictions together in court, but they and others like them may nonetheless find themselves permanently shoved off the streets evenings because of somebody else's greedy notion of progress. This desire for progress is understandable, in some cases perhaps even well-intentioned. But it's also lamentable—if Early and his supporters don't watch their tinkering they could turn this marvelous 12-by-10-block chunk of real estate and all its rich music tradition into just another gentrified haven for the upwardly mobile. db

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# CHORDS & DISCORDS

## Overjoyed with Ornette

I loved your article on Ornette Coleman and Pat Metheny [June '86]. I bought the record as soon as it came out and caught the show at Town Hall here in New York. This certainly is one of the most exciting things that has happened in music in a long time. I'm glad your coverage of it was so timely and that you put it right on the cover.

I want to encourage you to have Ornette's ideas and music in your magazine as much as possible. I am continually shocked at the number of people, espe-

cially young musicians and music fans, who are unaware of this incredible artist. I don't pretend to understand what he is doing from a technical point of view, but I feel safe in saying that from a musical point of view he is one of the giants of the history of music, a great instrumentalist, composer, and teacher.

Thanks again for an excellent article. It was one of the very few ones I have read on him that I felt enthusiastic about. Kenneth J. McCarthy New York City

Thanks for the most enlightening piece

of music journalism I've ever read. Art Lange's questions and terse statements were perfectly dynamic—as we all strive to be. It is refreshing to read and re-read this interview. Never have I come across a more desirable musical pairing. Can't wait to hear *Song X*. Ornette Coleman is not only a brilliant musician, he should also add Philosopher, Theosophist, Theologian, and Shaman to his credits. For fear of running away with myself I cut short this note. I had to write **db** though, because the information revealed by Ornette in this interview is pertinent to all. The things he said are sheer magic. His spiritual and musical visions unite to form a whole that is indeed far greater than the sum of its parts. The phrase "quality of life" dominates throughout. Just wanted to say: thanks!

Michael Paumgardhen

Stone Mountain, GA

## Magic touch

I have been reading your magazine regularly for about a year now. In my opinion it is not only the magazine *For Contemporary Musicians* but also for contemporary music lovers.

Your story on Stanley Jordan [May '86] was one of the best ever. More than anything ever written it has enabled me to get a better appreciation for the guitar sensation and his music. Just listening to his music tells you he resides in a higher stratosphere. But reading your story has helped to elevate him even higher. His music now sounds better after reading **down beat**.

Alpheus Finlayson Nassau, Bahamas

## Cosby beat

I really enjoyed May's *On The Beat*; Bill Cosby is doing the jazz world a real favor by spreading the word of jazz to adults and children alike through appearances by Joe Williams, Dizzy Gillespie, and the all-star band (Heath Bros., Puente, Blakey, et al). Keep it up, Bill!

By the way, the last-mentioned episode raised a question: what is Patato Valdes up to nowadays? Has he retired from studio work, is he just taking a break, or am I just listening in the wrong places for his sounds? I'll still keep looking for albums by my favorite conga-bopper.

Since I discovered the joys of **db** several months ago, it has become my favorite music mag. I know it's supposed to be "For Contemporary Musicians," but how about letting us in on the antics of some older masters like George Auld, Horace Silver, Harold Land, and Jimmy Smith? Without these and lots of other

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grand old men (and women), jazz wouldn't be what it is today.  
Todd S. Jenkins Yucaipa, California

### "deebie" thanks

We are extremely proud of our 10 "deebie" awards in the 1986 competition (June '86), and a simple "thank you" doesn't seem to be enough. What makes these awards so prestigious is **down beat** magazine itself. You are the most respected jazz periodical on the market, and those who read you each month know the integrity and careful research behind each subject and story.

Although my name appears on nine of the 10 awards, there are many who made the recognition we have received possible. The five clusters at the Dallas Arts Magnet—Academics, Dance, Music, Theater, and Visual Arts—use discipline, dedication, and cooperation from within to reach the high level of expertise our school has come to expect of itself. The administration, staff, and faculty continually work together to strive for something just a little out of reach, but always believing it possible. As a result, this pledge for excellence filters through to the school's students, whose many hours of diligent practice have allowed us, together, to be the best we can be.

Bart Marantz  
Director of Jazz Studies Dallas, TX

### Back sax

Like other **down beat** readers, I too enjoy the Pro Sessions with Emilio Lyons. I am a sax player, and an instrument repairman, and find his tips really give me food for thought about other repair/adjustment techniques. Is there any chance of getting back issues or reprints of all the sessions with Mr. Lyons to date? Unfortunately, my copies of **down beat** are borrowed by friends and frequently don't find their way home!

Tom Tapscott Clarksville, TN  
*Back issues, provided we have them in stock, are available for \$2.50 each by writing our business office, 180 W. Park, Elmhurst, IL 60126. Previous Sax Doctors have run in the 12/83, 7/84, and 7/85 issues.* —Ed.

### Hear, hear

I'd like to state my agreement with Glen Peterson of St. Paul, MN, who in the May issue's Chords & Discords stated that "we should encourage jazz musicians to be inquisitive and explore when it seems like they're straying from the accuracy of the bebop style." This is a good way to

help high schoolers to feel more comfortable about their pop-influenced jazz solos. After all, bebop is done best by the musicians of its own time period. Us younger jazzers can imitate but will never match perfectly what the beboppers did naturally. So let's continue to appreciate the old and learn as much from it as possible, but also experiment with the new forms that constantly come forward

during each practice session.  
Michele Egan Rochester, NY

### No respect

I am a 16-year-old drummer who intends to pursue a career playing jazz. I have recently acquired a subscription to **down beat**, and I think you guys are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 62

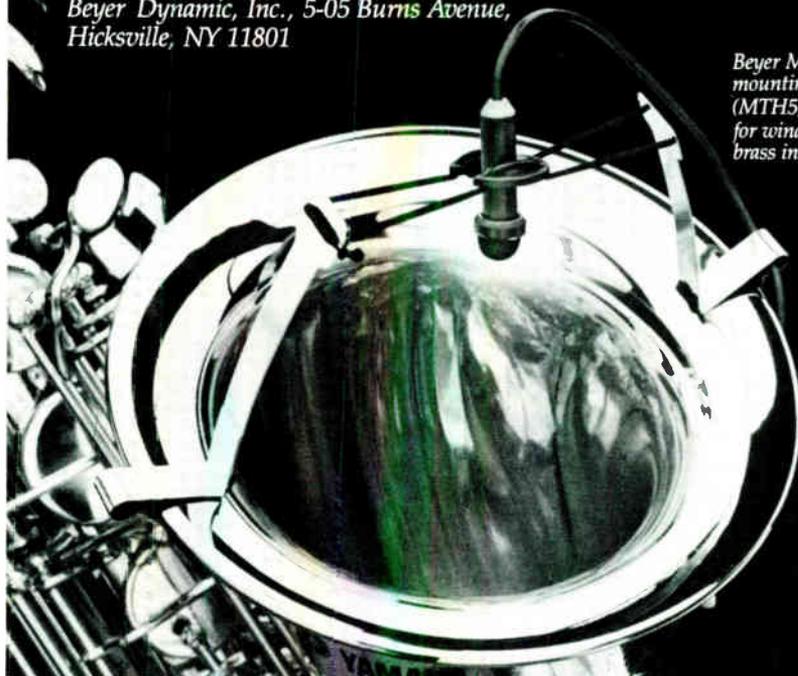
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And its extremely low handling noise minimizes the introduction of extraneous handling sounds that might

otherwise creep into your sample. What's more, the SM94 offers exceptionally high SPL capability—up to 141 dB—all but eliminating distortion on transient peaks.

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In addition to offering a unique combination of features not normally found in condenser mics in its price range, the SM94 is built with Shure's legendary emphasis on ruggedness and reliability. Features like a protective steel case, machined grille and tri-point shock mount make it rugged enough to go wherever your inspiration takes you.

And for voice sampling, we suggest the new SM96 with its vocal contoured response and built-in three-stage pop filter. Both these fine microphones can bring a new dimension of realism to your digital sampling.



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## Jazz U.

**NEW YORK**—"If you want to be a jazz musician, learn from a jazz musician," says saxophonist Arnie Lawrence of the ambitious new jazz college he's spearheading in New York. "It's a four-year program, accredited through New York State, and we'll give a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. The school is starting off as a division of The New School for Social Research. It's called The New School/Jazz and Contemporary Music. I call it 'Be-Bop U.'—or the 'Universality of Jazz.' I've had this idea for a long time."

Lawrence will teach and serve as Director of Instruction, but beyond the facilities at Parsons, the whole of New York will become the school's classroom, and a Who's Who of jazz will serve as the school's faculty. "We have people assigned to specific courses: Cedar Walton and Roland Hanna for Keyboard Harmony and Theory; Barry Harris, Ram Ramirez, and myself for Improvisation; Ira Gitler and Phil Schaap for the History of Jazz; Doc Cheatham, Milt Hinton, and Eddie Durham for the Roots of Jazz; Jimmy Cobb, Chico Hamilton, Mino Cinelu, and Jerry Gonzalez for the Analysis of Rhythm." Also in the curriculum: The Blues with Jimmy McGriff and Norman Simmons, The Studio

Musician with Michael Brecker and Lew Soloff, Contemporary Jazz with Sam Rivers and Dave Liebman, along with musical electives, liberal arts courses, and practical courses on the Music Business and Artie Bressler's The Club Date: a Survival Course for Musicians.

"All of these courses are going to be run by active artists," Lawrence says. Indeed, the faculty list reads like a **down beat** poll. Among others available as instructors and consultants: Clark Terry, Woody Shaw, Jimmy Knepper, Slide Hampton, James Moody, Les Paul, Larry Coryell, Tommy Flanagan, Cecil Taylor, Cecil McBee, Roy Haynes, Max Roach, Gil Evans, Bob Dorough, Sheila Jordan, and Dizzy Gillespie.

"The premise is very simple," says Lawrence. "The college will exist on three levels: in-house study, private study with a jazz master, and clubs like the Blue Note will become classrooms where students will have sessions with musicians like Ted Curson. They'll get credits for all worthwhile situations, such as the Jazz Cultural Theatre, Jazzmobile, the Universal Jazz Coalition, and the International Art of Jazz."

Lawrence hopes to begin with a class of 40. "Right now we can give



**HONORED, I'M SURE:** Herbie Hancock and Paul Simon exchange congratulations after being awarded honorary Doctor of Music degrees at the Berklee College of Music's recent commencement ceremonies in Boston. Elsewhere out East, pianist/composer/jazz educator/broadcaster Marian McPartland was awarded an honorary degree at the 192nd commencement of Union College in Schenectady, NY.

students extra special attention. We'll try to fill the gaps and support the strengths. If a student needs to develop technical facility we might put him with a first chair player from the New York Philharmonic. If a trombonist has a rhythm problem we'll put him with one of the great jazz drummers. If a drummer has a problem with melodies we might put him with a great saxophonist. The objective is to promote originality. Students

coming out of this school will be able to walk into any situation and play. And the bulk of the music they'll play is music they'll write themselves. They're going to become composers. That's the art of jazz, creating new music. We'll have a new 52nd Street in the most positive way."

For further information, write to The New School/Jazz, 66 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

—*Michael Bourne*

## POTPOURRI

Get your pencils and scorecards ready: **John Scofield** has *not* joined **Joe Zawinul's** new Weather Update—the revised lineup has bassist **Victor Bailey**, drummer **Peter Erskine**, and percussionist **Robert Thomas Jr.** joining the keyboardist, with guest guitarists tba; meanwhile, keyboardist **Clyde Criner** has joined **Wayne Shorter's** group for summer touring and the recording of the saxophonist's next CBS LP; the revamped Steps Ahead has ex-Miles' man **Mike Stern** on guitar and ex-Journey man **Steve Smith** on drums, joining old hands Mike Mainieri on vibes and Mike Brecker on reeds; **Branford Marsalis** reports that the **Sting** band is back in Barbados cutting a new LP; and **Thad Jones** has left his post as musical director of the Basie Band, having failed to come to terms when his contract expired with Count Basie Enterprises—saxist **Frank Foster** is now fronting the band . . . Prez opera: **Lester Young** is the subject of the jazz chamber opera *Prez*, pre-

miered recently in Hull, England; Alan Cooke sings words to Lester Young solos in the title role, and the opera was co-written by Alan Plater and Bernard Cash . . . Davis endorsement: **Miles Davis** is among the celebs signed up for new Honda bike commercials, joined by comedienne **Sandra Bernhard** and Chicago Bears quarterback **Jim McMahon**; past Honda endorsees from the music world have included **Lou Reed** and **Grace Jones** . . . **Pat Metheny** recently turned up as guest VJ on Video Hits One's *New Visions* show; Metheny chatted with guests **Lyle Mays** and **Michael Hedges**, and introduced videos by such of his favorites as Philip Glass, Gary Burton, Chick Corea, Miles Davis, Bennie Wallace, Kate Bush, Jamaaladeen Tacuma, Michael Shrieve, and Andy Summers . . . corrections: we mistakenly shortchanged Mt. Pleasant High School (San Jose, CA) in June's "deebie" listing; the **Mt. Pleasant Studio Jazz Singers** were voted top jazz vocal group, as reported,

but a second group with the same name and different personnel should have been credited with an Outstanding Performance in the same category. Apologies are also due to **James Kerwin** and **Jim Buchanan**, whose names were mistakenly reported as "Kerwin Jones" and "Jim Buchanan" in that same month's feature on David Grisman . . . **Jazz And Keyboard Workshop** contains keyboard tips from the likes of Harold Danko and Sir Roland Hanna; the subscription newsletter, published by Ed Shanaphy and edited by Becca Pulliam, is available at \$20 per nine issues by writing 223 Katonah Ave., Katonah, NY 10536 . . . **RCA/Ariola** has announced the launching of a new label covering New Age, contemporary jazz, and vintage jazz from the RCA vaults, to be managed and marketed by the company's Red Seal unit; former Windham Hill vice-president Steve Backer will head the new label, whose name will be announced with the release of four-five LPs in each of the label's three music categories this fall . . . other newly announced labels include the **Audion Recording**

**Company**, which will turn out "state-of-the-art, electronic instrumental music" to be marketed and distributed by JEM Records; and **DVP Records & Tapes** (Deerfield Beach, FL), formed by guitarist Daryll Dobson, whose own *The Mind Electric*, featuring L. Shankar, Kenny Kirkland, Tony Smith, Fernando Saunders, and Kenwood Dennard, became the company's first release this spring . . . elsewhere on the record label front, **MCA Records** is donating a collection of rare original photographs of such Chess artists as Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Howlin' Wolf, and Little Walter to the Chicago Cultural Center Blues Archives; MCA will also send along a copy of each Chess album remaining in print, as well as those reissued from the Chess catalog, which MCA purchased last year . . . composers have until 11/1 to compete for \$500 and \$200 prizes in the 11th annual **Composers' Competition of New Music for Young Ensembles, Inc.**; for more info, write Raoul Pleskow, Music Department, C.W. Post/Lang Island University, Greenvale, NY 11548 . . .



Lionel Hampton congratulates the William Paterson College Jazz Quintet, (left to right) drummer Bill Stewart, trumpeter Rob Henke, bassist Doug Weiss, tenor saxist Scott Kreitzer, (not pictured, pianist Matt King).

## Hampton launches jazz fest

**NEW YORK**—For the past few years, Lionel Hampton has guested with the McDonald's High School Jazz Ensemble, so it seemed only natural that they should be together again at the first annual McDonald's Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival.

The irrepressible vibist, who with McDonald's coordinated the festival, said he was "trying to help interest youth in jazz." Held at Manhattan Community College, the festival was designed to reward gifted young musicians with cash prizes and scholarships to the Manhattan School of Music. The awards were presented during four nights of jazz featuring Dizzy

Gillespie, Tito Puente, Betty Carter, Joe Newman, and the McDonald's High School Jazz Ensemble. This followed an initial three-day competition for high school big bands and jazz combos comprised of musicians 14-21 years old.

"We're trying to tie in jazz education with performance at high school and college levels," said Justin DiCioccio, program director/conductor of the McDonald's High School Jazz Ensemble.

Winner in the jazz combo competition was the William Patterson College Jazz Quartet; the high school big band winner was Hall High School (West Hartford, CT) Jazz Ensemble. —pat sims

## Jimmy Lyons, 1932-86

**NEW YORK**—Jimmy Lyons, composer, alto saxophonist, occasional baritone saxist and flutist, leader of his own ensemble, and for almost 25 years an essential member of pianist Cecil Taylor's units, died May 19 of lung cancer here. He was 53.

Best known for his personal style on alto—a flinty, fleet, penetrating, rich, angular sound that stands alongside Jackie McLean's

Elmo Hope during his youth in the Bronx. Lyons also cited altoist Ernie Henry as an early influence.

Besides his thorough documentation on Taylor's albums (through *Winged Serpent* of October '84), Lyons led quintet sessions with his wife, bassoonist Karen Borca, on *Black Saint* and *hat Hut*, and collaborated on various projects with Lester Bowie, Andrew Cyrille, Joseph Jarman, Eddie Gale, and David Murray, among others. A comprehensive interview with Jimmy Lyons appears in the April '85 issue of Switzerland's *Jazz* magazine.

—howard mandel



COLLIS H. DAVIS JR.

## Harold Arlen, 1905-86

**NEW YORK**—Harold Arlen, one of the greatest American song writers of Tin Pan Alley, died here April 23 at age 81.

Of the great popular composers—Berlin, Gershwin, Porter, Kern, and Rodgers—Arlen was the one closest to the jazz world. Born in Buffalo in 1905, he was the son of a cantor and began studying music early. But he soon found his own way, and in 1929 launched his songwriting career with *Get Happy*. From 1931-34 he wrote the music for the Cotton Club Parades, which featured the Duke Ellington and Cab Calloway orchestras. During this period Arlen produced some of his greatest music—*Stormy Weather*, *I Got A Right To Sing The Blues*, *Paper Moon*, and others.

He went to Hollywood and hit his peak in 1939 with *Over The Rainbow*, sung by Judy Garland in *The Wizard Of Oz*. Fifteen years later he added another classic to the Garland repertoire, *The Man That Got Away*. Other songs from the movie period included *Blues In The Night*, *Old Black Magic*, and *Happiness Is Just A Thing Called Joe*. Additional Arlen titles such as *My Shining Hour*, *Come Rain Or Come Shine*, and *Last Night When We Were Young* continue to stand among the most enduring works of modern popular music.

In recent years Arlen became increasingly immobile with Parkinson's disease. Among his last appearances was a visit to the offices of ASCAP on Broadway at Lincoln Center to accept the organization's Richard Rodgers Award for lifetime achievement.

—john mcdonough

## FINAL BAR



LAUREN DEUTSCH

**Estella "Mama" Yancey**, legendary blues vocalist died Apr. 19 in Chicago at age 90. Mrs. Yancey worked regularly with her husband, famed pianist Jimmy Yancey, from their marriage in 1919 until his death in 1951. Since then she performed with various blues pianists around Chicago, including Erwin Helfer, and recorded a 1983 album on the Red Beans label.

**Teddy Kotick**, bassist for bands led by Charlie Parker, Buddy Rich, Artie Shaw, Buddy DeFranco, Horace Silver, Stan Getz, et al, died April 17 at a Boston hospital. He was 57. Rarely heard in solos, Kotick was known as an excellent rhythm section bassist. He recorded with scores of musicians (Jimmy Raney, Phil Woods, Bob Brookmeyer, Bill Evans, and Jimmy Knepper in addition to those named above) and worked extended gigs in nightclubs such as Rodney Dangerfields.

**Dorothy Ashby**, Detroit-born jazz harpist, died of cancer Apr. 13 at her Santa Monica, CA, home at age 55. Ashby began playing harp while in high school, and Count Basie flutist and saxophonist Frank Wess eventually heard her and hooked her up with the Savoy record label, which led later on to dozens of albums for other labels. After moving to California, she recorded with a number of pop artists, among them Bill Withers and

Earth, Wind and Fire, as well as serving as accompanist to such jazz stars as Hubert Laws and Freddie Hubbard.

**Leroy Jackson**, a Chicago-area bassist who recorded with such jazz greats as Charlie Parker, Lester Young, Johnny Griffin, Gene Ammons, and Sonny Stitt, died in Chicago Dec. 27 at age 58. Jackson, who began his career at Chicago's Du Sable High School under Captain Walter Dyett, had been active on the city's jazz scene until a stroke ended his career.

**Nettle Sherman**, vocalist/pianist who got her start playing clubs in Chicago, New York, and Minneapolis in the '20s, died in Rochester, MN, March 31 at age 85. Sherman appeared on Broadway with Fats Waller, performed with Pearl Bailey and Edith Wilson, and was a friend of Duke Ellington. She also worked as an actress on various radio soap operas.

# The Super Bowl For Stage Bands

**VANCOUVER, B.C.**—The 14th annual Canadian Stage Band Festival roared through this year's site, EXPO '86 (the 1986 World Exposition), with the power of a runaway train and the precision of an Indy 500 racecar.

"Amazing seems to be the key word," said fest executive director Jim Howard. "I think everybody—from the student performers to the judges and the audiences—was absolutely amazed: they were amazed at the surroundings, holding it on the Expo grounds; they were amazed at the caliber of the musicianship that they were listening to."

The culmination of a yearlong effort combining the hard work and high hopes of not only the Festival staff, but the more than 200,000 Canadian high school and college music students who participate initially at the regional level and view the Festival as the pot of gold at the end of their school year, this year's festivities were the largest and most exciting ever. The Festival is actually the national finals of the Canadian Stage Band Competition, encompassing not only a big band category, but those of small jazz combo, dixieland combo, vocal jazz choir, vocal jazz combo, and concert band as well.

To reach the national finals, bands must qualify by winning their respective regional competitions—and, according to Jim Howard, "There are 68 regionals, taking place in all of the major cities across Canada—Vancouver, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, and so on, right across the country. Bands often drive as much as 100 miles to compete in one of these regionals."

Rejean Marois, leader of two community-oriented prize-winning groups at this year's fest, speaks for many when he says, "It's the biggest musical event in Canada—seeing so many kids coming together for music is heartwarming." Just how many students compete in the finals? Some 7,850 performed in 315 groups on six stages over a five-day period. "That's exactly twice what we had last year," says Jim Howard, "and we had exactly twice that year what we had the year before that." So the festival continues to grow, and such numbers are impressive—and remember, these are the finals, where only the best are invited—but they actually tell only a small part of the story behind the

success of this remarkable event. The fest's real, lasting rewards lie in the enthusiasm of the students and the educational value of the experience.

During the competition, each group performs in front of a panel of adjudicators, consisting of some of the country's most knowledgeable musicians and music instructors. The judges not only rate the band's performance in terms of the competition, but also deliver a handwritten critique and an oral critique immediately after the performance, so each band can receive feedback while their playing is still fresh and ringing in the air.

Jim Howard began working with the Festival as an adjudicator in 1978, and he has definite feelings about the competition's educational value. "The fest's major change over the years has been a solid swing towards educational considerations. Bands are playing the music as opposed to playing against other bands—if somebody loses it's because they didn't play as well as they could have, not



Tenor saxophonist Greg Johnson, of Gladstone (OR) High School, was cited for special recognition by adjudicators.

because somebody else beat them.

"I'm a believer in competition—life is competition. Everything we do is competitive; either we're competing against ourselves or we're competing against someone else. And I think competition is a learning experience for everyone. As far as this particular musical competition is concerned,

we're offering something unique in that it's the highest level of performance standards in the country—and given the scope of the competition, possibly in North America. The students not only get a chance to compete for the adjudicators, they also get a chance to compete with their peers. That's why we have so many classes, to assure that an 18-year-old is competing against other 18-year-olds, so they really can establish where they are [in their development].

"Add to all that the 60-some hours of clinics which the festival offers, and you have a well-rounded experience. I think that's why it's growing. It's more than a competition. It's a supplement to a good music teacher's program."

Certainly the students feel that this is more than a competition; they're here to have fun. And they do—to hear the cheering at the Awards Ceremony in the Kodak Pacific Bowl you'd think you were at the Super Bowl. This intense spirit and sense of enjoyment carried throughout the performances as well. It was inspiring to see not only the enthusiasm of the performing groups, but the involvement of the audiences too, rooting on their region's sister schools, applauding a dynamic chart or a hot soloist. As Janet Warren, faculty director of the award-winning Argyle H.S. Vocal Jazz choir, put it, "The competition sets up a tradition of excellence for new students to aspire to—and the kids get a kick out of hearing what groups in the other regions are doing in terms of type of material and style."

Added to the competition for the first time this year was an expanded category—the down beat International Award for bands outside of Canada. Eleven high school and college bands made the long journey from various parts of the U.S. to Vancouver, but it was definitely worth the effort, according to Ted McDaniel, faculty adviser to the silver medal-winning band from Ohio State. "This makes everyone work together, and work hard towards a goal—and to be honored for the hard work they've done all year," McDaniel said.

The complete list of gold medal winners in each of the various categories is listed in the accompanying box. But the experience itself far surpassed the sheer result of winning or losing. Despite five days of grey, rainy weather, nothing could dampen the enthusiasm of the participants—or anyone else fortunate enough to attend and share in the good feelings.

—art lange

## Canadian Stage Band Festival Gold Medal Winners

- Stage Band IA (College/University): Humber College Jazz Ensemble, Toronto, Ont.
- Stage Band IB (Community): Douglas College Jazz Band, New Westminster, B.C.
- Stage Band IIA (Senior High School): Chingacousy Jazz Band, Toronto, Ont.
- Stage Band IIB (Multiple High Schools): Hamilton All-Stars, Hamilton, Ont.
- Stage Band IIIA (Intermediate High School): Handsworth Senior Jazz Ensemble, North Vancouver, B.C.
- Stage Band IVA (Jr. High Schools/15 And Under): Handsworth Jr. Jazz Ensemble, North Vancouver, B.C.
- Stage Band IVB (Multiple Jr. High Schools): Saskatoon Jr. Jazz Ensemble, Saskatoon, Sask.
- Stage Band IVC (Jr. High Schools/14 And Under): Bishop Pinkham Stage Band, Calgary, Al.
- Jazz Combo IB: Combo Rejean Marois, St. Foy, Quebec.
- Jazz Combo IIA: Stefan Schedler Trio, Campbell River, B.C.
- Jazz Combo IIB: Network Fusion, Windsor, Ont.
- Jazz Combo IIIA: Nanaimo Sr. Secondary School Jazz Combo, Nanaimo, B.C.
- Jazz Combo IIIB: Deported From Cozumel, Windsor, Ont.
- Jazz Combo IVA: Conversations, Campbell River, B.C.
- Dixieland Combo IA: Malaspina College Dixieland Band, Nanaimo, B.C.
- Dixieland Combo IIA: Kenner Collegiate Dixieland Band, Peterborough, Ont.
- db International Award, High School: Brandywine H.S. Blazers Jazz Band, Wilmington, DE.
- db International Award, College: Fredonia Jazz Ensemble, Fredonia, NY.
- Rising Star Award: Michael Filice (alto saxophone), Scott Park H.S., Hamilton, Ont.
- Vocal Jazz Choir IA: Diese Onza, Quebec City, Que.
- Vocal Jazz Choir IIA: Jubilation, Lake Steven, WA; Shades Of Blue, Grand Rapids, MI; Bothell Vocal Jazz Ensemble, Bothell, WA.
- Vocal Jazz Choir IIIA: Magee Sr. Vocal Jazz Ensemble, Vancouver, B.C.; Argyle Vocal Jazz '86, North Vancouver, B.C.
- Vocal Jazz Choir IVA: Argyle Jr. Jazz Choir, North Vancouver, B.C.
- Most Outstanding Vocal Jazz Ensemble: Segue, Cap-Rouge, Que.
- Vocal Jazz Combo IA: Vocazz, St. Foy, Que.
- Vocal Jazz Combo IB: Solstice, Saskatoon, Sask.; Segue, Cap-Rouge, Que.
- Vocal Jazz Combo IIIA: Girl Talk, North Vancouver, B.C.
- Most Outstanding Concert Band: McNally Sr. Concert Band, Edmonton, Al.
- Concert Band III: Red Deer All-City Band, Red Deer, Al.; Handsworth Jr. Secondary Band, North Vancouver, B.C.; Oak Bay Concert Band, Victoria, B.C.
- Concert Band IV: M.J. Mouat Secondary School Concert Band, Clearbrook, B.C.; Hillside Wind Ensemble, Valleyview, Al.; Shorecrest H.S. Wind Ensemble, Seattle, WA; Fort Vancouver Concert Band, Vancouver, WA.
- Concert Band V: Central Memorial H.S., Calgary, Al.; McNally Composite H.S., Edmonton, Al.; Handsworth Secondary School, North Vancouver, B.C.

## Loose Tubes

**LONDON**—It seems impossible on paper: 21 musicians, all from different musical backgrounds, playing together as a big band with no leader. "People come to the fore at various moments depending on what their talents are," said bassist Steve Berry, "but we try to work it as far as possible to be democratic and co-operative."

They stormed onto the London jazz scene last year, selling out Ronnie Scott's club, and recorded a debut album (available from 43 Durham Rd, East Finchley, London N2 9DR, UK), some of the brightest "British" jazz in years, music as energetic and various as the musicians. They're all young and from all around the British music world, some classically trained, others pub-trained, some from the studios or the theatre pits, others from ethnic and pop bands, all with a love of jazz and a desire to make music together. "We all do other things that keep us basically alive," Berry said, "and we're all involved in small bands that we wouldn't want to give up doing. We need to keep that diversity for the sake of the band."

Berry and keyboardist Django Bates became the principal composers at first, but several now have written for the band. "Loose Tubes doesn't exist on its own," Berry said. "It's the people that make it up." Berry acknowledged "the Ellington principle. He wasn't really writing big band music. He was writing for the guys in the band. And we have that strength. We don't just write a flute part. We write a flute part for Eddie Parker."

Along with Parker's flute, the palette of the band includes six reeds, nine brass, keyboards, guitar, Berry's acoustic bass, drums (acoustic and



JAK KILBY

electronic), and percussion. Sometimes they'll all play free at once, and each individual is encouraged to freely contribute to compositions. They've been compared to Gil Evans, Carla Bley, Mike Westbrook, Mike Gibbs, Sun Ra, et al, but the sound is unique—and sometimes explodes from the stage, blasting all around the audience.

They'd formed with Arts Council money as a "youth project" headed by bandleader/composer Graham Collier. "His aim," Berry said, "was to get young contemporary British improvisers who wouldn't ordinarily get into a big band situation. There'd be a weekly rehearsal, and each week a different writer would bring in some charts. But we found the music that we made ourselves was that much more cohesive. And from that it evolved away from being an unpaid rehearsal workshop to being an unpaid band." As the band's identity evolved, "we weared ourselves away from Graham's directing." They'd wanted a name that

"communicates what we're about. Graham wanted to use names like London Youth Improvisational Project Workshop Band. Colin said to call it Loose Tubes, and that sounded like that kick in the groin that was needed."

They're a real kick in concert, wild and swinging and even funny. (It's not unusual for a berserk ragtime march to erupt in the middle of a swirling descarga.) Ashley Slater (bass trombone) acts as the tongue-in-cheek emcee, but they all goof. On one televised performance, one of the musicians knitted between solos, another came dressed as Carmen Miranda. Berry recalled, "The first gig we did was in a traditional jazz club. The first couple of numbers, sure, there were some furrowed brows, trying to work out their bearings. But by the end of the gig the whole place was roaring!" "Nobody can really refuse it," added Dave Defries (trumpet). "It's the energy!"

—Michael Bourne

## New York Jazz Guitar Ensemble

**NEW YORK**—In the tradition of Supersax and Tony Rizzi's Five Guitars comes The New York Jazz Guitar Ensemble. The brainchild of Bob Ward, who had studied with former Supersax member Warne Marsh, this ensemble of swinging six-stringers has recently released its debut album on Choice Records (distributed by Bainbridge Records, P.O. Box 8248, Van Nuys, CA 91409). Appropriately titled *4 On 6 x 5*, it's largely an homage to the guitar great who remains a towering influence over them—Wes Montgomery.

As Supersax synthesized and harmonized Charlie Parker solos and Tony Rizzi took the same approach with Charlie Christian solos, so is Bob Ward & Company doing with Wes. Backed by Steve Alcott on acoustic bass and Taro Okamoto on drums, the five Wes disciples glide through such swinging vehicles as *4 On 6*, *Wes' Tune*, and Sam Jones' *Unit 7*, as well as such lush fare as *Old Folks* and Herbie Hancock's *Speak Like A Child*.

Initially an outlet for keeping their sightreading chops together, the members of the group eventually coalesced into a working band with gigs around Manhattan and Long Island, though each guitarist still held onto other commitments



outside of the NYJGE

Bill Bickford, for instance, is also involved in the commercial funk band Liquid Hips as well as the out-funk group Defunkt. Peter Leitch works regularly around town in trio and duo settings and released his own album on the Uptown label, *Exhilaration*, with Pepper Adams and John Hicks. Paul Meyers has his own group on the side, a trio called Isotope, and plays in another guitar quartet with Jack Wilkins, Gene Bertonecini, and John Scofield. Scott Hardee, too, leads his own quartet and does various sessions around town. And Bob Ward is pretty busy himself doing duets, in which he employs his Roland GR-707 MIDI-ed up to a Yamaha DX7 for orchestral effect.

But the five dig Wes so much and enjoy playing together enough that they've decided to stick it out. Since the release of their debut album, they've expanded their performing base and are hoping to land overseas gigs at some of the prestigious jazz festivals around Europe. They're each writing and arranging new material, and Ward is even working his guitar synth into the act, using a Jimmy Smith-type organ program for comping behind solos. It's a particularly good application of the Roland GR-707. High-tech with the finesse of Wes.

—Bill Milkowski

## Eugene Chadbourne

**CAMBRIDGE**—In the year or so since the demise of Shockabilly, Eugene Chadbourne has been quite a busy free improvised country & western bebopper. According to the fractured string player, you can get a lot more done by yourself. "When you're working with people in a group, by the time you've compromised on everything, you've whittled things down quite a bit. The result isn't always what you wanted. Actually I'm not interested in being in a group anymore. There are too many around. If I see another picture of some guys posed against a wall with a name like the Piss Pots, I'm gonna die. I just don't want to subjugate my personality to be part of a group at this time."

Chadbourne needn't worry; every project he's been a part of since he first hit the improvised music scene back in the mid-'70s has carried the indelible stamp of his personality. He's done atonal blitzkrieg duets with both saxist Frank Lowe and violinist Polly Bradfield, created an orchestral forum for experimental players (*2000 Statues*), recorded the (now) landmark cross-cultural opus *There'll Be No Tears Tonight* (shitkicker music meets the noise patrol), and submerged



KIRK WEST

psychedelic tunes, rockabilly standards, and assorted other musical artifacts into the murky depths of Shockabilly's B-movie splatter.

But this past year saw several releases launched under his own name. *The President: He Is Insane* was a caustic indictment of the USA's top dog and his policies, *Country Music Of*

*Southeast Australia* rerooted some more c&w classics through the grinder and featured the Chadbourne family crest, which boasted the logo "sonus terribilus," and *Country Protest* took a stroll through some '60's socially conscious tunes—with an especially poignant take of Phil Ochs' *When I'm Gone*—and, you guessed it, more c&w. Throughout all of them there's the free improviser's sense of investigation, the pop traditionalist's sense of song structure, and a whacko's sense of humor. The records are relentless pastiches of musical and non-musical material, jammed to the gills with sound and sounds. Yet the expense of Chadbourne's scope prohibits them from feeling claustrophobic; instead it makes them a laugh riot.

Traveling across the country troubadour-style, Chadbourne gets to combine many of his varied personas these days (and baffle listeners with his electric garden rake). "Back when I did nothing but free improvisation, I wasn't realizing the potential of what I do. Even now when I get together with some improvisers, the tendency is to do some songs too, not just limit ourselves to sounds. I enjoy the improvised sections more when they are developed as part of a whole. I don't like being locked into one idiom; my goal is to play in as many as possible—show some appreciation for them and make fun of them too." —jim macnie

## Sergio & Odair Assad

**NEW YORK**—The Assad brothers are extraordinary guitarists of what might be described as the post-modern (they call it the "after Beatles") generation. "We have this feeling," admits dark, bearded, talkative Sergio, 33, who generally plays the second guitar line to his dark, bearded, quiet 29-year-old sibling Odair's lead parts. "If you play popular music, you can attain this feeling. If you don't, I don't think you can."

But understand: the two Brazilians, despite their feelings, looks, and talents, aren't pop stars. They're a serious duo, making the legitimate concert scene in the U.S., Europe, and the southern hemisphere. Their repertoire is completely composed, in the classical tradition. Yet they're iconoclasts out to bring attention to the 20th century works of South Americans from Villa-Lobos forward, true to their regional identities and their times as well as the highest aesthetic principles. Jazz and pop styles simply inform the Assads' interpretations of contemporary compositions with drama and a lively rhythmic sense, as one can hear in versions of Argentinian Astor Piazzolla's *Tango Suite*, Cuban Leo Brouwer's *Micro Piezas*, Brazilian Hermeto Pascoal's *Bebê*, Radamés Gnattali's *Retratos*, and Alberto Ginastera's *Idilio Crepuscular* on the pair's Nonesuch Records debut, *Sergio And Odair Assad*. The brothers' precise interplay and prodigious instrumental techniques bespeak formal education, but their "feeling" testifies to something else.

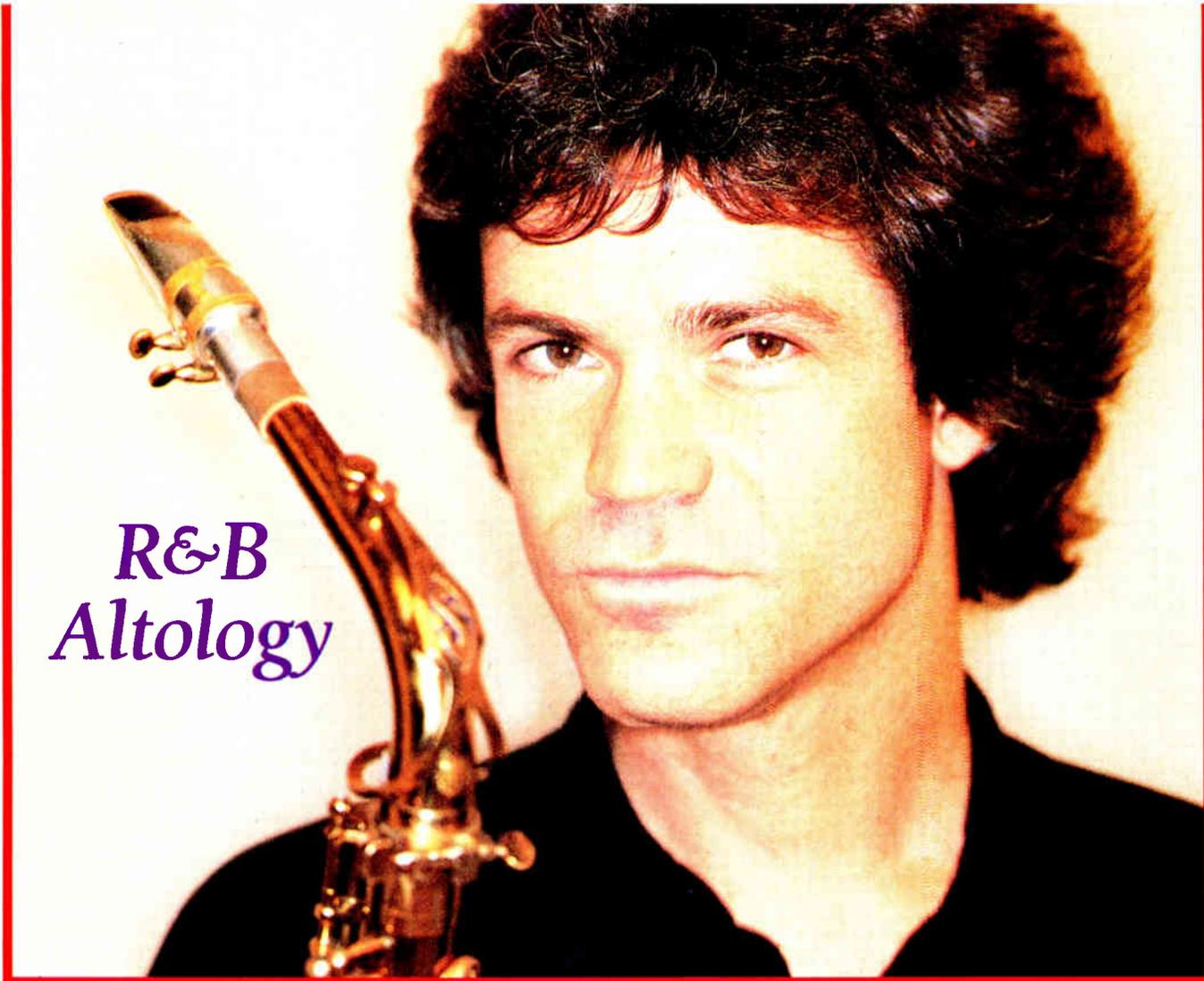
That something else is experience with an enduring 20th century pop music heritage. Residing in a small town near São Paulo, the Assads played English and North American pop hits and indigenous Brazilian songs (their teen years coincided with the tropicalia movement, dominated by songwriters like Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil) in private, at home, with friends, for their own enjoyment; enrolled in classical study, they kept their casual music to themselves. Sergio penned tunes with lyrics, but relegated them to the closet. He's just lately begun to include his more

ambitious, still distinctly Brazilian-flavored compositions, such as his four miniatures represented on the Nonesuch LP, into recitals.

"I write classical forms, but try to use that Brazilian feeling, that improvised feeling. I used to think I'd lose my friends, playing my own music—that people would say, 'Hmph, that's not serious.' But I don't care anymore. I think we're going to create something new—and not for the music only, but for the guitar. Especially because we have two guitars," Sergio says, "we'll create something new." —howard mandel



BEATRIZ SCHILLER



MICHAEL HALSBAND

## R&B Altology

# David Sanborn

By GENE KALBACHER

“I’m a little frazzled right now,” a sleepy-eyed David Sanborn, barely suppressing a mid-morning yawn, says from his apartment in New York City. “I’m doing four things at once.”

The darkly handsome Sanborn, the alto saxman whose semisweet-yet-masculine tone and rhapsodic rhythm & blues drive have endeared him to the doyens of rock and pop, is too busy handling his own projects to accept outside offers on his phone-answering machine. “I really haven’t been doing too much outside work recently,” he explains, unnecessarily. Besides lending his deft reed touch to forthcoming albums by ex-Miles Davis guitarist Mike Stern and the Temptations—that stylistic expanse sums up his versatility succinctly—the St. Louis native is shaping up his band for a summer tour, writing the score for the motion picture *Soul Man*, and hosting and co-producing a weekly, two-hour syndicated radio program for NBC called *The Jazz Show*. What’s more, he’s cutting a follow-up to his recently released 10th album for Warner Bros., *Double Vision*, a collaboration with keyboardist/composer Bob James. And on Thursdays he makes time to join the band on *Late Night With David Letterman*.

For a saxophonist who flatly denies being a jazz musician, Sanborn has made quite a name for himself in jazz circles. His breezy solo albums enjoy prolonged stays atop the jazz charts, his gigs at jazz festivals across the country are sellouts and, now, his radio show is making inroads for jazz on constricted rock-radio formats. Yet, semantics aside, Sanborn is an r&b devotee, a Hank Crawford-influenced player with his own singular sound who cut his teeth playing “teen town” dances in the Midwest with bluesman Albert King and Little Milton before joining the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. Pop cameos with the likes of James Taylor and David Bowie cemented Sanborn’s reputation for rhythmic directness, but since his 1981 *Voyeur* LP for Warner Bros., a Grammy-winner for Best R&B Instrumental Performance, he has increasingly created his own situations, so much so that stellar singers like Al Jarreau (*Since I Fell For You* on *Double Vision*) are gracing his albums instead of the other way around.

Recently, Sanborn has expanded his activities to include film scoring. Although his score for—and bit acting part in—the Italian film *Stella Sulla Città* (*Stars Above The City*) is “sitting in the can somewhere in Rome,” he wrote the music for what he

calls "the love scene" in *Psycho III* and is currently penning the score for *Soul Man*.

Adjusting his eyes and ears to the demands of the new day, Sanborn discreetly munches some breakfast and fields questions about his *Double Vision* album.

**Gene Kalbacher:** It seems like every time a new Sanborn record is issued, you're already at work on another one. How did your partnership with Bob James come about?

**David Sanborn:** He and I had talked about doing a record for a while. He was getting ready to go with Warner Bros., and I was in-between records. I've played on a couple of his albums, and we've worked in that odd studio situation that has existed since the advent of multi-track recording, where you can work with somebody without physically being in the same room with him. I've always admired his arranging abilities, his ability to use different orchestral colors and timbres, and I wanted to get involved with him on that level. He has a nice way of manipulating textures, and he's a real sensitive accompanist, too.

**GK:** Besides your one original and two co-compositions with James on *Double Vision*, bassist Marcus Miller again figures prominently, chipping in two tunes. Why do you find him so valuable?

**DS:** Those tunes [*Maputo* and *More Than Friends*] are really strong. Marcus is a great writer. He writes tunes with a nice symmetry; they're like Swiss watches—all the parts work together well. It's always a lot of fun to play on Marcus' tunes because they have an emotional directness and a strong melodic impetus.

**GK:** Marcus produced your previous album, *Straight To The Heart*, recorded before a live studio audience. Why on *Double Vision* did you tab Tommy LiPuma as the producer instead of Miller or James or even yourself?

**DS:** We both felt we needed an outside producer. I don't feel real good about producing myself. I think most artists need somebody with a good overview, somebody who can maintain a certain level of objectivity about the whole thing and also take care of some of the administrative duties that naturally fall on the shoulders of a producer. It's a lot to take on for most people. Unless you've got an incredible amount of patience or a lot of money or a lot of time, or *all* of those things, it's very hard to produce yourself. I've never had the desire to do it. I feel I can exert enough control over the situation just as the artist without having to take on the added responsibility and headache of being the producer.

**GK:** After the release of *Backstreet*, your previous studio recording in 1983, you expressed after-the-fact reservations about your studio approach. You bemoaned the lack of a "band," the lack of bodies to bounce off, telling me, "As difficult as it is to overdub [alto] to pre-recorded drums, it's that much more difficult to overdub to a pre-recorded drum machine." How did the *Backstreet* experience affect your studio methodology on *Double Vision*?

**DS:** We approached this record like we used to make records 10, 15 years ago: going in the studio for a week and doing all the tunes, all the playing, and then taking some time maybe to add some synthesizer pads, do some editing, maybe fix some spots here and there, maybe fix a melody that's out of tune, but basically keeping the body of the music intact. We did the album pretty much live. We did the basic tracks, and I did most of my playing live in the studio in about a week, at Clinton Recording Studios. We didn't use any drum machine and we did very little overdubbing. I think maybe we did four takes, at the most, on one tune. I mean, you spend a certain amount of time getting the right *sound*, the right balance, and getting used to each other.

**GK:** The last tune on the record, *You Don't Know Me*, brings it all back home for you—to St. Louis and Ray Charles, one of your favorites.

**DS:** Ray Charles did record it, but Eddy Arnold [and Cindy Walker] actually wrote it. I've always loved that tune. But some

people may think the song is too dated or laidback. That was the reaction in some quarters. We were after a sort of after-dark mood.

**GK:** Isn't King Curtis' *Memphis Soul Stew*, which you're cutting with the Uptown Horns for your next album, roughly equivalent in r&b stature to *You Don't Know Me* on the *Double Vision* album?

**DS:** Yes, but [*Memphis Soul Stew*] is more of an *up* tune. Even though I'm doing *Memphis Soul Stew* in a sort of traditional way, we're updating it rhythmically.

**GK:** Are you finding that the premise of your weekly, two-hour radio show holds much promise for the infiltration of jazz into commercial radio?

**DS:** I try to play a fairly wide cross-section of music. What it is, basically, is trying to introduce the idea of playing jazz on stations that are *not* formatted for jazz. Most of the stations are album-oriented rock or straight-out rock stations. We're trying to ease the concept of jazz into that format. A lot of it is really getting past the station managers and the programmers—to convince *them* that people really want to hear this music. The big surprise has been that the response has been positive: we started out with about 40 stations, and within a couple of months it's up to 92.

What we try to do is to play some stuff on the *Billboard* jazz charts and get some historical perspective by playing older stuff. And we do occasional interviews; we've had Wayne Shorter, Dizzy Gillespie, Chick Corea, and John Scofield. I do some of them myself. I'm trying to stretch the limits of the



PAUL NATAKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

show. I would like to reflect some of the more traditional aspects of jazz, particularly bebop. We're trying to ease in Coltrane, some of the older Miles Davis stuff, Sonny Stitt. We're trying to say, "This is old music, this is new music; this is good music but this is, too."

**DS:** Has the response on any of the stations carrying the show been such that the program directors are adding jazz-oriented material, contemporary stuff like Manhattan Transfer, to their regular programming?

**DS:** That I don't know. I do know that certain of these stations, because of the response of this show, are doing their own local [jazz] shows.

**GK:** Do you believe that the boundaries between jazz and rock have been narrowed over the past year or so due to the crossover successes of the jazz-flavored pop albums by Sting and Sade?

**DS:** There are several arguments, pro and con, about that kind of crossover phenomenon, and I can see both sides of it. There are people who contend that when you blur the distinctions [between the two genres], you're diluting the real essence of what jazz is—America's only true, indigenous art form. Those people believe this tends to take away from the true nature and vitality of jazz music, which to a lot of people means an acoustic reality. Speaking as a musician, I don't think in terms of those categories.

In the first place, I've never thought of myself as a jazz musician. Even when I do think in categories, I never think of myself as a jazz musician. I've never called myself a jazz musician in the public forum or privately.

**GK:** Yet you freely admit that, while you aren't fluent in the bebop vocabulary, your music does involve a certain amount of improvisation and jazz phrasing and swing, which are essential ingredients or components of jazz.

**DS:** Yes. But I don't see myself in a direct line in the tradition of jazz. I didn't come out of that tradition; I started out playing in blues bands and in r&b music. That's what my musical foundation is.

**GK:** Then again, blues is an important building block of jazz.

**DS:** Exactly. But most of the contexts I've played in have been either blues-based or r&b or straight-out rock & roll. What experience I've had in playing jazz has been pretty sporadic; most of it was working with Gil Evans. And I'm not trying to distance myself from jazz in any way. I'm just trying to clarify how I think of myself. See, I don't want to misrepresent myself, and I don't want to misrepresent the music. It's kind of a touchy situation for me hosting a show called *The Jazz Show*. Although at this point the range of what I'm able to play on the show is limited, I want to keep pushing those limits and expand the listening palette, the range of music played on the show.

**GK:** The other argument, getting back to the crossover phenomenon, holds that blues- or jazz-rock music will lead open-minded rock listeners to check out the true jazz roots that inform rock. In the early '70s, for instance, adventurous fans of Return to Forever and the Mahavishnu Orchestra dug deeper and investigated the backgrounds and influences of those groups, thus learning about Miles Davis and Charlie Parker.

**DS:** That's what I believe happens. That's the kind of mind I have. I have very eclectic tastes. I listen to opera, Mideastern music, rock & roll, bebop, Renaissance music, Gregorian chants, Irish folk music, Indonesian music. Historically, I've found out about this music by hearing it in another context. Hearing a Talking Heads record, I would say, "Gee, that's an interesting texture. What was that instrument?"

**GK:** The answer might be traceable to African pop music like Fela [Anikulapo Kuti].

**DS:** Yes. That's what I'd like to think other people do as well.

**GK:** Through Eric Clapton's *Crossroads*, many Cream fans learned about the blues of Robert Johnson.

**DS:** A lot of people get into the blues through English rock & roll, through the Rolling Stones, who are blues fanatics. I think

electronic instruments are a reality, and they're not going to go away. It's ludicrous to ignore their presence and not at least explore the possibilities available to you. That doesn't mean you have to abandon the acoustic reality. At a certain point, the piano was a synthesizer, and the Hammond B-3 organ sure enough was. After a while, these arguments about traditionalism versus change become a rhetorical dialog. Although it's very hard to put an essential-ingredient [definition] on what jazz is, I think jazz is an evolving art form that comes from a certain tradition and that pushes musical boundaries and stretches people's imagination. That's what makes it an art form—because it makes people *think* and it challenges people emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually.

**GK:** It challenges the listener who hears it because it challenges the musicians who *play* it.

**DS:** Exactly. Because it's not predictable, it's not safe.

**GK:** You mentioned that you feel a bit uneasy hosting a program called *The Jazz Show*. In one respect, though, you may be the perfect host because you've worked in rock contexts familiar to AOR audiences. Although you don't consider yourself a jazz musician, you have played jazz and you display an

CONTINUED ON PAGE 61



PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

### DAVID SANBORN'S EQUIPMENT

David Sanborn recently switched from a gold-plated Yamaha alto saxophone to a Selmer Mark VI alto from the mid-'50s, 147000 series. "Although I have two other Yamahas and a few other Selmer allos," he explains, "I find that for my purposes these days I like the Selmer because it has a lot of character. Even though the Yamaha is sturdy, I think when you find a really good old Selmer, there's nothing like it." He continues to use LaVoz and Hemke medium-hard reeds and a Dukoff #8 mouthpiece.

### DAVID SANBORN SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

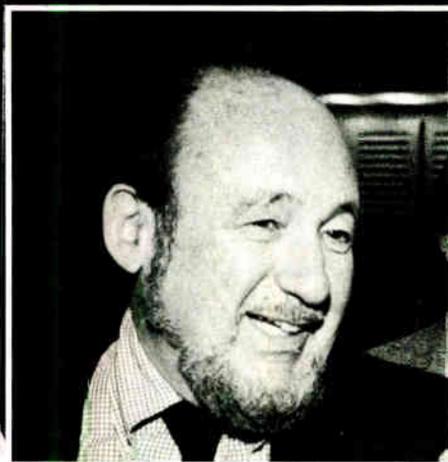
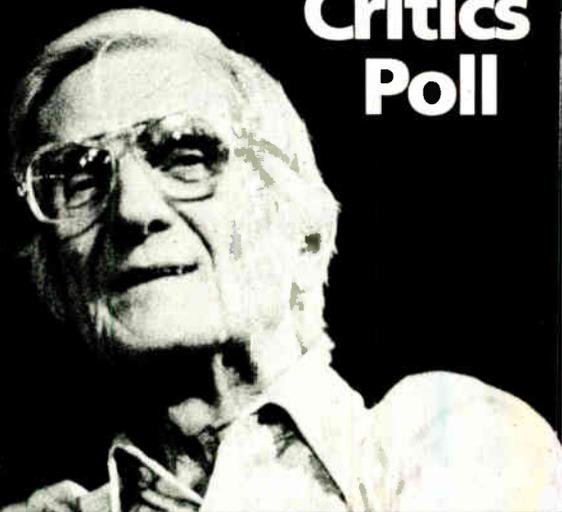
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>as a leader</b>                                | <b>with David Bowie</b>                         |
| STRAIGHT TO THE HEART—Warner Bros. 25150-1        | YOUNG AMERICANS—RCA 1-0998                      |
| BACKSTREET—Warner Bros. 23906-1                   | <b>with Gil Evans</b>                           |
| AS WE SPEAK—Warner Bros. 9 23650-1                | SVENGALI—Atlantic 90048-1                       |
| VOYEUR—Warner Bros. 3546                          | <b>with John Scofield</b>                       |
| HIDEAWAY—Warner Bros. 3379                        | ELECTRIC OUTLET—Gramavision 8405                |
| HEART TO HEART—Warner Bros. 3189                  | <b>with Phoebe Snow</b>                         |
| PROMISE ME THE MOON—Warner Bros. 3051             | SECOND CHILDHOOD—Columbia 33952                 |
| SANBORN—Warner Bros. 2957                         | <b>with Bruce Springsteen</b>                   |
| TAKING OFF—Warner Bros. 2873                      | BORN TO RUN—Columbia 33795                      |
| <b>with Bob James</b>                             | <b>with Roger Waters</b>                        |
| DOUBLE VISION—Warner Bros. 9 25393-1              | THE PROS AND CONS OF HITCHHIKING—Columbia 39290 |
| HEADS—Columbia/Tappan Zee JC 34896                | <b>with Tommy Bolin</b>                         |
| <b>with the Rolling Stones</b>                    | TEASER—Nemperor 436                             |
| UNDERCOVER—Rolling Stone 7 90120-1                | <b>with Jaco Pastorius</b>                      |
| <b>with Paul Butterfield</b>                      | JACO PASTORIUS—Epic 33949                       |
| IN MY OWN DREAM—Elektra 74025                     | <b>with John McLaughlin</b>                     |
| KEEP ON MOVING—Elektra 74053                      | ELECTRIC GUITARIST—Columbia 35326               |
| THE RESURRECTION OF PIGBOY CRABSHAW—Elektra 74015 | <b>with Rickie Lee Jones</b>                    |
| <b>with Stevie Wonder</b>                         | PIRATES—Warner Bros. 3432                       |
| TALKING BOOK—Motown 77-319R1                      | <b>with Steely Dan</b>                          |
| <b>with James Taylor</b>                          | GAUCHO—MCA 6102                                 |
| GORILLA—Warner Bros. 2866                         | <b>with Linda Ronstadt</b>                      |
| <b>with the Brecker Brothers</b>                  | LIVING IN THE U.S.A.—Asylum 6E-155              |
| THE BRECKER BROTHERS—Arista 4037                  | <b>with various artists</b>                     |
| BACK TO BACK—Arista 4061                          | CASINO LIGHTS—Warner Bros. 9 23718-1            |

# 34th Annual International Critics Poll

## HALL OF FAME

- 17 Gil Evans
- 8 Jo Jones
- 5 Kenny Clarke
- 5 Johnny Dodds
- 5 Herbie Nichols
- 4 Stan Getz
- 4 Lionel Hampton
- 4 Philly Joe Jones
- 4 Big Joe Turner
- 4 Mary Lou Williams

H. L. LINDENMAIER



MITCHELL SEIDEL

## HALL OF FAME

As the down beat Hall of Fame often honors musicians whose contributions to the art form were established well in jazz's past, it's a particular pleasure to announce the 63rd inductee is an active presence right now. All hail Gil Evans, arranger and ensemble leader, whose Monday Night Band at Sweet Basil's in Manhattan is as charged up and youthful as Evans himself, at age 74!

Born Ian Ernest Gilmore Green, May 13, 1912 in Toronto, Canada, and raised by his mother on the road from farms to ranches, mines to lumber camps, Gil Evans first learned jazz through 78 rpm records as a teenager in Berkeley, California. Though he didn't play an instrument in public until 1952 (now he comps, as he calls it, "cheerleading piano"), he led a band of his own from 1933-41, and worked on Bob Hope's radio shows before joining Claude Thornhill's orchestra in '40s as an arranger. The man behind Miles Davis' *Birth Of The Cool* nonet, Gil gained notice as the trumpeter's collaborator on *Miles Ahead*, *Sketches Of Spain*, and *Porgy And Bess*, and has remained an important advisor to Davis. Among players who've blown through his charts are Charlie Parker (*Old Folks* and *In The Still Of The Night* with the Dave Lambert Singers), John Abercrombie, George Adams, Cannonball Adderley, Art Blakey, Arthur Blythe, Hiram Bullock, Kenny Burrell, Paul Chambers, Johnny Coles, Mark Egan, Barry Galbraith, Billy Harper, Budd Johnson, Lee Konitz, Steve Lacy, Jaco Pastorius, Airto Moreira and Flora Purim, Dave Sanborn, Lew Soloff, Phil Woods—and many more, constituting his own Hall of Fame.

"You can't copyright a sound," Evans acknowledges, without bitterness. But we can recognize his sound—by his wonderfully rich and flowing use of french horns, flutes, electric guitars, synthesizers, baritone saxes, trombones, muted trumpets, latin percussion, and lately, advanced electronics. With whatever instruments and instrumentalists he's had at hand, Evans has opened up and explored the possibilities. He's receptive to the entire history of music, from classics to the current rock hits, and has incorporated themes by Jelly Roll Morton, Thelonious Monk, and Charles Mingus, as well as the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix, into his sets. Best of all, Evans is far from finished learning, loving, and creating more exciting, colorful music—recently he scored the British rock film *Absolute Beginners*. His recordings, without exception, remain fresh (though some are hard to find) today, and his concerts and club dates are certifiably alive. Hear Gil Evans, one way or another, and honor him as one musician who's spent his career honoring other musicians with his own special sound. —Howard Mandel

## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Since its inception in 1981, the down beat Lifetime Achievement Award has recognized and honored individuals whose life's work has benefited jazz in three basic, non-performing ways: the achievements must have advanced the development of jazz in a fundamental way; there must be a broad consensus on the value of these achievements among musicians, historians, and audiences; the achievements must have proved their worth under the test of time. The previous awardees have been John Hammond, George Wein, Leonard Feather, Dr. Billy Taylor, and Dr. Lawrence Berk. This year we are proud to add the name of Orrin Keepnews to that distinguished list.

"I've always felt that the basic function of a producer in jazz is to be a catalytic agent," Keepnews told Jeff Levenson in a *db Ad Lib* (Jan. '85). "It is my job to bring out the best in the people I'm working with." It is inconceivable how the development of jazz would have been altered without Keepnews bringing out the best in such artists as Thelonious Monk, Sonny Rollins, Bill Evans, Art Blakey, and McCoy Tyner—to mention only the brightest lights in the galaxy of stars Keepnews has produced over his 30-odd year career.

As one of the co-founders of Riverside Records, his work with Cannonball Adderley and Wes Montgomery helped make them jazz-household names. When Riverside ceased operation in 1964, Keepnews turned his talents to Milestone Records; a few years later, when Fantasy took control of the Riverside/Milestone catalog and began to lay the groundwork for what was to become the largest reissue program in recorded jazz history, Keepnews was the natural choice to head all of the company's jazz activities. And after a few year's respite, he returned in 1985 as the guiding force behind Landmark Records, which after 14 noteworthy releases is well on its way toward achieving the same reputation for quality as Keepnews' previous labels.

The care, craft, and concern—for the music and the musicians—which Keepnews brought to the jazz recording industry should be a model for all current practitioners. He has proved that creativity, integrity, and high aesthetic values can not only co-exist, but find a longlasting position of popularity in the marketplace as well. As Jeff Levenson put it, "For some, a commitment to art and to the people who make it is not just a way to pay the rent, nor is it just a decent and meaningful life choice. For Keepnews, it is survival—his own, and that of the music." With this in mind, we are pleased to honor Orrin Keepnews with the down beat Lifetime Achievement Award.

—the editors

## RECORD OF THE YEAR



- 9 **James Newton, *The African Flower* (Blue Note)**
- 7 Miles Davis/John Coltrane, *In Sweden 1960* (Dragon)
- 7 Wynton Marsalis, *Black Codes (From The Underground)* (Columbia)
- 6 Misha Mengelberg/Steve Lacy, *Change Of Season* (Soul Note)
- 5 Lester Bowie's Brass Fantasy, *I Only Have Eyes For You* (ECM)
- 5 Dave Holland Quintet, *Seeds Of Time* (ECM)
- 5 Bennie Wallace, *Twilight Time* (Blue Note)
- 4 Manhattan Transfer, *Vocalese* (Atlantic)
- 4 Don Pullen, *The Sixth Sense* (Black Saint)
- 4 Sonny Rollins, *The Solo Album* (Milestone)
- 4 Cecil Taylor, *Segments II* (Black Saint)

## RECORD LABEL

- 20 **Black Saint/Soul Note**
- 15 Blue Note
- 5 Mosaic

## RECORD PRODUCER

- 14 **Michael Cuscuna**
- 13 Giovanni Bonandrini
- 3 Orrin Keepnews
- 3 Bruce Lundvall

## ACOUSTIC JAZZ GROUP

- 74 **Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers**
- 55 Art Ensemble of Chicago
- 35 Phil Woods Quintet
- 30 Wynton Marsalis
- 30 David Murray Octet
- 22 Jack DeJohnette's Special Edition
- 22 Henry Threadgill Sextet
- 21 Abdullah Ibrahim's Ekaya
- 18 Dave Holland Quintet
- 16 Adams/Pullen Quintet
- 16 World Saxophone Quartet

### TDWR

- 23 **Adams/Pullen Quintet**
- 22 Dirty Dozen Brass Band
- 22 Out Of The Blue
- 18 Ganellin Trio
- 18 Henry Threadgill Sextet
- 15 Dave Holland Quintet
- 15 David Murray Octet
- 13 Blanchard/Harrison Quintet
- 10 Abdullah Ibrahim's Ekaya

## REISSUE OF THE YEAR



- 9 **Charles Mingus, *The Complete Candid Recordings* (Mosaic)**
- 9 **Ben Webster, *The Complete Ben Webster On EmArcy* (EmArcy/PolyGram)**
- 7 Tina Brooks, *The Complete Blue Note Recordings* (Mosaic)
- 7 Billie Holiday, *On Verve 1946-59* (Verve/PolyGram)
- 6 Sidney Bechet, *The Complete Blue Note Recordings* (Mosaic)
- 4 Thelonious Monk, *The Complete Black Lion And Vogue Recordings* (Mosaic)
- 3 Various Artists, *Atlantic R&B 1947-74* (Atlantic)

## BIG BAND

- 74 **Count Basie**
- 71 Sun Ra
- 65 Gil Evans
- 51 Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin
- 34 David Murray
- 20 Mel Lewis
- 18 Carla Bley
- 17 Woody Herman
- 14 George Russell
- 10 Vienna Art Orchestra

JEFF THEBAUTH



Talent Deserving Wider Recognition

- 43 **Willem Breuker Kollektief**
- 36 Vienna Art Orchestra
- 26 Charli Persip's Superband
- 25 Pierre Darge's New Jungle Orchestra
- 19 David Murray
- 17 George Russell
- 15 Carla Bley
- 14 Jaki Byard's Apollo Stompers
- 13 Ed Wilkerson's Shadow Vignettes

## ELECTRIC JAZZ GROUP

- 92 **Miles Davis**
- 68 Ornette Coleman & Prime Time
- 60 Pat Metheny Group
- 37 Ronald Shannon Jackson & Decoding Society
- 31 Weather Report
- 16 Steps Ahead
- 11 John Scofield

### TDWR

- 21 **Jamaaladeen Tacuma**
- 17 Ronald Shannon Jackson & Decoding Society
- 16 Azymuth
- 16 Bass Desires
- 13 Jimmy Giuffre

## COMPOSER

- 70 **Carla Bley**
- 41 Toshiko Akiyoshi
- 35 George Russell
- 28 Ornette Coleman
- 22 David Murray
- 18 Wayne Shorter
- 18 Henry Threadgill
- 16 Anthony Davis
- 15 Muhal Richard Abrams
- 14 Thad Jones

### TDWR

- 32 **Henry Threadgill**
- 30 David Murray
- 15 Anthony Davis
- 12 Dave Frishberg
- 11 Julius Hemphill
- 10 Muhal Richard Abrams
- 10 Anthony Braxton
- 10 Jan Garbarek
- 10 Abdullah Ibrahim
- 10 Butch Morris

## ARRANGER

- 121 **Gil Evans**
- 47 Thad Jones
- 42 Carla Bley
- 36 Toshiko Akiyoshi
- 25 George Russell
- 19 Muhal Richard Abrams
- 19 David Murray
- 15 Quincy Jones
- 12 Sun Ra
- 12 Don Sebesky

### TDWR

- 33 **Mathias Rügge**
- 19 David Murray
- 16 Mike Westbrook
- 14 Willem Breuker
- 13 Misha Mengelberg
- 11 Bill Kirchner

## TRUMPET



LAUREN DEUTSCH

- 101 **Lester Bowie**
- 83 Wynton Marsalis
- 41 Dizzy Gillespie
- 36 Miles Davis
- 35 Don Cherry
- 25 Woody Shaw
- 24 Freddie Hubbard
- 14 Clark Terry
- 14 Kenny Wheeler

### TDWR

- 61 **Terence Blanchard**
- 41 Olu Dara
- 40 Tom Harrell
- 18 Baikida Carroll
- 18 Wallace Roney
- 17 Ruby Braff
- 17 Paul Smoker
- 15 Enrico Rava
- 12 Kenny Wheeler

## TROMBONE

- 69 **Jimmy Knepper**
- 49 Craig Harris
- 44 J. J. Johnson
- 43 Albert Mangelsdorff
- 41 George Lewis
- 40 Ray Anderson
- 38 Roswell Rudd
- 22 Al Grey
- 18 Slide Hampton
- 14 Steve Turre

### TDWR

- 86 **Ray Anderson**
- 66 Craig Harris
- 57 Steve Turre
- 15 Al Grey
- 12 George Lewis
- 11 Paul Rutherford
- 11 Bill Watrous

## SOPRANO SAX

- 139 **Steve Lacy**
- 78 Wayne Shorter
- 45 Bob Wilber
- 34 Evan Parker
- 26 Dave Liebman
- 24 Branford Marsalis
- 22 Jane Ira Bloom
- 11 Ira Sullivan
- 10 Julius Hemphill

### TDWR

- 55 **Jane Ira Bloom**
- 24 Branford Marsalis
- 23 Dave Liebman
- 23 Roscoe Mitchell
- 21 Anthony Braxton
- 16 Evan Parker
- 15 Ira Sullivan
- 15 John Surman
- 12 Jan Garbarek
- 12 Bob Wilber

## ALTO SAX



ANDY FREEBERG

- 92 **Ornette Coleman**
- 87 Phil Woods
- 51 Benny Carter
- 49 Lee Konitz
- 24 Paquito D'Rivera
- 20 Anthony Braxton
- 20 Jimmy Lyons
- 18 Arthur Blythe
- 18 Jackie McLean
- 15 David Sanborn

**TDWR**

- 44 **Steve Coleman**
- 42 Donald Harrison
- 27 Paquito D'Rivera
- 21 Tim Berne
- 20 Kenny Garrett
- 20 Julius Hemphill
- 16 Oliver Lake
- 16 Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson
- 16 Robert Watson

**TENOR SAX**

- 113 **Sonny Rollins**
- 76 David Murray
- 44 Stan Getz
- 28 Johnny Griffin
- 15 Warne Marsh
- 15 Archie Shepp
- 14 Dexter Gordon
- 14 Wayne Shorter
- 14 Bennie Wallace
- 13 Branford Marsalis



H. L. LINDENMAIER

**TDWR**

- 45 **Bennie Wallace**
- 23 Ricky Ford
- 22 Branford Marsalis
- 18 Billy Pierce
- 17 Warne Marsh
- 14 Johnny Griffin
- 12 Harold Ashby
- 12 Joe Henderson
- 11 John Gilmore
- 11 David Murray

**BARITONE SAX**

- 122 **Pepper Adams**
- 97 Gerry Mulligan
- 69 Hamiet Bluiett
- 35 Nick Brignola
- 26 John Surman
- 12 Cecil Payne

**TDWR**

- 48 **John Surman**
- 31 Nick Brignola
- 27 Hamiet Bluiett
- 27 Charles Tyler
- 24 Ronnie Cuber
- 24 Howard Johnson
- 18 Henry Threadgill
- 15 Vinny Golia
- 15 Joe Temperley
- 13 Glenn Wilson

**CLARINET**

- 105 **John Carter**
- 85 Buddy DeFranco
- 49 Benny Goodman
- 41 Alvin Batiste
- 39 Anthony Braxton
- 30 Jimmy Giuffre
- 26 Eddie Daniels
- 11 Kenny Davern
- 10 Jimmy Hamilton
- 10 Bill Smith

**TDWR**

- 39 **Kenny Davern**
- 33 Alvin Batiste
- 24 Eddie Daniels
- 23 Perry Robinson
- 11 Jimmy Giuffre
- 10 Tony Coe

**FLUTE**



H. L. LINDENMAIER

- 159 **James Newton**
- 47 Frank Wess
- 45 Lew Tabackin
- 39 James Moody
- 30 Sam Rivers
- 24 Hubert Laws
- 11 Ira Sullivan

**TDWR**

- 27 **Ira Sullivan**
- 25 Henry Threadgill
- 19 Frank Wess
- 18 James Moody
- 18 Sam Most
- 17 Dave Valentin
- 14 Sam Rivers

**VIOLIN**

- 117 **Stephane Grappelli**
- 88 Billy Bang
- 64 Leroy Jenkins
- 58 John Blake
- 22 Michal Urbaniak
- 16 L. Subramaniam
- 11 Didier Lockwood
- 11 Jean-Luc Ponty

**TDWR**

- 41 **John Blake**
- 39 Didier Lockwood
- 36 L. Subramaniam
- 32 Billy Bang
- 24 Claude Williams
- 19 Svend Asmussen
- 16 Jon Rose
- 15 Phil Wachsmann
- 11 Krzesmir Debski

**MISCELLANEOUS INSTRUMENT**

- 78 **Toots Thielemans (harmonica)**
- 74 Howard Johnson (tuba)
- 25 Anthony Braxton (misc. reeds)
- 25 David Murray (bass clarinet)
- 23 Abdul Wadud (cello)
- 22 David Grisman (mandolin)
- 15 Bob Stewart (tuba)
- 10 Steve Turre (conch shells)

**TDWR**

- 23 **Andy Narell (steel drums)**
- 17 David Murray (bass clarinet)
- 17 John Surman (bass clarinet)
- 17 Foday Musa Suso (kora)
- 15 Diedre Murray (cello)
- 10 Vincent Chancey (french horn)

**VIBES**

- 147 **Milt Jackson**
- 132 Bobby Hutcherson
- 58 Gary Burton
- 39 Lionel Hampton
- 19 Jay Hoggard
- 13 Walt Dickerson
- 11 Gunter Hampel

**TDWR**

- 54 **Walt Dickerson**
- 52 Jay Hoggard
- 46 Khan Jamal
- 25 Mike Mainieri
- 20 Dave Samuels
- 18 Gunter Hampel
- 14 Kari Berger
- 12 Lionel Hampton
- 12 Bobby Hutcherson
- 11 Red Norvo

**ACOUSTIC PIANO**

- 77 **Cecil Taylor**
- 48 Tommy Flanagan
- 35 Oscar Peterson
- 34 McCoy Tyner
- 26 Don Pullen
- 21 Kenny Barron
- 20 Barry Harris
- 20 Abdullah Ibrahim
- 14 Keith Jarrett



**TDWR**

- 36 **Geri Allen**
- 27 Ran Blake
- 23 Mulgrew Miller
- 18 Michel Petruccianni
- 17 Kenny Kirkland
- 16 Jaki Byard
- 13 Marilyn Crispell
- 13 Dave McKenna
- 11 Don Pullen
- 11 Dick Wellstood

**ELECTRIC PIANO**

- 77 **Chick Corea**
- 66 Herbie Hancock
- 42 Zawinul
- 32 Sun Ra
- 17 Lyle Mays
- 10 Tommy Flanagan



JEAN-MARC WIPPE

**TDWR**

- 35 **Lyle Mays**
- 32 Jasper Van'T Hof
- 13 Kenny Barron
- 12 Stanley Cowell
- 11 George Cables
- 11 Clare Fischer
- 11 Kenny Kirkland

**ORGAN**

- 125 **Jimmy Smith**
- 66 Sun Ra
- 36 Amina Claudine Myers
- 30 Jimmy McGriff
- 19 Shirley Scott
- 17 Carla Bley
- 16 Jack McDuff
- 13 Groove Holmes

**TDWR**

- 40 **Amina Claudine Myers**
- 28 Shirley Scott
- 18 Jimmy McGriff
- 17 John Patton
- 15 Carla Bley
- 12 Eddy Louiss

**SYNTHESIZER**

- 117 **Zawinul**
- 50 Sun Ra
- 44 Herbie Hancock
- 42 Lyle Mays
- 23 Chick Corea

**TDWR**

- 30 **John Surman**
- 20 Jasper Van'T Hof
- 17 Bill Frisell
- 17 Lyle Mays
- 12 Wolfgang Dauner
- 12 Brian Eno
- 11 George Duke

**GUITAR**

- 61 **John Scofield**
- 51 Joe Pass
- 49 Kenny Burrell
- 47 Jim Hall
- 34 Tai Fariow
- 30 Pat Metheny
- 28 Derek Bailey
- 23 Stanley Jordan
- 15 Bill Frisell
- 15 Jimmy Raney

**TDWR**

- 46 **Bill Frisell**
- 35 Birell Lagrene
- 30 Ed Bickert
- 29 Stanley Jordan
- 19 Emily Remler
- 17 Philip Catherine
- 14 Reg Schwager
- 12 Kevin Eubanks
- 10 Eugene Chadbourne
- 10 Pierre Dorge

## BASS

- 100 Charlie Haden**  
52 Dave Holland  
50 Ron Carter  
48 Ray Brown  
31 Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen  
30 Cecil McBee  
23 Fred Hopkins  
16 Malachi Favors  
13 Red Mitchell

### TDWR

- 32 Cecil McBee**  
30 Charnett Moffett  
23 Fred Hopkins  
23 George Mraz  
20 Marc Johnson  
17 William Parker  
16 Aladar Pege  
14 Eddie Gomez

## ELECTRIC BASS

- 118 Steve Swallow**  
53 Jamaaladeen Tacuma  
28 Marcus Miller  
25 Stanley Clarke  
20 Jaco Pastorius  
14 Bill Laswell  
12 Bob Cranshaw  
10 Avery Sharpe

### TDWR

- 31 Gerald Veasley**  
21 Miroslav Vitous  
18 Jamaaladeen Tacuma  
18 Eberhard Weber  
16 Daryl Jones  
16 Marcus Miller  
15 Mark Egan

## DRUMS

- 124 Max Roach**  
75 Jack DeJohnette  
67 Art Blakey  
33 Ed Blackwell  
29 Elvin Jones  
17 Billy Higgins  
14 Famoudou Don Moye  
13 Ronald Shannon Jackson  
12 Tony Williams  
10 Andrew Cyrille

- TDWR**  
**56 Marvin "Smitty" Smith**  
29 Billy Higgins  
23 Andrew Cyrille  
21 Steve McCall  
18 Ronnie Burrage  
12 Pharoan Aklaft  
11 Han Bennink  
11 Terri Lynn Carrington  
10 Jeff Watts

## PERCUSSION

- 84 Nana Vasconcelos**  
74 Airto Moreira  
49 Famoudou Don Moye  
27 Tito Puente  
25 Mino Cinelu  
22 Daniel Ponce  
14 Han Bennink

### TDWR

- 30 Famoudou Don Moye**  
29 Han Bennink  
21 David Moss  
15 Jerry Gonzalez  
12 Mino Cinelu  
10 Pancho Sanchez  
10 Günter Sommer

## MALE SINGER



LAUREN DEUTSCH

- 102 Joe Williams**  
84 Bobby McFerrin  
72 Mel Tomé  
25 Jon Hendricks  
23 Ray Charles  
14 Mark Murphy  
12 Big Joe Turner  
11 Al Jarreau

### TDWR

- 43 Dave Frisberg**  
41 Bobby McFerrin  
37 Mark Murphy  
23 Chef Baker  
11 Georgie Fame  
10 Jack Bruce  
10 Doc Cheatham  
10 Jon Hendricks

## FEMALE VOCALISTS

- 126 Sarah Vaughan**  
90 Betty Carter  
51 Sheila Jordan  
40 Ella Fitzgerald  
22 Carmen McRae  
13 Jeanne Lee  
13 Abbey Lincoln  
13 Maxine Sullivan  
12 Helen Merrill

### TDWR

- 29 Sheila Jordan**  
22 Maxine Sullivan  
20 Lauren Newton  
15 Janet Lawson  
13 Jeanne Lee  
13 Helen Merrill  
12 Meredith D'Ambrosio  
11 Amina Claudine Myers  
11 Anita O'Day  
11 Kim Parker

## VOCAL GROUP

- 133 Manhattan Transfer**  
70 Hendricks Family  
21 Rare Silk  
19 Persuasions  
17 Singers Unlimited  
14 Jackie & Roy

### TDWR

- 25 The Nylons**  
24 Sweet Honey In The Rock  
18 Rare Silk  
13 Hendricks Family  
13 Toure Kunda

## POP/ROCK GROUP

- 37 Stevie Wonder**  
35 Sting  
17 Talking Heads  
16 Miles Davis  
15 Prince  
13 Richard Thompson  
12 Rolling Stones  
10 Ry Cooder



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### TDWR

- 16 Laurie Anderson**  
14 Michael Jackson  
8 Tail Gators  
8 Robert Wyatt

## SOUL/R&B GROUP

- 52 Ray Charles**  
42 B. B. King  
37 Stevie Wonder  
29 Neville Bros.  
23 Sade  
18 James Brown  
13 Prince  
11 Johnny Copeland  
11 Aretha Franklin

### TDWR

- 28 Neville Bros.**  
22 Albert Collins  
16 Dr. John  
15 Robert Cray  
11 Tina Turner  
10 Jeannie Cheatham  
10 Johnny Copeland

## T.H.E. C.R.I.T.I.C.S.

Following is a list of critics who voted in *db's* 34th annual International Critics Poll. Fifty-four critics voted this year, distributing nine points among up to three choices (no more than five points per choice) in each of two categories: Established Talent and Talent Deserving Wider Recognition. Selections in the Hall of Fame and various record categories received single points for each vote. The participants were:

**Michael Bourne:** contributor, *db*; WBGO-FM (Newark).

**Pawel Brodowski:** editor, *Jazz Forum* (Poland).

**W. A. Brower:** *db* correspondent (Washington DC); writer/researcher/producer.

**Chris Colombi:** *db* correspondent (Cleveland); *Cleveland Plain Dealer*; music director, WCPN-FM.

**Philippe Carles:** editor, *Jazz* (France).

**Richard Cook:** editor, *The Wire* (England).

**Tom Copi:** *db* correspondent (San Francisco); photographer.

**Owen Cordle:** contributor, *db*; *Jazz Times*; *Raleigh (NC) News & Observer*.

**Francis Davis:** author, *In The Moment: Jazz In The 1980s*.

**Paul DeBarros:** *Seattle Times*.

**Chip Deffaco:** contributor, *db*; *Modern Drummer*; *Coda*.

**Jose Duarte:** Portuguese radio, tv, press.

**Lofton Emmerli III:** managing editor, *Chicago Observer*; WHPK-FM.

**Leonard Feather:** contributor, *db*; author, *The*

*Encyclopedia Of Jazz*.

**Mitchell Feldman:** *db* correspondent (West Germany); *Fachblatt*.

**J. B. Figi:** contributor, *db*; freelance writer.

**Leslie Gourse:** contributor, *db*; writer.

**Frank-John Hadley:** contributor, *db*; Institute of American Music (Boston).

**Randi Hultin:** *db* correspondent (Norway); *Jazz Forum*; *Afterposten*.

**Niranjan Jhaveri:** critic, producer, Jazz Yatra (India).

**Gene Kalbacher:** contributor, *db*; publisher, *Hot House*.

**Peter Kostakis:** contributor, *db*.

**Art Lange:** editor, *db*.

**David Lee:** *Coda* (Canada).

**Jeff Levenson:** *db* correspondent (New York); *Hot House*.

**Jaap Ludeke:** *db* correspondent (Netherlands).

**Kevin Lynch:** contributor, *db*; WMSE-FM (Milwaukee).

**Lars Lystedt:** *db* correspondent (Sweden).

**Terry Martin:** contributor, *db*; Jazz Institute of Chicago Archives.

**Barry McRae:** *Jazz Journal* (England).

**Bill Milkowski:** contributor, *db*; *International Musician*; *Guitar World*.

**Mark Miller:** *db* correspondent (Toronto); *Toronto Globe & Mail*.

**Yasuki Nakayama:** editor, *Swing Journal* (Japan).

**Jon Pareles:** *New York Times*.

**Michael Point:** contributor, *db*; *Austin American-Statesman*.

**Doug Ramsey:** *Jazz Times*; *Texas Monthly*.

**Jim Roberts:** contributor, *db*; *Advocate* (MA & CT) newspapers.

**Robert Rusch:** editor, *Cadence Jazz Magazine*.

**Gene Santoro:** contributor, *db*; freelance writer.

**Joel Simpson:** *db* correspondent (New Orleans).

**Mitchell Seidel:** contributor, *db*; *Jazz Times*; photo editor, *Hot House*.

**Chris Sheridan:** contributor, *db*; *Jazz Journal*; Count Basie discographer.

**Bill Smith:** editor/publisher, *Coda*.

**Jack Sohmer:** contributor, *db*; musician/teacher/writer.

**W. Royal Stokes:** contributor, *db*; *Washington Post*; *Jazz Times*; WDCU-FM.

**Ron Sweetman:** CKCU-FM (Canada).

**Luis Vilas-Boas:** producer, Cascais Festival (Portugal).

**Ron Welburn:** contributor, *db*; *Jazz Times*; Cupola Productions.

**Kevin Whitehead:** contributor, *db*; *Cadence*; *Jazz Times*.

**Russell Woessner:** *db* correspondent

(Philadelphia); *Philadelphia City Paper*.

**Scott Yanow:** contributor, *db*; *Jazziz*; *Cadence*; *Coda*; *Bebop And Beyond*.

**Shoichi Yui:** jazz critic (Japan).

**Rafi Zabor:** Grand Fozzie of Fozzookn.

**Dieter Zimmerle:** editor, *Jazz Podium* (West Germany); producer, SDR.

*db*

# Bill Laswell

*confessions  
of a renegade*

**T**en years ago he was a journeyman bass player working in various r&b bands around Detroit and the Midwest. Today he is a highly sought after, highly paid producer of some big name pop artists. Check these credits: Mick Jagger's *She's The Boss*, Yoko Ono's *Starpeace*, Laurie Anderson's *Mister Heartbreak*, as well as upcoming projects by funkmeister Bootsy Collins, the reggae riddim tandem of Sly & Robbie, and the heavy metal neanderthals known as Motorhead.

But the single project that got Bill Laswell over the hump and helped him to make this incredible quantum leap to the top of his profession was undoubtedly the Herbie Hancock album *Future Shock*, featuring the monster street beat-scratch hit *Rock-It*.

In retrospect, Laswell views that key project in his career as nothing more than a stroke of good fortune. "I really don't see that album as a major breakthrough in terms of concept or production," he says. "That was a kind of freak record. It's got nothing to do with me having an advanced idea of production or Herbie having any advanced idea of musical progression. The success of that record is totally based on the fact that we used a Bronx dj to scratch a record particularly at the correct time. When I made that record, to be honest, we were just experimenting and not trying to fashion a hit record at all. It had nothing to do with commerciality. I knew I liked it, but I was just totally amazed that it actually worked commercially."

Freak or not, Laswell was able to call the shots after the success of *Rock-It*. Suddenly he was pegged as the new, hip guy on the block. The cat with the streetwise sensibility. You want your album to sound fresh? Call Laswell. Looking for a cool drum machine sound? Call Laswell. Need to keep in touch with the kids? Cop the pulse of the street? Call Laswell.

And they did, seemingly by the dozens. Hancock tapped Laswell as producer of his next pop album, 1983's *Sound-System*, but the Material man was determined to avoid falling into a *Rock-It* formula for this one. "That worked as a freak incident. It won't come like that again. You won't be able to base a formula on that and continue it because it's a freak. Someone else can make a kind of style and have a hit and then they base the rest of their career on it. But that's not the way I do it."

Laswell has never played it safe. He has no formula for success. Instead, he seems to work intuitively in the studio. He feels out the situation and makes quick decisions based



on his gut reaction. He defies formula, disdains the record industry in general and has little or no respect for the producers and power-figures who control it.

Well, then, who *does* Laswell respect? In a word, renegades. All the people he has chosen to work with over the post-*Rock-It* years have been fiercely independent figures, strong characters and slightly eccentric individuals who stand in open defiance to industry trends. Lenny Caution of Motorhead, Yoko Ono, Johnny Lydon of Public Image Ltd., Fela Kuti, Laurie Anderson, Bootsy Collins, avant garde guitarist Sonny Sharrock—they're all renegades, and Laswell is naturally drawn to them.

"These are characters who all stand for something, and those are the kinds of people who I work with," he says. "Those people who don't stand for something, I avoid. Gil-Scott Heron said it very clearly: 'You either stand for something or you go for anything.' He's right."

How Laswell has been able to build a substantial career by standing outside the industry is an amazing feat in itself. His ubiquitous presence on so many albums in the past few years has irked some critics; mainly those who object to Laswell's street beat sensibility, his penchant for studio manipulation, and his auteur methods of production.

In the studio he works fast and efficiently. He always has a plan going in, but is never so married to it that he can't change course and go with the flow. "It's all planned out, day by day," he says. "Conceptually you have to have a plan of each track, like what are the relationships of the parts and how they fit in with the lyrics. But we don't write the music out. Nobody who's playing the shit that we do ever writes anything out under any circumstances. The people who

write it out *sound* like they wrote it out, and sound like they're reading it when they play. Our shit is live."

Spontaneity, then, comes into play after the tracks have been laid down. "I do some trial-and-error with different effects and percussion and little things just to mess around with the sound. Like some backwards hi-hat effects, or backwards basslines. But in terms of spontaneity, everything's actually pretty locked in—the horn parts, the bass part, the guitar parts, everything's all preconceived and done professionally."

Laswell has taken a heavy hand on certain projects, notably the Fela Kuti album, *Army Arrangement*, for which he erased all of Fela's sax parts and substituted organ work by Bernie Worrell. "The fact is, Fela can't play the sax. His solos were awful. Horrible. I don't even play saxophone and I could play better than that. Prison or not, politics or not, he can't play saxophone. So we just erased everything."

Although he's been branded as a drum machine specialist, Laswell's actually cut back on his use of LinnDrums lately. In fact, his work on the recent PIL project includes no drum machine whatsoever. Of course, who'd want to use a drum machine when you've got guys like Ginger Baker and Tony Williams around?

Oh, er, um . . . you're not supposed to know that. You see, Bill's been trying to keep that a secret. No credits, please.

"It's a vital concept. I wanna keep it a total secret from the press and from magazines. Let them guess who's playing on the album. Because I've done too many records where at the beginning of the review they spend 10 minutes talking about the musicians. Then at the end they start to criticize the music based on the value they have for the artists. They see the names and those names entail quality and history and certain particular traditions. And they think you have to judge the record on the credentials of those names, not on the basis of the music. So for this John Lydon album, we just wanted to present a record. We wanted to present *music*."

They did, but gradually the truth of who played on that session began to leak out. Eventually the record company, Elektra, grew tired of trying to keep the secret and began offering the names to press people who called daily, trying to find out who was the guitarist on such-and-such a cut, the drummer on this, the bass player on that. But Bill is still mum on the subject.

"It's similar to what Miles did with *On The Corner*," he explains. "For 10 years, people have been guessing at the personnel and you get all these bullshit ideas from people who think they hear somebody, which has got nothing at all to do with the music. And you can ask Miles. He doesn't know either—and that's great. Because what we're talking about is the music. It's not about the people. So if you release a record and stack up all these credits, you'll get horrible reviews because of all the built-in expectation those names carry. But if you release the same record with no credits, you'll get a very different response from the critics, even though it's the same music. Which means that they're not really reviewing the music after all, they're reviewing something else which has nothing to do with what we just sold to a record company and what we're selling to consumers. So when you buy this PIL album, you should respond to the music, not to the fact that Tony Williams was an incredible drummer when he was 12 years old or some shit like that. That has nothing to do with it."

As a producer, Laswell has been roaming around Japan and other Asian countries in search of fresh new bands to record. "My first project for this new label I'm setting up in Japan is with Ryuichi Sakamoto [keyboardist for Yellow Magic Orchestra]. Then I'm doing a record with Toshinari Kondo [the improvising trumpeter]. And after that I'll go to China and look for rock bands, just trying to develop a network. I'm using Tokyo as a kind of introduction point, since it's like a doorway to all of Asia. So I hope to turn up some exciting new projects from that."

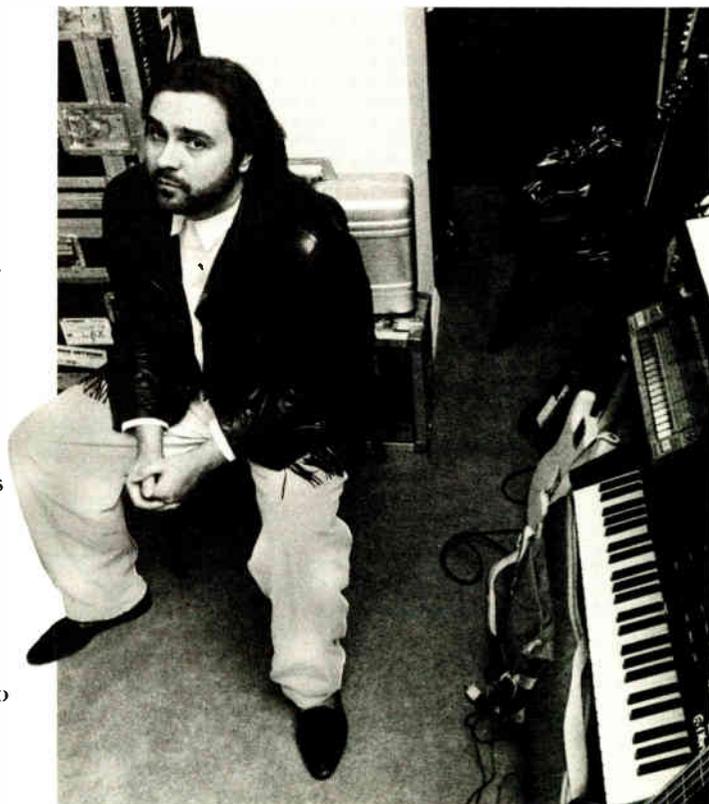
Laswell has strong connections to Japan. As a bass player he is revered in the Land Of The Rising Sun. His new improvising group Last Exit (with drummer Ronald Shannon Jackson, saxist Peter Brötzmann, and guitarist Sonny Sharrock) recently returned from a triumphant tour of Japan. "They billed us as if we were The Beatles of improvising music," laughs Laswell. After the initial tour of Japan, Last Exit began a second tour of Germany and Switzerland, culminating in a live recording for the Rough Trade label. This album contains some of the most severe—yet exciting—sounds I've ever heard.

Laswell thrives on excitement. I can't imagine him producing the next Duran Duran album for mega-bucks or getting involved in the next Culture Club project. With so much going on in his life, he's got better things to do with his time. And he's not particularly obsessed with making money, now that he's got some.

"The pop music industry today is all about money," says Bill. "You cut down the information, the education, the real initiative, and the kind of closeness music creates—you narrow all that down and on top of that you worry about money and the sum of that is pretty much what you're listening to today on the radio. It's the sound of that problem.

"What you're hearing on the radio today is definitely not funk, certainly not blues or jazz or rock & roll or reggae either. So what is it? Well, I don't make records like this so I can't honestly answer that question. But I do know that the formula is, once something works and makes money, then that thing is definitely zeroed in on. People use that as a key to the mint and they continue that routine because it brings the sure thing. It brings the cash. And what that does is it reduces the music industry to the point of selling mere goods. And it's all the same—homogenized and formulaic. On so many of these things you hear on the radio, you don't even think of it as *people* playing music anymore. Nobody's saying nuthin'. It's just like a little chunk of something that exists—some product to be consumed."

By continuing to work with such pioneers and renegades as Bootsy, Lydon, Sonny Sharrock, et al, Laswell's dread for



DANV GIGNOUX

the world of mainstream pop music gets stronger by the day. He's seen what record company executives have done to the music and the spirit of established artists and he's not going to let it happen wherever he's concerned.

"The last couple of *Bootsy* albums on Warner Bros. were really not *Bootsy*," says Laswell. "They were the result of people telling him that he had to conform to a particular situation in order to sell records. And it's a lie. It was a situation where record company people said, 'Well, we don't want to hear about the old stuff. We want you to sound like Kashif or something like that. You know, don't do the bass thing anymore.'

"But see, I'm not on the payroll. I don't get any advantage from pleasing the record company and f\*\*king over the artist. My advantage is to please the *artist*. And that's the difference between keeping an artist alive and killing him. Too many artists have been brainwashed into believing that they have to conform to a particular format or formula in order to sell themselves. And that's okay if you're dealing with a new artist because the new artist has no roots, no tradition, no character. They have nothing. So you can take a new artist and turn him into anything. But you can't take a tradition and destroy it for some silly notion of marketing. You can't destroy *Bootsy*. And if I have a job here, it's to prevent that kind of thing from happening."

Bill Laswell will never conform. He never has. Certainly not as a player (in idiosyncratic groups like *Massacre* with Fred Frith and Fred Maher; *Curlew* with George Cartwright, Nicky Skopelitis, Bill Bacon, and Tom Cora; or the loose aggregation of downtown improvising artists collectively known as *Material*). Nor as a producer. In a business full of phonies and lackies and spineless yes-men, Bill Laswell is a renegade force to be reckoned with. **db**

## BILL LASWELL'S EQUIPMENT

Though reticent to go into detail about his current equipment, Bill Laswell has been seen performing on-stage with his trusty Fender Precision six-string bass, buttressed by a Steinberger and a Wall fretless. In the past he has used Music Man Stingray and Ampeg amps.

## BILL LASWELL SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

- as a leader**  
*BASELINES*—Elektra Musician 60221-1  
*PRAXIS*—Celluloid 168
- with Material**  
*MEMORY SERVES*—Elektra Musician 60042-1  
*ONE DOWN*—Elektra 60206-1  
*TEMPORARY MUSIC*—Celluloid 6576
- with Massacre**  
*KILLING TIME*—Celluloid 5003
- with the Golden Palominos**  
*THE GOLDEN PALOMINOS*—Celluloid 5002  
*VISIONS OF EXCESS*—Celluloid 6118
- with Deadline**  
*DOWN BY LAW*—Celluloid 6111
- with Kip Hanrahan**  
*COUP DE TETE*—American Clavé 1007
- with Curlew**  
*CURLEW*—Landslide 1004
- with Various Artists**  
*TRILOGY*—Celluloid 80808
- as a producer**  
**Herbie Hancock:** *FUTURE SHOCK*—Columbia 38814  
**Herbie Hancock:** *SOUND-SYSTEM*—Columbia 39478  
**Mick Jagger:** *SHE'S THE BOSS*—Columbia 39940
- Yoko Ono:** *STARPIECE*—Polydor 827 530-1  
**Laurie Anderson:** *MR. HEART-BREAK*—Warner Bros. 25077-1  
**Nona Hendryx:** *THE ART OF DEFENSE*—RCA 1-4999  
**Nona Hendryx:** *NONA HENDRYX*—RCA 1-4565  
**Public Image Ltd.:** *ALBUM*—Elektra 60438  
**The Last Poets:** *OH MY PEOPLE*—Celluloid 6108  
**Toure Kunda:** *NATALIA*—Celluloid 6113  
**Toure Kunda:** *LIVE: PARIS ZIGUIN-CHOR*—Celluloid 6106  
**Toure Kunda:** *AMADOU TILO*—Celluloid 6104  
**Mandingo:** *WATTO SITTA*—Celluloid 6103  
**Manu Dibango:** *ELECTRA AFRICA*—Celluloid 6114  
**Fela Anikulapo Kuti:** *ARMY ARRANGEMENT*—Celluloid 6109  
**Ronald Shannon Jackson:** *PULSE*—Celluloid 5011  
**Daniel Ponce:** *NEW YORK NOW*—Celluloid 5005  
**John Lydon/Afrika Bambaataa:** *TIME ZONE*—Celluloid 176

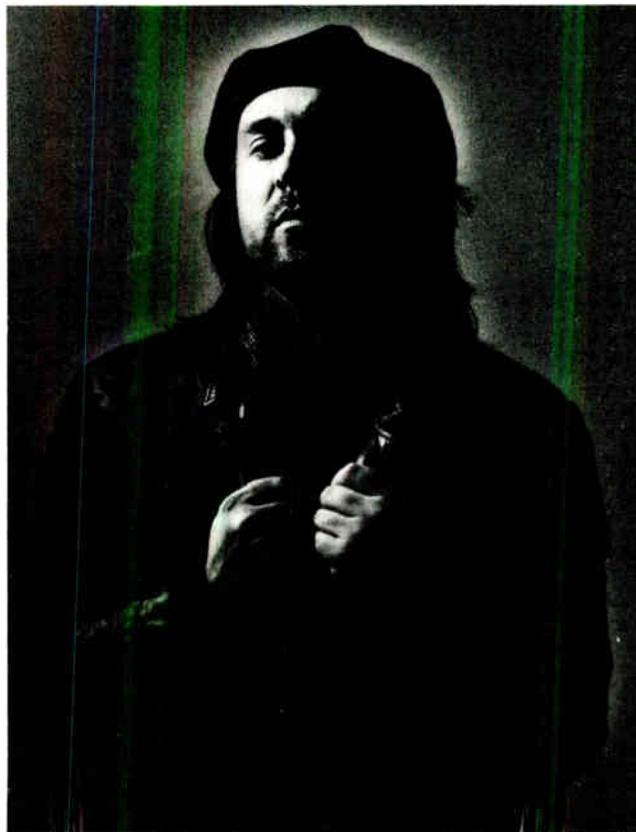
## VARIOUS AND SUNDRY QUOTES FROM The Eminently Quotable Mr. Laswell

**On jazz:** Well, definitely, young kids today wouldn't recognize Charlie Parker as music. We know that now. I don't think they would associate that with music, based on how they've been programmed by the homogenized shit that you hear on the radio today. So in terms of young kids, you can consider jazz dead, 'cause they don't wanna know about it.

**On rap:** It all recycles. I remember when I started making rap records, everyone said that rap was totally finished. They said, "Don't do it 'cause rap is dead." But within a month's time, Grandmaster Flash came out with *The Message* and revitalized rap totally. And it was through that period that I met people like Afrika Bambaata and D.ST and all those guys. It was a strong period for experimenting with the way records were made—studio manipulation and all that shit. And now rap is being covered by *People* magazine and is on tv commercials and in the movies. So things do recycle.

**On his own style of bass playing:** To be quite honest, I can't play all that Jaco kind of stuff. I think that at any point if I devoted my life to that I'd have nothing to show for it. I mean, I can get off a few things but I can't really play that busy stuff. I don't really like that style of bass. I was into Jaco when he first came out, but after hearing reggae I began to appreciate a more minimal approach to the bass. There was a period where I bought only dub records—I bought like 300 or so. Any Jamaican dub record I could get my hands on. And that's where I discovered Sly & Robbie. When I heard the bass and drums on those things that had a huge influence on me—that feel. To me, that's bass. The other thing is something else. I mean, Jaco is playing Jaco, you know? It fits into Jaco but maybe he can't fit that into anything else.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 61



THINK LE

# Ry Cooder

by  
GENE SANTORO



PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE

Lately a lot of folks have been going back to school again, studying the roots of the music they're making so they can grow their own hybrids. It's understandable: ever since Elvis wedded hillbilly music to rhythm & blues, ever since Chuck Berry stretched c&w guitar licks over jump beats, each new generation of rockers—we're not talking the haircut variety, here—has gone through the musical process of reappropriating some other branch of the form's extensive family tree. And for nearly 20 years now, one of the senior professors in this college of musical knowledge has been a deep-voiced master of fingerpicking guitar styles, bottleneck, and blues mandolin named Ry Cooder.

Not that what he does is academic. His rich understanding of such musicians as diverse as Joseph Spence and Jelly Roll Morton, Flaco Jimenez and Willie Dixon, Blind Blake and James Brown, Gabby Pahinui and Little Richard, Bert Williams and Bobby

Womack, has helped him forge one of the supplest, most expressive musical languages around. Within its expansive grammar, musical forms like blues, gospel, norteño, c&w, reggae, Hawaiian, Middle Eastern, and, of course, good ol' rock & roll dance compellingly to produce new shapes. A reggae-flavored take on the Valentinos' *It's All Over Now*? Earl Hines' piano on Blake's ragtime-guitar classic *Ditty Wah Ditty*? Gospel vocals on Blind Willie McTell's *Married Man's A Fool*? Come and listen to Ry.

He started early with his own listening. Having acquired from his father both a taste for music ("There were always a lot of records in the house, and my dad's friends had all your usual left-wing folk music") and a uke-style guitar at age four ("He could play a little, so he showed me what he knew"), the fledgling picker graduated to a full-size box by age eight, learning tunes by the likes of Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie, Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee. Then came the folk-and-blues

revival of the early '60s. "By the time I was 13 or 14 I was seeing these people, like Reverend Gary Davis, at the Ash Grove. It was that real brief period between the time when you didn't hear *anything* about these people and the time they all died. It was an incredible kind of first-hand experience that doesn't exist in the music business today," he drawls.

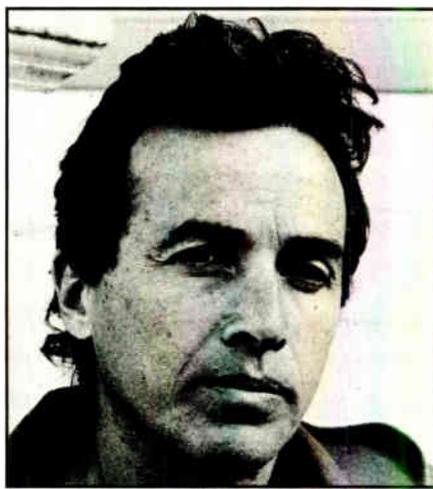
Guided by the experienced tastes of older friends, like musicologist/guitarist John Fahey and the future Dr. Demento (Barry Hansen), Cooder continued the musical explorations that would engage his interest for life. He also began characteristically to put them to work, in the post-Beatles spawn of young bands and new clubs around L.A. "All of a sudden," he smiles, "instead of sitting around a folk nightclub and doing virtually nothing, you could do something—jump up on a stage somewhere and call yourself a group." Which is what he and a friend named Taj Mahal did, with a band called the Rising Sons. Cooder recalls

one of their first gigs: "It was an early teenage-exploitation thing in a big auditorium, and of course all the instrument manufacturers had booths. The Martin rep had us play Martin electrics and amps—which were terrible—so we sat down and did stomp blues every night. Right next to us was the Fender booth, where this 10-piece Chicano sequined-suit outfit, each of 'em with a different size Fender, was playing Whittier Blvd.-type music, like Cannibal and the Headhunters—really great, had all their moves down. They thought we were crazy. Then one night there comes this gravelly voice out of the side: it was Beefheart. He was living in the desert and had this group, wanted me to join because he'd just gotten this record contract and his guitar player was having a nervous breakdown—I later found out why," he laughs. The eventual result: *Safe As Milk*, Captain Beefheart's tortured, surrealist, Ornette-tinged take on the blues that featured Cooder's stinging slidework.

Meanwhile, Ry was furthering his musical education with Taj, opening for the Motown revues that swept through L.A. on their way to crossover stardom. "We became aware of how really good good can be," he says dryly, "and we found out we didn't know anything, so we stopped working." But not before they completed what he calls "a little piece of business for Columbia Records:" *Taj Mahal*.

With that recording under his belt, the guitarist discovered he had a career as a session player. "One thing led to another," he observes. "It was weird at first because I had no idea that behind closed doors these cats were burning tape 24 hours a day, with studio musicians making hits and all that. I imagined a guy sitting in his living room playing into a microphone. My job seemed to consist of taking strange instruments which were not as yet cliched in the rock field—like mandolin or dulcimer, even bottleneck guitar—and pump 'em up, play 'em hard, and integrate myself into the ensemble as a color or sound effect. [Producer] Terry Melcher would say, 'Do an intro, play some mandolin,' and since I was not a reader it didn't bother me what the page said, I'd just play across the top [laughs]. That became my hook. After a while it became obvious that you could enjoy yourself, learn something, and make a living at it, which is what I tried to do from then on."

And be damned successful at it, too. Catch his Yank Rachel-inspired mandolin on the Rolling Stones' version of *Love In Vain*, say, or his singing bottleneck slicing through the Stones' *Jamming With Edward*; listen to how he



SUSAN TITELMAN

fleshes out Randy Newman's frightening fantasies *Suzanne* or *Let's Burn Down The Cornfield* with swooping and pungent slide microtones; pick up on his swinging chordal propulsion behind Maria Muldaur as she tackles Jimmie Rodgers' *Any Old Time*. He obviously had what it takes.

Which Warner Brothers, for whom he'd been doing more and more sessions, recognized. "By then I'd found that there were levels to the studio thing," Cooder explains, "that the stuff they were doing at Warners was a class act, with Randy and Van Dyke [Parks] and people like that. They had a handle on this funny synthesis in L.A. which wasn't just crunch-rock or transplanted Nashville. So one day [then-producer, now Warner's president] Lenny Waronker said to me, 'Maybe you ought to make a record of all this goofy stuff yourself.'"

Ry Cooder, complete with pic of 1937 airstream trailer on the cover, produced by Waronker and Parks, unleashed Cooder's unique musical sensibility in 1970, featuring Ry's fingerpicking chops on Blind Blake's *Police Dog* and his, er, wry sense of humor on *Alimony*. Two years later, *Into The Purple Valley* further showcased his wide-ranging acquaintance with old tunes, while he began working his eclectic magic with unpredictable arrangements; Leadbelly's *On A Monday*, for instance, is driven by a heavy electric rhythm section and shot through with skirling, edgy bottleneck, while Jesse Stone's r&b chestnut *Money Honey* gets hit with a heavy dose of punctuating mandolin.

His fourth LP, *Paradise And Lunch*, is classic Cooder: generic collisions became one of the main orders of business. Who else would play *Ditty Wah Ditty* as a call-and-response duet with Earl Hines? Asked what prompted the coupling, Cooder is, as usual, direct: "I looked in the paper one day, saw he was in town, and said, 'Okay, this is an indication here.' So I called the club where he was playing, got his hotel number, called him, told him who I

was—which of course meant nothing at all to him—and said, 'There's a little thing we could do on this record I'm making for Warner Bros.; do you have a spare afternoon?' And he said, 'Sure.' Now, here's this guy I grew up listening to, in a very ethereal way, thinking, 'Who is this magical person?', then all of a sudden I'm talking to him on the telephone. That's what used to happen when you went looking for these old guys—you could find them. So he came in, and we just sat down and played that song. First of all, just to be in the presence of somebody that good is what it's all about; second of all, you actually have a good little tune for him to play and he says, 'Well, I don't know anything about this kind of music' and then proceeds to play it until I almost had to leave the room [laughs]. So I said, 'Uh, we'll just record this, Earl, and think nothing of it.'"

Far from being over, Cooder's own musical explorations were beginning to take him further afield, literally as well as musically. Having already tracked down Bahamian guitar great Joseph Spence ("When I first heard him I didn't know anything about tunings at all, but I could see something was different because he had all those organ-pedal bass runs over that rough calypso groove"), he found himself drawn to Hawaii, where he studied the nearly infinite number of slack-key tunings employed by Gabby Pahinui and others. Next came a pilgrimage to Austin, Texas, where he sought out Tex-Mex legend Flaco Jimenez, played for him the Flaco song he'd spent six months mastering on accordion and, with Flaco thus won over, spent some time absorbing the cultural scene that produced the music. Soon he persuaded the accordion great to return with him to L.A. and record *Chicken Skin Music*. Talk about generic collisions: how about some norteño squeezebox on Leadbelly's *Goodnight, Irene*? Or a version of *Yellow Roses* that floats languidly someplace between Albuquerque and Oahu? Add the zesty spice of backup gospel vocals, plenty of tangy bottleneck, and the warmth of Cooder's own somewhat slurred, resonant baritone, and you get a taste of the singular potpourri this chef was simmering.

Unfortunately, the recipe didn't attract the number of paying customers the restaurant owners expected. "That one was the straw that broke the camel's back," Cooder observes sardonically. "Everybody got the wrong idea from that record—including Warner Bros. They thought, 'Well, this guy's a musicologist, a collector freak,' which really wasn't so. I just happened to be looking to learn and do something, but what I didn't realize fully in those days was that Warner Bros. was not in the

business of subsidizing my personal interests; it seemed to me that they *should* be, but they definitely weren't [laughs]. I was trying very hard to get somewhere with musical understanding and using the records as an excuse, and you're not supposed to do that. So even though they were gracious enough to put the records out, they didn't promote 'em and they didn't sell, and they weren't played on the radio, and it seemed like people didn't much care. After a while it became hard to say just what I was accomplishing. I mean, I kept doing it and nobody slammed me down for it; it didn't do anything for me monetarily, but of course I didn't care because I thought the music was the thing to be served. I just kept thinking of the synthesis you could make, which seems to be the American musical heritage, the point of the whole thing anyhow—that everybody puts together something that wasn't there before."

If *Chicken Skin Music* puts that quirky, catchy something together, *Show Time* documented it in live action, though with an all-too-predictable lack of commercial success. "I love those gospel voices, I'd learned a great deal from the Hawaiians about guitar music, and the Tex-Mex stuff seemed to me the greatest ensemble music I'd ever heard, so I wanted to blend it, or at least acquire some of that strange energy. And I actually did that, and stuck it out on the road a while, but then that became very problematic because nobody was ready for it. The Europeans dug it [in fact, *Chicken Skin Music* went gold in Holland and netted a German Grammy], but here they wanted to see white people play white music. Nowadays I think it would be different: the Third World is something they can sell now. But in those days, man, people just did not want to see Mexicans in leisure suits and black guys in silk shirts and me do this weird thing that we did."

And so, even though he released four subsequent albums of his "weird thing"—including one, *Jazz*, that featured versions of Jelly Roll Morton and Bix Beiderbecke songs—Cooder tends to see them as points along the curve's down side: "After a while, as the result of having no real commercial, product-oriented momentum, the whole thing kind of ground to a halt." Of his final non-soundtrack LP, 1982's *The Slide Area*, Cooder reflects, "That one just about slid me into the water, because I found myself with nothing to do and no place to go and not a clue as to what to do about it. That's when I started doing film work."

He'd started, actually, before that, having "tagged along," as he puts it, with ace arranger Jack Nitzsche, with

whom he'd done sessions, to drop blazing bottleneck all over the soundtracks for *Performance* and *Blue Collar*. But it wasn't until a decade later that Cooder composed his first score, for *The Long Riders*. "[Director] Walter Hill called me up, and that started it," the 38-year-old says simply. "I'd wanted to do film work, and I knew I could do it, if there was the opportunity to do it in the right way, with the right context. So I began to do a little bit, and a little bit more, until it became a full-time job."

He sees that job with characteristic depth-of-focus: "It's the last refuge of abstract music. Composition is what it's all about, so even in a blues context you must always think conceptually. Since I'm not particularly good at thinking about the three-minute hit song—obviously [laughs]—I do this more naturally. I'll be looking at the cassette of the film and thinking, 'What do I hear?' You just have to sit there and listen for it. I'm not trained for composition, so I have to work intuitively. Hopefully that's why the director hired me, because he's of like mind. But every film is obviously different, how you put it together, which frees my mind up from patterns and clichés."

Whether in the swampy sounds gracing *Southern Comfort*, the Tex-Mex aura stitching through *The Border*, or the "Chinese cowboy music" coursing through *Alamo Bay*, you can hear Cooder's hard-won professionalism as well as his hoard of accumulated musical knowledge. Take as an example the Robert Johnson classic that gives *Crossroads* its title: "I thought, here we go again: same damn tune, one more time [laughs]. But you can always find someplace to go with this material, especially after having lived with it so long—you want to make a contribution." His reading certainly does that, from the edgy bottleneck opening to the uneven bar patterns, from his own powerful vocals to the gospel-style breakdown: "It's a shout, and I figured it could be a shout about being taken out of the crossroads; it's got a lot of church imagery to it, especially the way they developed it in the film."

Lately Cooder's found himself thinking a lot about doing another album of his own. "I'm working on a few tunes," he declares, "and I ought to make further use of some of the stuff I've done for films, sounds especially. Besides, bands like Los Lobos have opened up a lot of latent possibilities, which is very encouraging to me. A lot of people have gotten more sophisticated and are willing to listen to unique kinds of musical energy. Look at the craze for African music: people *have* to dig it, it's great. All they need is to be exposed." db



## RY COODER'S EQUIPMENT

The man is a true equipment addict. "I've got one main electric, a real weird composite I've put together: a fairly new Strat body, a C-neck David Lindley gave me, good for bottleneck because it's wide, with a little more mass so it conducts better; and a lap steel pickup I put on down by the bridge after emptying the guts out—it's like a sandwich with magnets on the bottom and the top. It makes the notes so *round*, gives them this beautiful singing quality I like. And onstage it'll crank way up. Another one I use a lot is my Teisco Del Rey, a Spectrum V: it's a real neat '60s thing, looks like a coffee table, stereo, with a wang bar that's best not for bending notes but for making 'em sound pretty like the black church guitar players do with their bars screwed down so tight. I use it for all the 'world tourist' music I play—the ballads and the Mexican stuff. I've also got a couple of Ripley instruments that I use mostly for sound effects, with two kinds of vibrato, built-in limiters, makes these *horrendous* sounds [laughs]. I've also got a nice old Gretsch 6120."

Amps include a Magnatone, a couple of Silvertones, and a Fender Princeton, "but mostly I use my '60s piggyback Supro: it's a weird stereo monster with a lot of compression that makes it sound like a gymnasium—it's the last word in amps." He's also been known to flirt with harmonizers and digital delays.

Fingerpicker Cooder favors round-wound Ernie Ball strings of varying gauges, usually on the heavier side because of his penchant for different tunings. "I don't play much in standard tuning; mostly I use various D and G open tunings because they're very rich harmonically. But I'll use anything you can think of: in fact, my old Sovereign acoustic got knocked down one day, went out of tune and sounded interesting that way, so I went in and did *Paris, Texas* with it tuned like that, to some kind of sixth." Slides are sherry bottle necks, cut by an auto glass store and worn on his pinky.

## RY COODER SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

### as a leader

*THE SLIDE AREA*—Warner Bros. 3651  
*BORDERLINE*—Warner Bros. 3489  
*BOP TILL YOU DROP*—Warner Bros. 3358  
*JAZZ*—Warner Bros. 3197  
*SHOW TIME*—Warner Bros. 3059  
*CHICKEN SKIN MUSIC*—Reprise 2254  
*PARADISE AND LUNCH*—Reprise 2179  
*BOOMER'S STORY*—Reprise 2117  
*INTO THE PURPLE VALLEY*—Reprise 2052  
*RY COODER*—Reprise 6402

### soundtracks

*BLUE CITY*—Warner Bros. 25386  
*CROSSROADS*—Warner Bros. 25399-1  
*ALAMO BAY*—Slash/Warner Bros. 25311  
*STREETS OF FIRE*—MCA 5492  
*THE BORDER*—Backstreet 6105  
*PARIS, TEXAS*—Warner Bros. 25270  
*THE LONG RIDERS*—Warner Bros. 3448  
*BLUE COLLAR*—MCA 3034  
*PERFORMANCE*—Warner Bros. 2554

### with the Rolling Stones

*JAMMING WITH EDWARD*—Rolling Stones 39100  
*LET IT BLEED*—London NPS-4

### with Randy Newman

*SAIL AWAY*—Reprise 2064  
*12 SONGS*—Reprise 6373

### with Taj Mahal

*TAJ MAHAL*—Columbia 9579

### with Capt. Beefheart

*SAFE AS MILK*—Buddah 6-23171

PAT METHENY  
ORNETTE COLEMAN  
X  
CHARLIE HADEN  
JACK DEJOHNETTE  
DENARDO COLEMAN

## PAT METHENY/ ORNETTE COLEMAN

**SONG X**—Geffen 29046: *SONG X*; *MOB JOB*; *ENDANGERED SPECIES*; *VIDEO GAMES*; *KATHELIN GRAY*; *TRIGONOMETRY*; *SONG X DUO*; *LONG TIME NO SEE*.

**Personnel:** Metheny, guitar, guitar synthesizer; Coleman, alto saxophone, violin; Charlie Haden, bass; Jack DeJohnette, drums; Denardo Coleman, percussion.

★★★★★

*Song X* is great fun to listen to and, very possibly, important to hear. It's a remarkable union of the true and the new, a fusion of the bedrock human sound of Ornette's alto with the sometimes jarring, mostly bracing electronic capabilities of Pat's guitar-synth, a collaboration of a mature and still idealistic musical visionary with an honestly selfless, spirited, talented, optimistic, nearly liberated seeker outgrowing his youth. Not to discount the uplifting resilience of a great rhythm team—Charlie Haden anchors every track (except the duo) as surely as gravity holds us to earth; Jack DeJohnette propels a scrupulous, detailed swing; Denardo Coleman projects the freedom, variety, and ease of the body's natural rhythms with the unpredictable grace of a sports star mid-play. *Song X* is a kick and a gift from start to finish, a further exploration and elucidation of what these invaluable artists have suggested to us before.

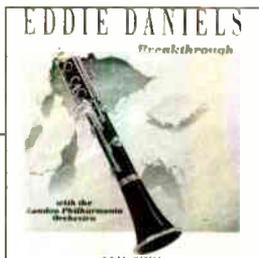
From the title track's opening unison (which shortly gives way to Coleman's characteristic hiccup riffs and Metheny's free-stream-of-notes para- or counter-phrasing) through the bluesy, idiosyncratic melody of *Mob Job*, the collective holocaust of *Endangered Species*, Pat's Pac-Man maze chase into *Video Games*, the co-composed affectionate insight of the ballad *Kathelin Gray*, the extensions of *Trigonometry* the comfortably mutual improvisation of *Song X* by altoist and guitarist alone, to the final glinting echo of Coleman's welcome back, pal *Long Time No See*, music leaps off this record without impulse-denying self-consciousness. In that sense, the band works together like a gathered clan, but nothing is taken for granted; the conversation steers clear of habitual rhetoric or smug posturing to consider topics that matter and talk them through to enriched conclusions.

Ornette is direct and discursive, his sound warm, wise, funny, and tender, prophetic, and descriptive, unmistakable in its restless stretch of the straitjacket of tempered intonation, as unique in its patterns as a poet's breath. Pat is neither placid nor ethereal, nor does he brood; he proudly brings princely technical skills and

the passionate abandon of a garage-rocker to his gleefully self-imposed task of understanding a hero's thought, the better to expand his own. His aim is to surpass his past by discarding mannerisms, to realize an unmediated musical state. As Ornette encouraged the child Denardo (whose adult deployment of electronic drums is another aspect of this album that rewards attention) to regard his uneducated effusions as legitimate expressions, so does he validate Pat's willingness to set aside what's in his head and let his fingers follow his released intuition.

Of course, Haden has pursued his personal muse since he became a professional in his parents' old-timey band. DeJohnette is brimming with precise power and complementary determination to tell all. The five combine what they know and fear in *Endangered Species*, to realize an all-too-relevant warning that the fabric of the world we've created, anxious with cross-purposes—those multi-colored threads of individual activity that add up to more than our separate parts—could be permanently scorched and sundered, through catastrophic accident or short-sightedly aggressive design. Whistling *Song X* in the dark is no protection, but Pat Metheny and Ornette Coleman, Denardo, Haden, and DeJohnette are doing their best to enlighten us, urging each person to indulge our natural mutual empathy toward vaster, more profoundly sensitive communion. Their music packs a punch that's unusually authentic and moving. Send it to friends—but be sure to save a copy for yourself.

—howard mandel



## EDDIE DANIELS

**BREAKTHROUGH**—GRP 1024: *SOLFEGGIETTO/METAMORPHOSIS*; *SICILIANO*; *CIRCLE DANCE*; *AJA'S THEME*; *DIVERTIMENTO*; *CONCERTO FOR JAZZ CLARINET AND ORCHESTRA (ALLEGRO/ADAGIO/PRESTO)*.

**Personnel:** Daniels, clarinet; Fred Hersch, piano; Allan Walley, Marc Johnson, bass; Martin Drew, Joey Baron, drums; The London Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Ettore Stratta.

★★★★★

Although other major clarinetists of the past and present, most notably Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, and Buddy DeFranco, have at various points in their careers attempted to bridge the gulf between formal (or "classical") techniques and jazz sensibility, Eddie Daniels seems to have framed the perfect synthesis between the two somewhat disparate disci-

plines. An undoubted master of his instrument, Daniels combines a flawless dexterity with a full-bodied liquid tone and a control of modern harmonies that is exceeded only by that of DeFranco himself. And while his predecessors all used, to one degree or another, a jazz-type sound when playing classical material, Daniels does not; since his approach to jazz has never been anything other than contemporary, his conception of vibrato and pitch-bending is not at that much variance with "legitimate" standards of performance.

The blinding virtuosity of the opening selection, an amalgam of C. P. E. Bach and the modern composer Jorge Calandrelli, amply sets the scene for what follows: Nan Schwartz' updated rescoring of J. S. Bach's *Siciliano*; Daniels' own composition, *Circle Dance*, which features the expert jazz piano of Fred Hersch; two provocative works by Torrie Zito; and the major opus which comprises the entirety of side two—Calandrelli's jazz concerto, which was originally commissioned by Jack Elliot for a Los Angeles concert featuring Daniels with the New American Orchestra. Here the soloist, though in a different setting, meets the still-difficult challenge of Calandrelli's work with supreme confidence and striking brilliance.

—jack sohmer



## RUBY BRAFF/ SCOTT HAMILTON

**A SAILBOAT IN THE MOONLIGHT**—Concord Jazz 296: *A SAILBOAT IN THE MOONLIGHT*; *LOVER COME BACK TO ME*; *WHERE ARE YOU?*; *'DEED I DO*; *WHEN LIGHTS ARE LOW*; *JEEPERS CREEPERS*; *THE MILKMAN'S MATINEE*; *SWEETHEARTS ON PARADE*.

**Personnel:** Braff, cornet; Hamilton, tenor saxophone; John Bunch, piano; Phil Flanigan, bass; Chris Flory, guitar; Chuck Riggs, drums.

★★★★★

**MR. BRAFF TO YOU**—Phontastic 7568: *CHINA BOY*; *BUTTERFLIDA (POOR BUTTERFLY)*; *IDA (SWEET AS APPLE CIDER)*; *GOODNIGHT MY LOVE*; *MISS BROWN TO YOU*; *AND THE ANGELS SING*; *AS LONG AS I LIVE*; *EMALINE*; *YOU BROUGHT A NEW KIND OF LOVE TO ME*.

**Personnel:** Braff, cornet; Hamilton, tenor saxophone; John Bunch, piano; Chris Flory, guitar; Phil Flanigan, bass.

★★★★★

Classicism, among other things, implies durability and a striving toward a state of equilibrium. This small group swing music, though seemingly outdated, is enduring, shamelessly

# RECORD REVIEWS

old-fashioned in its intent, and buoyantly happy. And it's no accident that both of these releases are headed-up by cornetist Ruby Braff and tenorist Scott Hamilton, for throughout their careers these musicians have been fortuitous anomalies, eschewing the merely fashionable in music (and genuine stylistic trends in music, for that matter) to strive toward their own timeless state of repose, proudly—even defiantly—obsolete. (Has it occurred to anyone else that in certain contexts *obsolete* can be a positive critical expression?)

Specifically, this controlled, clean music moves easily in the harnesses of tonality, rhythm, and form. Given Braff's self-imposed stylistic limitations, his playing is wonderfully elastic, largely because of his sizeable vocabulary of horn inflections: flutters, wobbles, squeezes, half-valves, growls, rips, and whinnies, all played with his characteristically Armstrongish raw edge and shaped by his genial sense of humor. Scott Hamilton, who was born at least a-decade-and-a-half after the heyday

of this style of music, has an unfashionably full, smoky, rich tone, at times pleasingly fuzzy, suggesting a tennis ball in slow motion. John Bunch, a sly, dapper player who has long known that brevity is the soul of wit, tosses off pithy lines dripping with nonchalance. Guitarist Chris Flory, whose neon phrases suggest a strong debt to Charlie Christian, punctuates his sassy lines with mellow chords, and is also a master of undiluted Freddie Green-style four-to-the-bar strumming, which rounds out the sturdy rhythm section. All soloists have an acute sense of drama, for they understand how to shape abstract musical ideas so that they acquire depth, resonance, and unerringly resolve to a state of equilibrium.

Much of the pleasure to be derived from these releases comes from the intertwining of cornet, tenor, and piano lines in an intricate fashion that evokes the independent voices of New Orleans polyphony, an effect sadly overlooked in much contemporary music. Another neglected musical strategy which Braff and

Hamilton preserve here is the art of melodic paraphrase. Phrases in these heads are subtly and not-too-subtly laundered, rinsed, and hung out to dry, so much so that it seems a point of honor among these musicians never to make exactly the same melodic statement twice. Savoring their effortless variations—and variations upon variations—is one of the main pleasures of listening to this music.

The difference in these albums' ratings results only because the second LP features largely obscure (and rightly so, I think) material associated with Benny Goodman that is inferior to the themes on *Sailboat In The Moonlight*. In an art form which relies as heavily as does this on paraphrase, weak thematic material is bound to be reflected in individual and collective performances.

Is traditional jazz a dead issue? The vitality of these releases suggests that this is hardly the case. We can thank these keepers of the classical flame for their attentive, one hopes not unrecognized, efforts. —jon balleras

## Two Sides Of Genius

In many ways, Charles Mingus was the antithesis to Thelonious Monk. The bassist was almost immediately acknowledged as a virtuoso on his instrument, while it took years for Monk to register a begrudging admiration for his "unique" keyboard talents. Mingus' musical ambitions were often of a Promethean grandeur; wildly expressionistic scores requiring an ever-expanding palette of colors and textures. Monk spent years refining and revisiting a handful of introspectively generated pieces in the unchanging company of a rather monochromatic quartet. Monk's music is so intensely personal that often additional performers seem an intrusion—solo Monk is the purest, most direct line to his music's essence; while Mingus' all-embracing openness needed the creative involvement of willing collaborators.

Two Mosaic compilations, *The Complete Black Lion And Vogue Recordings Of Thelonious Monk* (MR4-112) and *The Complete Candid Recordings Of Charles Mingus* (MR4-111), are more than just suitable examples of these antithetical stances; they are among the most valuable and exceptional recordings of modern jazz.

Comprising two sessions separated by 17 years, the Monk recordings find him either alone at the keyboard, or in the company of peers (Al McKibbin and Art Blakey)—and he had precious few peers. The first side-and-a-half of this four-record set is given over to a 1954 solo sequence recorded in Paris and previously available—but usually neglected—on Vogue or GNP Crescendo. The neglect is puzzling, for although recorded before Monk's "rediscovery" (tied to the quartet with Coltrane, and later, his promotional backing by CBS, and a *Time* magazine cover story), it is nevertheless a pungent, penetrating look at some of Monk's best-known com-

positions. Though Monk tended to turn reflective when performing in solitude (*Thelonious Alone In San Francisco*, reissued on Riverside/OJC, is especially heartrending in this regard), these performances of pieces like *Off Minor*, *Well You Needn't*, and *'Round Midnight* are somewhat tougher, exposing the muscle, sinew, and nerve that provided the basis for Monk's emotional messages.

The remaining 26 tracks (14 solo, 12 with Blakey and McKibbin) were from Monk's last recording session, 1971 in London, and find him in a remarkably bluesy frame of mind. Thus the variety of left-hand walking and stomp basslines on *Blue Sphere* and *Something In Blue* reinforce his position in the James P. Johnson-Fats Waller-Duke Ellington lineage of piano playing. But Monk's intentions go far beyond that limited suggestion; the slowly rocking (train) episodes in *Something In Blue* are as timeless as Jimmy Yancey or Pinetop Smith, and his frequent riff-punching is no less powerful than Count Basie's. Further, his characteristic obsession with subtly altered repetitive passages was a harbinger for future compositional developments—an influence he has never been credited for. Though I prefer the freedom which the solo format offered Monk, there's no denying that his metrical effects are thrown into greater relief when accompanied by the rhythm section's consistency. Regardless, these are remarkable performances—seven of them previously unissued—and serve as a fitting companion to Mosaic's indispensable *The Complete Blue Note Recordings Of Thelonious Monk* (MR4-101).

The majority of Mingus' recordings for Candid probably need no introduction to most jazz-lovers. Suffice it to say that the 1960 Jazz Workshop quartet sides with Ted Curson, Eric Dolphy, and Dannie Richmond—Mingus' response to Ornette Coleman's path-breaking 1959-60 quartet—are among the most telepathically cohesive and exciting

performances in recorded jazz history, with enough energy, substance, and surprise to last a lifetime of listening. They have been available on various LPs over the years, and should be in everyone's collection by now.

What you may have missed, however, are the quite stunning pieces Mingus recorded, with varying personnel, on November 11, 1960—in large part a reaction to the musical successes of that summer's "Newport Rebel Festival." Two of the three recognizably Mingusian selections from that day are previously unreleased: *Bugs* (a paraphrase of Charlie Parker's *Ah-Leu-Cha*, featuring a scorching tenor outing by Booker Ervin) and a somewhat disjointed version of *Reincarnation Of A Lovebird*. The third typically Chazz chart is the cathartic chaos of Mingus' reminiscence of a blessedly brief Bellevue stay, *Lock 'Em Up*.

The glories of this day's recording activities, however, lie in the seemingly incongruous combination of Swing giants Roy Eldridge, Jo Jones, and Tommy Flanagan with Dolphy, Mingus, and trombonist Jimmy Knepper. Admittedly, the chosen repertoire is more on Roy and Papa Jo's turf than Mingus' more expansive leanings; nevertheless, it is somehow surrealistic and at the same time reassuring to hear *Body And Soul's* solos segue from Eldridge to Dolphy. The Old Masters are, well, masterful here; Eldridge's expanded trumpet timbral effects—squeals and growls, stutters and shakes—sound so modern, and his energy level exceeds even that of Mingus. Jo Jones' drums propel everything with a vibrancy and optimism—and he and Eldridge work especially well together. It may be Roy's irrepressibly vigorous and expressive trumpet which is the star of the show, but the entire set's rambunctious, life-affirming joy is attributable to the unquenchable spirit of the leader.

(Mosaic Records are available only by writing 197 Strawberry Hill Avenue, Stamford CT 06902.) —art lange



## Return Of The Canaries

The problem with "jazz singing" is largely the term itself. When you put these two words together, the resultant force scares the heck out of this art form's practitioners. Especially in the face of the dominant pop music scene of the last 30 years, the decision to sing jazz becomes less a matter of developing a new, individual approach than one of picking an already acceptable style and adapting it for the voice. Hence we now have swing singers, bop singers, avant garde singers, and fusion singers.

Aside from the commercial pitfalls of applying this label to oneself, there are musical detriments galore. Even more than the bald-faced impossibility of turning a voice into an instrument (as silly as trying to mimic human speech with horns), many givens of the jazz soloist just don't apply to singers. One is the standard piano/bass/drums accompanying trio, a format too demanding for any but an absolute master vocalist on the level of Ella Fitzgerald, Mel Tormé, or Tony Bennett. Another is the LP format, as there are too few singers—especially new ones—who know how to sustain interest for 40-minutes plus.

Even those who've been around a while are in danger of falling into these traps. **Meredith D'Ambrosio** has a lovely voice and a book full of good, offbeat tunes, but her whispery, virtually non-rhythmic style gets monotonous after just a few tracks of the very long *It's Your Dance* (Sunnyside 1011), as does her non-changing piano and guitar accompaniment. Her labelmate **Roslyn Burrough**, on *Love Is Here* (Sunnyside 1009), suffers from the same problem only in reverse. While I relish hearing a newcomer schooled in the postwar blues tradition of Della Reese and Dakota Staton, Burrough very nearly shouts every single note.

One solution, setting the voice against a single instrument, demands at least a smattering of dynamics or the listener won't be able to get through eight bars. **Laurie Antonloli**, on her debut disc *Soul Eyes* (Catero 015), falls just short of succeeding because the voice/piano format is just too rough, too demanding, especially for a first-timer—even when the pianist is George Cables. Contrastingly, another newcomer to my ears, **Karen Young**, (on *Karen Young/Michael Donato*, Justin Time 8403) exploits the voice/bass duo more expressively than any singer I've heard since Sheila Jordan. Young knows how to contrast loud and soft sounds, and also when to go into her upper register. That she's considered the irregular rhythm which this format demands comes across in *Happy Talk*, a song which doesn't work as jazz unless you do something completely off the wall with it.

But such intricacies are washed out altogether in the electronic textures and rock-heavy rhythms of fusion. A singer named

**Janet Planet** chirps amidst tightly written, constricting surroundings on an album called *Sweet Thunder* (Sea Breeze 2026), and the results are intended less for those who like jazz or singing than lovers of this unnatural hybrid of jazz and rock. Even when the synthesizer is spiced up with bongos and played by a champ like Clare Fischer, who backs **Lisa Rich** on her latest, *Touch Of The Rare* (Trend 541), the darn thing nullifies and wallpaperizes even the most distinctive of voices.

True, there are singers who work with more exciting cohorts and have to worry about the same problem. On her latest album, *Sometimes I'm Blue* (Soul Note 1133), **Kim Parker's** *gesang* frames some wonderful improvisations by the Mal Waldron Trio. It doesn't matter that at this stage in her development Parker is only an average singer (except for the self-conscious drops into her lower register at the end of some numbers) when she has backing this good, and interesting enough material—as she did on a previous album, Larry Gelb's *The Language Of Blue* (Cadence Jazz 1012), a collection of witty, non-didactic vignettes on the jazz life, and here, where she grabs all attention with the verse to *Angel Eyes*.

Even though Dizzy Gillespie sounds better on *Oo-Shoo-Be-Do-Be* (Soul Note 1147) than he has on other recent disc appearances, **Lillian Terry's** album is that great rarity, an unnecessary Gillespie record. This time the best jazz label in the world has released a party record of Diz and an old friend whooping it up through the standard deejay book, a set redeemed only partially by Terry's Egyptian-language version of *A Night In Tunisia*, which is as genuinely funny as Slim Gaillard's *Yip Roc Heresy*.

While Parker and Terry work in bop settings, Ellen Christi, Valentina Ponomareva, and Maggie Nicols are all legitimate avant gardists, and for more than their use of wordless vocals in both chordal and free frameworks. Each subordinates her own singing—in the very broadest sense of the word—to the larger responsibilities of composition and structure. **Ellen Christi's** group *Menage*, as recorded *Live At Irving Plaza* (Soul Note 1097), matches her vocals with Lisa Sokolov's, sometimes together, sometimes separate, with a piano player, bassist, and drummer who function more as individual voices than as a rhythm section. The unit gravitates between modal and outside approaches, resulting in a captivating meditative effect.

*Fortune Teller* (Leo 136) introduces to the free world the "free" Soviet canarybirdski **Valentina Ponomareva**, who avoids regular rhythms, conventional tonality, and anything that sounds remotely verbal. On an adaptation of *Ain't Misbehavin'*—aimed at those of us tired of all those contemporary versions of *Jitterbug Waltz*—her collaborator, the Ganelin Trio's simultaneous multi-reedman Vladimir Chekasin, evokes Benny Carter. Ponomareva uses trios and quartets where her voice becomes indistinguishable from

the horns, a symphony orchestra and, on an unrecognizable reworking of the Lennon/McCartney *Michelle*, goes skinny-dipping a capella, sometimes spicing her chirps with over-dubs and reverb.

It's a pity that the British government doesn't take steps to insure international distribution of **Maggie Nicols** records, like *Nicols N' Nu* (Leo 127), because she's terrific enough to make up for England's having inflicted Cleo Laine on us. In this pairing with pianist Peter Nu, Nicols combines all of the techniques vocalists have been working toward since the late '50s, adding to them recitation, dialog, and straight speech in a Cockney accent, all with tremendous social and political ramifications. Intelligent, articulate, and thoroughly listenable, Nicols is more than the best European singer since Rita Reys; she's truly on a par with Betty Carter, Sheila Jordan, and Jeanne Lee, the best of the American post-modernists.

Stateside though, we're not hearing much record-wise (except for Jordan, who has a new release on Blackhawk) from any of these sages. Instead, American ears focus on the lines of Eisenhower-era pop stars who are coming back with albums aimed at the jazz audience. Even when **Keely Smith** was a national name she somehow never got to make a truly definitive album. Her collaborations with Louis Prima used her only as a foil (albeit an ingenious one) for the trumpeter/singer/comedian's antics, and arranger Nelson Riddle, perhaps sensing that Smith wasn't as strong a personality as Peggy Lee or Ella Fitzgerald, overloaded her ages-old "straight" vocal records with choirs and other unnecessary accoutrements. Her return to vinyl, *I'm In Love Again* (Fantasy 9639), tries too hard to convince Smith and her listeners that she's a bonafide "Jazz Singer," with hip accompaniment more befitting a Mel Tormé or an Anita O'Day. While this leaves her swingers a little heavy-handed (including two tunes mimicked off Tormé's 1964 *Sunday In New York* set), Smith's ballads are still wonderful, giving us an essential, s-l-o-w, *How High The Moon*.

With the exception of a couple of synthesized Sondheimian opuses, **Margaret Whiting's** *The Lady's In Love With You* (Audiophile 207) is cut from the same high-grade cloth that the lady's led us to expect for the last 40 years—partly for its full, 14-piece ensemble, partly for Gershwin's smartly arcane *Little Jazz Bird* and Rodgers & Hammerstein's imitation of Burke & Van Heusen on *Cockeyed Optimist*, but mostly for Whiting's magnificent Simon-pure contralto.

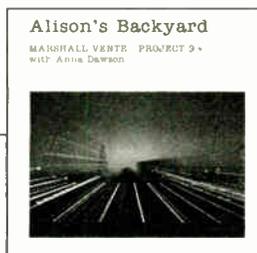
Which leaves us with the brilliant and vital **Rosemary Clooney**. Not just the dominant figure in this movement, Clooney may well be the most important female vocalist recording today, especially with Carter, Fitzgerald, and Sarah Vaughan having temporarily withdrawn to the wings to plan their next moves. *Rosemary Clooney Sings Ballads* (Concord Jazz 282) collects 10 of the best, and importantly, most common—she doesn't have to unearth obscurities to sustain

interest—love songs for Rosie to re-animate with more than just sentiment, as she did 30 years ago, but with full, three-dimensional emotion. The only advantage of her '50s albums in comparison with her 10 Concord's to date is their constant variety; that she's good enough not to have to change settings so much anymore doesn't mean that every album has to use two horns and four rhythm. Her past encounters with Woody Herman's

Herd and Les Brown's Band of Renown (the latter still unreleased outside of Japan) were terrific enough to justify further big band albums—or how about letting her change partners with Concord's own Mel Tormé, whose albums have been suffering from a degree of sameness? Give Clooney George Shearing's piano just once and let Tormé swing out with Warren Vaché and Scott Hamilton.

Evidence such as Tony Bennett's recent

return to vinyl and Clooney's sustained excellence indicates that the best singing of our generation will be done by rediscoveries (are you listening, Kay Starr?). Yet there'll always be young singers coming to jazz, although the medium offers neither the profit of rock & roll nor the academic respectability of European art singing, simply because jazz is the only art form that not only accommodates but requires individuality. —will friedwald



## MARSHALL VENTE/ PROJECT 9+

**ALISON'S BACKYARD**—MoPro 113:  
ORNITHOLOGY; ALISON'S BACKYARD; MAYBE SEPTEMBER; DAY BY DAY; BASSIN' WITH MASON; MOONDANCE; BULLS IN THE NIGHT; BULLS . . . REPRISE.

**Personnel:** Vente, piano, synthesizer; Bill Sears, alto, soprano saxophone, flute, clarinet; Jim Massoth, tenor, soprano saxophone, flute; Chip Gdalmann, baritone saxophone, bass clarinet, alto flute; Nick Drozdoff, trumpet; Art Davis, trumpet, flugelhorn; Steve Berry, Edwin Williams (cuts 2, 3), trombone; Frank Dawson, guitar; Scott Mason, bass; Isi Perez, drums; Al Keeler, congas, percussion; Anna Dawson, vocals (3, 4, 6).

★ ★ ★ ★

## PAUL NASH

**SECOND IMPRESSION**—Soul Note 1107:  
SONG FOR LANIE; NEW YORK NOCTURNE; AFTER WORDS; INTERMISSION; (IT'S A FEW STEPS) FROM BROADWAY TO AMSTERDAM; UPLIFT; PENTEPIC; PASSING GLANCE; STARLIT SKYLIGHT.

**Personnel:** Nash, seven-string guitar, flute (5, 8); Alan Braufman, alto, soprano saxophone (1); Gregory Yasinitzky, soprano, tenor saxophone (4, 9); Ann Yasinitzky, flute (4, 9); Tom Harrell, trumpet; Gerard Carelli, trombone; Michael Cochrane, piano; Anthony Cox, bass; Jimmy Madison, drums; Michele Hendricks, vocal (8).

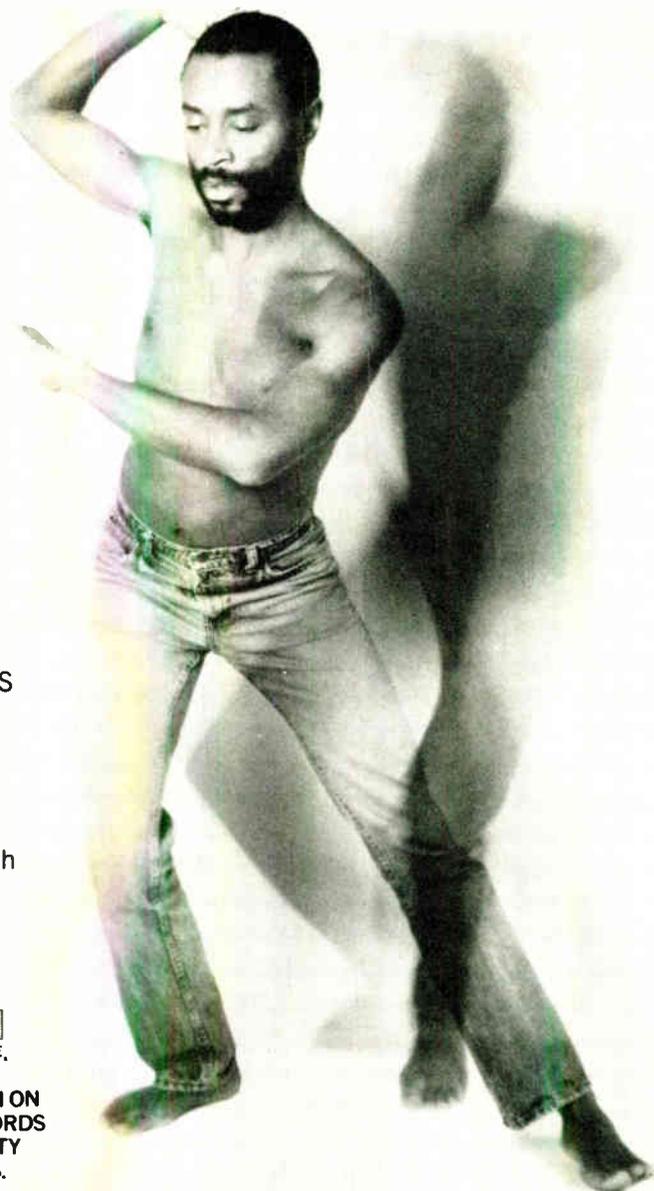
★ ★ ★ ★

Paul Nash's specialty is writing and arranging his own music. Marshall Vente's forte is arranging originals and songs composed by others. Each has a nine piece-or-so ensemble willing and able to give jazz life to his manuscript paper plottings. Both men are talents deserving wider recognition.

Nash, whose formal studies in composition were undertaken at the New England Conserv-

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# RECORD REVIEWS

atory, Berklee College of Music, and San Francisco's Mills College, has carefully constructed eight songs for *Second Impression* that coast along unhindered by compositional stasis—only his ninth work, the reflective *After Words*, seems to stagnate rather than flow. Pianist Michael Cochrane and trumpeter Tom Harrell, the most prominently displayed players, stay close to the inviting melodies in their solos without sounding stilled. Every musician on the session, whether handling melody, harmony, or rhythm, contributes mightily to the effervescent spirit of the songs. *Song For Lanie*, *Intermission*, and *From Broadway To Amsterdam*, in particular, are full of felicity and grace. The richly textured album, which also benefits from the lively presence of singer Michele Hendricks on one number, is worth owning.

*Alison's Backyard* is the third LP credited to Chicagoan Vente and Project Nine. Vente, a student of Gil Evans and David Matthews, makes his orchestrations fresh and vital with striking tone colors, imaginative instrumental blendings, and other particulars of first-rate scoring. The attentive and hardworking Pro 9

attacks the charts and packs the air with excitement.

Vente and comrades recast Bird's *Ornithology* in accessible, contemporary terms while remaining true to the essence of the classic Dial recording: intelligent solos by saxophonist Jim Massoth, electric guitarist Frank Dawson, and horn player Art Davis; boppin' passages of ingeniously combined voicings; powerful brass section statements; and funk/rock rhythms all please the ear. The version of Van Morrison's *Moondance* is appropriately vertiginous, the propulsive acoustic bass from Scott Mason and crackling horns encouraging the vocal flights of Anna Dawson. *Day By Day* shines again due to Ms. Dawson's sure, unaffected handling of the lyrics and how Vente has employed the group for smooth bossa-then-swing drive; *Maybe September*, another evergreen, is less impressive because her vocal treatment and the musicians' involvement seem a bit melodramatic. Vente's jazz-tinged-with-rock *Bulls In The Night* explodes with colors and energy. Fresh, creative sounds certainly abound on the record.

—frank-john hadley



## KENNY DAVERN/ DICK WELLSTOOD/ CHUCK RIGGS

**LIVE HOT JAZZ**—Statiris 8077: *ROSE ROOM; TRAVELIN' ALL ALONE; THEN YOU'VE NEVER BEEN BLUE; LADY BE GOOD; WHO'S SORRY NOW; WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS; ROSETTA; BEALE STREET BLUES.*

**Personnel:** Davern, clarinet; Wellstood, piano; Riggs, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Bop Chops

I've started this piece several times, but have run into an organization problem. Lots of albums, both new and re-released. The most chronicled era—bebop—in jazz history. Private recordings, club dates, radio broadcasts, classic studio sides, personnel changes, unlisted personnel, dates from 1943 to '84—these are some of the variables. And to boot, we're dealing with creative geniuses—**Charlie Parker** and **Dizzy Gillespie**—people discussed and dissected by the literati of jazz for over 40 years. Where to begin?

Parker's *Birth Of The Bebop* (Stash 260), subtitled *Bird On Tenor 1943*, is the earliest and most revealing of these records. The program goes like this: five cuts by Bird on tenor from 1943, two alto cuts from '46, three alto cuts from '50, and three alto cuts from '53—all from hotel room or similarly ad hoc jam sessions. The tenor tracks are the famous "missing link" recordings made by Bob Redcross, which have long been suspected of documenting Bird's alleged roots in Lester Young's tenor style. Yep, Bird sounds like Prez. Even when he switches to alto on the rest of the album, you can hear that old Prez flotation and relaxation underneath the mercurial alto lines. This album is mostly a collage of Bird solos because most of the other solos are faded out—but not Diz's blazing work on *Sweet Georgia Brown* (1946) or Miles Davis' sweet trumpet on *Dripping On A Reed* (1950). These were private recordings, but despite their scratchy sound they reveal important lines of history. Gary Giddins' liner notes are particularly helpful, too.

Dizzy Gillespie and His Sextets—that's the billing—deliver *Groovin' High* (Musicraft 2009), reissued sides from 1945 and '46. These include the classics *Shaw 'Nuff*, *Salt*

*Peanuts*, and *Hot House*, with Gillespie, Parker, pianist Al Haig, bassist Curly Russell, and drummer Sid Catlett. Gillespie leads three other groups on the album, but this is the cream of the crop. Annotator Leonard Feather calls *Shaw 'Nuff* "the most phenomenal bebop line of that entire era." He could have cited this performance as well—careening head, reeling Bird, flaring Diz. Wow! Alto saxophonist Sonny Stitt, who appears on some of the other cuts, establishes solid credentials, too. A very good album altogether.

*One Bass Hit* (Musicraft 2010) by Dizzy Gillespie and His Orchestra comes from 1946—it's also a reissue, and both LPs are also available as Prestige 24030—and features nine big band performances and one sextet track. The album is not as consistently creative as its companion sextet volume, but the leader's well-constructed solos and the harmonic density and rhythmic punch of Gil Fuller's arrangements command attention. The pièce de résistance, *Things To Come*, demonstrates the real power of this band.

Two two-record sets come next: *Bird: The Complete Royal Roost Performances Volume One* (Savoy 2259) and *Volume Two* (2260). This is the first compilation of these previously issued radio broadcasts, with *Volume Three*, a single album, to follow soon to complete the series. Beginning September 4, 1948 and running through February 19, 1949, these performances show Parker's consistent agility, fluidity, and humor while leading his working quintet from week to week. Symphony Sid Torin's announcements set the tone of the era with his "All Night All Frantic One" banter, and several versions of *Groovin' High*, *Ornithology*, *Scrapple From The Apple*, *Salt Peanuts*, and *Be-Bop* form the musical basis for this vocabulary. Bird's band included Miles Davis or Kenny Dorham, trumpet; Tadd Dameron or Al Haig, piano;

Curly Russell or Tommy Potter, bass; and Max Roach or Joe Harris, drums. Miles' harmonic awareness and melodic nuances weren't too different then from today. The two volumes rate the same in musical quality, but neither quite equals Gillespie's *Groovin' High* album.

*Charlie Parker At Storyville* (Blue Note 85108), another new discovery, completes the Bird chronology. The scene: George Wein's Storyville Club in Boston; March and September, 1953. Side one has Bird with pianist Red Garland (their only recorded meeting), bassist Bernie Griggs, and drummer Roy Haynes. Their version of *Ornithology* is full of brilliant change-running Bird. Side two features trumpeter Herb Pomeroy, pianist Sir Charles Thompson, bassist Jimmy Woode, and drummer Kenny Clarke. Overall analysis: smoothly controlled Bird, a clean recording, slightly better performances than at the Royal Roost.

Cut to Diz On *The French Riviera* in 1962. This reissue (Philips 822 897-1) captures the trumpeter's working quintet plus local guests. The music is pretty heavily arranged for a combo, solos are short, and the feeling is good even if fireworks are lacking. Gillespie and alto saxophonist and flutist Leo Wright don't get as worked up as pianist (and arranger) Lalo Schiffrin. This was the year of the bossa nova; Dizzy adapted melodiously and in a mellow tone.

Here's the bomb: Gillespie's *Closer To The Source* (Atlantic 81646-1), from '84. This is all sappy thump-and-pop schlock—elevator muzak. The trumpeter fades in and out. Fine personnel—Branford Marsalis, Kenny Kirkland, Marcus Miller, even Stevie Wonder—but they get electronically and compositionally sanitized, too. Diz's personality is present, but it's very subdued. The less said about this record, the better.

—owen cordle

## ALLAN VACHÉ

**HIGH SPEED SWING**—Audiophile 192: *SWING '39; IF I COULD BE WITH YOU; EMILY; I'VE STARTED ALL OVER AGAIN; CHINA BOY; SECRET LOVE; I DON'T STAND A GHOST OF A CHANCE WITH YOU; GONE WITH THE WIND; MOONLIGHT ON THE GANGES; GOODBYE.*

**Personnel:** Vaché, clarinet; John Sheridan, piano; Howard Elkins, guitar; Jack Wyatt, bass; Kevin Hess, drums.

★ ★ ★

The Davern/Wellstood tandem has been an ongoing thing for some time now—15 years or more, as a matter of fact. They work beautifully together, for they have both drawn from their predecessors just what suits their own personalities best: Kenny from the pantheon of New Orleans and Chicago giants of the '20s and '30s, most notably Jimmie Noone, Frank Teschemacher, Pee Wee Russell, and early Benny Goodman; and Dick primarily from the rich tradition of Harlem stride piano styles, as exemplified in the flowing historical continuity ranging from James P. Johnson through Thelonious Monk. But these are no mere travelers on the byroads of jazz continuance; they are, instead, unique creators in their own right.

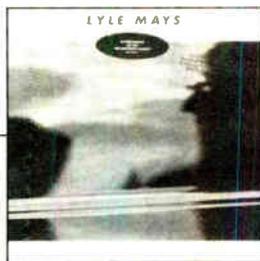
The clarinetist, for example, has carved out of his own life experience a highly individual and readily identifiable style. At present, Davern embodies all of the most relevant qualities that his mentors possessed: he has an enormous, full-bodied, warm, woody tone in all registers; he endows virtually every one of his phrases—whether scale-wise, arpeggiated, or percussive—with subtle pitch-bendings, trills and tremolos, cross-register articulations, and various other devices designed to enhance his melodic contours; and he exercises full control over an elastic sense of rhythmic displacement that is at the very core of classic swing. In addition, he shares with Wellstood a quirky Monk-like wit that, because of its good-natured irreverence, has far more in common with the adventurous spirit of the '20s and '30s than any amount of slavish imitation.

This album, recorded live at the Maryland Inn in Annapolis, is undoubtedly the best record Kenny has made to date. Wellstood is his customarily magnificent self throughout, underplaying his partner when necessary, but nevertheless always shining through with his own brand of unpredictable rejoinders. Riggs, a much younger musician who came to recognition a few years ago as a member of Scott Hamilton's group, provides just the sort of stylistically supportive drumming a small combo like this needs—steady, swinging, and intelligent.

Allan Vaché, younger brother of the by-now well-known Warren Vaché Jr., is an openly expressed admirer of Davern, but prefers for himself an unadulterated allegiance to the style of late-period Benny Goodman. He is an extremely facile clarinetist whom some might have heard and seen on a PBS show featuring The Happy Jazz Band and Pete Fountain's group in concert; but he also seems to be one who has devoted far more of his time to the acquisition of a flawless finger technique and an impressive range than he has to some other

requisites of jazz playing. Not surprisingly, he sounds best when the tempo is up—that is to say, when he doesn't have to sustain a note for too long. When he is playing ballads, for example, or indeed anything slower than fast swinging runs, he has the occasional tendency to terminate his chosen note with the most distracting and musically inappropriate fast lip tremor I have ever heard. Now this is nothing like the fast, wide vibratos of such revered New Orleans players as Johnny Dodds or Sidney Bechet, for their vibratos were expressive in nature and never less than emotionally rewarding in impact. I feel certain that this irritating defect is simply the result of muscular fatigue, and is a problem that Vaché has most likely already learned to overcome. In any case, the clarinetist is definitely one to watch in the future, for in all other respects he appears to be one of the brighter lights on the horizon.

—jack sohmer



## LYLE MAYS

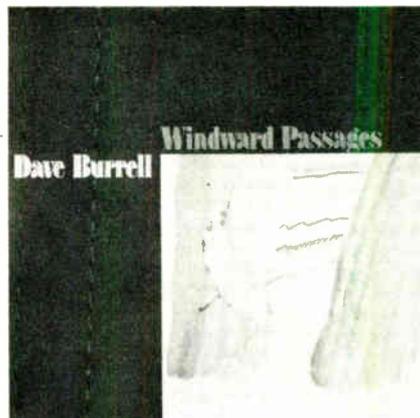
**LYLE MAYS**—Geffen 24097: *HIGHLAND AIRE; TEIKO; SLINK; MIRROR OF THE HEART; ALASKAN SUITE; NORTHERN LIGHTS, INVOCATION, ASCENT; CLOSE TO HOME.*

**Personnel:** Mays, piano, synthesizers, auto-harp; Billy Drewes, alto, soprano saxophone; Bill Friseli, electric guitar; Marc Johnson, bass; Alejandro N. Acuna, drums; Nana Vasconcelos, percussion; Patrick Sky (cut 1),uille pipes.

★ ★ ½

While chum Metheny's off exploring the harmonic rainbow, keyboardist Mays remains drawn to pastels. His sound's not as pale as it once was, when it seemed as if he played only on the white keys—chromatics abound on the impressionistic piano ballad *Mirror*—but he's still inclined toward the gentle and the peaceful. In truth, he's not too far left of the New Agers. This eponymous LP—his first as sole leader—features a gauzy mix (in which instruments blend as often as they stand out), highlighted by the synthesizer sounds that often characterize his work: broad and airy sustained chords and transparent, flute-like melodies.

Mays has a knack for layering sounds on sounds, but a weakness for stasis. *Alaskan Suite*—seemingly indebted to the windswept arctic soundscapes of the Residents' *Es-kimo*—takes too long to build from spare electronic twitters to the final, thundering reiterations of a majestic theme. *Teiko* has some varied, evocatively atmospheric interludes (on which the percussionists make their mark), but



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Photo by Cenicola

# RECORD REVIEWS

it always circles back to a rinky-dink if catchy pentatonic riff, some tacky Hollywood-film-score vision of Japan.

*Slink*, the standout track, has an ingratiatingly sinuous synth-and-sax theme set against artfully syncopated backing. But as elsewhere, Mays spends too much time showing off the hook; he could have spent more of it spreading solo room around. Throughout, saxophonist Drewes (ex-Paul Motian band) is used mostly for coloration. Axeman Frisell—I like him too, but does he have to be on every album?—appears oddly constrained and conventional, only rarely displaying his deliciously sour signature sound: hanging chords that slide out of tune.

The leader takes improvised breaks only on piano. His longterm, heretofore off-the-record association with bassist Marc Johnson (a classmate at North Texas) suggests the influence of Johnson's old boss, Bill Evans. But unlike quiet man Evans, Lyle doesn't always transcend the cocktail moods he flirts with. (The synthesized strings and tinkling piano on *Close To Home* offer the most extreme example.) At times, Mays' music can be precious, cloyingly sweet; those failings are less chronic than on some Metheny LPs, but he's yet to shake them altogether. —kevin whitehead



## TANGERINE DREAM

... **IN THE BEGINNING**—Relativity 8066: *ELECTRONIC MEDITATIONS*; *ALPHA CENTAURI*; *ZEIT*; *ATEM*; *GREEN DESERT*.

**Personnel:** Edgar Froese, synthesizers, guitar, organ, mellotron; Chris Franke, synthesizers, percussion, flute, piano, organ, drums, voice; Peter Baumann, synthesizers, organ, piano, vibes; Klaus Schulze, drums, percussion; Conrad Schnitzler, cello, violin, guitar; Steve Schroyder, organ, voice, echo machines; Udo Dennenbaug, flute, words; Roland Paulyck, Florian Fricke, synthesizer; Christian Vallbrecht, Jochen Van Grumbcow, Hans Joachim Brune, Johannes Lucke, cellos.

★ ★ ★

Over their 16-year recording history, Tangerine Dream have progressed from free improvisation experimenters to composers of meticulously detailed electronic music. Their most recent recording, *Le Parc*, shows them at the height of their form, with precise, personalized tone poems. This six-LP box set, ... *In The Beginning*, plots just how far they've come.

... *In The Beginning* repackages the four original albums that Tangerine Dream made for the now-defunct Ohr label prior to what

could be considered their first golden era, which began in 1974 with *Phaedra*. While these recordings were critical listening for me in the mid-'70s, going back to them now is like opening a cracked time capsule.

Living within the walls of West Berlin, the '60s arrived a few years late for founder Edgar Froese and company. Falling under the influence of psychedelia and a personal relationship with surrealist painter Salvador Dali, the first two Dream records, 1970's *Electronic Meditation* and *Alpha Centauri*, spewed out Stockhausen impressions through Hendrixian distortion.

*Meditations* pre-dates Dream's synthesizer phase, and is a marauding psychedelic nightmare. With distortion-laden feedback guitars, manic drumming from Klaus Schulze, and Conrad Schnitzler's distended electronic cello, it was not the kind of meditation music you'll find in your local New Age store.

By 1971's *Alpha Centauri*, the Dream was changing from free-form heavy metal into free-form space music ala Pink Floyd. In fact, the surging *Fly And Collision Of Comas Sola* is based on the chord changes of *A Saucer Full Of Secrets*. Who says space music doesn't have a tradition? The silences get wider, the stereo panning more annoying on *Sunrise In The Third System*, and they introduce their first synthesizer, played by Christoph Franke.

It's on the subsequent two-record *Zeit*, from 1972, that Dream discovered their oeuvre. With new-found patience, they allowed sounds to breathe in resonant spaces, mixing synthesizers and a cello quartet in an impressionistic journey into deep space. They also solidified their personnel around founder Froese, Franke, and Peter Baumann. This stable unit led to the intuitive improvisation of *Atem* in 1973. Although Dream was always largely an improvisational group, *Atem* was the first record to indicate genuine interplay. It was also the first album dominated by synthesizers and the mellotron, an instrument that would become an early trademark, much as it was for the Moody Blues and King Crimson. The angst of *Meditations* gave way to the floating music for which they're best known, with gently droning synths wafting through an ethereal background of shimmering flutes and glissando effects.

The final disc in this set, *Green Desert*, is supposedly the great lost Tangerine Dream album, recorded by Froese and Franke between *Atem* and the groundbreaking *Phaedra*, but it is for completists only. The sidelong title track uses drones and sequencer patterns to underscore a meandering guitar solo from Froese and a repetitious drum solo by Franke. The remaining tracks are clearly scratch recordings of later Tangerine Dream material. In fact, judging from the dancing octaves, sequencer rhythms, and orchestral sounds, it appears that these were actually recorded much later than the 1973 date given for *Green Desert*.

... *In The Beginning* is an inexpensively packaged set, with the original covers reproduced as black & white inner sleeves, and sophomore liner notes full of typos and errors. But if nothing else, ... *In The Beginning* shows how Tangerine Dream's glistening and exotic

sound, precise almost to a fault, has its roots in a spirit of angst, experimentation, and drugs that isn't too distant from the early days of acid rock—or the recent days of hardcore. Just think, in another time or place, Tangerine Dream might've been the Grateful Dead ... or Hüsker Dü. —john diliberto



## BOBBY HUTCHERSON

**COLOR SCHEMES**—Landmark 1508: *RECORD-A-ME*; *BEMSHA SWING*; *ROSEMARY*; *ROSEMARY*; *SECOND-HAND BROWN*; *WHISPER NOT*; *COLOR SCHEME*; *REMEMBER*; *NEVER LET ME GO*. **Personnel:** Hutcherson, vibraphone, marimba; Mulgrew Miller, piano; John Heard, bass; Billy Higgins, drums; Airtio Moreira, percussion.

★ ★ ★ ★

## GARY BURTON/ RALPH TOWNER

**SLIDE SHOW**—ECM 25038-1: *MAELSTROM*; *VESSEL*; *AROUND THE BEND*; *BLUE IN GREEN*; *BENEATH AN EVENING SKY*; *THE DONKEY JAMBOREE*; *CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST*; *CHARLOTTE'S TANGLE*; *INNOCENTI*. **Personnel:** Burton, vibraphone, marimba; Towner, acoustic six-, 12-string guitar.

★ ★ ★ ★

## JAY HOGGARD

**RIVERSIDE DANCE**—India Navigation 1068: *RIVERSIDE DANCE*; *PLEASANT MEMORIES*; *LUSH LIFE*; *OJALA*; *BRILLIANT CORNERS*; *SALAT*; *MARIPOSA*. **Personnel:** Hoggard, vibraphone; Onaje Allan Gumbs, piano, synthesizer; Vernon Reid, electric guitar; Jerome Harris, electric bass; Pheeroan Aklauff, drums.

★ ★ ★

As a jazz instrument, the vibraphone is something of a paradox. On one hand, it seems to be almost ideal—a perfect marriage of melody and percussion. On the other hand, it has a rigid sound that precludes the nuances so essential for establishing a distinctive tone. Bobby Hutcherson, Gary Burton, and Jay Hoggard have all found a way to work within this paradox and create a personal sound. In doing so, they have had to resolve some stylistic conflicts as well: Hutcherson's approach reflects both his West Coast roots and

the rough-edged Eastern sound of '60s hard-bop and New Thing; Burton has been tugged one way by his Midwestern heritage and another by the European tradition; Jay Hoggard began his career performing serious avant garde and new music works, then veered into commercial pop-jazz.

Hutcherson remains a bopper at heart. His touch is light, and he spins long, graceful runs that often end on trills for "sustain." He is so fluent that it's easy to overlook the depth of his ideas and just float along on his buoyant rhythms. *Color Schemes* is a pleasantly varied showcase for Hutcherson's mastery, but the colors are mostly California pastels: the easy bossa nova of *Recorda-Me*, the delicate swing of *Whisper Not*, the restrained elegance of *Never Let Me Go*. The two duets are the most involving pieces. *Rosemary*, *Rosemary* is a haunting portrait sketched by piano and marimba; *Color Scheme* is an ingenious "texture poem" for overdubbed vibes, marimba,

and percussion.

If *Color Schemes* is a little too relaxed, then the Burton/Towner album might be just a bit too solemn. Burton is a post-bop formalist who keeps his prodigious technique under tight control. He uses more space than Hutcherson, playing precise runs broken by pauses. He likes to let a telling note hang in the air. On contemplative Towner compositions such as *Maelstrom* and *Beneath The Evening Sky*, Burton's improvisations are beautiful but somehow forbidding, like sculptures carved in ice. On the lighter, more uptempo tunes—and especially on the hillbilly calypso of *The Donkey Jamboree*—Burton opens up. His technical skill is no less impressive, but his spirit shines through more clearly. We become aware of Burton as a human being rather than a four-mallet wizard—and this is a better album because of it.

Jay Hoggard, a decade younger than Hutcherson and Burton, has an engaging mu-

## CRITICS' CHOICE

### Art Lange

**NEW RELEASE:** John Carter, *Castles Of Ghana* (Gramavision). The clarinetist's octet has captured—with evocative tonal colors and textures—the wickedly emotional highs and lows of Carter's programmatic paean to Africa's Gold Coast, its glories and tragedies.

**OLD FAVORITE:** Jimmy Lyons/Sunny Murray, *Jump Up—What To Do About* (hat Art). Though any of his recordings with Cecil Taylor would illustrate the late altoist's integrity, perseverance, and aggressive lyricism, this recently reissued live pianoless trio set allows him maximum freedom.

**RARA AVIS:** Tom Waits, *Swordfishtrombones* (Island). The jangling, Salvation Army Band-meets-Harry Partch-meets-Kurt Weill settings for Waits' seedy and sentimental life studies make this a rare bird indeed, but beautiful in its way.

**SCENE:** The level of energy, enthusiasm, and technical ability at this year's Canadian Stage Band Festival—which brought together 8,000 music students at the competition's *finals*—was invigorating (at Expo '86 in Vancouver, B.C.).

### Gene Santoro

**NEW RELEASE:** James Brown, *30 Golden Hits* (Polydor). From the early Willie John-inspired sides like *Try Me* through the '60s struts like *Cold Sweat* to his '70s funk pioneering, JB has godfathered sounds that seep across the world's culture; witness his influence on Fela. Digitally remastered with excellent liner notes.

**OLD FAVORITE:** Little Walter, *Little Walter* (English Chess). This two-LP set features one of the greatest blues bands—Muddy's—pumping out Walter's spare but spine-tingling arrangements; his harp and voice across the top let you know where it all comes down.

**RARA AVIS:** Sister Rosetta Tharpe, *Gospel Train* (MCA). Released in 1980, this excellent compilation of work by gospel's most innovative guitarist includes her epic cuts from 1944-49. She sanctified the blues while appropriating Charlie Christian and prefiguring Chuck Berry.

**SCENE:** Ornette, Metheny, & Co. turned New York's Town Hall inside-out with subtle rhythmic and tonal shifts from *Song X* and elsewhere, despite the early exiting of a few disappointed Metheny fans.

### Bill Shoemaker

**NEW RELEASE:** John Carter, *Castles Of Ghana* (Gramavision). The vivid writing of master clarinetist Carter, and sterling performances by the likes of Bobby Bradford and Andrew Cyrille, make this a contender for year's-best honors.

**OLD FAVORITE:** Johnny Dyani, *Song For Biko* (SteepleChase). This is a poignant tribute to the martyred South African activist, by the extraordinary expatriate bassist who leads an inspired quartet including Don Cherry and Dudu Pukwana.

**RARA AVIS:** Christian Marclay, *Record Without A Cover* (Recycled). *Record Without A Cover* is exactly that, a one-sided disc of turntable artist Marclay's phantasmagorical mix of broken and reconstituted records, which he urges not be stored in a protective cover.

**SCENE:** The Warner Theater, Washington DC's vaudeville-era venue for everyone from Metheny/Ornette to Philip Glass to NRBQ, might fall victim to downtown development unless a public/private partnership under consideration by the city is implemented.

## BLUE NOTE

# INTRODUCES THE PREVIOUSLY UNRELEASED REISSUE!

In the early sixties, Blue Note listed a number of albums in catalogs and liner notes and pictured them on inner sleeves. Despite artwork, catalog numbers and announcements, they were never issued at the time. Some have come to light briefly in Japan or in an American twofer reissue series a decade ago. Others remain unissued. Blue Note has recently discovered the artwork for many of these albums and introduces them in their originally intended form with original catalog numbers. Lost treasures restored to their rightful mantles.

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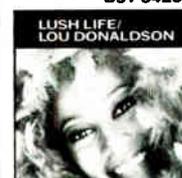
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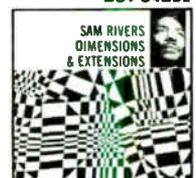
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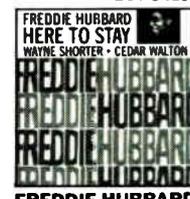
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# RECORD REVIEWS

sical personality but still seems to be searching for a unified style. Although *Riverside Dance* is funky and accessible, it wants to be "serious" too. I'm not sure Hoggard can have it both ways. The hip, Miles-funk tunes (notably *Ojala* and *Mariposa*) sound contrived, but the standards ring true. Hoggard's arrangement of *Brilliant Corners* is striking, with a wrenching vibes-and-guitar head that suddenly downshifts into a loping 4/4. (Jerome Harris and Pheeroan Aklaaf handle this masterfully, proving that funk and swing can indeed coexist.) *Lush Life* is even better: Hoggard's mallet strokes are measured and deliberate, building with agonizing intensity to a stunning unaccompanied cadenza at the end. It could be the finest thing he has ever recorded. Overall, Hoggard's ideas don't quite seem to be in focus yet, but the direction of his music is very promising—*Riverside Dance* might be the least consistent of these three albums, but it's also the most adventurous. —jim roberts



## SHADOW VIGNETTES

**BIRTH OF A NOTION**—Sessions 0001: *HONKY TONK BUD*; *THE NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED*; *STROLLIN'*; *QUIET RESOLUTION*; *FEETS OF CLAY*.

**Personnel:** Edward Wilkerson Jr., tenor saxophone, director; David B. Spencer, Orbert Davis, Robert Griffin, Ameen A.C. Muhammad, trumpet; "Light" Henry Huff (cut 4), soprano saxophone; Edwin Daugherty, alto saxophone, clarinet, flute; Ari Brown (3, 5), Ernest Dawkins, alto saxophone, clarinet; Vandy Harris, tenor, soprano saxophone; James Perkins, tenor, soprano, baritone saxophone; Mwata Bowden, baritone saxophone, clarinet; Steve Berry (3, 5), Isaiah S. Jackson, Sam Walton, Greg Frizell, Martin Lampkin, trombone; Daniyal Khabir Abdul Sami Ricardo Riperton, piano; Richard Brown (2, 4), Yosef Ben Israel, bass; Reggie Nicholson, drums, vibraphone; Kahil El'Zabar, earth drum, sanza, gongs, timpani; Don Lawson, Tom Wade, Phyllis McKenny, violin; Naomi Millender, cello; John Toles-Bey (1), narration; Rita Warford (4), vocal.

★ ★ ½

Can this be the state of Chicago's AACM? The Ethnic Heritage Ensemble's Edward Wilkerson Jr. has here assembled a raft of AACM School and Large Ensemble vets, who demonstrate the high level of technical competence for which the teaching/performing cooperative Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians is known. But where is the spirit of adventure that informed the work of the organi-

zation's first '60s wave—the Art Ensemble, Braxton, Muhal and more—when they redefined the avant garde? To supplant/supplement the furious bluster into which Eastern cousins sometimes lapsed, the Midwesterners introduced precise articulation (Braxton and Roscoe Mitchell picking up where Dolphy left off), aphoristic pithiness, dry wit.

Wilkerson abides by the Art Ensemble's precept: that all black music is one, ancient-to-the-future. This program is deliberately eclectic, taking in hip-hop rapping (*Honky Tonk Bud*), Vegas soul (*Quiet Resolution*, with a showstopping vocal by Rita Warford), Chi-Congo exotica, and big band progress reports. (*Names Have Been Changed* builds on Duke's jungle brass and Sun Ra's Fletcher Henderson studies, like some of Muhal's large ensemble works.) But Wilkerson overlooks the old AACM's against-the-grain contrariness. The soupy strings on *Quiet Resolution* are everything Leroy Jenkins colorfully scratchy fiddling reacted against. (The section's better used, in pizz-and-arco call-and-response, on the modal romp *Strollin'*.) AACM pioneers knew the wisdom of being able to play anything in the spectrum—as these musicians obviously can—but always maintained a critical/sardonic view of pop (and jazz) genres. That saving irony is missing here. Too often, the music bends to fashion. Despite backgrounds that whimsically mirror the action, *Bud*—a 10-minute epic portraying the street hustler as outlaw hero—never loses a trendy air. (Not coincidentally, it's also marketed as a video.)

Even at best—*Feets Of Clay*, beginning with intersections of somber cloudbank chords, and ending in new tribal celebration—Shadow Vignettes are rather too fond of groove-riding. Consequently, even the best solos—Isaiah Jackson's tailgate spot on *Names*, altoist Ernest Dawkins' on *Stollin'*—are unruly, prolix, rambling. The old terseness and unpredictability are gone, and I miss 'em.

—kevin whitehead



## PHILIP GLASS

**SONGS FROM LIQUID DAYS**—CBS 39564: *CHANGING OPINION*; *LIGHTNING*; *FREEZING*; *LIQUID DAYS*; *OPEN THE KINGDOM*; *FORGETTING*.

**Personnel:** Glass, Michael Riesman, keyboards; Richard Peck, alto saxophone; Jon Gibson, soprano saxophone; Paul Dunkel, Jack Kripl, flute; Robert Carlisle, Joseph Andere, french horn; Alan Raph, bass trombone; James Pugh, trombone; Wilmer Wise, Stephen Burns, Philip Ruecktenwald, trumpet; John Beal, bass; Fred-

erick Zlotkin, cello; Paul Doktor, Jill Jaffe, Sol Grietzer, viola; Sanford Allen, Carol Pool, Linda Quan, Elliot Rosoff, Richard Sortomme, Marti Sweet, violin; the Kronos String Quartet: David Harrington, John Sherba, Hank Dutt, Joan Jeanrenaud; Linda Ronstadt, Bernard Fowler, Janice Pendarvis, the Roches, Douglas Perry, vocals.

★ ★ ½

Philip Glass has been a Renaissance man in contemporary music. His wildly popular cyclical classicism has been proven readily adaptable to films, opera, dance, theater, and performance works. He's even produced smart rock records by the Raybeats and Polyrock. So the idea of *Songs From Liquid Days* is certainly a provocative and attractive one.

Commission the best and hippest lyricists of the '80s—David Byrne, Suzanne Vega, Paul Simon, and Laurie Anderson; cast their words for distinctive vocalists like the Roches, Linda Ronstadt, Douglas Perry, Janice Pendarvis, and Bernard Fowler; add the melodic spirals of Philip Glass. The results highlight Glass' gifts—as well as his pretensions—as a musical "everyman."

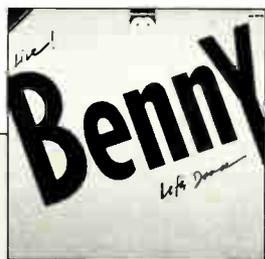
First off, there's an intrinsic problem with the writers Glass selected. You don't hear a lot of Talking Heads and Laurie Anderson cover versions, and for good reason. No one else can sing them with the same conviction and nuance. Linda Ronstadt interpreting Laurie Anderson is the oddest combination since Ronstadt tackled Carla Bley on *Escalator Over The Hill*.

Further, Glass does little to adapt to the needs of the lyrics. Don't get the idea that this is the Philip Glass Rock Album. The music is vintage Glass, with churning melodies locked into perpetual motion. Excepting Perry and Ronstadt, the singers never sound comfortable with the portentous operatic charts. The Roches in particular are hard-pressed to stretch their usually charming vocal harmonies across the awkward phrasing and Byrne's lyrics.

Finally, there's the lyrics themselves. Glass has assembled a negative-love song-cycle in which Paul Simon becomes cosmic ("Maybe it's the mantra of the walls and wiring") and Anderson loses her sense of irony. I suspect Byrne's *Liquid Days* would be a study in manic desire if he were singing it, but Glass and the Roches render it as a flakey dirge, that never jibes with lines like "I offer Love a beer/Love watches Television."

Glass is best when he composes to the singer's strengths, like Douglas Perry's commanding performance of the Byrne lyrics on *Open The Kingdom*, as synthesizers pulse under a soaring refrain that wouldn't be out of place in Glass' opera *Satyagraha*. On *Forgetting*, Ronstadt, the Roches, and the Kronos String Quartet lend a poignancy to Laurie Anderson's surprisingly straight lyrics of forgotten trysts.

Glass fans should rest assured that this isn't the equivalent of The London Symphony plays *Tommy* or a Plácido Domingo popular song album—but the comparisons *did* come to mind. —john diliberto



## BENNY GOODMAN

**LIVE! BENNY, LET'S DANCE**—MusicMasters 20112Z: *LET'S DANCE; DON'T BE THAT WAY; YOU BROUGHT A NEW KIND OF LOVE TO ME; KING PORTER STOMP; ANYTHING FOR YOU; BLUE ROOM; DOWN SOUTH CAMP MEETIN'; STEALIN' APPLES; GOODBYE.*

**Personnel:** Goodman, clarinet; Paul Cohn, Laurie Frink, John Eckert, Randy Sandke, trumpet; Matt Flanders, Eddie Bert, Bobby Pring, trombone; Ken Peplowski, Loren Schoenberg, Chuck Wilson, Jack Stuckey, Danny Bank, reeds; Dick Hyman, piano; Jim Chirillo, guitar; Bob Haggart, bass; Louie Bellson, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★

**BENNY AND SID: ROLL 'EM**—Honeysuckle Rose 5004/5: *ROLL 'EM (seven takes); DON'T BE THAT WAY; FLYING HOME; TUESDAY AT TEN; WHEN THE SUN COMES OUT; SMOOTH ONE; BENNY RIDES AGAIN (two takes); TAKE IT; CONCERTO FOR COOTIE; THE COUNT; THE EARL (two takes); SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES; BIRTH OF THE BLUES; POUND RIDGE; IF IT'S TRUE; SING SING SING; IDA; CLARINET A LA KING; I'M HERE; DOORKNOB HITCHA; ONE O'CLOCK JUMP.*

**Personnel:** Goodman, clarinet; Billy Butterfield, Cootie Williams, Al Davis, Jimmy Maxwell, trumpet; Lou McGarity, Cutty Cutshall, trombone; Gene Kinsey, Clint Neagley, Pete Mondello, Vido Musso, Skip Martin, Chuck Gentry, reeds; Mel Powell, piano; Tom Morgan, guitar; John Simmons, bass; Sid Catlett, drums.

★ ★ ★ ★ ½

Good news: Benny Goodman's finally cracked a 30-year jinx on big band recordings and hit the mark nearly dead-center with a masterly (though rather miserly, at only 24 minutes without themes) set taken from the soundtrack of the WNET/PBS television special taped in October 1985 and broadcast last March.

With the exception of a good English band recorded in 1970 (London/Phase Four Records 21), Goodman's handful of band dates since *BG In Hi-Fi* in 1954 have often been a disappointing lot. Sometimes when the expectations seemed highest (Brussels, 1958; Carnegie Hall, 1978), the results were the wimpiest: dry saxes, vapid brass, mechanical rhythm sections, even eccentric acoustics. Goodman's had his ups and downs too. All this makes Benny's return to form at age 76 that much more surprising—and with an outstanding orchestra that he took over from tenor saxophonist Loren Schoenberg, who formed it in 1981 as a rehearsal unit.

For Goodman, no allowances need be made for age. He plays with high enthusiasm and flu-

ency. His attack is sharp and his sound is singing, more lyrical than hot at the mostly moderate tempos. The band's reeds are warm and feathery with the phrasing hand-rubbed at the edges. From the first notes of the theme, they ride a shifting undercurrent of dynamics and nuance like a yawl hugging the flow of the sea. The brass are bright and powerful without screaming. They make a rocking ensemble in the last 32 bars of *Blue Room* and *Stealin' Apples*. And at the center of the rhythm second there's Louie Bellson, the band's only star rank-and-filer—a model timekeeper and canny accenter. It's all been beautifully recorded too.

The repertoire is mostly Fletcher Henderson. There are many ways to interpret Henderson. On this album you'll hear it the original way. If these sides could be compared to any of Goodman's earlier bands, it would be the 1935-36 unit, when the arrangements themselves and not the players were the star, as they are once again here. No one takes more than two choruses and the integrity of the writing is not diluted by "opening it up." Some may object to Goodman's conservatism. But he has no apologies to make for it. Nor should he. His playing is still full of spontaneity and unexpectedness within his familiar frameworks, just as Parker, Eldridge, and Gillespie remained fresh within theirs—reason enough for him to stand his musical ground. But in his desire to bring new attention to Henderson, Goodman has cherry-picked the most familiar material—repeating the repertoire of earlier BG big band albums. If Goodman produced two or three records a year, this would hardly matter. But he doesn't. Especially when so much Henderson work has been silent for 40 years, from offbeat beauties like Ravel's *Bolero* to milestones such as *Honeysuckle Rose*, not to mention Henderson charts Goodman never played, like *Jim-*

*town Blues* or the 1937 *Stampede*. There's some pretty good Jimmy Mundy and Edgar Sampson in the trunk too. All this is really the *raison d'être* of this splendid band, because there's no one who can play this music like Goodman. And this album proves it.

Goodman's had some star drummers in his day, from Gene Krupa in the beginning to Louie Bellson today. In between, one of the best was Sid Catlett, and the Catlett/Goodman pairing is the focus of *Roll 'Em*, an excellent compilation of live broadcasts from the summer of 1941. A drummer can leave a mighty imprint on the character of a band; imagine Ellington without Sonny Greer or Basie without Jo Jones. And Catlett made a massive mark on this Goodman band. He was never shy about drawing attention his way. Yet, he was one of the purest ensemble drummers of them all. He could weave into a musical phrase with a rimshot, bass accent, cymbal splash, or a combination of all three, and suddenly the lucky musician's solo would snap into bold italics. But he wasn't polite. He could ride hard on a soloist or a band. His playing could be insolent and insubordinate. It challenged and dared as it supported and nourished. Any band with Catlett on its back was in harm's way if it didn't watch out. He had an imaginative sense of rhythmic motion that was coupled with an appreciation of a drum's melodic potential, too. It's evident here from the subtle shuffle brushwork behind Benny on *Ida*, to the surging, 16-cylinder press-rolls and bone-cracking, backbeat rim shots that fire the various *Roll 'Em* versions. It's a thrilling high to hear Goodman's fertile brilliance and Catlett's uninhibited power meet one another's match in these marathon slugs on the blues. The only regret is that much of Sid's loose, lashing cymbal work is lost in the low-fi high-frequencies of the master recordings. —john mcdonough

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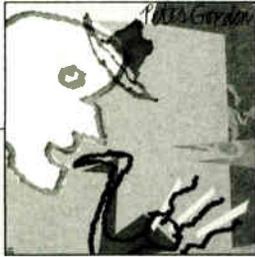
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# RECORD REVIEWS



## PETER GORDON

**INNOCENT**—Columbia 42098: *ROMANCE; THE DEVIL COMES TO GETCHA; THE DOUBLE; THAT HAT; ST. CECILIA; AFTERNOON DRIVE; DIAMOND LANE; PSYCHO; HEAVEN.*

**Personnel:** Gordon, tenor, baritone saxophone, clarinet, Fairlight CMI, piano, organ, synthesizer; David Van Tieghem, drums, percussion,

electronic percussion; Elliot Easton, guitar, electric sitar; Ned Sublette, Randy Gun, Eric Liljestrand, Larry Saltzman, guitar; Lenny Pickett, flute, soprano saxophone, baritone saxophone; Tony Levin, Chapman Stick; "Blue" Gene Tyranny, piano, synthesizer; Gary Lucas, National Steel bottleneck guitar; Clarence Fountain, Jimmy Carter, Sam Butler, Billy Butler, vocals; Mustafa Ahmed, congas, percussion; Arthur Russell, vocals, electric cello, LinnDrum; Al Scotti, Tom Garnier, bass; Sara Cutler, harp; Tim Schellenbaum, mandolin; Rik Albani, trombone; Richard Landry, bass clarinet, flute, tenor saxophone.

★ ★ ★ ★

Peter Gordon looks back to the days of instrumental rock music, wordless songs with hard-driving rhythms, snappy horn charts, and energized solos. Booker T & the MGs would be

Gordon's closest antecedent, but that influence is obviated by the mutations of New York's hip avant garde—Glenn Branca, Philip Glass, and especially Laurie Anderson and Robert Ashley, with whom he's worked. In fact, Anderson contributed one song, *The Day The Devil Comes To Getcha*, a whimsical funk-gospel tune.

For nearly 10 years Gordon's been trying, unsuccessfully, to reconcile these elements on records like *Star Jaws* and *Geneva*. On *Innocent* he brings it all together on a collection of pounding, riff-heavy tunes performed by some of New York's leading virtuosos.

*Innocent* is a pastiche of musical styles. Gordon plays hypnotic Arabic scales on clarinet while the electronic and acoustic percussion section churns out Moroccan rhythms on *The Double*. *The Announcement* is built around a mechanized Bartok-like theme and *Diamond Lane*, with its '60s Farfisa organ, is

## down beat 51<sup>st</sup> annual readers poll

HALL OF FAME (see rules)

JAZZ MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR

POP/ROCK MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR

SOUL/R&B MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR

TRUMPET

TROMBONE

FLUTE

CLARINET

SOPRANO SAX

ALTO SAX

TENOR SAX

BARITONE SAX

ACOUSTIC PIANO

ELECTRIC PIANO

ORGAN

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## instructions

Vote for your favorite musicians in **down beat's** annual Readers Poll. **The Poll** for 50 years.

Your favorites want your support. Vote! You need not vote in every category. Cut out the ballot, fill in your choices, sign it, and mail to **down beat/RPB, 180 W. Park, Elmhurst, IL 60126 USA.**

### VOTING RULES:

1. Vote once only. Ballots must be postmarked before midnight September 1, 1986.
2. Use official ballot only. Please type or print.
3. **Jazz, Pop/Rock, and Soul/R&B Musicians of the Year:** Vote for the artist who, in your opinion, has contributed most to jazz, pop/rock, and soul/r&b in 1986.
4. **Hall of Fame:** Vote for the artist—living or dead—who in your opinion has made the greatest contribution to contemporary music. The following previous winners are not eligible: Cannonball Adderley, Louis Armstrong, Albert Ayler, Count Basie, Sidney Bechet, Bix Beiderbecke, Art Blakey, Clifford Brown, Benny Carter, Charlie Christian, Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Paul Desmond, Eric Dolphy, Roy Eldridge, Duke Ellington, Bill Evans, Gil Evans, Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Benny Goodman, Dexter Gordon, Stephane Grappelli, Coleman Hawkins, Fletcher Henderson, Jimi Hendrix, Woody Herman, Earl Hines, Johnny Hodges, Billie Holiday, Stan Kenton, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Gene Krupa, Glenn Miller, Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk, Wes Montgomery, Jelly Roll Morton, Fats Navarro, King Oliver, Charlie Parker, Art Pepper, Oscar Peterson, Bud Powell, Sun Ra, Django Reinhardt, Buddy Rich, Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, Pee Wee Russell, Zoot Sims, Bessie Smith, Billy Strayhorn, Art Tatum, Cecil Taylor, Jack Teagarden, Lennie Tristano, Sarah Vaughan, Joe Venuti, Fats Waller, Ben Webster, and Lester Young.
5. **Miscellaneous instruments:** Instruments not having their own category, with these exceptions: valve trombone, included in trombone category; cornet and flugelhorn, included in the trumpet category.
6. **Jazz, Pop/Rock, and Soul/R&B Albums of the Year:** Select only LPs issued during the last 12 months. Do not vote for 45s or EPs. Include full album title and artist's name. If your choice is part of a series, indicate volume number.
7. Only one selection counted in each category.



here's your ballot

what the Blues Magoos might have sounded like had they possessed chops, taste, and restraint.

Like a drum major in a Mummer's Day String Band, soloists strut out of Gordon's precision arrangements. *Romance* finds Elliot Easton whipping a scattered guitar solo before dissolving into a lovely flute and keyboard unison theme. Gordon himself proves an uninhibited howler on the same tune, alternating gut-bucket low register squawls with overblown shrieks.

*Innocent* may sound like a mish-mash smorgasbord, but Gordon unifies it with punchy horn charts and a crunching dance floor beat that propels, rather than pummels, this music. Van Tieghem's deft electronic percussion manages to be both kinetic and off-center on pieces like *That Hat*, *The Announcement*, and *St. Cecilia*, with lopping gates and odd punctuations. Dance music hasn't been this intelligent since Duke Ellington was playing for the hoofers.

—john diliberto

## School Bands On Wax

Before looking at these college and high school band recordings of the past year, a couple of general observations.

First, if these records give an accurate picture, music education is becoming distressingly inbred. The horizons seem to be shrinking rather than expanding. If the quality of the musicianship is uniformly high, that is no reason why the content of music has to be as uniformly uniform as it often is. It would be a poor conservatory, for instance, that limited its concentration to classical works written within the last five years; or worse still, to compositions produced by the students themselves and drawn purely from contemporary stimuli. Yet, that seems to be the state of things in the realm of the college "lab" band.

Of the 17 albums considered here, only one contains a "classic" piece of big band writing (Ellington's *Harlem Air Shaft*). Nowhere else are the students heard playing the compositions of Ellington, Benny Carter, Edgar Sampson, James Mundy, Eddie Sauter, Don Redman, Sy Oliver, or even Fletcher Henderson, whose writing remains the essence of orchestrated swing. It's little wonder the preponderance of music on the typical lab band record is pristinely rigid. Students, on the evidence of these performances, are apparently not being exposed to the classical masters of big band jazz orchestration, the writing that came out of the jazz orchestra's "golden age."

One assumes students will absorb the contemporary sensibilities of post-Coltrane jazz, jazz-rock, and pop-funk, on their own time by osmosis. But where else are they to embrace the Mozarts and Beethovens of the jazz orchestral heritage if not in formal study? Yet, there seems to be no common repertoire

CONTINUED ON PAGE 42

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# RECORD REVIEWS

from the classic period on which these bands are meeting. The vision of that heritage appears to stop just this side of Wayne Shorter and Joe Zawinul; or perhaps Stan Kenton of his Creative World recordings period.

Second, I suspect the obsession with perfection, which dominates the commercial record business, influences these lab band records as well, which further contributes to the "demonstration record" syndrome of so many over-produced college LPs. Mostly, they lack presence and a sense of reality. When the drummer's high-hat cymbal or bass drum sounds as close to my ear as the piano or baritone sax soloist, I resent it. I'm not getting the perspective of natural distance that separates one section from another and the listener from the ensemble; these are the internal balances and relationships of a real musical performance. And it makes me suspicious, too. When music comes to sound fabricated and manipulated, I'm inclined to think there's cheating going on, whether or not there actually is.

So, with these perhaps somewhat cranky reservations on the record, let's get on with the records themselves and try not to beat too many dead horses in the process.

Recorded during the Montreux Jazz Festival in 1985, *Montreux Magic* by the **University of Northern Iowa Jazz Band I** delivers (or "demonstrates," to use that somewhat pejorative verb) a wide-ranging package of ensemble skills. The opening selection, Chick Corea's *Humpty Dumpty*, is a showcase for the band's outstanding reed section. Nearly half of the six-minute piece is a crackling section exercise swung with verve and expertise. With headphones, you can sort out the individual voices, although you lose the wholeness of the choir in the process. *Blues For M.J.* and *Party Dancing* are too long and lack cohesiveness as long-form pieces, but Al Naylor brings his own *Blues For M.J.* to a boiling climax with some exciting plunger trumpet. The band gives *Harlem Air Shaft* a performance which Ellington might smile upon; and Bryon Ruth, whose hard, contemporary-sounding tenor saxophone sounds relatively expected on other pieces, here takes up the clarinet. His warbling vibrato conjures warm images of Russell Procope in addition to certifying his versatility. Don Jaques' clear, ringing alto is another standout on *Reverend Jack*.

The **Fullerton College Ensemble** offers an unexpected "concept" album, a collection of familiar standards dressed up in a generally tasteful wardrobe of timely voicings and sounds (*Unforgettable*, AM-PM Records 15). Probably the most surprising is the big band classic, *In The Mood*, whose loose, airy swing is replaced by a staccato, rat-a-tat-tat attack. The most interesting portions, however, are Doug Gregan and Ed Velasco's two-tenor interlude, which re-invents the Benekel/Klink exchanges on the famous Glenn Miller version. Some slick, stylish vocal ensembles, purveying both lyricism and boppish ensemble passages, figure prominently in arrangements of *Unforgettable*, *I Can't Get Arranged*,

and several other cuts. In imposing alternative concepts on these familiar tunes, the Fullerton band yields some ingenious and always tricky feats of ensemble performance. If the results are sometimes a bit self-conscious, just as often they break through to some attractive new perspectives, as on *Sweet Georgia Brown* and Dan Friedman's *Zip-A-De-Doo-Dah* chart.

One of the most satisfying and relaxed of the current college band batch is *The Beast* by the **Fredonia Jazz Ensemble** from Fredonia, New York (Mark Records 20642). Don Menza's arrangement of his own *Groove Blues*, which leads off the album's six cuts, is a chart to test a band's swing more than its showy virtuosity. And the Fredonia band's version stands comparison to some pretty good existing treatments (compare, for instance, with Louie Bellson's band on Pablo 2310-755). Moreover, Perry Pace proclaims homage to Charlie Parker in his first solo bars. Other cuts are uniformly good, with the exception of a piece of nonsense by Al Jarreau (*Roof Garden*) totally out of place in an otherwise fine set.

The latest from the test tubes of the **North Texas State One O'Clock Lab Band** (Lab '85, North Texas State Records LA8501-NS) has something of a manufactured sound about it. The drum solos, particularly, are over-mic'ed on *Harlem Nocturne* and sound totally artificial. Any drummer who allows himself to be recorded in this manner has no grounds to complain when he's ultimately replaced by a computer. In any case, the performances are virtually flawless, and the writing (all home-grown) explores a range of dynamics, tempos, and voicings, often all in one piece (i.e. *Tightrope*). Arrangers John Murphy, Bret Zvacek, and Neil Slater (also director) show a mastery of state-of-the-art writing skills, but no strong melodic sense. In *It Might Be You* Zvacek captures the warmth and humanity of the best big band writing. The closer, however, *Trust Me*, is a grating, sophomoric throwaway. The gimmicky in the mix makes one wonder who the artists really are here anyway—the musicians or the engineers?

*Top Secret* is a grab-bag of idioms and moods calculated to reflect a versatile orchestra—the **Jazz Band of the Miami-Dade Community College** in Florida (MDCC 101). Although the band is a tight and disciplined ensemble, and soloists such as Bob Martinez (tenor saxophone) and David Love (trombone) sound as good (and as alike) as their counterparts elsewhere, the content of the music tends to run through one's fingers. Rob McConnell's arrangement of *Damn That Dream* is pretty but empty and vapid. On other cuts the percussion is forever edgy and overly busy—mostly latin, occasionally funky, rarely swinging. The whole album sounds rigid and stiff.

The **University of Miami Concert Jazz Band's** two-LP set, *Picadilly Lilly*, is an unusually bright and consistent program of original pieces and some outside work. The writing is more often than not above par and

wraps nicely around the soloists. The title piece by Dave Liebman is especially straight and swinging, while *4414* integrates orchestra and synthesizer with an exceptionally musical balance. Pete Minger, with Count Basie for a decade and now at the university, takes a warm, shapely trumpet solo on *Skylark*. Discounting one or two sleaze tracks (a grimy throwaway called *Free Time*, for instance), there's at least one very nice LP to be found in this two-fer.

It takes most of side one for the band from the **University of Northern Colorado** to find a substantial groove, but the search is never sloppy or slipshod. For a few lovely seconds leading into Sandy Anderson's vocal on *We Could Be Flying*, a wonderfully simple mood is struck. But slowly it starts to balloon into an oversize mound of high-volume virtuosity. Yet *Urban Lung Comedy*, which opens side two, starts simple and swinging and holds its perspectives. Dana Marsh (piano) is the only soloist and plays with solid savvy. The chart is a relative gem among the routine college band huffers-and-puffers. Another fine arrangement of *Don't Get Around Much Anymore* begins with a tongue-in-cheek red herring of an introduction before falling back on Kirk Jones' bass trombone. But the reed section steals the show with some fluent ensemble playing.

An unexpected encore from the **University of Northern Colorado** is *Hot IV*, an album of jazz vocals by a remarkable 22-voice ensemble somewhere between Manhattan Transfer and the Double Six of Paris. The material has some nice twists, such as a witty parody of *Pennies From Heaven*, including the verse. *I Hear Music* is a complete delight, as is *Old Times* and *Come Rain Or Come Shine*. *Infatuated* is also excellent, although opened up too much. *Boogie Down* is a waste of the talents of this fine group.

*Hot Big Band Jazz: Live At The Satellite*, from **California St. University at Fresno**, is the most believable college big band set of the batch. It's also the best recorded, which may have something to do with it—open and refreshingly natural. There is no information provided on arrangements, but an otherwise exciting *Yardbird Suite* is broken by a gratuitously academic capella chorus after the opening ensemble. Neal Griffin and David Wolfe put things back on track with swaggering reed solos. The feel is straightahead swinging music, save for a pretty but rather too-serious burnished brass chart on *Song Bird*. *Rhythm Machine* and *Party Hearty* are played with plenty of spirit and drive. A first-rate live session; one of the best.

A variety of small groups, none larger than eight, make up **Arizona State University's** *Basking* LP. The mix-and-match groups and hop-scotching from style to style, however, leaves the album without focus. A dixieland track comes off as a bit patronizing. Better they should have played honestly in this genre rather than kid it. It's an easy target for players too lazy to address seriously the often interesting repertoire and disciplines of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

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# MUSIC FOR THE MIRACLE

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# RECORD REVIEWS

this now-unfashionable style. *Stella By Starlight* has a surface loveliness, but is really too long and ultimately a little boring. Other pieces range from straight Miles (*Freddie The Freeloader*) to a couple of original modern things.

One reason the quality of the musicianship is so good on the preceding LPs is the farm system of high school bands, a sampling of which follows. The virtuosity on *We've Got What* by the **Hall High School Concert**

**Band** from West Hartford CT, is in bold-face italics from the title tune on. It begins as a somewhat mindless caricature of *I've Got Rhythm* which develops some fine ensemble strength later on, especially from the reeds. But the look-ma-no-hands tempo is far too fast to leave any space for phrasing or swing. *Vine Street Rumble*, a Nestico/Basie chart, is generally relaxed, despite a grossly overbearing bass line. Baritonist Mike Cohen proves himself a first-rate soloist, both here

and on a two-tempo ride through *Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most*. *Caravan*, the closer, is a flaring, brassy, Kentonesque bore that rambles on for 12 minutes with an over-indulgent cadenza that doodles on for five minutes. The band director would do well to observe what Tizol and Ellington did with this material in three minutes once upon a time.

The **Hemet High School Jazz Ensemble** of California has built a reputation as one of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 55

## NEW RELEASES

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

### NILVA

**Ronnie Mathews**, cohesive trio of the pianist, Ray Drummond, and Alvin Queen, so SORRY PLEASE. . . . **Bob Cunningham**, first time out as a leader, the vet bassist colors the trio sides with subtle synth lines, WALKING BASS. **John Collins**, longtime mainstream guitarist's debut leader LP was also Dolo Coker's last vinyl appearance, THE INCREDIBLE. **Alvin Queen**, purposeful drummer fronts hot sextet (Terence Blanchard, John Hicks, etc.), JAMMIN' UPTOWN.

### LEO

**Homo Liber**, Siberian musicians Yuri Yukechev (piano) and Vladimir Tolkachev (reeds), UNTITLED. **Misha Lobko Sextet**, the leader's various clarinets and poetry by Anna Akhmatova highlight these four RITUALS. **Giancarlo Nicolai Trio**, live Swiss recording of four originals by the guitar/bass/drums group, GIANCARLO NICOLAI TRIO.

### MCA

**Edgar Meyer**, bassist/pianist waxes w/ some of the best "newgrass" musicians (Sam Bush, Bela Fleck, Mark O'Connor), UNFOLDING. **Albert Lee**, in-demand axeslinger (just ask Eric Clapton) twangs and tears through eight rockish instrumentals, SPEECHLESS. **Robert Greenidge/Michael Utley**, steel drummer and synthesist create a refreshing Caribbean-pop fusion, MAD MUSIC.

### INDEPENDENTS

**Chet Baker**, trumpeter fronts '85 trio session of sensitive interaction on seven standards, from Sonet Records, CANDY. **Paris Reunion Band**, attempt to recapture the expatriate moods of Paris jazz in the '60s, w/ Johnny Griffin, Woody Shaw, others, from Sonet, FRENCH COOKING. **Guitars Unlimited**, Ulf Wakenius and Peter Almqvist duo on acoustic guitars and tackle Djangoish material, from Sonet, ACOUSTIC SHOKK. **Metropolitan**

**Bopera House**, young quintet hits the hard-bop repertoire with gusto, from VSOP Records, STILL COMIN' ON UP. **Various Artists**, reissued '57 compilation of tracks by pianists Carl Perkins, Jimmy Rowles, Paul Smith, Gerald Wiggins, and Lou Levy, from VSOP, PIANO PLAYHOUSE. **Scotty Young**, Scots-born bassist leads West Coast quintet, from Riza Records, OUTSIDE IN. **Medicine Bow Quartet**, Rocky Mountain quartet touches on latin and straightahead sounds, from Medicine Bow Records, MBO. **Fattburger**, original material from the California quintet, via Optimism Records, ONE OF A KIND. **Robert Lowe**, r&b-influenced Detroit native premieres his lyrical guitar on LP, from Lowe-Down Records, DOUBLE DIP. **Barbara Reed**, original songs supported by L.A.'s studio finest, from Rare Sound Records, THIS WAS MEANT TO BE. **Jenny Ferris**, first LP from a Bay Area canary, from Erik Records, NOT SO LONG AGO.

**Sonny Costanzo**, trombonist fronts three LPs of varying characteristics, all from Mimo Records: romantic tunes, FOR LOVERS AND OTHER FRIENDS; solos with strings, MY FUNNY VALENTINE; a latinesque blowing date w/ first-call quintet, ONLY TRUST YOUR HEART. **Jay Corre**, Buddy Rich's '60s tenor soloist hits the quartet trail, from Onix Records, AND THE WORLD CITIZENS. **Yves Bouliane/John Heward**, bass/drums duo of a vital sensibility, from CIAC Records, MASSE AUTIERS CONTROLE. **Elizabeth Caumont**, French vocalist does Monk, Corea, Parker, and others, from Carlyne Music, ELIZABETH CAUMONT. **Rene Urteger**, French pianist goes solo on almost all original material, from Carlyne Music, JAZZMAN. **Chris Burn/John Butcher**, sound explorations for piano and saxes, from Bead Records, FONETIKS. **Carwin Gysling**, octet from the Netherlands play their pianist's charts, from Cat Records, NORTHERN LIGHTS. **Het Fluitekruidt**, hot dance music in the style of the '30s, from Cat Records, DELIRIUM. **Alan Simon**, pianist presents quartet program with a classical touch, from Cadence Jazz Records, RAINSPASH.

**John Lee Hooker**, first new recording in eight years for the King of the Boogie incorporates some surprising musical curves, from Pausa Records, JEALOUS. **Otis "Smokey" Smothers**, guitar fixture on the Chicago blues scene, with a down-home feel, from Red Beans Records, GOT MY EYES

ON YOU. **Chris Thomas**, young Louisiana bluesman debuts on disc, from Arhoolie Records, THE BEGINNING. **Fiacco Jimenez**, Tex-Mex conjunto accordionist keeps 'em dancing, from Arhoolie, AY TE DEJO EN SAN ANTONIO. **Beausoleil**, cajun dance music by the fiddler Michael Doucet and his sextet, from Arhoolie, ALLONS A LAFAYETTE. **Milton Cardona**, percussion and chants based on Lucumi and Santeria beliefs, from American Clavé Records, BEMBE. **Astor Piazzolla**, the Charlie Parker of the accordion's *neuvo tango* (new tango) from Argentina, via American Clavé, LIVE. **Kip Hanrahan**, musician auteur's EP includes alter ego Jack Bruce and the usual eclectic combination of regulars, from American Clavé, A FEW SHORT NOTES FROM THE END RUN. **Malcolm Daiglish**, solo hammer dulcimer sounds of mostly original design, from Windham Hill Records, JOGGING THE MEMORY. **The Blues Busters**, Memphis blues quintet add a rocky undercurrent to their stylings, from High Water Records, BUSTED! **Jubirt Sisters**, Memphis trio ala the Pointers, only on the blues side of the tracks, from High Water, LADIES SING THE BLUES.

**Alphonse Mouzon**, electric drummer's electric quartet electrifies the airwaves, from Pausa, BACK TO JAZZ. **Ned Rothenberg**, saxophone hieroglyphics in solo and duo (w/ John Zorn) configurations, from Lumina Records, TRESPASS. **Orthodontics**, sax/drums/keyboards/vocals trio produced by Fred Frith (for a clue), from Rift Records, LUMINOUS BIPEDS. **Duncan Trio**, three synths team up for lush and lyrical electric textures, from Spooky Pooch Records, BARON OCHS. **Gordon Monahan**, idiosyncratic manipulation of a piano creates curious sounds, from GM Records, PIANO MECHANICS. **David Olliver**, pianist/marimbist and frequent cohorts Dan Brubeck (perc.) and Paul McCandless (reeds), from Damiana Records, MARISHKA. **Timothy Donahue**, fretless electric and fretless electric harp guitars, plus occ. guests of varying instrumentation, from Avalon Records, THE FIFTH SEASON. db

### MAIL ORDER SOURCES

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

## Music Under Glass

How many of you have ever made a record? Or even dreamed of making a record? Nearly all musicians make tapes at one time or another, either as a look in the sonic mirror or to market a band, but far fewer are ready to make the investment of time and money to get out a personalized piece of vinyl. There often seems to be an insurmountable barrier to reach that goal of being able to say, "I put it on wax." Well, today you can dream about going from tapes to compact disc without ever considering vinyl at all. Someday you'll be able to say, "Yeah, I put it under glass."

Digital Music Products has been doing just that for some time now. First they put out a series of digitally recorded tapes by well- and not-so-well-known jazz artists (see my *db* review, Mar. 84). Now they've released the same and additional sessions on CD. No records. None planned. Their releases are well-conceived and well-made in all respects (artistry, engineering, packaging, and, as well as can be expected, marketing).

It was a pleasure to hear **Warren Bernhardt's** *Trio '83* (C-441) again, as that tape was one of the year's sleepers for me, getting more play than just about any other in the small cassette library stashed under the front seat of my VW, except for Roger Tory Peterson's *Bird Songs Of North America*. Bernhardt's Hamburg Steinway sounds amazingly rich and alive, focused-on and bowing-toward Bill Evans; Eddie Gomez's bass has lots of likeable, plump presence, and Peter Erskine's brushed skins swish appropriately. The tunes wear well, expanding and contracting with the sensitive conspiracy of the players. Five stars for the surprise and the continuity. Sixty minutes of playing time was one way that DMP rewarded the listener for the extra investment; it's still one of the reasons to let this fine album, virtually showing an "extra side" in total time and total immersion—even fuller and more richly present on CD—spin on.

I liked guitarist **Joe Beck** better on tape, playing standards in the trio on *Relaxin'* (C-444), than his CD with a studio sextet playing none-too-memorable originals on *Friends* (C-446). The tape seemed an especially fulfilling outing for this often-overproduced musician, as he could really relax and let his mind unwind, whereas this slightly hyper sextet date, with masters of scrubbed glibness (drummer Steve Gadd and saxophonist Mike Brecker) let matters almost fall into the throwaway studio bag. Yet Beck's own

warm playing comes through strongest, and redeems the outing.

**Bob Mintzer's Big Band** blows through the eight full-length originals on *Incredible Journey* (C-451) with the dedication and aplomb usually found only with long-established, hard-working ensembles. There are many loving references to the charts of Thad Jones in the Jones/Lewis Big Band, with whom Mintzer played tenor during its latter days on many a Monday night at the Village Vanguard. DMP producer and engineer Tom Jung shows a light hand here, piping the sax section (the world's first all-Jewish?) on a single mic and giving Mintzer his head to fly with his mates, in this particularly refreshing jazz orchestra CD. The chartwriting and blowing are good, clean fun.

Concert pianist **Jackson Berkey** plays easy-going popularizations of romantic impressionists with a string orchestra on a new CD from American Gramophone, which is branching out from its all Mannheim Steamroller catalog. *Ballade* (AG-371), featuring expansions of piano pieces by Debussy and Rachmaninoff and Satie's *Gymnopedies*, shimmers and glows: it's just fine for candlelight and champagne overlooking the full moon twinkling on the surf. There is no real jazz content here, but the strings are real and sound it. Somewhat didactic notes tell us, contrary to fashion, much about the composers and the pieces, but nothing about the musicians.

**Jim Pepper**, an American Indian saxophonist who has acquitted himself well in the company of Charlie Haden and Paul Motian, is up to his old conjuring tricks on *Comin' And Goin'* (Ryko CD-10001), where he pretty much lays down his gritty, pungent tenor sax—the Gato Barbieri of the Great Plains—and picks up the cudgels of the Indian Question. There's much limp filler on this recording, despite the presence of Don Cherry, Collin Walcott, and John Scofield; rough-cut vocal harangue, thumping beats, and whining chant that may be long on native American roots but short on musical interest, I think, for most readers. Toward the end, Pepper plays some good sturdy horn and bails out the date. Like DMP, Ryko, based in Salem, MA, doesn't make records; in fact, they don't even make cassettes—only CDs. Their eclectic, mostly licensed catalog includes Doc Watson, Phil Woods, Jerry Garcia, The Residents, the soundtrack to *Divya*, and shortly, some new and old Frank Zappa. What a mixed bag!

*The Symphony Of A Jazz Piano* (Interface 33C38-7825) marks the re-emergence, at least in Japan, of bebop pianist and

composer **George Wallington**, who, along with clarinetist Tony Scott, shares the distinction of being among the jazz world's most long-standing dropouts. Born Giacinto Figlia in Palermo, Sicily in 1924, Wallington cut quite a name for himself on 52nd Street in the bop era, following in the distinguished footsteps of Bud Powell, working with Dizzy Gillespie and Serge Chaloff, and composing at least a few classics (*Godchild* and *Lemon Drop*, immortalized by Miles Davis and Woody Herman, respectively). Here, after a 30-year silence, he winds out a dozen dense-textured, similar-sounding originals, long on harmonic complexity and short on dynamic and emotional variety. Played on the Hamburg Steinway in RCA's Studio A in New York, they are rather hollowly recorded by Max Wilcox, Grammy-winning engineer for Artur Rubinstein.

**Ananda** is the name of a quintet of Berklee College associates, under the quiet leadership of composer/guitarist Claudio Ragazzi, who have effected an impressive fusion of South American and contemporary jazz influences. *Amazonia* (Sonic Atmospheres 311) offers some intriguingly layered pieces with Ragazzi's malleable guitar and catchy melodies, placid but bright oboe/flute leads from Bob Kroeger and Hyman Katz, and firm rhythms from electric bassist Joe Goodman (composer of the title track), then-regular drummer Martin Richards, and guest percussionist Paulinho da Costa, whose colors shine on CD. This Panamerican/Oregon sound is rather distinctive, though I'd prefer a little more improvisational oomph from the horns. The CD sounds just that much brighter and separated than the album, as most of these do where I've had a chance to hear both. Ragazzi has little to do with traditional Argentine music, having absorbed blues and rock as well as modern jazz, but little hints of dotted dance rhythms creep in here and there to spice up the set.

This compendium of recent CD releases sound marginally brighter and crisper than the digital tapes and substantially more so than the records, when I've had a chance to compare them. A few companies—DMP and the Japanese imports—take the pains to include more tracks (up to an hour in these cases), but the majority of these CDs contain just normal LP playing time (around 40 minutes). As with all forms of recorded music, there'll be some you'll cherish, and a few you'll wonder how they got there in the first place. "Hell," you might find yourself saying, "I can make a better CD than that!"

—fred bouchard

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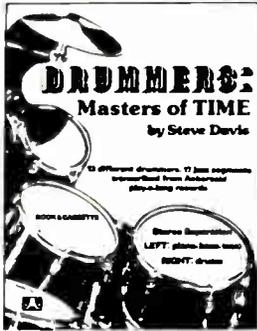
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# BOOK REVIEWS

**RECOLLECTIONS** by Marion Brown (Frankfurt: JAS Publications, 1984, 285 pp., \$20.00, numbered/hand-signed, paperback).

**MARION BROWN DISCOGRAPHY** by Hugo DeCraen and Eddy Janssens (Brussels: New Think! Publications, 1985, 48 pp., \$5.00, paperback).

Charles Mingus' *Beneath The Underdog*. Art Pepper's *Straight Life*. Billie Holiday's *Lady Sings The Blues*. My private reading list of books by musicians (titles recently read or re-read, not books newly released) spills over with *Sturm und Drang*, personal demons, and slow-boil tragedy. Whatever their degree of truth-telling, all of these volumes confirm stereotypes that the jazz public maintains about people who make the music. In this context, *Recollections* by Marion Brown (born 1935 in Atlanta, Georgia) comes as a pleasant surprise. The subject is an artist in equipoise with his environment—an individual who may have suffered, like his illustrious predecessors in the music, but whose strength is abiding: "Mind and body," in Brown's words, "are unified through memory and muscle. I remember things about Atlanta when I was young up there, things that kept me warm all those years that I spent out in the cold."

*Recollections* is not an autobiography. Subtitled "Essays, Drawings, Miscellanea," it is a remarkably congruent assemblage of documentary media. The volume is arranged so that a three-part interview (with Brown) forms a connective "bridge" between each of the five essays, 13 ink drawings, and five compositional scores. Through written and spoken words, pictorial lines and shadings, and musical notation, the elements in this presentation add up to a telling portrait of the saxophonist and his points of view.

The interview explores intriguingly diverse areas thematically and anecdotally, including: the multi-instrumentalist (something Brown passionately concludes he is *not*: "The saxophone is a lifetime job"); living for a week with Brian Eno while guesting on a Harold Budd session ("That is one of my favorite records"); how he and Sirone came to New York from Atlanta to find their "own kind" of players; and the role of the church in black life as the repository of knowledge about black history ("All of our myths are in the spirituals"). Brown's own writings (of crystalline logic and academic sobriety) range in subject matter from the visual



Marion Brown

arts-oriented "The Negro in the Fine Arts" and a study of "Form and Expression" in the music of Duke Ellington, to "A Love Supreme: The Spiritual Awakening of John Coltrane" and elaboration on the author's musical methods for the extended improvisation *Afternoon Of A Georgia Faun* (ECM 1004). The drawings, which pay tribute to such figures as Thelonious Monk, Blind Lemon Jefferson, and Paul Desmond, showcase a new art form Brown embraced in 1981.

The music of Marion Brown, at its best, is a meeting ground for the jazz tradition and experimental ideas—and so is *Recollections*. From its dedication to Brown's music teacher Wayman Carver, one of the first jazz flutists and a member of the Chick Webb Band, onward, *Recollections* aptly reflects the uninterrupted continuity of old with new. Brown places the '60s "New Thing" within the natural progression or chain of events in the music. (Today he is still probably most widely known as a sideman on Coltrane's *Ascension* album.) His signature singing vibrato, his purity of tone as an altoist, unmistakably hark back to "a certain aspect of sound; the sensuous, the ballads, and romanticism with a certain distance" of Johnny Hodges and Charlie Parker. But *Recollections* also demonstrates how the saxophonist has developed his all-around balanced identity as ethnomusicologist (Brown calls himself a "world musician") and contemporary composer. "I don't play words," Brown emphatically asserts. "... I'm not putting down anything that you could express in words." Understood in that sense, this collection presents the reader with images and ideas that can contribute to a better understanding of the performed and recorded evidence of Brown's music. They are a pleasure to read and see; but they sent me flying to

the music to discern its meaning.

The *Marion Brown Discography*, a complementary volume, addresses the specific issue of this evidence. The book opens with a brief background statement about the artist. A sample entry preceding the discography offers a clear schematic explanation about how to use the listings. Employing the format of David Wild's Ornette and Trane discographies, the profusely footnoted (62 footnotes!) discography proper lists Brown's appearances on vinyl in chronological order. Further on, entries are cross-indexed as to records issued as a leader, albums not issued under his own name, names of participating musicians, and recordings not issued, among other subject headings.

*Recollections* is available from Juergen Abi Schmitt, Eschbornerlandstr. 14, D-6000 Frankfurt 90, Federal Republic of Germany. *Marion Brown Discography* may be obtained domestically through Cadence/North Country Distributors, Redwood, NY 13679. —peter kostakis

## UNFINISHED DREAM: THE MUSICAL WORLD OF RED CALLENDER by

Red Callender and Elaine Cohen (London/New York: Quartet Books, 1985, 239 pp., \$24.95, hardcover).

In this warm, engaging autobiography veteran bassist George "Red" Callender relates many of the important steps and working associations that have marked his five-decade career in music. Born in 1916 in Haynesville, VA, but raised in Atlantic City, NJ, Callender took up music at an early age, receiving a solid grounding in the fundamentals of music at Bordentown School. Following several years experience with various regional bands on the East Coast and in the Midwest, he settled in Los Angeles in 1936, where, except for a two-year Hawaiian stay in the late 1940s, he's resided since.

As one of the more important bassists bridging the swing and bebop/modernist styles, Callender has worked with an extraordinarily wide range of resident and visiting jazz musicians in L.A., from Louis Armstrong and other traditionalists to modernists like James Newton and John Carter, and virtually everyone in between. His solid musicianship and thoroughgoing professionalism, no less than his enthusiastic dedication to jazz, have enabled him to work comfortably, and often with distinction, with all of them.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 63



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**1 O.T.B. O.T.B.** (from *OUT OF THE BLUE*, Blue Note). Michael Philip Mossman, trumpet, composer; Robert Hurst, bass; Ralph Peterson, drums.

It's nice. It swings. It definitely sounds like a Blue Note record, but a recent one. The bass sound gives it away. There's a direct sound to it, the direct signal of the acoustic bass. It has a presence to it. Was that *Out of the Blue*? Ralph Peterson? The last time I heard him play was in Japan, and he was playing a lot busier, overplaying; but on this recording he's right in-the-pocket. It's good. Three stars.

**2 SHELLY MANNE.** *CHEROKEE* (from *2-3-4*, Impulse). Manne, drums; George Duvivier, bass; Eddie Costa, piano; Coleman Hawkins, tenor saxophone.

Shelly Manne. It started off great—tremendous energy, real exciting. Shelly was one of my favorite drummers, not only as a drummer but as a human being. If I've emulated anyone it was probably him. I miss him. I really admired all the different kinds of music he played, any setting. He was always interested in exploring the different sounds of percussion instruments. I enjoyed all the records he made on Contemporary, but I don't have this one. He always sounded great. Four stars for the recording. Five for Shelly.

**3 THIRD KIND OF BLUE.** *IT JUST CAN'T BE THAT WAY* (from *THIRD KIND OF BLUE*, Minor Music). Ronnie Burrage, drums, composer; Anthony Cox, bass; John Purcell, tenor saxophone.

Amazingly funky. Very, very hip, the drumming. It has a real street feeling to it. It reminds me of some drummers I've heard on the streets of New York. I mean that as a compliment. There's an energy and a looseness about it. I'd give the tune four stars, but the drumming takes it up to five.

**4 PAUL MOTIAN.** *HIDE AND GO SEEK* (from *JACK OF CLUBS*, Soul Note). Motian, drums, composer; Ed Schuller, bass; Joe Lovano, Jim Pepper, saxophone; Bill Frisell, guitar.

That's Bill Frisell, who has a one-in-a-million sound. Is that Joe Lovano? Paul Motian? I like the way they play the waltz. It's not the most amazing tune. It didn't show to the greatest effect Paul's playing, but that's the way Paul is—music first. There's something very pure, childlike, in Paul's drumming. I love everything Frisell plays, every note, every sound.

## Peter Erskine

BY MICHAEL BOURNE

Just out of high school at the end of the 1960s, drummer Peter Erskine was on the road with the Stan Kenton big band. He's been among the brightest stars at the drums ever since. He stayed three years with Kenton, then finished his education at Indiana University. Maynard Ferguson hired him next, and while working with Ferguson, Jaco Pastorius heard him and called him to work with Weather Report, by then the most popular jazz group in the world. It might have seemed a quantum rhythmic leap from big band swing to funk and fusion, but Erskine is a drummer both adept and adaptable—and a swinger whatever the groove.

Erskine stayed with Weather Report four years, then joined the co-op Steps Ahead (with Eddie Gomez, Don Grolnick, Mike Mainieri, and Mike Brecker). Meanwhile, he moved to Los Angeles and frequented recordings with Joe Henderson, George Cables, and Bobby Hutcherson, eventually recording his own *Peter Erskine* (Contemporary 14010). Joe Zawinul encouraged him to return to New York and to Weather Report. They've re-



TOM COPI

He's one of the great musicians today. Four stars.

**5 BUDDY RICH.** *UPTIGHT* (from *SWINGING NEW BIG BAND*, Pacific Jazz). Rich, drums; Jay Corne, tenor saxophone; Stevie Wonder, composer; Oliver Nelson, arranger.

I played this chart in high school. Buddy played great rock & roll drums—he's the greatest drummer ever to hold a pair of sticks. His snare drum technique I don't think anyone will ever match, and he can be very musical and really swing. He gets a great sound out of the instrument. When he plays that fill, it's just four bars, but he can do more with four bars than most people. I enjoyed this a lot when it came out. It was a great band. Three stars for the tune. Five stars for Buddy.

**6 ELVIN JONES/McCOY TYNER.** *HIP JONES* (from *LOVE & PEACE*, Trio). Jones, drums; Tyner, piano; Pharoah Sanders, tenor saxophone, composer.

One hundred stars for Elvin! He's my drumming hero. Everything he plays sounds amazingly hip to me. Listening to him is like what I imagine it's like driving a Ferrari a hundred miles an hour

around mountain curves. You don't know what's coming next. His sound, the way he sets the rhythm, the velocity, everything about the way Elvin plays is great.

recorded a new album, and this summer Erskine will tour with the band, minus Wayne Shorter, now known as Weather Update. He's also a regular with John Abercrombie's trio and Marc Johnson's *Bass Desires* (ECM 25040-1).

This was his second Blindfold Test; the first was in *db*, June '83. He was given no information about the records played.

**7 TONY WILLIAMS.** *LIFE OF THE PARTY* (from *FOREIGN INTRIGUE*, Blue Note). Williams, drums, composer.

Tony! Is this the new album? That's pretty hilarious the way he uses the drum machine. It's not state-of-the-art, but what's state-of-the-art? Tony meets the music on his own terms. A lot of drummers, myself included, will change our instrument setup for different kinds of music. Tony doesn't. He's kept constant, and that's really important. Very few people do that in their lives. I really admire him.

Tony is very, very hip, and has been ever since he first recorded with Miles. It's so stunning to go back and listen to that. I guess he didn't know you couldn't do that. Tony comes out of the tradition, but he, more than just about any other drummer, did something new. Elvin did, too. Elvin rolls about more and there's more continuity to it, but the angularity of Tony's playing is outstanding, a little more striking. What did I give Elvin, 100 stars? I'll give Tony 99! **db**

## Marc Johnson

From the introspection of pianist Bill Evans to the twin-guitar attack of Bass Desires, Johnson provides the solid foundation.

BY MICHAEL BOURNE

Marc Johnson looks too young to have done so much. Called a *wunderkind* when he played bass with Bill Evans from 1978 until the pianist's death in 1980, he was almost inevitably heralded as the "new" Scott LaFaro. He's still, after 10 years in the majors, considered one of the young lions.

Johnson was born in Nebraska in 1953. He started at the piano, learning from his father, pianist Howard Johnson, but then switched to cello. "I was intimidated by my father's ability as a pianist," he said. "I was a mediocre cellist until I was 16, when the high school music director was losing his bass players to graduation. I gave the bass a shot and had such a quick success with it that it snowballed. I went from being the worst cellist in the section to being the best bass player." When he entered North Texas State, he was already, at age 19, working professionally with the Fort Worth Symphony. While still in school, Johnson and fellow student Lyle Mays recorded together with the One O'Clock Lab Band, a record awarded a Grammy nomination in 1975.

Johnson joined Woody Herman a year after graduating and recorded three LPs with the Young Thundering Herd. "I like big bands," he said, "but I knew I was headed for smaller ensembles. Playing with Bill Evans was the only thing I wanted to do."

He'd encountered Evans on record when a teenager. "I remember one summer my dad had this album, *Alone*, by Bill. I played it and at first I thought it was kind of boring, but I listened and listened and it got under my skin. I was infatuated with his playing, his music, his trios, and I just started buying nothing but Bill Evans records. I got totally immersed in him."

Scott LaFaro and Eddie Gomez, the players Johnson followed with Evans, were also inspirations. "I remember the first time I was checking out Scott LaFaro. I said 'Wow, what are those notes he's playing?' Some of his solos were like horn lines. I wanted to do that. I saw Eddie Gomez when he came through Dallas



BASS DESIRES: Johnson (left), with cohorts Peter Erskine, John Scofield, and Bill Frisell.

and did a clinic, and just seeing how he approached playing the bass opened up vistas for me. I knew I wanted to do that and wondered if I'd ever have the ability."

While on the road with Herman, Evans invited Johnson to sit in at the Village Vanguard. "I was fortunate that I caught Bill at a time in his life when he was making a change. Eddie had been with him for 11 years. Bill had a different attitude. He saw it as a building time in his personal life. He'd just been separated from his wife, and music was central to his life again. It had a lot to do with his acceptance of me and my inexperience. I'm very grateful that he saw a lot of potential. I was in fantasyland." Johnson considers the two-volume *Paris Concert* (Elektra/Musician 60164-1 and 60311-1) the trio's best recorded work.

After his time with Evans, Johnson stayed in New York, free-lancing and playing with the Mel Lewis big band on Monday nights. "Being at the Village Vanguard once a week kept my face in the scene," he said, "and I was able to spin other gigs off that gig." He joined Stan Getz in 1981 and stayed two years; he also worked with Bob Brookmeyer, Toots Thielemans, JoAnne Brackeen, Philly Joe Jones, and John Lewis. He's featured on the latter's recording of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* (Philips 824 381-1).

"After I left Stan I had some strong intentions to play for larger audiences," he said. "I wanted to play with guitars, and as soon as I made this decision Jim

Hall called me up." John Abercrombie is another guitarist Johnson appreciates: "Playing with John gives me that same musical high that I was getting with Bill."

Bass Desires, his newest project and his first as a leader, features two other young masters of the guitar, John Scofield and Bill Frisell, plus drummer Peter Erskine. "I'm a leader in quotation marks," he said. "I see myself as a co-ordinator, just getting the guys together and coming up with a few tunes. Everybody's writing." They've recorded some extraordinary fusion (ECM 25040-1), but as they all have other commitments Bass Desires will only be occasional. "I think right now we're forming an identity," he said, "but I have no attachment to it being anything more than what it is at the moment. I'm not trying to make it a 30-week touring ensemble. The idea was to have a band, get an album, and just go on the road a few weeks a year. That would make me happy."

Meanwhile, he's still working with Abercrombie. "I like trios," he said. "For a bass player who wants to solo it's a great situation." He's also excited about Abercrombie's trio—most recently heard on *Current Events* (ECM 1311)—becoming a quartet with saxophonist Michael Brecker.

Another project is Crazy Quilt, a group he's started with his wife, classical flutist Stephanie Jutt. "It's a jazz trio at the heart of it," he said, "and the pianist accompanies Stephanie in some classical pieces. There's a classical singer who can

PETER SCHAAF

also sing jazz standards. I do some improvisation. I'm the jazz hold-out. Everybody else goes both ways. It's all American composers. We play anything from Charles Ives and Samuel Barber to Frank Zappa, a thing called *The Black Page*."

If all that were not enough, Johnson might be recording in Brazil with guitarist Helio Delmiro soon, and he's playing again with North Texas schoolmate Lyle Mays. "Lyle and I have kept a musical connection over the years," he said, "and we're going out on a tour with a trio later this year. Right now for me it's a busy period." But will his Dorian Gray looks endure? "I started playing professionally in 1977," he said, "and I really looked young then. I think the road has put a few lines on my face." db

## SCHOOL BANDS cont. from page 44

the major bands of its kind, and the flawless craftsmanship is all over this LP (their third). Jeff Adams (trombone) and Dave Brown (flugelhorn) float in and out of one another's solos like two shades of milk chocolate on *Quiet Time*. *Yoda's Groove* is a fusion chops-tester of interest more for its remarkable ensemble acrobatics than any real content. The percussion sounds hi-tech and canned, but the sound is in-character of the jazz-rock genre. Side two is another world and another band entirely, the Hemet Symphonic Band, making this the demonstration record to end them all. But a very good one nonetheless.

The Arts Magnet High School of Dallas demonstrates not only a high grade of musicianship on a pair of LPs from 1984 and '85, but a bevy of arranging talents as well, which include vocalists. Donessa Washington is very commanding in her scat work on *Land Of Make Believe* (on the *Milestones* LP) and *Lovers* (on *Impressions*). The instrumental pieces are divided between combo and band titles, all performed with the enthusiasm of young players itching to show their stuff.

Not too far away in Houston is the High School for the Performing Arts, which has come up with *Eye Of The Hurricane* (Mark 20622). This set keeps its eye entirely on big band pieces and has a degree of focus the mix-and-match collections lack. Marvin Stamm and Lou Marini are guest soloists on trumpet and tenor. Also the repertoire is relatively free of fusion clutter, making for a higher quality overall program. There is a musicality here, too, that eschews pretentious tempos and overblown ensembles. And the musicianship ranks with the best.

—john mcdonough

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# CAUGHT

## CRAIG HARRIS

### NIGHTSHADE/BROWN UNIVERSITY

CAMBRIDGE, MA—As a trombonist, Craig Harris is certainly one of the sharpest of the younger players. As a composer, he's not without a flair for hanging together curt, taut phrases, whether it's to rifle them in search of their active ingredients, or to stretch them out in hopes of discovering their hidden pockets (as he's done on extended pieces like *Harlem Night Song* and *Nigerian Sunset*). It's frustrating, then, to realize that the two records that started off his career as a leader (*Aboriginal Affairs*, India Navigation 1060 and *Black Bone*, Soul Note 1055) were marred by a lack of focus and bands that simply never jelled. His third record, *Tributes* (OTC 804), proved that his problems were fading, and a recent pair of New England concerts underscored the notion that at the moment Harris is definitely hitting a stride with his slide.

During a quartet date at Nightstage—the newest club addition to the surging Cambridge jazz-and-blues scene—Harris, along with cohorts Andrew Cyrille on drums, Anthony Cox on bass, and Chico Freeman on reeds, turned a host of original pieces into blowing vehicles of cool frenzy. Although it was a one-night pick-up gig, the group insecurity that sometimes puts a stamp of tentativeness on such events was absent. The front line of Harris and Freeman pumped their way through the composer's bluesy, drawn-out heads before launching solos that were as exhaustive as they were emphatic. Freeman, who's been absent from the New England turf for a couple years, couldn't have sounded more confident. The r&b tinge of a few tunes—especially *Slinky And Kinky*—had him honking a bit, as well as upping the intensity of the riffs with some full-bore circular breathing. A pair of ballads from *Tributes* provided a base for the trombonist's earthy and lamentful musings. Harris has never lacked a warm, wide tone, but this particular night found the sound of his horn positively lush, and he delivered his statements with the relaxed, rambling approach which has come to be a cornerstone of his style. Cox and Cyrille didn't rely on interplay between themselves as much as they toyed with the melodies individually, although neither forsook the job of fortifying Freeman and Harris' solos.

Two weeks later the trombonist was back, this time in Providence with a slight variation of his newest ongoing project,



Chico Freeman

ANDY FREEBERG

*Tailgator's Tales*. On the bandstand were Ronald Shannon Jackson, Fred Hopkins (replacing Bob Stewart), and a trio of horns—Don Byron on clarinet, Roy Campbell on trumpet and flugelhorn, and Harris himself. Although the band was only one instrument larger than the ensemble at Nightstage, the extra horn allowed Harris to flesh out the arrangements, enabling the group to sound fuller than it actually was (a slick lesson learned from past employer Henry Threadgill), and while this night too was full of blistering solos, it was a group personality that was stressed.

With only Hopkins and Jackson on the stage, the lights went out and the Tailgators started spinning their tales. Hopkins set the tone with some mysterious sawing, rife with the abstract lyricism he's a master of. Byron, a young player who uses both the whole horn and the whole history of the instrument, hunted and pecked out a dialog with the bassist. Where was the rest of the band? "Niiih, niiih, niiih," proclaimed a muted Roy Campbell as he strolled in from the back of the hall. "Forooooooh," moaned Harris from the other side of the room. Working their way to the stage, they shifted through a ghostly collective conversation that gave way to Harris' *D.A.S.H.*, a romantic ballad (turned into a stroll by Shannon's brushwork and Hopkins' rhythmic lilt).

A drawn-out soliloquy by Harris on the dijeridoo, an Aborigine wind instrument, gradually turned into *Underground Journey*; the leader's fluency proving that his investigation of the odd horn wasn't just an attempt at exoticism—he

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went from doo-wop to bop on it. This flowing piece prompted a liquid bass-clarinet passage from Byron and hand percussion from Jackson. *Cootie*, a contemporary jump tune dedicated to Ellington's chief growler, was aptly titled; its raucous bounce delivered the flavor of a '40s swingfest.

Harris was wise to balance the concert with such extreme settings, it showed how versatile the ensemble could be. By the time they got down to the neo-funk of *24 Day An Hour*, the crowd had already been won over and the leader's request for some handclapping was met enthusiastically.

—jim macnie

## QUEEN IDA/ FLACO JIMENEZ

### LIBERTY LUNCH

**AUSTIN**—Accordion music, particularly in the South and Southwest, has been so mutated by the intermingling of cultures and musical styles that it has become an ethnomusicologist's nightmare. But while the music's rich and eccentric blend of heritages and innovative interpreters defies easy classification, it also provides unrelentingly enjoyable entertainment of a sort that the feet can quickly comprehend even if the head cannot.

For all its ethnic diversity, the foundation remains dance music, and no matter in which stylistic direction the music swerves the feet remain in rhythmic motion. This is obvious any time a master accordionist plays, but when you put three together, as was done here in a special accordion "Squeeze-Off," the point is driven home with fascinating finality.

Queen Ida, the Grammy-winning San Francisco zydeco star, headlined the triple bill and probably won the "most danceable" award. Although her musical roots are solid, Queen Ida's sound has more commercial appeal than most of the harder-edged Louisiana-based zydeco bands. Her music is more of a pop fusion than the best of the bayous, but it's still an eminently enjoyable sound. She uses the traditional zydeco instrumentation, including a fiddler and washboard player, but takes some of the pungent bite and raw energy out of the music.

It's a gentler, more relaxed sound that rolls along with supple grace and ceaseless syncopation. The washboard rhythms weave with the guitar and fiddle while Ida's smooth work on her button accordion soars above it all. Ida's vocals,



Queen Ida

more in the vein of classic blues ladies like Bessie Smith than in zydeco tradition, add a blues element to the mixture that works well. Wilbur Lewis' washboard work, as well as his energetic demonstration of high-stepping cajun dance moves, nearly stole the show, but Queen Ida's own considerable stage presence prevailed in the end.

Flaco Jimenez, one of the Southwest's most legendary music figures, provided another example of the instrument's versatility with a smooth set of modernized *musica nortena*, a sound that has assimilated German, Mexican, and Texan musical traditions into a Tejano super-sound. Using twin vocal harmonies and Flaco's fluid accordion work, the music flowed easily, all the while bouncing through its mutant polka beat. A slow burning version of *La Bamba* may have been the highlight of the show, but the consistent soulful interaction of Flaco and the band kept the music interesting throughout the set. An encore of *You Are My Sunshine* brought the cross-cultural aspects of the music into fine focus, blending the seemingly disparate musical elements into a logical whole above and beyond its component parts.

Austin accordion star Ponty Bone, a veteran of Joe Ely's early West Texas band, opened the show with a honky-tonk segment that set the stage for the later excursions. His band, the Squeezetones, has a heavier touch than the acts that followed, but the addition of a saxophone and some solid Texas r&b underpinnings gives the occasionally ragged sound a distinctive character of its own.

—michael point

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# PRO SESSION

## How To Put Together A Home Studio For \$5,000

**BY BOB CHRISTIANSON  
(WITH PAT SIMS)**

**A** recording studio for \$5,000? It's possible, according to composer Bob Christianson, whose work as a songwriter, arranger, and synthesist has made him a master studio musician. His experience includes stints as conductor for NBC's Saturday Night Live and the Broadway productions of *Godspell* and *Gilda Radner—Live From New York*; he is also composer of the music for the NBC *Nightly News* and a singer and synth player for many of New York City's major jingle houses.

These days, Christianson works out of a studio in his home in Chelsea, where, equipped with everything from a Harrison Raven 32 x 24 board to a 1939 Steinway Grand, he can produce virtually anything. His current setup cost well above the \$5,000 range, but he knows equipment and remembers the days when the sky was not the limit.

You can put together a studio for \$5,000. The prices of quality equipment have come down so much recently that more and more people can afford to do it themselves. When I put together my first 8-track studio, it cost me close to \$10,000. But the same equipment I had is now better made, has more features available, and is about half the price. So it's actually very easy to get into owning a studio now, and that's why everybody and his grandmother is doing it.

Just because something's 8-track doesn't mean in any way it's semi-professional—you really can get professional results. The main difference I see, having had both 8-track and the more elaborate stuff, is that 8-track requires less maintenance, though you have to treat it a little more carefully.

The best thing is that there's a lot of good equipment out there to choose from. One piece of equipment I saw recently really knocked my socks off. It's a new recorder Tascam just came out with—an 8-track recorder and mixer all in one unit that costs around \$3,195. You get a board with 12 inputs in it that you can hook anything up to. Instead of using half-inch tape like the bigger ones do, it uses quarter-inch tape, the same as the Fostex standard—this greatly reduces your tape costs, since quarter-inch tape is about a third as expensive as half-

inch tape. I couldn't believe how good it sounded.

You could combine that with the Yamaha Rev 7. This new unit costs about \$1,000. It's a state-of-the-art digital reverb with effects that has all the solid programs that the larger \$10,000 units have. And it sounds great. There are a lot of companies making similar units for even less, in the \$600-800 range, so if you're a little resourceful, you can get some incredible stuff.

Then you could buy a cheaper 2-track machine to bounce down to for around \$1,000. And you'll need a mic. A decent vocal mic, a real standby, is the Shure SM57. That's your basic dynamic \$70-85 mic, the one most performers use onstage. If you can only get one mic, that's the one to get. Other companies, like Audio Technica, have come out with their versions of it in about the same ballpark price-wise. I have one that I use for electric guitar and for drums.

That would give you a basic studio for around \$5,000, and you would be getting quality sound. Another way to go would be the Fostex 8-track, which costs about \$2,000. Then budget about \$700 for the two-track bouncedown and for another \$1,000 the Rev 7 or an equivalent. You'd want to spend another thousand—minimum—for a mixer. There are a lot of companies that make decent small 12-input mixers. Tascam makes some less expensive boards, too, and so does Ramsa. There's also Soundcraft's 400B, a small recording board that's reasonably inexpensive.

The important thing for an 8-track machine is to get an 8-buss board. Try to get a board with as many effect sends as possible. The more sends you have, the better, because they free tracks up. An 8-track machine should have at least a 12-input board. And if you're using one of the effect sends with digital delay, you'll want a fader to return the delay so you can equalize it. You always need more faders than the number of tracks you have. For example, I've got 24 tracks and a 32-track board, and I'm getting another module so I'll have 36. That gives me more tracks to return effects to, and I find the more complicated you get, the more flexibility you need. Those extra channels give you that flexibility.

Don't forget to look at the specs for signal-to-noise ratio. See how quiet the board is and check how much headroom it has. An inexpensive board should have at least plus-18 headroom and definitely as many effect sends as possible. The equalization should be three-band: high, mid, and low. If you can find one that's semi-parametric, all the better, but that's

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going to depend on your budget. You should have at least three-band, though, and each band should be at least plus or minus 15 db. Remember that with any of the less expensive machines like the Fostex or Tascam, you're going to need noise reduction if it isn't built-in, and that'll be an additional expense.

If you want to spend more money on microphones, say, or another \$500 on an extra board, there are different reverbs you can look for—digital reverbs. ART makes one that's around \$500-600—cheaper than a Rev 7. Yamaha makes a less expensive version of the Rev 7 that you can find for around \$400. Alesis makes one that's around \$600. And there are a lot of one-space rack digital reverbs now for under \$1,000; a lot of them cost around half that. So, even though I recommend the Rev 7, you can save money by getting a smaller model and then buy a better board. The 12-track Akai is a little more than \$5,000, but that includes tape machine and mixer.

For someone who doesn't have a set of speakers and an amp to begin with, the Fostex 8-track, a \$1,000 mixer (one of the less expensive Teacs or Yamaha), and a \$500 reverb unit—like Yamaha's—is the best way to go. Speakers will cost at least \$200, and a power amp a minimum of \$400.

For someone on a budget, Yamaha NS10M speakers are a good idea.

They're becoming the industry standard now, even in control rooms in big recording studios. They're not expensive, they're accurate, and they put out a lot of volume. Amps should be at least 100 watts a side and that's rms, not peak.

As far as required space, you can do this in your living room. I did, with no acoustic whatever. You've just got to be careful, if you've got your board on a desk or something, not to put the speakers against the wall or on the floor, because they'll use the floor as a resonator and the bass frequencies will come out louder than the mix does.

If you like to listen to music loud and you're in a regular room with hard surfaces—hard walls, and no rugs on the floor—you're going to get an out-of-balance perspective of your sound, because the low end will be magnified like crazy. If you're not careful, you'll do your mix thinking that you have a lot more bass than is actually there. So think about soundproofing. You can use the old egg carton routine, the standby for years. Just cut the cartons in half and nail them to the wall. Rugs or foam rubber work too. Both deflect the low frequencies and keep the sound from bouncing around, so when you listen to the sound you get as accurate a picture as possible of what it's like. That'll do almost as much for making your product sound good as having good equipment. db

## Kessel On Guitar

Though geared toward the novice, Barney Kessel's *Jazz Guitar Improvisation* instructional video (Rumark Video Inc., 200-75 Albert Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B 1G3) is nonetheless a useful tool for learning how to enrich your playing regardless of your level of expertise. Like a jazz version of the PBS instructional series, *Rock School* (hosted by Herbie Hancock), Kessel's video offers the basics on phrasing, fills, grace notes, portamento, and other ways of "fancying up the melody" or exhibiting your own individuality on solos.

A consummate craftsman and spokesman for reason, he lectures on avoiding licks, formulas, and gimmicks in the process of learning to play what you hear. And being strictly from the Charlie Christian school, Kessel doesn't go in for such things as feedback or wang-bar tactics as a means of dressing up a solo. He disdains that whole Hendrixian philosophy, stressing instead a need to exhibit taste, discretion,

and balance in your playing.

In straightforward, no-nonsense terms, Kessel talks about first *internalizing* an idea, then *externalizing* the thought by whistling or humming what you hear in your head, and then finding it on the guitar.

There are lots of useful dos and don'ts here, particularly about contrast and overkill. And Kessel's bottom line is this: "You have to make an overall statement. What you are saying is more important than the equipment you're using or how you're sitting. It's your personal expression. Make it sound rich and interesting."

Well put. Now if only Rumark will release a video explaining how Kessel gets all those lush chordal voicings he's noted for. As an improviser, his ideas are directly out of the Christian school, which may seem dated to some young axe-wielders. Sure, he can get down on the blues, and his ideas are always tasteful and pleasing. But what really makes him great, to my mind, is his encyclopedic knowledge of chord substitutions and his expertise in comping. Show us some of that, Barney! —bill milkowski

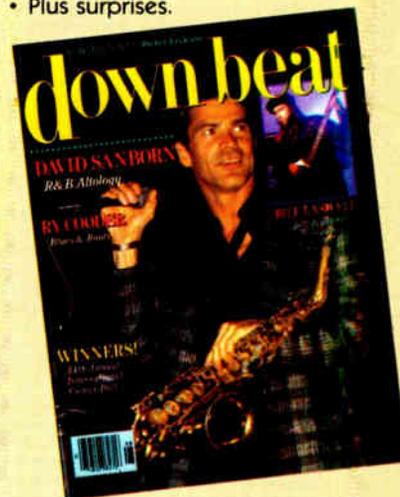
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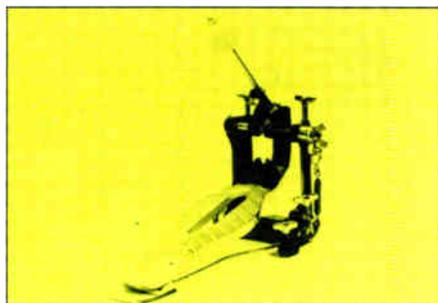
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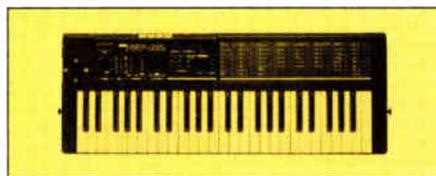


**HSS' Panther Series**

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**Music Industries' OMB-5**

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## GUITAR WORLD



**Stewart-MacDonald's Electric Mandolin**

The StewMac Electric Mandolin from STEWART-MACDONALD MFG. CO. (Athens, OH) features a Parsons-White string bender and the "A" string for double-bends and pedal effects. Available in four- and five-string models, the semi-solid mandolin has a carved curly maple body and neck and a removable back with space for electronics. Its arched ebony fingerboard comes with 22 speed frets and six mother-of-pearl position markers; scale length is 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inches. Other features include a single symmetric-coil humbucking pickup, three-way adjustable height bridge, Grover Rotomatic mini-tuners with a 12-to-one ratio, and tone and volume controls. The StewMac Electric is available with a high-gloss cherry red sunburst finish, and it comes with a custom-designed hardshell case.



**Guild's S-261**

The S-261 electric guitar from GUILD MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS (Lyndhurst, NJ) features a two-piece body of poplar or alder, a maple neck with rosewood fingerboard, one humbucker and two single-coil pickups, and a Kahler pro model tremolo. The guitar's body is available in black, red, or white high-gloss polyurethane finishes; the 22 nickel-silver frets on the hand-shaped neck are the same jumbo frets found on higher-priced Guilds. The guitar's pickups feature high output without loss of high-frequency response, and the standard five-position switch provides the player with a choice of sounds ranging from all-out raunch to clean "Strat" sounds. **db**

understanding of, and respect for, the jazz tradition without being a lineal descendant of that tradition.

**DS:** I looked at it as an opportunity to get some of this music into formats that wouldn't ordinarily play it. The fact that a John Coltrane record would show up on a hard-rock station in Chicago, to me, is a victory. People haven't gone nuts and turned it off. I don't want to make it sound like this is a revolutionary show. It's not—it's a gradual stretching. I don't want to condescend and say it's an educational show. It's not so much educating as *reassuring* program directors that people listen to this music, people like it, and people not only will tolerate it but *want* it. What it comes down to is that there *is* an audience for jazz.

There was a station in San Francisco, whose call letters I can't remember, that I listened to in 1967. It was a predecessor of KSAN. They played, literally, Robert Johnson, Bartok, Creedence Clearwater, Miles Davis, Harry Partch—all in the same show. It was like going to somebody's house and listening to a whole lot of great music. To me, that's what great radio is. What I liked about radio was the personal rapport you had with the person playing the music. I think part of the problem with radio and media—I guess it's always been a problem with the world—is that everything is *big business*. It's very hard to convince people to take chances, because playing it safe *pays*. And that's a drag. db

LASWELL

continued from page 25

**On working with Bootsy Collins:** It was a real honor to be involved with him on this project. My best feelings in making records so far have been with Bootsy and with Sly & Robbie. Bootsy is a star. He's an original, an icon of black music. Like James Brown and George Clinton and Sly Stone, he's very much a part of the American black music experience. You kill that, you're cutting off your own future. But you can't kill Bootsy. And you can't corrupt James Brown. They know what they invented. They are institutions.

**On working with Ginger Baker:** I had to find Ginger. It took us six months to seek him out. He was living in the mountains in Northern Italy. Ginger met me at the airport in Florence and I spent three days with him on a farm, which had no telephone. And he was the most incredible person. What stories he had! He had lived in Nigeria and worked with Fela, so we had a lot to talk about. He was such a vital character, so real. I knew I had to get him to New York as soon as possible. And we jammed a bit at his home in Italy. He had a room with a huge kit of Ludwig drums overlooking this valley of olive farms. One day he played for maybe 20 minutes without letting up. I've never ever heard anything like that. The sound was huge because of the open window and the reverb of the room. So an hour later we went to a restaurant down in the valley, maybe six miles away. And when we walked into this restaurant, they all started clapping. They had heard Ginger playing six miles away! It was too much.

**On performing with Last Exit:** It's a real relief from having to be so meticulous in the studio, where you're constantly checking details and little points for three weeks straight without any breaks. So when we go on tour we never rehearse or have any written music. We just hit it and make this great horrible noise. It's like a vacation. It's definitely a different world from the studio, and I usually end up getting a lot of ideas from doing that which I eventually translate into making records. So one thing feeds the other.



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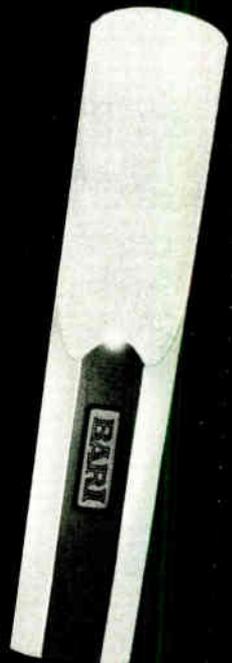
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Particularly valuable, from a historical perspective, are Callender's recollections of the poorly documented L.A. jazz scene of the late '30s and '40s, for he was actively involved in club work during this period, performing with a large and varied roster of players. He recalls, with great vividness, the impact Charlie Parker had on most of the city's younger players, and recounts his experiences working and recording with the altoist. Among his other playing associations, he cites those with Lester and Lee Young (giving high marks to this latter, generally underappreciated drummer), Erroll Garner, and Art Tatum as being among the most enjoyable and rewarding. His reminiscences of the two pianists are particularly warm and affectionate; his remarks on Tatum, both interesting and insightful, clearly indicate the high regard in which he was held by fellow musicians, not only for his prodigious musicianship (which has been widely commented on) but for his graciousness and generosity of spirit. Callender's remarks make the man come alive for us, so much so that we want to hear more.

If the book has a major flaw, it's simply that it doesn't tell us as much as we'd like to know, not only about Tatum or Garner, but also about many of the bassist's colleagues and working experiences. Good as his reminiscences of the L.A. jazz scene are, they simply scratch the surface, whet one's appetite for more—more facts, more experiences, more comments on the men he worked with, the places he worked in, the men—clubowners, record producers, concert bookers and the like—he worked for. More detail on Callender's longtime studio career—he was one of the first blacks to be accepted into a field at one time almost exclusively dominated by whites—his experiences as a pop record producer, and his post-war work as r&b session player, arranger, and talent scout, would also have made the book more valuable.

Because of his long years of activity in the studios and the great diversity of his experiences, he's in a perfect position to tell us a great deal about much that's occurred in popular music culture since he entered it. Yet what we get is largely a skim, a once-over-lightly look back over a lifetime's experience. We learn a lot about Callender, his life, marriages, and family, his motivations, values, satisfactions, and some of his more interesting musical experiences and professional associations and, through this, come to an

appreciation of, and respect for him as a person, dedicated family man, and a deeply committed musician who's contributed richly to much of the music we've enjoyed over the last five decades. Good as *Unfinished Dream* is, one senses it could have been even better.

—pete welding

### THE CONTEMPORARY KEYBOARD-

IST by John Novello (Taluca Lake, California: Source Productions, 1986, 551 pp., \$49.95, spiral-bound paperback).

When I started studying piano on my own in the early '60s, the first volume of the late John Mehegan's *Jazz Improvisation* had just been published. At the time, Mehegan's groundbreaking work seemed definitive, but while his work was enlightening on harmonic theory, keyboard architecture, and voicing, there were whole areas of keyboard playing—melodic development and ear training especially—on which his work was bafflingly nearly silent. Works by others slowly emerged to fill in the gaps, especially David Baker's savvy *Jazz Improvisation* and his provocative, ear-opening *Advanced Improvisation*, George Russell's metaphysical *Lydian Chromatic Concept Of Tonal Organization*, Dan Haerle's trenchant three-booklet *Jazz Improvisation For Keyboard Players*, and Jerry Coker's short but quite serviceable *Improvising Jazz*—not to mention a parade of tutorials on such specialized areas as scales, patterns, voicings, songbooks, transcriptions, and idioms. Remarkably, these works have not produced a glut in publishing for the modern keyboard player; there always seems room for one more approach and, especially, for a work that performs the synthesis of summing up the best that has gone before and advancing both old and new material with a fresh viewpoint. John Novello's *The Contemporary Keyboardist* is just such a work.

A seasoned West Coast keyboard session player, composer/arranger, musical director, and teacher, among other things, Novello calls his work "a survival manual" and has organized the bulk of his material (and at 551 pages it is a bulk) into four sections: "A Philosophy Of Music," "Mechanics," "The Business Scene," and "Interviews." The first two chapters of "A Philosophy Of Music" are the most controversial. In brief, Novello is a follower of Scientology L. Ron Hubbard, whom he credits with shaping his thinking on theoretical matters concerning music and on life in general. Citing

Hubbard's statement that "Art is a word that summarizes the quality of communication," Novello takes us on an outing through applied Scientology which introduces us to the buzz words of this religion/philosophy—thetans, theta, postulates, mock-ups, and game theories. All this is an incidental way of making good the promise of Novello's title, for he here provides one aspect of the complete keyboardist by tailoring him with a philosophical outlook. Novello's readers, naturally, are free to reach their own conclusions regarding the usefulness of applying this doctrine to music. I, for one, find it refreshing that someone in a method book (usually an arena of cut-and-dried discourse) is articulating a musician's higher purposes and stimulating us to speculate for ourselves on a musician's means and ends.

While Novello's philosophical turnings may miss the mark for some, his discussion of what he calls the mechanics of keyboard playing is clear, extremely detailed, and to the point. He covers such topics as keyboard harmony (including polychords and non-tertial structures), comping, chord substitution, scale studies (quite extensive), intervallic playing, rhythm, transposing, ear-training (some valuable approaches), sight-reading, technique, multi-keyboards (not bad, but MIDI merits a full discussion), and studio work. Novello's writing is peppy, authoritative, and contains a large quantity of viable, practical information. Especially noteworthy are the assignments and study questions punctuating this material, for Novello has a knack for raising the appropriate issue at the opportune time.

Novello's section on the business scene is also helpful. The author encourages keyboardists to be "shrewdly tactful" when dealing with business associates and the public, to eschew drugs, and to work to make their own breaks. He also offers advice on unions (good), con artists (not so good), and on life on the road (he advocates saving oneself for the loved one at home). But the most fascinating section of *The Contemporary Keyboardist* is the interviews. Novello has a gift for engaging musicians in dialogs regarding both the pragmatic and the philosophic aspects of their craft, and the result is a collection of 10 interviews with such diverse participants as Chick Corea, Edgar Winter, Keith Emerson, and Paul Schaffer. Novello's questions probe the main themes of his work—awareness, self-actualization, hard work, and professionalism—and thus make a fitting conclusion to this happily holistic text.

—jon balleras

# AUDITIONS

down beat spotlights young musicians deserving wider recognition.



**NICK NOLAN**, 21, was the 1985 winner of the Edward Van Halen Guitar Scholarship to L.A.'s Musicians Institute, from which he recently graduated. Nolan began strumming an acoustic guitar to Beatles tunes at age 11, and he bought himself a Fender Stratocaster three years later. He studied privately with Curt Allen for four years in southeastern Michigan, and played french horn in high school in addition to his guitar work for the school's jazz band. Before moving to Los Angeles, Nolan performed with the popular Detroit club act the Valerie Winters Band, and he studied music theory with his mother, a voice/piano instructor at St. Clair Community College, and by analyzing such classical composers as Bach, Mozart, Paganini, and Stravinsky on his own.

During his yearlong course at the Musicians Institute, Nolan practiced eight-to-12 hours a day on styles ranging from jazz to heavy metal. He's now in the process of putting together a band to perform in L.A. clubs. Among the musicians cited as major influences by Nolan are John Lennon, Paul McCartney, Igor Stravinsky, Randy Rhoads, and Steve Vai.



**CHRIS COLE**, 18, has won first place in the Dallas Music Teacher's Association Jazz Festival all four times he has competed in it, most recently for his arrangement of *My Funny Valentine* this past January. He began studying clas-

sical piano at 13, and won the D.M.T.A. Student Affiliate competition at the local level in the 10th grade; since then he's won the North Central Division and competed at the Texas Music Teacher's Convention in El Paso.

Cole is pianist and principal bass vocalist for the Arts Magnet High School Lab Singers, and is arranging music for the school's forthcoming album, *Two Sides Of Art*, due for fall '86 release. He is also involved in many outside projects, including the initial recording with his band Mirror Image, *Ordinary Child*, also set for fall release. Cole's influences include classical pianists Vladimir Ashkenazy and Glenn Gould, as well as such jazz artists as Chick Corea, McCoy Tyner, and Charlie Parker.



**DMITRI MATHENY**, 20-year-old trumpeter/flugelhornist, is pursuing a degree in Professional Music on a scholarship to the Berklee College of Music in Boston, where he has performed in ensembles with John LaPorta, Phil Wilson, and Herb Pomeroy while studying privately with Jeff Stout. Before beginning his college studies, Matheny was an honors Jazz Studies student at the Interlochen (MI) Arts Academy, where he was a featured soloist with the Outstanding Big Band award-winning I.A.A. Studio Orchestra at the 1984 Notre Dame Collegiate Jazz festival.

Matheny's performance experience includes work with jazz pianist Ramsey Lewis and vocalist Fabian, pitwork with the Playbox Theatre Orchestra, concert and club appearances with the Tucson, AZ-based Foothills Jazz Quintet, and a live broadcast on National Public Radio. He lists jazz educators Grant Wolf and Tom Knific as main inspirations for studying jazz, and credits his father with whetting his jazz interest early with the classic Miles Davis album *Kind Of Blue*. His major trumpet influences include Davis, Chet Baker, Kenny Dorham, Tom Harrell, and Terence Blanchard.



**TOM SMITH**, 28, is part-jazz trombonist, part-music missionary. Currently Artist-in-Residence at Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute in Lenoir, NC, he has founded a pair of 21-piece b.g bands in that town—the CCC & TI Jazz Workshop and the Unifour Jazz Ensemble, the latter of which has recorded the album *First Steps*. "Something I've thought about since high school," says Smith, "is that the contribution I can make to jazz is to start community jazz ensembles. We have a lot of towns the size of Lenoir which want a cultural arts group but can't afford a symphony orchestra."

Smith began playing trombone at nine under the guidance of his father, a renowned dixieland trombonist and former member of the Boston Symphony, and went on to win a record half-dozen berths on the N.C. High School All-State Band. After graduating from the University of Southern Mississippi, Smith went on to tour with such acts as Donald Byrd, Isaac Hayes, Les Elgart, and Sonny and Cher; and he continues to tour with trombone-and-flute-oriented duos, trios, and quartets.



**SCOTT KAY**, 21-year-old drummer, grew up in Dallas and started performing on drums at 12. During his four years in the Newman Smith High School Jazz Band he participated in various band and solo contests, and also worked with assorted country, rock, and jazz combos. Kay is now attending North Texas State University, where he performs with various

percussion ensembles, small groups, the NTSU drumline, and the 9 O'Clock Lab Band.

In 1984, Kay won first place in the PAS National Drumline Competition, and in '85 he became drummer for Dallas Brass & Electric, a nine-piece dance band performing music ranging from Tower of Power to Al Jarreau in addition to original material. DB&E, recently signed by Fred Wiess of Contemporary Artist Management, is touring Florida, Virginia Beach, and Atlantic City this summer, causing Kay to turn down an offered gig on the Opryland Showboat.



**JEANNETTE SCHWAGER**, 21, is a vocalist who began performing professionally in coffeehouses at age 12. She now resides in Toronto, where she performs in various musical situations—among them a music-sound-poetry trio called Contradiction, with partners Maureen Kennedy and Kateri Lanthier; a group of four guitars, voice, and drums called Plectrum Spectrum, which was inspired by a workshop taught by Cecil Taylor; and improvised music performed with drummer Michel Lambert, whom she also performs with at Obscure, an artist-run gallery in Quebec City.

Schwager, who has composed music for each of the above-named groups, also has recorded an album of jazz standards with her brother Reg (a former Auditions honoree) for Radio-Canada International; she and her brother will also represent Canada for an album recorded by the Group of Four Broadcasters for International Youth Year. Schwager's other music accomplishments include intense study at the Banff Summer Workshop, where she worked with Cecil Taylor, Jay Clayton, Dave Liebman, Julian Priester, Don Thompson, and others. **db**

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

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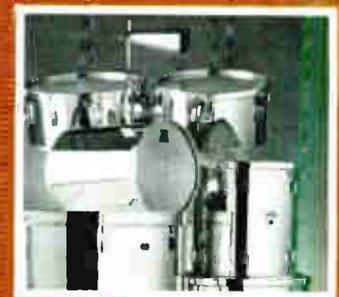
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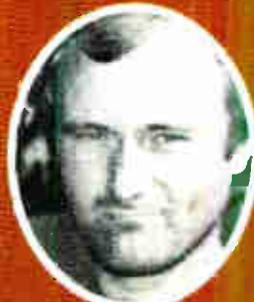
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