

THE JAZZ REVIEW

JAZZ

Volume 3 / Number 6 / July 1960 / Fifty Cents

Louis Armstrong
Eddie Barefield
Lee Konitz
Lennie Tristano

cato

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LETTERS

SUPPORT

I am a little annoyed at those disgruntled subscribers to **The Jazz Review** who climax their grievances by threatening to cancel their subscriptions.

What do these readers expect to accomplish by withdrawing their support from an admirable effort to keep jazz literature and communication alive? Do they know what it takes in circulation to keep a small publication going? Do they realize, for instance, that publishing costs have skyrocketed to a plateau of diminishing returns where it is almost impossible to make the grade? Do they realize that the writers and reviewers contribute their efforts largely through dedication to the cause of jazz—and certainly not for monetary gain?

The Jazz Review has made a major step forward in cutting through the parochial thinking which has plagued writers and followers of jazz for more than two decades. No other magazine has been able to effectively implement a broad editorial policy encompassing traditional, mainstream and modern jazz. No other publication has given equal space to Oliver, Ellington and Monk in

a single issue.

Being what may be termed a traditionalist and mainstreamer, I have been unable to keep abreast the changes and developments in jazz. However, articles such as those by Cannonball Adderley and Art Farmer have been a revelation to me. These musicians have something to say, and they say it well. Also, the series on James P. Johnson and early Ellington will hold up as important writing and documentation of permanent value. Students of jazz should complete their files of back issues. In fact, the early issues of **The Jazz Review** are almost unobtainable. **The Jazz Review** should be given full support by all of us. Petty criticism should not stifle the growth of this healthy trend toward an overdue, mature approach to the understanding of jazz.

George W. Kay
New Bedford, Mass.

DENIAL

In the May '60 issue, Nat Hentoff erred in stating that "George Crater" began

as a composite contribution of Dom Cerulli, Jack Tynan and others. What actually happened was that Jack Tracy, then editor of **Down Beat**, decided the magazine needed some humor and created **Out of My Head** by George Crater, which he wrote himself. After several issues, he welcomed contributions from the staff, and Don Gold and I began to contribute regularly. After Jack left, I inherited Crater's column and wrote it, with occasional contributions from Don and Jack Tynan, until I found that the well was running dry. Don and I wrote it some more and then Crater sort of passed from the scene, much like last year's favorite soloist.

One other thing: I think Bill Crow will be delighted to learn that the picture of Billie Holiday he so admired on the cover of the Decca Billie Holiday memorial album was taken by Tony Scott.

Dom Cerulli
New York City

PRAISE FAMOUS MEN

Orville K. "Bud" Jacobson died in West Palm Beach, Florida on April 12, 1960 of a heart attack. He had been there for his heart since 1956. It was Bud who gave Frank Teschemacher his first clarinet lessons, weaning him away from violin. He was directly responsible for the Okeh recording date of Louis' Hot 5. He spoke to E. A. Fern, president of Okeh about his old friend Louis Armstrong. Fern directed Richard M. Jones to gather Dodds and Ory, etc. for the sessions.

There was an article on Bud in **Jazz Session** magazine in 1947. He played on Freeman's **Crazeology**; Jimmy McPartland's Deccas and had his own records on Signature.

Charles Payne Rogers
Huntington Valley, Pa.

NOSEGAY

Congratulations to Mimi Clar for her two courageous reviews in the May issue. It is high time that there appeared on the jazz horizon a reviewer with sufficient insight and courage to debunk the pretensions of, on the one hand, the George Shearings of the jazz world and, on the other, those so-called vocalists who like Staton, are utterly ignorant of (and indifferent to) the art they aspire to practice.

If any reed or trumpet man were to appear on the stand of any jazz club in the nation and were to display as appalling an ignorance of his instrument as does Miss Staton, or as complete incompetence to master it as does Miss Connor, he would be hooted from the stand. Yet, out of kindness or indifference (or their own simple ignorance?) jazz reviewers without exception (until now) accept at face value the assertions of these vocalists' representatives that they are the jazz singers

to whom we must turn if we are to have jazz singers. Why not, indeed, Bobby Darin and Elvis Presley, if we are to go so far astray from singing?

The same congratulations (but in reverse) to Bill Crow for his singularly imperceptive review of "**The Billie Holiday Story.**" Can anybody who knew Billie Holiday on the Columbia or Commodore sessions seriously recommend this Decca set (perhaps Billie's worst period vocally) as adequately representative of the work of the greatest of jazz singers? In heaping adulation upon Lady Day is it necessary to praise her worst work equally with her best? Would it not be better, for Billie's memory and the sake of jazz, now and in the future, to say simply that here was a great singer who, early in her life, lost her voice and carried on by the force of her sheer, overpowering personality for twenty years after her voice was gone?

C. H. Garragues
San Francisco

MUSICIAN AS CRITIC

I have read with great interest the different views on criticism expressed in your latest correspondence column (March/April) and while I agree with the anonymous letter writer that **the JR** has provided a great service in opening its review columns to performing musicians, I strongly disagree with his contention that only musicians can truly appreciate jazz as an art. While I hope to see more and more musicians voice their opinions in the pages of **the JR**, I pray that there will never be a time when they will replace the non-musician critic, because, judging from past examples, this would offset the balance of **the JR** quite distinctly.

I am more interested in what an artist is saying as performer or creator than as critic, but I am also interested in his critical views of his art and his attempts to express his feelings and thoughts about the work of fellow artists. I believe that the reader can derive a certain amount of insight from such criticism, but it is more an insight into the musician who criticizes than the musician who is criticized. The musician-critic seldom has the distance and impartiality to write completely objective criticism. (Not many professional critics have either, of course). He has friends and colleagues to consider, and his own career. And a musician's view of a fellow player must of necessity be colored by his own playing style. Not being a professional writer, his style may need considerable editing or may not communicate. One only has to consult musical histories to find that artist-critics have often been the least objective. Among your musician-critics only one, in my opinion, entirely succeeds as a critic, and he because he let his technical and practical knowledge of the field be

his guide rather than the sole basis of his writing: Bill Crow, if he had written under a pen-name, would not easily be recognised as a musician-critic, at least in comparison with other musician-reviewers in past issues.

I must repeat that I find reviews written by musicians most valuable, but I believe that they should not stand alone; they should rather complement the writings of professional critics. I also do not mean to say that a theoretical and practical knowledge of the field is not highly desirable in the critic, and if I did not believe so, would hardly subscribe to **the JR**. Technical knowledge, thorough acquaintance with the history of the field, taste, impartiality, tolerance, and a readable style are the necessary requisites for any critic. But it is certainly not a requisite for the critic to be able to do something better than the artist. If complete appreciation of any art form would require the listener or viewer to out-create or out-perform the artist, then the arts would lose one of their prime functions: to communicate with an audience. What is it, that makes an artist great? Certainly not unintelligibility. Is it not the basic simplicity in their musical statements that makes Louis Armstrong and Miles Davis the great artists they are? To be sure, in this age of mass communications, simplicity in art may often prove difficult to a majority whose perception has been blunted by rapid fire entertainments (viz the simple beauty of the Indian film "**Panther Panchali**" as against Hollywood trying to "tell a story").

It is of course important to consider why and for whom reviews are written. I believe that too many reviewers feel that they have to sell a product. Many magazines undoubtedly provide nothing more than a buying guide for readers, and their reviewers blatantly state this fact. But the serious journal publishing criticism rather than reviews has another group of readers altogether. Recording companies being as prolific as they are, it is virtually impossible to buy all the records one would wish to own, or even the record output of just one artist whom one particularly admires. To a certain extent, therefore, reviews are read to make a selection within the limits of one's budget. But I hope that this is only one small reason for reading reviews. I believe that reading criticism of any kind can be an aesthetic pleasure in itself. Why, otherwise, would one read all of Jerry Tallmer's theatre reviews in **the Village Voice**, when one does not live in New York and has no hope of seeing most of the performances? Why would a review sometimes be published after a play has already closed? To be an aesthetic experience, however, a review must be a miniature essay, an essay about the artist under review or any

others who in the opinion of the critic have done something to influence the artist or performance. If therefore, a review of Coltrane says more about Rollins, or vice versa, that is the critic's privilege.

There are, of course, other reasons for writing and reading criticism; too many to mention. Periodic reviews of an artist's work informs the audience of the artist's progress, and while it is, of course, always desirable to hear or see for yourself, criticism can provide information when practical knowledge becomes impossible. If we want the jazz musician to be treated as the artist he is, we must treat him in the context of criticism as we would the author of a book, the composer of a symphony, or the creator of a painting. **The Jazz Review** is doing this admirably.

Harold Bohne
Toronto, Canada

We hate to disagree with a supporter, but we think Gunther Schuller, Don Heckman and Dick Katz among our more frequent musician contributors are very fine critics.

The Editors

Who's Art?

RAY ELLSWORTH! WAIT MAN . . . DON'T GIVE UP ON JAZZ . . . I can understand the psychic impact the computer had on you when it said "man I don't dig this paragraph here . . . etc." But this is only because of your past improper conditioning re computers. One must remember that the publicity concerning the computers ability to "think" is just the merchant's and military's idea of how to use it. We know better. We've had one of its distinguished ancestors in the piano (info fed in by hands and output by sound waves to ear registry). The computer's highest use and value is as a scientifically constructed instrument useful in the production of art.

There's a way to program computer machines to improvise. As John Cage has shown: the stages of randomness in any composition can be entirely set by chance operations. These new **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS** can be set to activate the differentials of all improvised odds of pitch, time, voices, etc., and with a musical typewriter attachment to translate your numerical representations into musical notation you can now convert your jazz frustrations into popularity and easy money. Just imagine! you who know them can feed in the formulas of all the greats and then wait till you're in the right mood to add your own personal chance deviation riff pattern. A potentially great instrument to articulate the new age's sizable wail. And to the question "yes, but is it jazz?" the usual answer, **ART ALONE WILL DECIDE.**

John Benson Brooks
New York City



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THE
REVIEW



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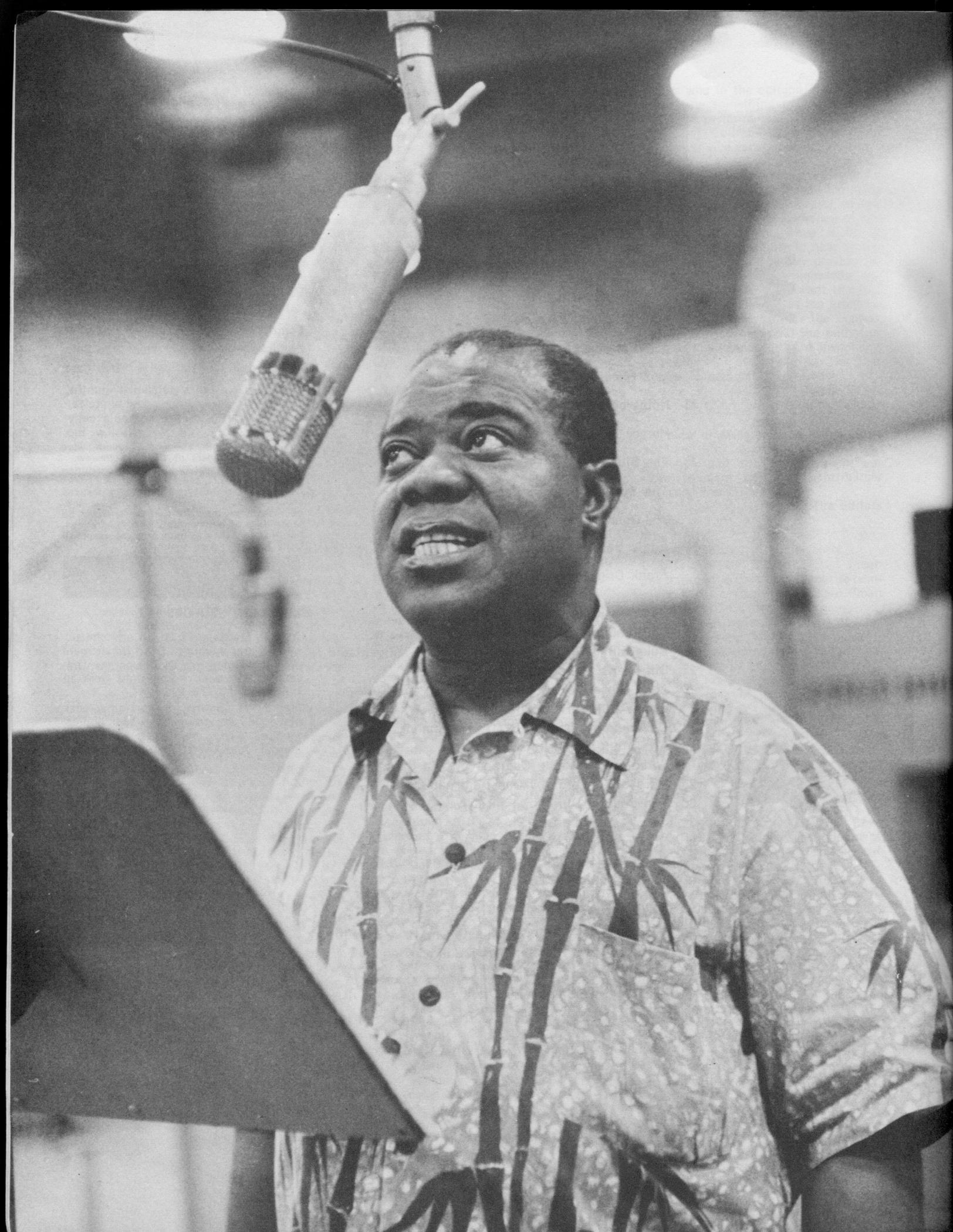
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NEW CONTRIBUTORS

Alan P. Merriam, Ph.D., an ethnomusicologist and member of the Department of Anthropology at Northwestern University, has been doing field work in the Congo for the last year.

Fradley H. Garner, a part-time bass player in jazz groups and symphonies, founded and co-edited a short-lived journal, **Jazz Digest**, in Philadelphia.



Louis Armstrong became sixty on July 4, 1960. We are proud to publish on this occasion this memoir of his early days when he was at the threshold of the independent creative work that has become the basis of almost all jazz playing today. Through some of his well-known opinions and enthusiasms, we can see, shining, the love of life and music, the youthful joy and resilience of spirit, that have carried him, triumphant, through more than forty years of playing, that have seen so many illustrious and talented musicians falter and fail.

"Satchmo"

Scanning ①

The History of Jazz"

The word 'Jazz' as far as I can see or can remember, was when I was a little boy, five years old. The year of 1905. In those days it was called Rag Time Music. And whenever there was a dance or a Lawn Party the Band (consisted) of six men, would stand in front of the place on the side walk and play a half hour of good rag time music. And us kids would stand or dance on the other side of the street until they went inside. That was the only way that we young kids could get the

chance to hear those great musicians such as Buddy Bolden—

-Joe CORNET Oliver MY IDOL

Bunk CORNET Johnson

Freddy CORNET Keppard

Henry CORNET Allen Sr. & HIS BRASS BAND

Old Man Moret

AND HIS EXCELSIOR BRASS BAND*

CORNET WONDER AND LEADER AT "60"

Frankie Dusen Trombone

Kid Ory

Trombone and a whole lot of the other players who will forever live in my mind as the greatest Musicians that I have ever heard since I was big enough to realize what was happening. Even to the Brass Bands down in my home town New Orleans, to witness them Playing a funeral March will Make Something inside of you just tinkle. Even to a 6-8-March, they always expressed themselves, and their very souls in the music. Joe CORNET Oliver (MY IDOL) and Emanuel CORNET Perez had a brass band by the name of the Onward Brass Band. And 'my My' how they could play in the Street Parades & Funerals. Joe Oliver to me was always a fantastic sort of a fellow. And the Greatest Creator of them all. One Sunday Hustler and Pimps HUSTLER AND GAMBLERS in my neighborhood who had a good Base ball team, and would go all over the city and play other teams in other neighborhoods, one Sunday they went over in Algiers a little town across the Mississippi RIVER to play the team over there. Of course everywhere they'd go, the neighborhood crowd would follow them. Even us kids would tag along. They'd only play for a large keg of beer. But it was lots of fun. And we Kids would be thrilled just to luck up on a glass of beer. Well sir—McDonald Cemetary was just about a mile away from where the Black Diamonds (MY TEAM) was playing the Algiers team. When ever a funeral from New Orleans had a body to be buried in the McDonald cemetary they would have to cross the Canal Street ferry boat, and march down the same road right near our ball game. Of course when they passed us playing a slow funeral march, we only paused with the game and tipped our hats as to pay respect. When the last of the funeral passed, we would continue the game. The game was in full force when the Onward Band was returning from the cemetary, after they had put the body in the ground, they were swingin **It's a Long Way To "Tipperary"**. They were swinging so good until Joe Oliver reached into the high register beating out those **high notes** in very **fine fashion**, And broke our ball. Yea! the players commenced to dropping **Bats** an. Balls, etc, And we **All** followed them All the way back to the New Orleans side and to their Destination. Of course there were many other greats even before my time, And my days of the wonderful music that every musician were playing in New Orleans. But to me Joe **King** Oliver was the greatest of them all. He certainly didn't get his right place in the mentionings in Jazz History as he so rightfully deserved. He was a Creator, with unlimited ideas, And had a heart as big as a whale when it came to helping the underdog in Music such as me. I was just a kid, Joe saw, I had possibilities and he'd go out of his way to help me or any other ambitious kid who were interested in their instrument as I was.

When he played his cornet, there were always happiness, and a certain closeness that he gave out whenever he played and whatever he played, take **Dippermouth** for instance, no one living today could express themselves while playing that tune like Joe Oliver did. When I played 2nd Cornet to him at the Lincoln Gardens in Chicago 1922—musicians from all over the world came to hear him. And of course, I love the man and his work so very much until we made the most fabulous 'cornet team' one ever heard of. No matter where he'd turn while we were playing, whatever note he made I always had a 2nd note to match his lead. The musicians who hadn't heard anything like it would go wild. They were some of the top men in the business who came to hear us. Of course there have been many steps in music since those days and in my younger days, such as Bop—'Music of Tomorrow—'Progressive', Cool etc. But not anyone of them Styles have impressed me as **Oliver**—and the **good ol** musicians played in those days what I am talking about. The **Tail Gate** those **Street Parades, funeral Lawn Parties, Balls**, they're called **Dances** nowadays. We didn't resort to different styles, etc, we just played good **rag time Music, sweet** when necessary. All these different styles of this day doesn't do anything for the up&Coming youngsters and they leaves not **anything** for the kids to derive on, like the old times did for us. Ever since this new stuff has been in port, I Myself has been for ever so long—trying to figure out what the **modern** musicians are trying to prove.

And the only solution that I came to is, the majority of them are inferior musicians. Where there would be a real **solid note** to **hit right** on the **nose**, they would make a **thousand** notes rather than attempt that **one. Screeching** at a **high note** an **praying** to God that they'd **hit** it. The result is that very few musicians are working Nowadays. The public itself gotten so tired of hearing so much **modern slop** until they refuse to continue paying those big checks. And now if you'll notice it, only the **fittest** are **surviving**. No matter where—who I play with, I never forget my **first** love—real good music. That's why I am at home, when I am, playing any kind of music. Most of the fantastic players of today can't even **read music**. They never did want to. All they want to do is **scream**. And if they don't watch out, I'm gonna **scream**, right along with the **public**.

Always remember—Louis Armstrong never bothers about what the other fellow is playing etc. A musician is a musician with me. Yea—I am just like the **sister** in our church in N.O. One Sunday our pastor whom we all loved happened to take a Sunday off and sent in another preacher who wasn't near as good. The whole congregation "frowned on him except" one sister. She seemed to enjoy the other pastor the same as she did our pastor. This aroused the **Congregation curiosity so much** until when Church service was over they all rushed over to this **one sister** and asked her **why** did she enjoy the substitute Preacher the **same** as our regular one? She said, Well, when **our** pastor **preach**, I can look right through him and see **Jesus**. And when I hear a preacher who is **not** as good as ours—I just look **over** his shoulder and see **Jesus just the same**. That applies to me. All through my life in music ever since I left New Orleans, I've been just like that Sister in our church.

I have played with quite a few
Musicians who weren't so good. But
as long as they could hold their instruments
Erect, and display their willingness to
play as best they could, I would look
over their shoulders and see Joe Oliver
and several other great masters from
my home town. So I shall now
close and be just like the little boy
who sat on a block of ice →

My Tale is Told.

Tell all the Fans
FANS
And All Musicians, I love Em Madly.

SWISS KRISSHY YOURS
Louis Armstrong
Satchmo

CONTROVERSIALEE

Max Harrison

Michael James

Max Harrison

In the liner note of "**Lee Konitz inside Hi-Fi**"³ the altoist is quoted as saying, "Back in 1949 I had an unself-conscious quality about my playing." With the exception of a few isolated items like **Cork 'n' Bib**, few of his performances could realistically be called unself-conscious, least of all the early Prestige titles. Most artists with creative gifts achieve, as the years pass, an increasingly personal, and therefore more directly communicative, mode of expression. Konitz is perhaps unique among jazzmen of considerable reputation, for while the external characteristics of his style have undergone a modest but fairly definite evolution, his ability to communicate remains as uncertain as ever. Konitz's chief formative influence was clearly Tristano. His harmonic approach is similar and so are the restless melodic lines. Yet in every performance they recorded together, Tristano proves to be the more articulate and communicates with a certainty that is altogether lacking in Konitz. The reasons are not too obscure. In tracks like **Sub-conscious Lee** the alto part has little connection with Manne's infectious beat—less than Bauer's has, still less than Tristano's. Some of these early Konitz solos may have a certain formal cohesion but only in the sense of being well-ordered patterns of sounds. This is as true of the fast **Marshmallow** as of the very slow **You Go to My Head**. Each of his improvisations seems hermetically sealed-off from the rest of the music—except in technical approach—and it is not surprising they have no emotional impact. His small, pure tone (in effect an emasculation of Lester Young's sound) is another aspect of Konitz's curiously negative attitude to the question of communication at that time. Indeed, the withdrawn, ethereal character of **Retrospection** may be taken as typical of his earliest work.

The Storyville lp² effectively illustrates that during the early fifties Konitz freed his playing from this formal

Michael James

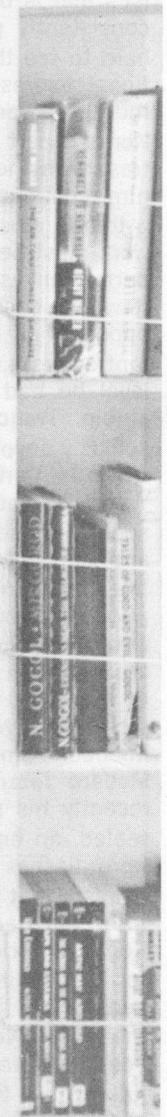
From his first appearance on records with Claude Thornhill, Lee Konitz has been called an alto player of promise. During his first stay with Lennie Tristano, he recorded with the group for Capitol and for Prestige. His first independent recordings were also made for Prestige. His Prestige album¹ offers a representative sampling of the records Konitz made before he joined Kenton in autumn, 1952; the earliest four date from a session led by Tristano. Konitz owed less than any of his contemporaries to Parker; Tristano seems by far his most important influence. Admiration for Lester Young's concept of tone is obvious especially in **Judy**, but everywhere else the pianist's mark is most evident. But Konitz was no slavish copyist. Tristano's influence showed primarily in well-constructed solos. But the very fact that Konitz based his style squarely upon that of a musician using another instrument—and a piano at that—prevented his playing, at least for a while, from achieving a truly personal stamp.

Subsequent record dates with his own groups showed the altoist building on this excellent foundation. The sessions with Warne Marsh give hints of what was to come, but his development is most obvious in the performances recorded in April, 1950. On the two slow tunes, **Rebecca** and **You Go to My Head**, he stresses an uncompromising leanness of tone, consistent throughout his range. On **Palo Alto** and **Ice Cream Konitz** he breaks up the improvised line in a very entertaining way, using longer pauses than before, giving a more definite outline to the construction. In one respect, his playing reminds one of Coltrane's; an intriguing balance between the masses of sound, an equilibrium that owes very little to normal methods of jazz construction, is a vital ingredient of each man's style.

Konitz was little concerned with swing, tonal inflection or relaxation, so that his music lacked the emotional power most people look for in jazz. It is unlikely that his apparent coldness is altogether explained by the combination of models he favored; or, to be more exact, let us say that its arbitrary and detached nature was presumably a conscious choice on his part. The solo on **Reiteration**, for example, may take on a real emotional charge when considered in the light of his growth as a jazz musician, but set apart from his later work exists only as an infinitely absorbing **object**. From 1951 on, Konitz slowly became more aware of the benefits offered by orthodox jazz methods. A new relaxation in rhythm rounded off the sharper corners of his phrases. His tone became less uniform, sometimes taking on a startling hoarseness in the upper register. And he began using longer rests between the typically intricate runs, letting the pulse of the rhythm section come through. These changes have been ascribed to the influence of the Kenton band, but environment alone could never have changed the outlook of such an intransigent spirit. It is far more probable that his natural development was reinforced by playing regularly with such extrovert musical personalities as Zoot Sims, Stan Levey and Conte Candoli.

The Storyville lp, recorded soon after he left Kenton, illustrates many of these changes. The contrast between the theme of **Hi Beck** and the improvised alto line shows how far Konitz had moved away from the very compressed melodies of the Prestige records. Not that diffuseness had crept into his work: the freer phrases make up in quality for what they lack in the way of concentration. Ronnie Ball strives diligently to prolong

Pete Turner



Lee Konitz

Max Harrison

rigidity and managed to achieve some tonal variety. Characteristically, however, these advances were not accompanied by a growth of expressive power. The melodic line became 'aired out' with rests but their use seems arbitrary—not a positive feature of the melodic thought, as in Parker's **Quasimodo** (take B), and in some cases almost led to incoherence. For example, it is hard to find much connection between some of the too-isolated phrases of **These Foolish Things**. In **Sound-Lee** the melodic thought has greater

Michael James

the mood set by the opening alto solos. There are moments of loose counterpoint that not only underline the sympathy between these two men but enrich the musical texture enough to make one wish such passages had been more frequent. It is also interesting to see how the rhythm section is used. On the earlier records the beat generated by bass and drums had provided no more than an efficient backdrop; their role had always been a very minor one. Now, as a complement to his own interest in swing, Konitz gave his

Max Harrison

logic but its exposition is still disrupted by the pauses; these rests do, however, allow the pulse of the rhythm section to be felt more strongly. On **Hi Beck** the altoist's line is better related to the beat. The tone is less consistently pure, but even after many hearings, it is hard to see that the variations of sound have any functional expressive meaning.

Indeed, a definite lack of conviction is evident in Konitz's part on **Sub-conscious-Lee**, particularly in contrast with the forceful piano. Ball, like Tristano before him, communicates much more surely than the altoist—this is most obvious in the **Hi Beck** chase—and his work must be counted the most enjoyable part of these performances.

It would be impossible for even the most determined opponent of Konitz's work to deny that two of the Atlantic tracks,³ **Kary's Trance** and **Cork 'n' Bib**, reach a level he had not previously attained in the recording studio. **Trance** is an attractive theme, less self-consciously involved than most of his earlier inventions, while in **Cork** the altoist swings with true relaxation. Yet it is Bauer who irresistibly attracts the ear. His accompaniments are of great sensitivity and invention, and his solos demonstrate rhythmic flexibility and a fine sense of melodic construction. Guitar and saxophone improvisations are closely entwined throughout and the unavoidable comparison shows rather clearly that, despite the greater amplitude of certain aspects of his style, Konitz's problems are much the same as ten years ago.

Michael James, in an essay on Lee Konitz (in **Ten Modern Jazzmen**, Cassell, London, 1960) writes, "Until recently his music was in so many ways hermetically sealed, an end in itself, perhaps even a refuge. There were flashes of a real concern, moments of a frail lyricism, but these were not truly representative: faced with the last test, the music generally fails." If Konitz's work is in the last resort a failure it is not for lack of instrumental accomplishment, harmonic ingenuity or, in his more recent performances, linear invention. Nor is tone the primary weakness. Lester Young showed it was possible to communicate forcefully with a timbre of unprecedented coolness. It is the absence of rhythmic invention—indeed, of positive rhythmic character of any sort—that is the vital weakness running through all Konitz's music. This explains not only the lethargy of, say, **Everything Happens To Me**, but the absence of emotional power from his whole output.

1. LEE KONITZ: "Lee Konitz Collates". Prestige PRLP 7004.

Sub-conscious Lee; Judy; **Reiteration**; **Retrospection**; **Ice Cream Konitz**; **You Go to My Head**; **Marshmallow**; **Fishin' Around**; **Tautology**; **Sound-Lee**; **Palo Alto**. Rebecca.

Lee Konitz, alto sax; Warne Marsh, tenor sax; Billy Bauer, guitar; Lennie Tristano, Sal Mosca, piano; Arnold Fishkin, bass; Shelly Manne, Denzil Best, Jeff Morton, drums. (1949 & 1950)

2. "LEE KONITZ QUARTET". Storyville LP 304.

Hi Beck; **These Foolish Things**; **Sound-Lee**; **Subconscious-Lee**.

Lee Konitz, alto sax; Ronnie Ball, piano; Percy Heath, bass; Al Levitt, drums. (January 5, 1954)

3. "KONITZ inside HI-FI". Atlantic 1258.

Kary's Trance; **Everything Happens to Me**; **Sweet and Lovely**; **Cork 'n' Bib**; **All of Me**; **Star Eyes**; **Nesuhi's Instant**; **Indiana**.

Lee Konitz, alto and tenor sax; Billy Bauer, guitar; Sal Mosca, piano; Arnold Fishkin, Peter Ind, bass; Dick Scott, drums. 1956)

Michael James

musicians more freedom. On **Subconscious-Lee** he even trades fours with Al Levitt, and has Ball setting up a chordal trellis over the beat of bass and drums. Freedom of this kind would have jeopardized the integration of the earlier records, which depended on a strict though partly spontaneous design. Since Konitz was now interested in evoking emotional flavor in his work, form in the academic sense was no longer quite so vital, and he was able to permit himself these everyday extravagances without danger to musical cohesion.

If the altoist's concept of a small group had moved closer to general practice, his own playing had not grown stale or even conventional. The greater emphasis on swing and wider tonal scope caused no watering-down of his originality. All the records made in the past five years indicate that his very personal manner has never been compromised by wider use of the usual methods of jazz, and the last lp shows this clearly.³ The distinctive turn of phrase and the acute, probing tone are wedded more closely than before to the flexible beat. His sense of swing may be less positive than Rollins', Parker's, or the generation which came before; but his sinuous rhythm is by no means different in effect from the more blatant swing of his contemporaries.

On **Kary's Trance**, where he switches to tenor for his second solo, we find a notable continuity of mood. His tenor playing is relatively unpolished, the tone sourer, the articulation of notes less clean, but each solo is just as cleverly wrought. **Indiana** contains some brilliant work, capped by an intricate final phrase that does away with the need to repeat the theme. His unfamiliarity with the larger horn might even be looked upon as an advantage, for the edginess of his playing intensifies the appeal. **All of me** has solos of no little urgency, while **Nesuhi's Instant**, a blues, shows how well he was able to organize the content, building the tension over six slow choruses. On the other titles, the interplay between Konitz's alto and Bauer's guitar is delightful. How well these two essentially diverse temperaments understand each other; the romantic and the ascetic so precisely interwoven! Not that the altoist always fights shy of lyricism: **Everything Happens to Me** displays the tenderness that he more often merely implies. Notice, too, how he moves swiftly out of the lower register at the start of the first release, setting free the spirit of optimism that pervades the whole performance. **Sweet and Lovely** is not of the same standard. Once the puckish theme is stated his ideas fail to flow with the ease the style demands. **Corks 'n' Bib** is much better, the uncramped lines leave plenty of room for each note to do its job.

"His tone is pale," writes Max Harrison, "and conveys little impression of his being emotionally involved in the music." At best this criticism is a poor description of his early work, and can hardly apply to any recent record. More misleading, though, are the charges of weakness that have been brought against his work; justified as they may seem at first sight, they ignore the inner force of his playing, the way each facet makes its austere yet vital contribution to the whole. Konitz lays no claim to the massive vigor that is Hawkins' nor to the incisive power of a Charlie Parker. His is another, less evident strength, the strength, perhaps, of grass that grows through stone.

LENNIE
TRISTANO
HAS BEEN
ONE
OF THE
REAL
ORIGINALS
IN

Harvey Pekar

JAZZ In building his playing style, he made almost as great a break with tradition as Charlie Parker did, although Tristano showed, perhaps, less inventiveness within his idiom than Parker did within his. But because of the abstracted quality of his playing, and partly because of his self-imposed seclusion, he has become a shadowy, semi-legendary figure.

His career on records has covered a span of almost fifteen years now, and at one point in the late forties, he seemed about to be founding a school, seemed to be achieving a considerable popular success, seemed to be headed for a position of general influence. Now, ten years later, it seems safe to say that he was not and will not be a **direct** influence on as many musicians as some less original pianists, Horace Silver for one. His greatest influence will probably be an indirect one, on musicians who assimilate aspects of his style through the work of his disciples, particularly through Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh. Bill Evans is one musician who has been indirectly influenced by Tristano in this way.

Tristano's style was based on a single note melodic line, and his lines were unusually long. Even his first records, made in 1946, showed that he had broken through the tyranny of the bar line, and could construct his melodic lines with great freedom and flow. His harmonic sophistication made it possible for him to use unusually wide intervals in his lines, and sometimes only to imply resolutions.

Perhaps his most significant departure from convention

was his method of phrasing and his way of constructing a solo. Tristano frequently phrases by accenting the first note or chord of a phrase and then releasing the tension through the rest of the phrase. Frequently such a phrase would consist of a descending run; he used such runs as climaxes more than other jazzmen. And his solos were often structured, conceived as a series of climaxes and releases made up of such phrases.

Such devices, of course, had been used before. Art Tatum sometimes accented in this way. But if you listen to Tatum records of the thirties carefully enough, you can find a precedent for almost anything that happened ten years later. And where Tatum used such devices occasionally and almost accidentally, Tristano made them into an integral style. Tristano's work is full of this kind of descending passages and devices. One related device, which was a particular Tristano favorite, was a passage played at double-time, repeated several times, each time more slowly, so that the last repetition gently reached the original tempo. **Wow**, on Capitol, illustrates this soft let-down technique perfectly.

Tristano's playing has a very special emotional climate. There is emotion in his work, but it is different from any other kind of emotion I've heard in jazz. It is a cool climate, like that of Lester Young (said to be one of Tristano's formative influences, and perhaps Tristano learned from Young his mastery of the use of space, of when to lay out), but unlike Young, Tristano has no blue tinge at all in his work. And where Young is relaxed and amused, Tristano is reserved and austere. But you can feel joy and pain through his reserve. His recordings can be divided, perhaps rather arbitrarily, into three periods. The first period includes the trio sides on Majestic-Savoy and on Keynote-Mercury; The second includes the 1949 Capitol and Prestige sides; The third period consists of one single Atlantic lp, made in the late fifties.

At the time of his first trio recordings, Tristano had already evolved all the basic aspects of his own playing style, and seemed to be concentrating on playing ideas which had never been heard before, taking a lot of chances. But he was also experimenting with an ensemble style, with a trio that included Billy Bauer on guitar and various bass players. Bauer, who was studying with Tristano, was working on a similar melodic style. But when they try for ensemble passages of improvised counterpoint, they sometimes lose each other, and the going gets a little disorderly. Bauer's sound was then very twangy, and tended to sound inappropriate to his melodic ideas. And Tristano was not a very sympathetic accompanist; he tended to dominate Bauer. (Bauer, by the way, understood Tristano much more than some people give him credit for; Tristano gets in Bauer's way as often as Bauer in Tristano's.) But in spite of the roughness of the ensembles, most of the time, these records have the tremendous excitement of creation. At times Tristano improvises almost furiously, as on **Coolin' Off with Ulanov**.

Since so few pianists have followed in Tristano's path, these sides seem, in retrospect, all the more fresh.

By 1949, Tristano was at the height of his popularity. He had made a few records with the Metronome All-Stars; he had gathered around him a group of disciples who included Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh; and even Bud Powell sometimes incorporated a Tristano idea or two in his solos (**Buttercup** on Verve, is an example).

During this period Tristano recorded with a sextet which included Bauer, Konitz, Marsh, bass and drums.

Tristano has always had trouble getting the kind of rhythm section he wants. He has a very even conception of time, and most frequently his drummers don't play an afterbeat, or any other kind of rhythmic decoration. Jeff Morton, who often played with Tristano during these years, is very much this kind of drummer; a model time-keeper who is not required to offer any inspiration to the soloist or to contribute color to the performance as a whole.

Nearly all the compositions Tristano's group played during this period, as during the earlier period, are based on the chord changes of well-known standards. The two notable exceptions were the experiments in total improvisation, **Intuition and Digression**, which involved no pre-planned harmonic basis or structural unit. In contrast to this kind of experiment, Tristano's own playing style seemed to be in a period of consolidation. He was no longer the furious experimenter, and his playing had become more introspective and graceful. He began to use the upper register of the piano to a greater extent, and the jagged chords of his earlier style became less frequently used. Perhaps the most characteristic example of this middle style was the solo on **Marionette** (reissued on Capitol T 796).

I believe Konitz and Marsh have never surpassed their work on these recordings. Today, you can almost predict when Konitz is going to accent. His solos are still very inventive and well shaped, but they have lost their supple qualities. At any rate, in 1949 both he and Marsh were marvelous.

Since 1950, Tristano has been represented on record by only a single lp. Four of the nine tracks were recorded in a studio, and on these, Tristano did considerable work with the tapes; double recording, speeding up tempos, etc. My opinion is that for once, in this kind of trickery, the end justified the means. On **Line-Up** and **E. 32nd Street**, both up tempo 32-bar pieces, he pre-recorded the rhythm and then superimposed his piano lines, slowing the bass lines down via tape and speeding up the treble. Both are full of drive and fascinating ideas. I'd like to hear the original piano lines; I bet they would compare favorably. The tempos would be slower, but the dynamics would be more varied. All that pounding in the bass end of the piano gets to be a drag after a while.

Requiem is a blues dedicated to Charlie Parker. It is the closest Tristano has ever come to the real mainstream. He uses Bird's vocabulary movingly and without affectation.

Turkish Mambo isn't much more than an exercise in triple tracking. It is built up of three lines, the first one moving from 7/8 to 7/4; the second from 5/8 to 5/4; the third from 3/8 to 4/4. It's entertaining, but that's all.

The other tracks were made during Tristano's stay at the Confucius Lounge with Konitz. He wasn't in particularly inspired form. He seemed to be trying to develop a more stable approach (or perhaps a more middle-aged one, depending on your point of view). He used chord melodies much more, and played nothing one hadn't heard him play before. Because this lp is either atypical or represents Tristano below par, it may be his least important, and it is a pity that it is the only Tristano recording currently available on lp.

THE BLUES

GREENBACKS

As I was walking down the street last night.
A pretty little girl came into sight.
I bowed and smiled and asked her name.
She said hold it bud, I don't play that game.
I reached into my pocket and to her big surprise,
There was Lincoln staring her dead in the eye.
On a greenback, greenback dollar bill,
Just a little piece of paper coated with chlorophyll.

She looked at me with that familiar desire,
Her eyes lit up like they were on fire.
She said my name's Flo and you're on the right track,
But look here Daddy, I wear furs on my back.
So if you want to have fun in this man's land,
Let Lincoln and Jackson start shaking hands.
On a greenback, greenback dollar bill,
Just a little piece of paper coated with chlorophyll.
I didn't know what I was getting into,

But I popped Lincoln and Jackson too.
I didn't mind seeing them fade out of sight,
I just knew I'd have some fun last night.
Whenever you in town and looking for a thrill,
If Lincoln can't get it, Jackson sure will.
On a greenback, greenback dollar bill,
Just a little piece of paper coated with chlorophyll.

We went to night spot where the lights were low,
Dined and danced and I was ready to go.
I got out of my seat and when Flo arose,
She said hold it Daddy, while I powder my nose.
I sat back down with a smiling face,

While she went down to the powder place.
With my greenback, greenback dollar bill,
Just a little piece of paper coated with chlorophyll.
The music stopped and the lights came on,

I looked around and saw I was all alone.
I didn't know how long Flo had been gone,
But a nose powder sure didn't take that long.
I left the place with tears in my eyes,
As I waved Lincoln and Jackson goodbye.
On a greenback, greenback dollar bill,
Just a little piece of paper coated with chlorophyll.

(By Renald Richardo.
Sung by Ray Charles on Atlantic 8006.
Transcribed by H. A. Woodfin.)

CAT MAN BLUES

Went home last night, heard a noise, I asked my wife 'What is that?'
Went home last night, heard a noise, I asked my wife 'What is that?'
Says 'Man, don't be so suspicious, that ain't nothin' but a cat.'

I travelled this world all over, mama, takin' all kinds of chance
I travelled this world all over, mama, takin' all kinds of chance
But I never come home before, seen a cat wearin' a pair of pants

Lord, he wouldn't call him cat man if he come round in the day
Lord, he wouldn't call him cat man if he come round in the day
But he wait till late at night when he can steal my cream away

Lord, I want that cat man stay away from my house, Lordy, when I'm out
Lord, I want that cat man stay away from my house, Lordy, when I'm out
Because I think he's the cause of my woman wearin' the mattress out

Said I went home last night askin' 'Just what is a lamb?'
Said I went home last night askin' 'Just what is a lamb?'
I never raised no suspicion till I hear my back-door slam

(Sung by Blind Boy Fuller on Melotone 7-01-56.
Transcribed by Eric Townley.)

DRY LAND BLUES

I can look through muddy water, baby, an' find dry land,
If you don't want me, honey, let's take hand 'n hand.

I'm goin' so far can't hear your rooster crow,
I'm goin' so far can't hear your rooster crow.

You won't cook me no dinner, baby; you won't iron me no clothes.
You won't do nothin' but walk the honey grove.

Men, if you love your woman, better measure it in a cup,
For she'll end up 'n quit you, boy, leave you in tough luck.

Men, you can take my woman but you ain't done nothin' smart,
For I got more'n one woman playin' in my back yard.

Windstorm come an' it blowed my house away.
I'm a good old boy, but I ain't got nowhere to stay.

An' there's trouble here an' there's trouble everywhere
So much trouble floatin' in the air.

What you gonna do when your trouble get like mine,
What you gonna do your trouble get like mine?
What you gonna do when your trouble get like mine?

(Sung by Furry Lewis on Label "X" LVA-3032.
Submitted unsigned.)

THE SYMPOSIUM

Joe Goldberg

When the true jazz innovator comes along, every six weeks or so, fearful obstacles lie in his path; too much publicity combined with what Jon Hendricks so tellingly called "lack of acceptance", and the like. This magazine would like to spare the true creative artist such indignities, since too often they represent mere opportunism on the part of the jazz press and other elements in the jazz business. Therefore, when we first heard about Ansel Jones, we made an unprecedented move. All the important jazz writers were contacted, a plane was chartered (at this time we would like to acknowledge with deep appreciation the assistance of the Fjord Foundation), and a picnic lunch was packed by the ladies auxiliary, directed by the Baroness Nica. We all set forth for Beaumont, Texas, where the Ansel Jones Duo was playing.

After that junket, copies of his new lp "**Yesterday Is Not the Answer**" were distributed. And the reflections and opinions of all of the country's most important critics on Ansel Jones were recorded. In this way, the reader can compare all the conflicting opinions on Ansel Jones, side by side, handy for reference. And the jazz writers save themselves quite a bit of trouble, for they all discovered Ansel Jones at the same time, and therefore have no axes to grind.

But first, a word about Ansel Jones. He is a shy man, and one is instantly impressed by his deep sincerity, his need to make music, and his love of jazz. As Ansel himself said to us—we were seated around a long table at the Texas Dog Bar and Grill, where Ansel's group was playing, and Ansel, warmed by the presence of so many men who believe in what he is trying to say, relaxed his ordinarily Spartan rule against verbalization—"I am deeply sincere. I love jazz, and I need to make music."

Much of Ansel's life in music is explained by his instrument, a strange, ungainly copper trumpet that he carries with him affectionately at all times. All his life, Ansel had wanted to become a serious composer, and had saved his pennies so that someday he might attend the Julliard School of Music. The day after his application to Julliard had been refused, Ansel walked calmly into the metal working shop at the high school, carrying the pennies he had been saving. Without a word, he tossed them into one of the huge cauldrons there. By night, he had melted them down and had forged from the molten copper a trumpet.

He and pianist Porter Smith form the entire group. Naturally, their exclusion of the conventional rhythm

section raised several questions, and for the answer to those, we turned to Porter Smith, who can be much more articulate about his music than can Ansel. "We don't need no rhythm," he said.

There you have it; the background on the Jones-Smith Duo. What follows is a cross-section of opinion from some of the finest jazz commentators in the world. It's all fiction, of course, but then so is most criticism.

Ralph Gleason: I like this group, and anybody who doesn't had just better not ever talk to me again, that's all. Their music has been analyzed in too much detail elsewhere for me to repeat the obvious here, but just let me say one thing. The act of melting down pennies to make a trumpet, in defiance of the federal law against defacing currency, is a nose-thumbing gesture of the artist against authority that shows a kind of courage I have only found in the poetry of Jon Hendricks and the humor of Lenny Bruce. And if you don't hear that parallel in the music, as well as overtones of Allen Ginsberg, Dylan Thomas and Paul Klee, then your ears are stopped up by prejudice, and I don't want to have anything to do with you.

Whitney Balliett: Ansel Jones, a thin, diffident young man who resembles a twelve-stringed lute placed on its end at an angle of seventy-three degrees, is getting music from his self-smelted horn that may radically change the shape of jazz. In a typical solo, he will start with a sort of agonized laziness, as if he were awakening from a dream caused by having eaten too much welsh rarebit the night before, and then, in about the third chorus, he will, in a series of short, splatting notes that give the effect of a catsup bottle hit once too often on its end, abruptly switch into a fast tempo that belies the furry bumbling that preceded it. All this time, his pianist, Porter Smith, a torpid ellipse of a man, lays down a firm, inky foundation that anticipates the leader's meanderings with the precision of a Seeing Eye Dog weaving its way through a Coney Island beach crowd on the Fourth of July. In one composition, **Duplicity**, the two men hit the same note simultaneously midway through the second bridge, and it had the shattering emotional impact of two old friends meeting by chance after years of aimless wandering.

Gene Lees: I'm not as friendly with Ansel Jones as I am with Quincy and some of the other guys, but some of the things they play remind me of tunes I've heard in my extensive collection of Hindemith and Stravinsky records. I suppose the critics will say they use counter-

point, because critics like that word, but they don't. They use fragmentation of theme.

Martin Williams: It is impossible to write about the music of Ansel Jones without using the word "artist." His compositions are five-strain rondos with the fourth strain omitted (ABACAE), and, in using this approach, he might seem to incorporate the sense of form that had previously been notable in only the work of, say, a Jelly Roll Morton, a Duke Ellington, a John Lewis, a Thelonious Monk. But Jones has, in the most natural way in the world, gone one step beyond the work of these masters. He has omitted the fourth strain. (A strain, it should be explained at this point, is an identifying feature of the work of Morton, roughly corresponding to a riff in the Ellington band of the forties, an episode in the work of John Lewis, or a theme in the compositions of Thelonious Monk). Omitting the fourth strain now seems an amazingly simple step to have made, but it takes an Ansel Jones to make that step. A man might deserve the title of artist for having done much less. But there is still more to this man's achievement. In the improvised passages, the strains—all four of them—are abandoned in favor of blues or **I Got Rhythm**. Perhaps a word of explanation is in order here. If I abandon my strain, I am then not playing the song I wrote, which gives me enormous freedom, although it plays hell with my discipline.

John S. Wilson: I do not understand the music of Ansel Jones, but he definitely shares a place with those men who have left us an identifiable body of music—Morton, Ellington, Lewis and Monk. In his execution, he gets a tweedy sound that is aptly suited to the cordovan tones produced by his pianist, Porter Smith. It will be interesting to see what their next album produces. I have not mentioned the other members of the group because there are no other members. This suggests a similarity to other duos—Don Shirley and Mitchell-Ruff—that can be misleading.

Ira Gitler: I like half of this record, the Porter Smith half. Porter Smith is playing jazz. He has that old Horace thing going. But Ansel Jones, who sounds like Miles Davis (major influence), with slight overtones of Don Jacoby and the merest hint of Rafael Mendez, is not playing jazz. He is playing a copper trumpet. Nobody ever played jazz on a copper trumpet before. I don't think I trust it.

Bill Coss: This review is not appearing in the new **Metronome**, which contains many interesting features and departments, such as record reviews, notes on where the bands are playing, and a crossword puzzle page, because we are all getting together, in the interest of jazz, and telling you, straight out and no holds barred, what we think of Ansel Jones. That, I think, is the true spirit of jazz. We stand right up there and tell you what we think, regardless of the pain, agony, torment and soul-tearing frustration of our inner selves. We are laying it on the line. And that is what jazz is. It is more than just music. It is freedom, irrepressible good spirits, a bottle of scotch and your girl on Saturday night, and, yes, it is those here-it-is-Sunday-morning-and-where-did-the-night-go-blues, too; it is all of that, and more, too; it is the jeering laugh at the policeman's swinging club because you know you're clean, buddy, so what the hell?

Because of space limitations, my review of Ansel Jones will not appear in this column, but it will be in

next month's issue of the new **Metronome**, along with a piercing analysis of Charles Mingus and a term paper on the role of the coffee house in jazz.

Symphony Sid: Ansel Jones is another of the great gentlemen of jazz who has been so swinging over the years. We like his music because it is Progressive and American, and he is appearing on our great swinging show at the Coliseum along with many of the other great gentlemen of jazz who have been so swinging over the years.

Leonard Feather: Although Ansel Jones has not yet done many of the things that we have come to know are equated with jazz greatness—he has not taken a blindfold test (**Down Beat**), been mentioned in the **Encyclopedia of Jazz** (Horizon Press) or been recorded on the Metrojazz label—he shows a certain amount of talent. However, is talent truly a criterion?

Nat Hentoff: It is important that the world become aware of what is going on in Beaumont, Texas. As the plane crossed the Mason-Dixon line, I noticed that certain of the passengers had been given containers with a large black "N" stenciled on them. Is this the America of Dwight MacDonald? That night, at the Texas Dog, I could hear little of the music over the clacking of my typewriter (I was writing a profile on Phil Foster for the **Daily Forward**), but I did hear one shattering fragment of **belles-lettres** that moved me deeply.

After the above comments were turned in, there was a round-table discussion on the work of Ansel Jones. Highlights are reproduced below.

Feather: What do you think about this fellow, Ed?

George Crater: Don't call me by my right name.

Williams: It certainly is a relief from all the blues-based-pseudo-funk we've been used to.

Jon Hendricks: Well, man, like, that's soul, y'know?

Gleason: You tell 'em, Jon, baby.

Lees: I think anything that extends the area of jazz is welcome. At **Downbeat**, we're going to sponsor a jazz booth at the next Conference of Christians and Jews, and get a delegation from Lexington to come and swear they never played jazz.

Wilson: I'd like to get back to what Martin was saying. Martin, how do you distinguish between funk and pseudo-funk? They employ the same harmonies, don't they?

Hendricks: One's got soul, baby, and one hasn't.

Gleason: You tell 'em Jon, baby. Isn't this a wonderful kid? The Sammy Davis, Jr. of jazz.

Gitler: That sounds like something Lenny Bruce might have said.

Gleason: Where do you think I got it?

Hentoff: Lenny Bruce is a devastating commentator on our contemporary social scene.

Coss: That's what jazz is. A devastating comment on our social scene.

Balliett: Lenny Bruce reminds me of an overturned milk truck.

Wilson: What do you mean by that?

Balliett: If you can't see how Lenny Bruce is like an overturned milk truck, I don't see how I can explain it to you.

Williams: I thought we were talking about Ansel Jones. It is very important that we all decide what position we are going to take on this man.

All: Let's ask Cannonball for an opinion. He's a musician. He'll know.

EDDIE BAREFIELD'S MANY WORLDS

Frank Driggs

Among the many excellent jazzmen of an older generation who have managed to stay working by using a variety of skills, is arranger-conductor and saxophonist Eddie Barefield. Many another equally good musician would have given up and left music, but Eddie has managed to acquire exceptional business traits over his years in music, and that with a lot of enthusiasm has enabled him to work steadily almost everywhere a jazzman can. He's played with Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Fletcher Henderson and Don Redman. He led an exceptional band of his own in the Los Angeles area of which Don Byas and Tyree Glenn were members during the late 'thirties. He was musical director for Ella Fitzgerald's orchestra. He's conducted for Street Car Named Desire on Broadway and for night club shows at the Copper Door. He has written arrangements for most of the big names in the field since the early 'thirties. Although he is primarily known as a clarinetist, he is a much more interesting alto soloist. He's managed to keep abreast of the changing currents in jazz and has gone through additional training at Julliard. He listens with interest to younger musicians like Cannonball Adderly, whom he especially likes. He misses the jam sessions which were so much a part of his own training and feels they would help bridge the gap between musical generations in jazz.

He related his experiences to me throughout the summer and early fall of 1959. He recently returned from Europe where he toured with the Jazz Train stage show as conductor.

Frank Driggs

I was born and raised in Iowa and became interested in music when I was in my early teens. I had my own group of guys my own age, called the Jimtown Ramblers. An older man named Edgar Pillows who had more experience took over and changed the name to the Night Owls. We went down to New Orleans with the band, which was just five pieces, and when we got back, I sneaked off in the middle of the night and joined Isler's Gravy Show, a traveling minstrel troupe. I was not only playing saxophone in the troupe, but for fifteen dollars a week, I also fought in an athletic sideshow, where I had to beat all comers. I started fighting to increase my salary and took on all comers all the way down through Texas during the summer of 1926.

The show got stranded in Kansas City, and that's where I first met Bennie Moten. Lamar Wright was playing trumpet with him then. I didn't have any money, and I didn't want my mother to know where I was, so I got a job washing dishes and didn't write home. Finally, a group of kids from Indianapolis came through on their way to California. One of them was Raymond Valentine, just a kid then, but a terrific trumpet player. They liked me and had gotten a sax for me to rehearse with them at Lincoln Hall. Somehow, my mother found out where I was, and she sent detectives around to bring me home. I didn't do much of anything all that winter and took off for Chicago the next spring.

There I was staying with a friend of mine who was a chef-cook and was also trying to learn the sax. I was playing by ear all this time and couldn't read, but he thought I was much better than he was, so he got me to come and stay with him. I was working in the stockyards when I auditioned for a band called the Society Syncopators. The first number was a jam session and they liked my playing, but when it came to reading I couldn't make it, and they wouldn't take me. But the leader sent me out on some gigs with Billy Frye, a piano player who played all the rent parties. We did pretty well, and from Friday to Sunday we'd make as much as fifty dollars apiece.

When I got back home I received a telegram from a band called the Virginia Ravens, famous in the Middle West then. They were run by an elderly white couple, but the band was all Negro. The telegram was very businesslike, saying something like, "We heard about you while going through Des Moines and think you are just the man we are looking for. You must be neat and clean, read and be able to improvise." I didn't want to go when I saw I had to read, but my friend in Chicago urged me to take it. He said it was my big chance, and I could make it. He thought I was the greatest. I had to hock my horn to make the trip by train to their headquarters in Genesee, Ohio. When the train pulled in at eight that night the whole band was there to meet me. They thought they were getting the greatest musician in the world. Their leader was a singer named Lee, I can't remember his last name. He asked me what horn did I want to play, alto or tenor? Knowing my past experience in Chicago trying to play lead alto, I decided to try tenor because I could hide the fact I couldn't read. I had a terrific ear and was a very good soloist for that time—you know, slap-tongue, etc. I went over like a house on fire because I could solo well and could follow the melody. I was copying Coleman Hawkins, just like everybody else in those years, and the music wasn't as difficult as it is now.



The Ravens' territory was Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin, and they did mostly one-nighters. I went over big, playing on my back, leaning way over, etc., so the others didn't pay any attention to the fact that I couldn't read. The people who owned the band were wild about me, and the people at the dances used to stop dancing when I started playing, so my head got quite big. Bill Crump, one of the other saxes and I got to be good friends. It seemed like all the other guys in the band were against the leader because he was older and pretty strict; they set my mind against him then.

We had a rehearsal one day and did a stock arrangement on a number called **Sam, the Accordion Man**. It had an eight-bar intro and a tenor break at the end of the eight. In those days, the band stopped at the break, so when it came, I stopped too. Lee said, "No, there's a saxophone break there." I said, "Oh, yeah." So they went through it again and when the break came I slap-tongued and went through a whole lot of notes, and Lee said "No, play what's on the paper." That's when the trouble started. The other guys couldn't believe I couldn't read. I'd been telling Bill all the time I couldn't read, and he'd get mad at me, telling me, "Why are you Eastern guys always jiving us?" Anyway, Lee fired me, told me he couldn't use me if I couldn't read. So I packed up my horns and was starting to walk out when Mr. and Mrs. Bass, the owners, came up and asked me where I was going. I told them Lee fired me, and they said, "Oh, no, he can't do that, you're our star attraction." When they told me that, I flipped, and my head got even bigger. For quite a while from then on, I just sat up in the band and did as I pleased. I'd fluff the leader off when he asked me to do something, or just turn my back. He finally came up to me and said, "As long as I have to keep you in the band, why don't you come over to my place for an hour a day, and I'll sit down with you and teach you how to read." I told him I didn't need to read and even offered to fight him. One day a little later on when I was walking down the main street in one of those little old towns I started thinking what an ass I'd been. This guy was trying to help me and I was making a fool out of myself. No matter what the guys in the band thought about him, he was offering me something, and I was a fool not to take advantage of it. So I turned around and went up to the hotel where he was staying and knocked on his door. When he saw it was me he started to shut the door in my face, but I pushed it open and walked inside. I told him I wasn't there to fight him, but I wanted to talk to him. He told me to sit down, and I said I wanted to apologize to him for the way I'd been acting and that I was ashamed of myself and wanted to take up his proposition for teaching me how to read. You should have seen the change come over his face. And he sat down with me every day and taught me how to read. I finally switched over from tenor to lead alto. This job was paying five dollars a day, but in those days you could get a room for twenty-five cents a night, a steak for thirty-five, and you would still have money left over. The other alto player was leaving to take a job with Don Phillips' band out of Fort Wayne. They were opening up at the Broadway Gardens in Madison, Wisconsin, and they were paying sixty dollars a week. I put in my notice with the other guy, and when Lee heard I was leaving, he quit too, because I was the only friend he had in the band. We stayed there all summer. When

the job was over Byron Garrison, the banjo player, and I stayed in Madison, because we liked the town. We couldn't get any work though, so he went back to Pittsburgh, and I went to Milwaukee.

I couldn't get any work there either because there was a strong union, and I wasn't a member of any local at the time. I got a job hauling stuff off a truck, and a month later the Virginia Ravens came through and I rejoined them. I got Snake White in the band (he and I were raised together), and we quit together in Eau Claire, Wisconsin and went to Minneapolis to join another band called the Ethiopian Symphonians. They were copying Fletcher Henderson's records and working in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Four of us quit after a while to join Clarence Johnson's band in Bismarck, North Dakota. That's where I first met Lester Young. He was with his father's band then, playing alto and baritone. Lee wasn't playing then, just dancing in front of the band. His mother was playing piano, and his sister saxophone. We used to get together and send off from a catalog and get all of Frankie Trumbauer's records. That's where Prez got the basis of his style. We stayed around Bismarck through the winter of 1927 and into early 1928.

After that, Snake and myself went to Minneapolis and I formed my own six-piece combo and played dance marathons in Minaqua, Wisconsin, and did a show for the Stecker Brothers. About this time Eli Rice came through with a ten-piece band, heard our group, took his own band back to Milwaukee, fired them and came back and picked us up. He was a big man, and a powerful singer who could sing over the whole band, no matter how loud you played. He was as big as Jimmy Rushing, but he was more muscular and he was tall. He was an older man then. His son, Sylvester Rice, was a very fine drummer and another son, Dick, was also a good drummer and singer. Between 1928 and 1930 I went back and forth between Eli Rice's Cottonpickers and Grant Moore's band; both of them worked in and around Wisconsin and Minnesota. Rice had a terrific band with guys like Eddie Tompkins and Joe Thomas on trumpets, and another guy called Shorty Mack who was a cross between Louis and Jabbo Smith. Shorty was a dwarf with really short legs but a man's body. Bert Bailey was playing tenor and Victoria Raymore was a fine pianist. She's married to Everett Barksdale now. I played with J. Frank Terry's Chicago Nightingales for a while—this was in Toledo—and I ran around with Art Tatum and Teddy Wilson who were both there then. Then I went back with both Grant Moore and Eli Rice until the winter of 1930, when I organized another combo of my own which I took into the Nest Club in Minneapolis. Snake White, Frank Hines and Lester Young were with me then, and we worked until the spring of 1931 when the job folded. I went back to Chicago to join Ralph Cooper's band at the Regal Theatre. I never did work because the union pulled me and the entire band off the job because I was called in from out of town. Cooper, Reginald Forsythe and myself all wound up sleeping in the same bed at the Hotel Trenier. That was where Forsythe taught me how to voice for brass sections and started me writing for Earl Hines and different bands around town then.

Bennie Moten was playing the Paradise Theatre on the North Side, and Ben Webster had come to town to join them. We got to be good friends. I went out with him

to the theatre and we started jamming and Bennie liked what he heard and asked me to join the band. So I went back to Kansas City with them and later took another tour East with them. We didn't make any money; got stranded in Columbus, Ohio; got stranded some more here and there, and finally we got our break: to open the Pearl Theatre in Philadelphia.

Fletcher's band was just going out, and it was a big thrill for me to see Hawk and all the other guys I'd been idolizing since I was a kid. They were rehearsing, so I spent the entire day at the theatre watching them—and all the beautiful chorus girls in the show.

While we were working the show we were tabbing everything. We didn't have any money, so we charged our rent, our clothes, our whiskey. And were balling it up with the girls. Payday came and Bennie didn't get any money. He owed Steiffel so much that he didn't have any coming in. I pawned a suit and my clarinet, and we wound up standing in front of the Pearl, broke. We had to get to Camden to record, and along comes this little guy Archie with a raggedy old bus, and he took us there. He got us a rabbit and four loaves of bread, and we cooked rabbit stew right on a pool table. That kept us from starving, and then we went on to make the records. Eddie Durham was doing most of Bennie's writing then; I made **Toby** that time. We didn't go back to New York again, just turned around and made it back to Kansas City. We hung around there for a while, not doing much of anything, so I jumped town and went to Columbus to join Zack Whyte.

Sy Oliver was doing most of the arranging for Zack then, although Gus Wilson, Teddy's brother, wrote some terrific stuff. Gus was also a fine trombone player. He would always make an arrangement on the same tune, **Clementine**. He'd come in every two or three days and tear up the old arrangement and make a new one, but only on that one tune. He was very upset then. One night in Chillicothe, Ohio, he walked off the stand, left his horn and everything, and none of us ever saw him again until I ran into him in Chicago a few years back. Vic Dickenson was with Zack then, and they had a terrific trumpet player named Henry Savage who was playing way up long before anyone else thought it could be done.

We were stranded in Columbus and took off on a road tour down to Chattanooga. I came down with some kind of virus, so they left me there. After I got well I did some broadcasting with one of the local stations until I got a wire to join the Cotton Pickers.

I went up to Erie, Pennsylvania to join them. They finally fired McKinney and came down to Baltimore to play Carlin's Hotel. That was the best job we had. We were making thirty dollars a week and stayed there until that fall. Roy Eldridge was with the band then, and he and I used to run together. We used to jam a lot in a restaurant, and one day Cab Calloway came by and heard us playing and asked me to join his band. I was glad to get asked to join a band that was doing something, so I went in. He didn't have any music for me, but I just added my part and eventually started writing them in. I made all his records until I left in 1936, in Hollywood after they made a movie with Al Jolson.

I'll tell you how **Moonglow** came to be made; it was a big hit and it was purely by accident. One day they happened to have some time left over in the studio so we happened to make it. Cab hadn't made any all instru-

mental records before that one. Actually, I like my own solo on **Chinese Rhythm** better.

We went to Europe in the early part of 1934 and did very well. When we got back, Ed Swayzee died and Mouse Randolph took his place in the trumpet section, with Doc Cheatham. I'll never know why Cab didn't use Doc Cheatham more often than he did, though, because he's always been one of the top men around. Ben Webster was in the band then too.

I fell in love with the climate in Hollywood and decided to settle there. I didn't do too many jobs because I wasn't in the union. I started to work with Charlie Schols' band after a while, and then I decided I might as well get my own band together. I took seven of his men, which was most of his band, and added some others. Tyree Glenn had just come to town, and he wanted to join, and Don Byas, who had been playing with Hamp's first band there the year before. I had Paul Howard, the secretary of the local, on the other tenor, so we didn't have any union problems at all. I turned down an offer from Frank Sebastian to play his Cotton Club, which was the only really important club in town, because he wanted to put Hamp in on drums. I had Lee Young and told him we'd rather stick it out together since we'd come this far. A month later he called me and told me to bring the band in on my own terms, and we stayed in there for quite a while. The band was good. Dudley Brooks, the piano player, and I did most of the arranging. We made some records for Al Jarvis who was doing everything he could to help us make it, but I don't know what ever happened to them. We couldn't get enough work around that part of the country, and we had to break up late in 1937.

When Louis Armstrong was out there in 1937 for the movie **Every Day's a Holiday**, the union got a fifty-piece parade band together to compete for the best marching band. We won the contest and got a part in the picture. There's a scene in the picture with the whole band—only instead of me leading it with my clarinet, Louis is leading the band and I'm in the back playing trombone! I was able to get into the movie studios doing sound tracks for Georgie Stoll along with Al Morgan, Marshall Royal, and a few others.

Fletcher Henderson came through in 1938. Jerry Blake quit the band and I took his place and came back East with him. I was pretty tired of Hollywood by this time. The climate was still the greatest, but there wasn't enough happening musically.

We went into the Grand Terrace that spring and I recorded with Fletcher. I think I played better clarinet on Fletcher's records than I did on most of the others. Pete Suggs was playing drums and vibes with the band then, and Emmett Berry and Ben Webster were there too. When we got back to New York I left to join Don Redman at the Savoy. Ed Inge was playing all the clarinet solos and I made **Milenburg Joys** with him—that's my alto solo, and not Don's as most people thought.

Chick Webb wanted me to join his band just a little while before he died. He wanted me to go on a ten-week tour with him, but I told him I'd join when he got back. He never made it. Ella took his band over and I joined and became director, staying about a year. Then I took my own combo into the Savoy. It was a group more or less on the order of the Savoy Sultans. I had Benny Carter, and me doing the arranging! I got a studio job with ABC here in New York which

lasted from 1942 through 1946, and I doubled into Duke's band at the Hurricane Club in 1942 when Chauncey Haughton went into the service. I also did some other gigs with Frankie Newton at the same time. I was with Duke again after the ABC gig in 1947, and was the musical director for the Broadway show **Streetcar Named Desire** through 1948. I was on the **Endorsed by Dorsey** show over WOR and with Sy Oliver at Cafe Zanzibar in 1950. Then I was back with Fletcher's last big band and small combo that played in Cafe Society in 1950-51 before he died. I went to Brazil and Uruguay with Cab in 1951 and have been writing, arranging, conducting, and gigging since then. I've had all of Cab's bands since that time and have made a tour of Europe again with the **Jazz Train** show. I took Tommy Benford with me and we used local musicians when we got there. I've always tried to keep up with whatever developments have come along, so I followed what Bird was doing when he came to New York, and I've kept up with the other younger guys like Cannonball Adderley and Lou Donaldson. And don't forget, there's always Benny Carter. It's too bad he doesn't come East, because he's still upset everybody, he can play so much. I love to play; one of these days maybe I'll be able to do some recording with my alto.

RECORD REVIEWS

"SPIRITUALS TO SWING: The Legendary Carnegie Hall Concerts of 1938-9". Vanguard VRS 8523-4.

BENNY GOODMAN Sextet: Benny Goodman, clarinet; Charlie Christian, guitar; Lionel Hampton, vibes; Fletcher Henderson, piano; Arthur Bernstein, bass; Nick Fatool, drums. *I Got Rhythm; Flying Home; Memories of You; Stomping at the Savoy; Honeysuckle Rose.*
COUNT BASIE BAND: Earl Warren, Herschel Evans, Lester Young, Jack Washington, reeds; Ed Lewis, Harry Edison, Buck Clayton, Shad Collins, trumpet; Dickie Wells, Dan Minor, Benny Morton, trombones; Count Basie, piano; Freddie Greene, drums; Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums.
One O'Clock Jump, Rhythm Man. Add Hot Lips Page, trumpet; Blue with Lips.
KANSAS CITY SIX: Buck Clayton, trumpet; Lester Young, tenor; Charlie Christian,

Freddie Greene, guitars; Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums.

Good Morning, Blues; Way Down Yonder in New Orleans; Pagan' the Devil.

Count Basie, piano replaces Christian and Greene. *Don't Be That Way.*

Young plays clarinet instead of tenor; *Mortgage Stomp.* Add Helen Humes, vocal: *Blues with Helen.*

NEW ORLEANS FEETWARMERS: Sidney Rechet, soprano sax; Tommy Ladnier, trumpet; Dan Minor, trombone; James P. Johnson, piano; Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums.

I Wish I Could Shimmy Like my Sister Kate; Weary Blues.

James P. Johnson, piano: *Mule Walk; Carolina Shout.*

Ida Cox, accompanied by Johnson, Clayton, Young, Wells, Greene, Page, Jones. *'Fore Day Creep.*

Sonny Terry and Bull City Red: The New John Henry. **Sonny Terry:** Mountain Blues.

Joe Turner, vocal; Pete Johnson, piano: *It's All Right Baby.*

Pete Johnson, Meade Lux Lewis, Albert Ammons, pianos; accompanied by Page and Jones. *Cavalcade of Boogie.*

Big Bill Broonzy, vocals; accompanied by Ammons, Page, Jones: *Done Got Wise; Louise, Louise.*

Mitchell's Christian Singers: What More Can Jesus Do?; *My Mother Died Ashoutin'.*

Goodman Sextet, Basie Band, Lewis, Pete Johnson, Ammons: *Lady Be Good.*

There is some gorgeous Lester Young in this set—and what beautiful things he played in those years. But that isn't all of course; for example, the Pete Johnson-Joe Turner duet is the very best I have ever heard from them, but Turner is a bit off-mike, and that brings up the question of recorded sound. There is some bad balance and occasional distortion, of course, but the only times it really got in the way for me were on a couple of the Goodman tracks, where Christian was either too close to the mike or had his amplifier up too high.

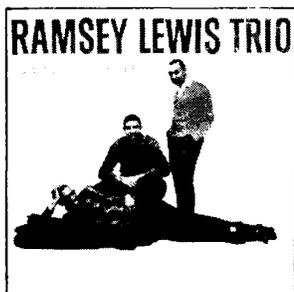
Among the Goodman tracks there is very good Christian and Hampton on *Flying Home* and *Memories*, and very good Christian on *Honeysuckle* (the version that later became *Gilly and Gone with 'What' Draft*, by the way), and it is fine to hear the Henderson solo on the latter.

The Basie band things mostly don't come to much. *One O'Clock* is just some of the riffs. *Rhythm Man* is a powerhouse James Mundy chart of a kind that I think had little to do with the virtues of this extraordinary band. However, toward the end of the mass *Lady Be Good* there is some ragged riffing which catches on records, for once, the almost unbelievable lift and

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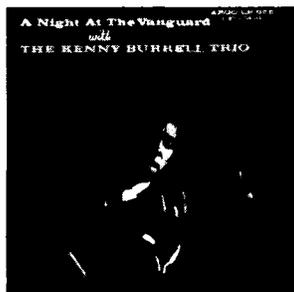
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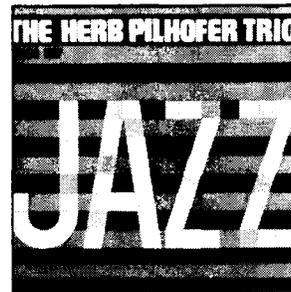
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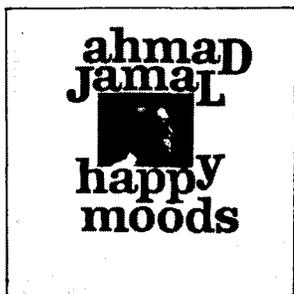
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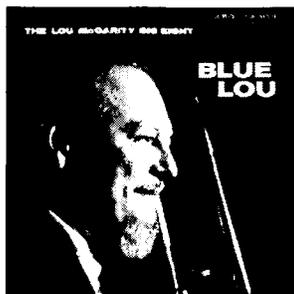
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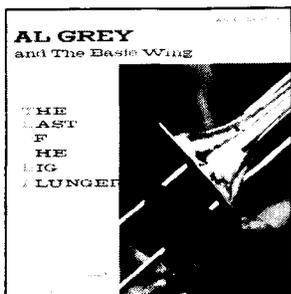
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excitement one got standing and listening in front of this band in those years, listening especially on its last number of the night which was usually a long "head," led off by Prez. The Lips Page track is his engaging embrochure-controlled, false-fingered medium tempo blues—and if you remember that **Boo Woo** and **Woo Woo** jive, you will know that Harry James must have had his ears wide open this night.

Basie's piano shows his roots; it is in his earlier Wallerish style, with touches of Hines. I will cop out on James P. because he is a big subject to me and not for now; let me lean on Dick Wellstood's comment in these pages that his earlier work was better. Bechet is really creative on **Sister Kate**.

Ladnier is too, there and also on the otherwise edgy **Weary Blues**. He also reminds us how many New Orleans players of Armstrong's generation shared the rhythmic ideas he had but used them differently with very different ideas of melody. Jo Jones kids an earlier drum style on these tracks but with respect and without ridicule (what a contrast to Krupa on the Goodman Carnegie set).

The Golden Gates were fine, but after hearing the same kinds of materials handled more spontaneously by the Mitchells, you may feel the whole thing is a little too dicty. (If you merely formalize something and add nothing thereby, you haven't done much. It is sort of like the difference between a Dean Kinkaid arrangement of **Milenberg Joys** and one by Don Redman.)

Ida Cox here is a bit different from the dramatic Ida Cox of the twenties. This is humorous vaudeville patter blues and, as such, is very good—but I wonder why seven accompanists. Helen Humes doesn't seem to me a blues singer, although later comic stuff like **Million Dollar Secret** is a good show. More on her track below.

Sonny Terry's two are in his falsetto style and, for me, are fascinating patterns of rhythmic sounds. Of course, he doesn't "get around" much on that harmonica, as the notes say; the point is the range of effects he gets while getting around very little. I have spoken of the Turner-Johnson delight above; Joe Turner's voice rings so clearly; they work together so completely. The **Cavalcade of Boogie** is not "the real article" huckstered in the title and notes; in fact it is not boogie at all but only some jivey blues. Those treble figures mean hardly anything without the interplay of a boogie bass.

Big Bill's two tracks find him in very good voice and at his urban best. It is far better Broonzy than the I'm-just-a-simple-country-boy bit he was doing in his last years. **Done Got Wise** is a first-rate "break" blues performance; Ammons is delightful back there on **Louise**. (According to Sam Charters' **County Blues**, C. Broonzy

was introduced to the audience as an ex-sharecropper! Ah, the thirties!) Now, Prez and associates. All is not gold, but what is gold glows as nothing else in all jazz can glow. Good clarinet solos by him are almost priceless, and there is one on **Blues for Helen**. He uses the same initial ideas as on the Commodore **Pagin' the Devil** to a quite different development, and I think that perhaps I have never heard a better Lester Young solo than this new one. **Mortgage Stomp** is, in effect, a quite worthy sketch for a masterpiece, **Lester Leaps In**; a constantly decelerating **Don't Be That Way** is not up to that high level. The Kansas City Six" numbers with Christian come from the 1939 concert; they sound different, are not quite as good, and there's a lot of trouble with the time on a couple of them. But to hear Prez and Christian in the same group is fascinating. **Good Morning Blues** generally plods though they are both very good on it, as is Clayton. The latter is somehow stuck for ideas until near the end of his **Way Down Yonder** solo. Christian's there is brief. If Young's solo isn't up to his Commodore version, it only means it isn't one of his very best recorded performances. This **Pagin' the Devil** is very good blues playing. Finally, to go back to the **Lady Be Good**, only some of it makes much sense to me but Christian's choruses are excellent; his best work of the set, I'd say. Lester's are really fascinating if you know the 1936 version, and it is so good to hear Edison without the current clichés.

Young and Christian; master and pupil, a great and enduring jazzman and one not quite so great. Christian was not so great as the master, but went beyond him and reflected a crisis in jazz. I think that he shows that crisis not in harmony, as is often said, but in rhythm. Christian used two kinds of rhythm. One is behind the beat, regular (almost monotonous), and he used it when he was stringing riffs. (You can hear the same beat here in Hampton and in Lips.) That is the crisis. The other rhythm is far less regular, closer to the beat, and Christian used it for those long, flowing lines of melody that alternated with the riffs. The lines come from Prez, of course, but go further harmonically. This side of Christian points to a part of the solution for the crisis. But the real basis of the solution is rhythm, again. Seen this way Christian almost becomes only a transitional figure. That view is not fair to Christian, but saying it does remind one that we could never even think of Prez, for all his innovations and their importance, as a mere "historical" figure. His best work endures because, well, because it is absolutely and always beautiful. And a lot of it here is that beautiful. A glance at the heading of this review will remind you of how many

commercial record dates these concerts spawned, and how many careers, new and renewed. One of John Hammond's purposes, of course, was to suggest to people what a rich heritage lay behind and within this "swing music" they were so crazy about. And one effect was to thrust many of the participants into the fringes of big time show biz success. Some flourished for a while; some still do. Another was to put jazz into the concert hall, irrevocably, as it turned out. Another effect that perhaps occurs to us only now was the astonishing comprehensiveness of having Sonny Terry and Lester Young on the same stage at the same concert. If we set ourselves to think about any of those things we may end up thinking about just what part jazz has really played, variously, in the lives of Americans, listeners and musicians of all kinds. I am sure that no matter how we approach a question like that, sooner or later, we will be faced with John Hammond, the fan, the collector, the enthusiast, the producer, the writer, the entrepreneur, the a & r man, the friend and encourager of major talent. He will figure in our answer in many ways. But for now, I will return to Lester Young on **Blues with Helen** in a silent gratitude.

Martin Williams

DUKE ELLINGTON-JOHNNY HODGES: "Side By Side". Verve MG V-8345.

Harry Edison, trumpet; Les Spann, guitar, flute; Johnny Hodges, alto; Duke Ellington, piano; Al Hall, bass; Jo Jones, drums. **Stompy Jones**; **Squeeze Me**; **Going Up**. **Roy Eldridge**, trumpet, fluegelhorn; **Lawrence Brown**, trombone; **Johnny Hodges**, alto; **Ben Webster**, tenor; **Billy Strayhorn**, piano; **Wendell Marshall**, bass; **Jo Jones**, drums. **Big Shoe**; **Just a Memory**; **Let's Fall in Love**; **Ruint**; **Band One**; **You Need to Rock**.

The three tracks with Duke and Sweets are from the sessions which produced the excellent "**Back to Back**" (MG-V8317) reviewed by Max Harrison in the March/April issue. **Stompy Jones** is even better than the best of "**Back to Back**". After one of Duke's authoritative intros, Hodges takes four choruses, starting gently, building in volume and intensity, and sounding almost as full as a tenor at the end. Sweets, with harmon mute, makes his first chorus a coy dialogue with Duke saving his best for the rideout. Spann plays pleasantly melodic guitar with echoes of the amplified Django Reinhardt. Duke's solo is a little masterpiece of architecture, proving again (where no proof is needed) that his sense of form and structure is innate. In each chorus the rhythmic accents are subtly shifted, and along with this he builds in sound. In the second chorus, the wide open spaces left by Duke give Jo Jones plenty to do,

and he does it all. At times, Duke shows us where some of Monk's ancestry lies; near the end he pays his own respects to Hines. All join hands for the rideout with Sweets on top, open now and without a trace of ennui. This is some of Sweet's best playing in recent years.

The remaining tracks from this happy gathering are almost anti-climactic. Still, on **Squeeze Me** there is some Harlem reminiscing by the maestro, with a bow to Willie The Lion, some gentle Hodges, and an ending with Jo making like Zutty Singleton.

Understated humor, a rarity in modern jazz, is much a part of all these performances. **Going Up** moves in a "modern" harmonic climate, its minor hues enhanced by Spann's wispy flute. Johnny is utterly relaxed and definitive and Sweets swings to the utmost.

The other session showcases the four horns, especially Hodges. Ben Webster was very relaxed; his chorus on **Just A Memory** is superbly warm. Note how close, both in sound and conception, he and Hodges can be. Roy Eldridge fits perfectly with the Ellingtonians, demonstrating his skill as an ensemble player and the more introspective side of his nature. But the passion in Roy's playing is, happily, never submerged. Johnny is at his lyrical best. The romantic mood is sustained with **Let's Fall in Love**, opened lushly by Lawrence Brown. Roy takes up the fluegelhorn for his chorus; the sound is mellow, the mood faintly nostalgic.

Hodges rides on an organ-chord background for his second chorus; he is not beyond poking gentle fun at himself in spots. Ben is imaginative and controlled. **Ruint**, a short track, features Johnny Hodges and is quite reminiscent of the work of the small Ellington groups of the thirties and forties, a treasure house of jazz. The horns blend but never blandly. On **Bend One**, Roy's chorus makes one wish for more. **You Must Need To Rock** does, with a good "hot" offering by Brown, who throughout sounds much more involved than is customary. **Big Shoe** is also the blues, and relaxed. Among other things, this lp demonstrates Hodges' rediscovered joy in playing, dating approximately from the time he rejoined Duke. The rhythm section is perfect.

As Nat Hentoff's liner notes indicate, it is a pleasure to write about this kind of music. The men here have left their stamp on jazz, but they aren't ready to retire. How good it is to have them with us still, and still at the peak of their powers. This record communicates; to the head, heart, feet.

Dan Morgenstern

BILL EVANS: "Portrait in Jazz".
Riverside RLP 12-315.

Bill Evans, piano; Scott LaFaro, bass; Paul Motian, drums.
Come Rain or Come Shine; Autumn Leaves; Witchcraft; When I Fall in Love; Peri's Scope; What Is This Thing Called Love?; Spring Is Here; Someday My Prince Will Come; Blue In Green.

Evans' third lp, as leader, gave me the impression that he uses different attacks depending on the tempo. On ballads, especially **Spring Is Here** and **Blue In Green** (if that's a ballad), he suggests how the composer might have done the job differently, more pianistically if you will. Changes of register and varying backgrounds are brought into play on both. **Spring** and **When I Fall In Love** have some beautifully altered harmonies while **Blue in Green** features rhythmic variation. Evans' pianistic skill, in his use of all the keyboard, his dynamic sensitivity, his variety and the simply beautiful sounds he creates are all here.

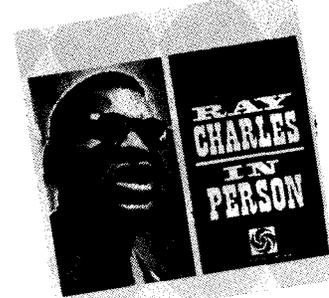
On up-tempo numbers, Evans becomes an improviser in a more conventional manner. He has a fine rhythmic touch—quite percussive—which habitually accents alternate notes when he plays long lines of eighths. This reinforces the four-to-a-bar pulse of the bass, and a musician of less imagination than LaFaro could be relegated to invisibility in his company. Sometimes, Bill abandons the tempo altogether and builds tension by playing a chromatic run out of phase with the rhythm section. **What Is This Thing Called Love?** features a section like this.

An overall rhythm is present also. There is no revolutionary idea of form in Evans' work, but the choruses of his up-tempo improvisations seem to take shape dramatically, reaching a climax which is signalled not only dynamically but by an extreme of register (usually, a high note, once attained at the peak of a chorus, is abandoned) and by a little extra edge in the swing.

This continuity has not been achieved without its price, for it dictates the type of idea that Evans imparts to his choruses. The motifs are largely functional; chosen, it seems, for their exploitability on a scalar basis. The scale is the overall form and the ideas are attuned to it so that they grow organically in a manner less pure than otherwise possible. The scale-oriented approach is intrinsically more melodic-sounding than the chord-running style, but after the initial impact (which was achieved in his last album), Evans seems to be restricted still, although in a different and less strict manner. Each scale from which he draws has its own duration, then the next takes over, in the manner of chords.

Moreover, the scales are often serial in construction and their colorations become too easily predictable, even in the hands of an imaginative player

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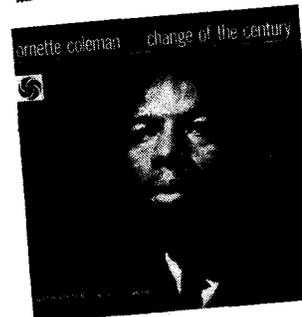


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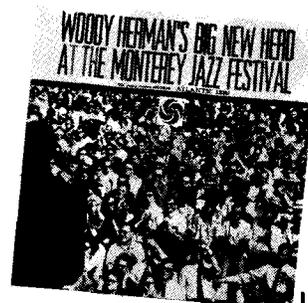


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like Bill Evans. The excellence of his solo on George Russell's **All About Rosie** probably stems from the fact the tenure of each scale was left up to him and true chromaticism was thus more accessible.

The impression of "**Portrait in Jazz**" is that Evans has perfected a style of playing which is original and rewarding but which is really part of something larger. His rapid development so far promises that he will not stop here.

Much may be done from the start Evans and LaFaro have made toward simultaneous improvisation on **Autumn Leaves** but as yet it amounts to free trading and not truly simultaneous playing in the way the MJQ has demonstrated possible.

David Lahm

ANDY GIBSON-THE MAINSTREAM SEXTET. Camden CAL 554.

Prince Robinson, clarinet, tenor; George Dorsey, Hilton Jefferson, altos; Paul Gonsalves, tenor; Leslie Johnkins, baritone; Jimmy Nottingham, Emmett Berry, trumpets; Eli Robinson, Vic Dickenson, Dickie Wells, trombones; Jimmy Jones, piano; Kenny Burrell, guitar; Milt Hinton, bass; Jimmie Crawford, drums.

Blueprint.

Jimmy Forrest, tenor; Harold Baker, trumpet; Vic Dickenson, trombone; Jimmy Greene, piano; Francesco Skeets, bass; Oliver Jackson, drums.

I Got Nothing but You; Bedroom Eyes; Give the Lady What She Wants Most.

Much of the criticism that can be made of records of this sort is not about the musicians, but about what is claimed for them. Since 'Mainstream' now specifically refers to this type of jazz, there's no point in objecting to it as a word. The idea, however, that this brand of playing constitutes some kind of norm seems to me very inaccurate.

This music is personal, at least in the sense that it's a crystallization of producer Stanley Dance's idea of what good jazz should be, and in issuing this record, and writing a glowing liner note, he has presumably given it his approval. Well, this is mainstream jazz all right, but it isn't the main stream of jazz any more. Today it's simply a pretty small department. Deplorable, possibly, and unfortunate for a lot of people, but true none the less.

The way I hear it, this jazz is more functional than creative, and I find that it needs a certain amount of mental readjustment to receive sympathetically what the men are doing. I can't help looking for originality in a jazz musician—or any artist, for that matter—and I think it's true to say that originality just isn't an issue with most of these musicians. To find out what's really

happening, therefore, it's necessary to throw out all preconceived notions about invention and 'ideas', and try to listen to the music in the spirit in which it's played. I don't mind admitting that in my case this took some doing, but I think—and hope—that I did it. And if all this sounds patronizing, let me say that it isn't meant to be—I'm just trying to explain a point of view.

The big band side is the less successful. It's so over-long that it seems hardly necessary to mention it. The opening, which is done in a kind of train rhythm vaguely reminiscent of **Happy-Go-Lucky Local**, is okay until you begin to realize that the tempo is too fast. I couldn't stop worrying about the rhythm section the whole way through—Crawford, or someone, seems to be running a race with himself, and an uncomfortable tension results.

Half the people in the band get a chance to solo, some twice. Burrell's second solo has some very nice things, especially a little bit of interplay with the piano, despite a bad microphone pick-up that gives his sound a muzzy edge, and it's one of the most satisfying things on this side. Vic Dickenson plays well, but it certainly isn't top-drawer for him. The clarinet solo probably shouldn't have happened, and neither should Hinton's **Bugle Call Rag** nonsense. There's a short drum solo from Crawford, who almost, but not quite, keeps the beat going right through into the next solo, by Gonsalves.

Most of the remainder is devoted to Paul Gonsalves. "Serpentine", Dance calls his solo, which is as good a description as any. Is that meant to be praise? Gonsalves plays fairly well at times, badly at others, and occasionally makes horse noises. Later the brass section riffs and squeals with him to a 'sock' finish. This may have gone over fine at Newport or somewhere, but in my living room it merely sounds self-conscious and loud. Maybe the fault lies with my living room, but "this is the kind of jazz adventure which is intended to leave the listener a little breathless", the liner says. Oh.

Side two is a lot better. Though there is imperfectly-balanced recording (the piano is often too loud) the group plays well together, gets a good, punchy sound, and handles the material (such as it is) very well. **I Got Nothing** is a bit too long for the tempo; what began as a relaxed beat soon sounds tired. The soloists, at any rate Baker and Forrest, seem to be conscious of having time to spare, and they're lackadaisical. Forrest starts his solo by playing the same lead-in phrase several times with minor variations. And much of his solo is borrowed; it's tiresome enough having to listen to Harry Edison play that phrase on every record he makes.

Bedroom Eyes, a medium-slow blues, succeeds in setting a mood reminiscent of some of the better Ellington unit things from the early forties. But that long and rather banal piano intro, for example, is a bore to sit through every time you want to play the number. Baker plays some good trumpet on this one, and he wisely sets himself up with a riff to blow over. This track left me with the feeling that it should have gone on a bit longer, which, in a way, is exactly when it should finish. **Give the Lady** is the fastest track, although still not much more than a medium bounce, and it has a more attractive theme than the others. (The notes pass off the tunes as "brief, written sketches . . . to serve as points of departure . . . for the soloists". What's wrong with writing good tunes as points of departure?) Baker has another nice, although perhaps intentionally repetitious, solo; the opening, particularly, is excellent, and Vic Dickenson plays well in his down-to-earth style. When I heard him on **I Got Nothing**, I thought that something was missing—especially recalling his solo on Lester's **D.B. Blues**, but there seems to be a resurgence of spirit on this track. I couldn't help thinking that the drumming was a little cushiony for what was going on up front.

Dickenson's style is described on the liner (again) as having a "high content of ironic wit." Ironic?

Peter Turley

JIMMY GIUFFRE: "The Easy Way". Verve MG V-8337.

Jimmy Giuffre, saxophone, clarinet; Jim Hall, guitar; Ray Brown, bass.

The Easy Way; Mack the Knife; Come Rain or Come Shine; Careful; Ray's Time; A Dream;

HERB ELLIS: "Herb Ellis Meets Jimmy Giuffre". Verve MG V-8331.

Off Center; Montage; Time Enough.

Herb Ellis, guitar; Bud Shank, alto; Art Pepper, alto; Richie Kamuca, tenor; Jimmy Giuffre, tenor; Jim Hall, guitar; Joe Mondragon, bass; Stan Levey, drums; Lou Levy, piano.

Goose Grease; When Your Lover Has Gone; Remember; Patricia; A Country Boy; You . . . Know; My Old Flame; People Will Say We're in Love.

We have here two further installments in Verve's effort to encompass the Giuffre repertoire. These are at times better, at times worse, than the ones that have come before, but certainly nowhere near the quality of his new "**Ad Lib**", (Verve MG V18361), with Red Mitchell, Lawrence Marable and Jimmy Rowles. Giuffre has always chosen to take the path of unconventionality, but never, except possibly in his "**Tangents in Jazz**" album, in an iconoclastic manner. He has preferred, he says "the pastoral . . . the country; . . . Debussy and Delius . . . peaceful moods . . ." with a preference for

sound that was "subtle, soft, deep and mellow" (from *The Jazz Review*, February 1960).

Both recordings are full of that sort of understatement. At times the subtlety tends toward hesitancy, perhaps even uncertainty. In competence and skill, there is little fault to find. In the Ellis album, the sax section plays well and in tune; Giuffre's charts are finely crafted. But it doesn't quite come off. It may seem trite in this day of blue-hued jazz to expect more "soul" than can be gotten from the usual "churchy" devices, but there's no reason why one shouldn't. Perhaps a little more thought should be given to the music before rushing into the recording studio. Anyhow, the album is tasty, quiet and refined, but it could never convince me that Herb Ellis is anything more than a competent journeyman. In many ways he is representative of a kind of jazzman who has emerged in recent years. Highly schooled, musically sophisticated, he parallels the symphony orchestra performer who can, upon demand, step out of the section to produce an acceptable version of any concerto or sonata in the popular repertoire. It would be tragic if such tedious conformity should take the place of personal expression. And this may be what bothers me about the album; the notes, after all, are in the right places and are interpreted with a conventional degree of swinginess, but the professionalism is too extreme, too glib, to be really convincing.

The trio album is better, mainly, I think, because of the presence of Ray Brown. Again the pastoral quality (an overused word but the one that immediately comes to mind when hearing Giuffre's 3s) predominates but there is less emphasis on the folksy harmonic idiom that Giuffre employed in some of his earlier records; in fact, several of the tracks use quite complex alterations: *The Easy Way, A Dream* (perhaps a trifle too impressionistic), *Montage* (really non-harmonic rather than atonal), and *Time Enough. Off Center*, with its Monk-like register changes, is the most successful track, and the best performance is unquestionably Ray Brown's gutsy excursion in blues on *Ray's Time*. This recording is probably the limit that Giuffre can go with this particular trio concept. I wish that he had chosen instead to develop more fully the principles advanced in his "Tangents in Jazz" compositions. His use of meter there was particularly intriguing and might have led to a freer concept of percussion than is generally practiced.

But Giuffre's new group sounds even more promising. One can anticipate his coming recording activity with pleasure.

Don Heckman

DR. EDMOND SOUCHON: "Songs of Minstrel Days and Blues". Golden Crest CR 3065.

Edmond Souchon, guitar and vocals, accompanied on some numbers by Raymond Burke, clarinet, Armand Hug, piano, and Sherwood Mangiapane, bass.

Give Us a Drink, Bartender; Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out; Sweet Baby Doll; Buckwheat Cakes; Mariuch, She make da Hoochie Ma Cooch; You Cooked Your Goose With Me; Deacon, Deacon, Deacon; Play that Barbershop Chord; E-Blues; She Keeps It Up All The Time; Oh, How She Dances!; Cookie; Animules Ball; That Was All We Saw; Ella Speed Blues.

If jazz had derived from the blues, the revivalists might have found better material when they went back, as well as a great playing style; and the whole movement might have turned out better than it did. And modern jazz musicians might not have, in a time of already badly compromised melodic material, quite as much reverence for effete popular ballads.

But this lp reminds us that Jelly Roll Morton used to work on stage with a dancer; that Ma Rainey toured the T.O.B.A.; that Zue Robertson played in a circus band; and that many of the songs Bessie Smith recorded weren't blues at all, but a kind of popular song, midway between blues and ragtime, which seem to fit vaudeville even if they don't come from it. *Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out* is more serious than most of these, but it's still not really a blues.

Chris Smith's *Ballin' the Jack*, as one of the best known, will do as a prototype for these songs, which seem to have in common: a sixteen-bar chorus divided into two eights, often with a break in bars seven and eight, and sometimes with a two-bar tag; a sixteen-bar verse, usually in a contrasting key tinged with the minor; a melodic line characterized by what used to be called secondary rag rhythm which probably doesn't "swing" in the current sense, but which makes you wanna dance; and a pronounced harmonic rhythm which pulls strongly toward the centers of harmonic gravity in the eighth and sixteenth bars. This last feature seems to be a property of the chorus and not the verse of many of the songs, and it gives the chorus a momentum the verse doesn't have; it's just this that gives the first half of Oliver's *Ain't Gonna Tell Nobody*, with its alternating verse-and-chorus pattern, the annoying stop-and-go effect.

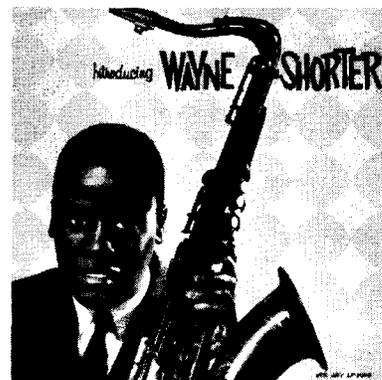
I imagine that audiences used to like performances of these songs, if the number of them Oliver recorded is any indication, and I imagine that the musicians liked to play them, since, as in Oliver's case, they triggered some of their best playing. Yet in the end I think Oliver and the rest were trapped

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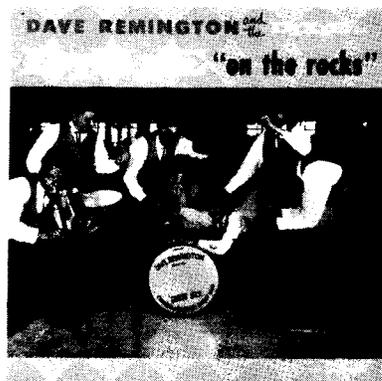
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by these tunes, trapped by their rather subtle cheapness and by their confining form, rigid enough—in direct contrast to the fluidity of the blues—so that in the end it was impossible to struggle out of it. And they led the revivalists off on a bootless trip to the Gay Nineties from which they never did come back to the job they should have done for jazz.

Yet the damned things are appealing, even in the brief treatment (with fifteen tracks on the lp the treatment would have to be brief) they get from Dr. Souchon's not always adequate voice, and in spite of the silly lyrics most of them have. I liked best the numbers with Burke, Hug, and Mangiapane behind Souchon: **Sweet Baby Doll**; **She Keeps It Up All the Time**; Irving Leclerc's **Cookie**; and a few others. Dr. Souchon's guitar on the blues track is pleasant, and the barker's spiel in **Oh, How She Dances** is funny enough, but the whole project, I'm afraid, doesn't add up to very much. As Jack Farrell's notes rightly point out, Dr. Souchon's comments and playing are an entertaining, if informal, way of throwing some light on an important part of jazz history. (Well, Farrell doesn't say it in so many words, but that's how I read him.) What I would like to get from Dr. Souchon is a more carefully worked out and more exhaustive treatment of the same material and the era, either in print or on a record. I think he has the equipment to do it: a good ear, a remarkable memory, a sharp mind, and the rare privilege of having been there when it happened. If I'm right, Dr. Souchon has a lot to give as a solid historian of a part of jazz history some real buffoons have been clowning around in lately.

Dick Frienié contributed the caricature of Dr. Souchon on the album cover and got his name spelled wrong on the back for his troubles. I wish Golden Crest had let Dick do the whole cover design.

J. S. Shipman

"The ART TATUM Discoveries".

20th Fox 3029.

Art Tatum, piano.

Begin the Beguine; Someone to Watch Over Me; **Body and Soul**; Willow Weep For Me; **Too Marvelous For Words**; **Danny Boy**; **Tenderly**; You Took Advantage of Me; **Yesterdays**; I'll Never de the Same; **Without a Song**; **Little Man You've Had a Busy Day**.

This collection, recorded at a party, is billed as "the other Tatum" and reviewers have received it as such. The other Tatum is the "real Art Tatum" whose creativity after hours or before just the right audience is very different, we are told, from what we hear on most of his records or heard in most of his club and concert appearances. If this be so, then the

other Tatum is the same old Tatum, only sometimes very much more so. Tatum is for me one of the most frustrating musicians in jazz, as he is obviously one of the most brilliant. The frustration does not come because of the lack of what is usually called "strong feeling" in his work, for to expect that would be to miss the point. Nor does it come from his lack of any but the most obvious kind of melodic imagination—but to call these dazzling decorative devices melodic at all may be sheer folly. There again, one would be missing the point to expect more than one gets. And I confess that I cannot always enjoy the rapidity of mind with which these arpeggios are made, except at a primitive level of mere dazzlement. What is frustrating is that Tatum's melodic taste is so banal. One need only look at that perpetual repertoire that included the likes of **Humoresque**, **Elegie**, **Dardanella**, or here, **Danny Boy** and **Little Man You've Had a Busy Day**. This kind of taste is reflected in the structureless haphazardry of some of his playing: the arpeggios flutter by and the thumbs drag along to produce some astonishing mish-mashes. Then there are the humorless interpolations—have we not had enough of **In A Country Garden** without having to be irreverently reminded of its prissy melody in the middle of a decorated Cole Porter ditty? And one can only hope that the parade of tremolos on **Danny Boy** is intended humorously—but one can't be sure. Then there is his technique as a pianist, a technique so much admired by concert musicians and composers that Tatum is the only jazz musician some of them will allow. They admire him for the same reasons they once admired Eddy Duchin, and they remind us that we may need to ask how much of Tatum's technique was specifically jazz technique—as all of Jimmy Yancey's or Basie's or Monk's techniques are.

On the other hand, I can cite you things in these tracks or in almost any Tatum collection that will give me the lie: there is an interpolation from Earl Hines in **Body and Soul** that is so appropriate, so beautifully placed and integrated that one wonders at his artistry. (**Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen** comes in later and far less well.) And **Willow Weep For Me** is so scrupulously paced and developed that one hardly wants to speak of his final impression of **You Took Advantage** as a disarray of flourishes.

Willow brings us to the point, of course, for in the past (and particularly in the version on Capitol) it has been one of the Tatum vehicles. Tatum was a great jazzman because he had a towering harmonic imagination, and, as Dick Katz has written, only Charlie Parker's name could be mentioned near Tatum's in this respect. **Tenderly** here

will prove it, excitingly and beautifully. And **Too Marvelous For Words** will convince you that Tatum knew everything there is to know or could be discovered in jazz about the European harmonic system, even—and this is done for once with an overt and entirely winning humor—about atonality. It is very likely that **Too Marvelous** is the greatest single Tatum performance we are fortunate enough to have. It is also, in the joyful feeling—even near-abandon—that it conveys, untypical; that fact almost hurts.

Martin Williams

"JAZZ WAY OUT". Savoy 12131.

Wilbur Harden, fluegelhorn; John Coltrane, tenor; Curtis Fuller, trombone; Tommy Flanagan, piano; Oli Jackson, bass; Arthur Taylor, drums.
Dial Africa; Domba; Gold Coast.

This is one of those records very few people know about, and the players have apparently forgotten. Then, too, some people may have been scared off by the title, which does seem to imply music from the dark side of the moon and points beyond.

These three tracks are nothing of the kind. What we have here is jazz with an African flavor and with none of the usual Herbie Mann or Machito effects. The only drums involved are the ones in Taylor's usual set. The writing is interesting and provocative. Trumpeter Harden, playing fluegelhorn here, wrote the first two lines and Curtis Fuller **Gold Coast**. **Dial Africa**, a medium-tempoed blues in B-flat, starts out with Taylor very quietly playing a figure which almost suggests the beat of the African drums and continuing it throughout the intro and the theme, switching to the ride-cymbal rhythm when the blowing starts. The theme is unusual, full of strange intervals, sounding almost like one of those tribal chants—and for all that, a good blues line. **Oomba** is an interesting little experiment in metric changes, with an improvisatory quality throughout. The meter shifts between 12/4 and 16/4, at times almost obscuring the basic pulsation, and an unusual effect is obtained by the horns and Flanagan each soloing in turn, with short ensemble choruses—no two alike—in between.

Gold Coast, which takes up all of the second side, opens with a phrase which later becomes the bass line for the channel on the blowing:



The theme itself is a descending line with an Eastern flavor and plaintiveness, divided between the piano and the

three horns. Again we have the Afro beat at the beginning, switching to the ride-cymbal rhythm for the solos, returning to the original rhythm at the end. The theme, at the beginning and end, is faster than the soloing which comes in between. The channel, incidentally, has an unusual chord progression: G maj. 7—Ab maj. 7—B maj. 7—Cm6—Bmaj. 7—Abmaj. 7—Gmaj. 7—Am7—D7.

Harden, Fuller and Jackson are ex-Yusef Lateef sidemen—and Harden is an interesting trumpeter. He could never really be mistaken for Miles. His solo on *Dial Africa* is especially good; he builds up very nicely and plays some really new ideas.

Coltrane is powerful and sure throughout the album. His solos feature an extended use of that breathtaking device which has been called "sheets of sound"—this recording was made late in 1959, around the time when he really got it going. What he does on *Dial Africa* can be described as a typical Coltrane blues solo, suspenseful, constantly building up to an almost terrifying peak of tension. In *Gold Coast* he's all over the horn, but purposefully, tightly concentrated. And his playing is lent a certain feeling of inexorable inevitability by the steady, unwavering beat laid down by the rhythm section. In the midst of this solid flow of pure sound there can be found here and there a phrase of unbelievably intense lyricism, like this one:



In short—very, very good Coltrane. Fuller, at the time of this recording, was trying to find a direction for himself, and his soloing is rather uneven. He is at his best on *Dial Africa*, where he has blues changes to work on, and he does things that remind this listener of those solos on *Blue Train* and *Locomotion*. On *Gold Coast*—(those changes are rough) he managed to get a bit hung up on the channel, wherein he repeats the same sequence every chorus, but the fluid technique and the beautiful sound are there. The rhythm section is very good. Flanagan probably couldn't be tasteless if he tried. Jackson is a good bassist who lays down solid lines and has some interesting things to say in his solos—but his intonation could be better. I get the impression that A. T. is most comfortable with Coltrane.

Zita Carno

JACKIE McLEAN: "Swing, Swang, Swinging". Blue Note 4024.

Jackie McLean, alto; Walter Bishop, Jr., piano; Jimmy Garrison, bass; Art Taylor, drums.

What's New; Let's Face the Music and Dance; **Stablemates;** I'll Remember You; **I Love You;** I'll Take Romance; **116th and Lenox.**

JULIAN PRIESTER: "Keep Swingin'". **Riverside RLP 12-316.**

Julian Priester, trombone; Jimmy Heath, tenor; Tommy Flanagan, piano; Sam Jones, bass; Elvin Jones, drums.

24 Hour Leave; The End; **Just Friends;** Under the Surface; **Once in a While.**

Priester, trombone; Flanagan, piano; S. Jones, bass; E. Jones, drums.

1239A; Bob T's Blues; **Julian's Tune.**

LOU DONALDSON: "The Time Is Right". **Blue Note 4025.**

Blue Mitchel, trumpet; Lou Donaldson, alto sax; Horace Parlan, piano; Layman Jackson, bass; Dave Bailey, drums; Ray Barretto, conga.

Lou's Blues; Be My Love; **Idaho;** The Nearness of You; **Mack the Knife;** Crosstown Shuffle; **Tangerine.**

KENNY BURRELL: "At The Five Spot Cafe". **Blue Note 4021.**

Tina Brooks, tenor; Kenny Burrell, guitar; Bobby Timmons, piano; Roland Hanna, piano (on *Hallelujah* and *36-23-36*); Ben Tucker, bass; Art Blakey, drums.

Birks' Works; *Hallelujah*; **Lady Be Good;** **Lover Man;** *36-23-36.*

These four records give an excellent representation of what is perhaps the most popular type of jazz being played today. It is an eclectic music, with debts to musicians as diverse as Charlie Parker and Horace Silver and, as a result, has only the individuality that can be forced into it by strongly assertive performers. In many cases, of course, this means no individuality at all. There is also a heavy emphasis on certain stylistic patterns: the drummer is expected to play with a heavy afterbeat on two and four, preferably by means of an accent on the high-hat; the piano player must be able to work in the popular "church" style; the soloists draw inspiration primarily from the blues of Parker, Miles Davis, Clifford Brown and J. J. Johnson; and the arrangements, above all, must draw heavily from the blues. All of these elements are perfectly valid, but their influence has become so pervasive that they have become a mystique in themselves. I doubt, for instance, whether an afterbeat played on a high-hat can be considered any more interesting than one played as a rimshot, yet very few self-respecting drummers would consider playing without that insistent little, (or sometimes not so little) "tchick" on the upbeat.

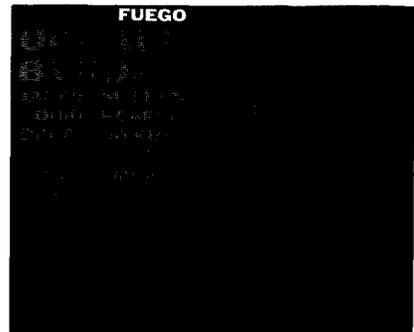
Some percussionists have managed to avoid complete regimentation of their meter by using the high-hat in combination with bass drum kick-beats and snare accents, creating a softening of the sound and spreading the rhythmic interest throughout the full space of the bar instead of emphasizing the two simplest multiples. Art Taylor on the Jackie McLean album seems to

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be particularly un intimidated by the exigencies of this style of drumming. The whole rhythm section, in fact, is excellent. McLean is probably the best of the Bird-followers, both in the spirit and the word of what he has to say. He has succeeded admirably in projecting his own artistic originality into this exceedingly rigid style. There is much that is similar between McLean and Lou Donaldson. For instance, starting from the same source of inspiration, both have managed to create something more conservative, less fiery than the original. Both manipulate the beat less, choosing to remain close to the actual metric impulse rather than to use it, as Bird did, simply as a point of departure. The one original quality that Donaldson brings to his music is an attractive wit and good humor. But I think, as a matter of fact, that the strongest voice on "The Time Is Right" is Blue Mitchell. The lean, fluid grace of his playing consistently reminds me of the young Dizzy Gillespie. The rhythm section does nothing for me; the addition of conga only serves to emphasize the heavy accents on two and four; no charts either, only standards and blues that should be in everyone's repertoire. The Priester date is somewhat better. Arrangements are in evidence, though they are generally bland and uninteresting. Priester has, however, attained a remarkable degree of professionalism for his first recording as leader. The most attractive element of his playing at this stage of development, is his big, lusty solo, but the melodic content of his solos leaves much to be desired. Though Orin Keepnews protests to the contrary, Priester is very close to J. J. Johnson, particularly in his characteristic use of a figure that runs through a seventh chord so:



The generally good quality of this rhythm section is mainly due to the presence of Sam Jones, whose long rolling sound is as solid as granite. Tommy Flanagan also plays well, Especially in the advantageous use of his pedal; listen in particular to **Once in a While**.

Kenny Burrell has somehow managed to avoid the artificiality that makes so many jazz guitarists sound as though they have become electronic extensions of their instruments. His sound is the sound of a guitar, not an amplifier. In many ways he reminds me of Tal Farlow, particularly in the loose, twangy drive of his melodic line. The rhythm section is adequate individually, but there is something lacking in their unit coordination. Roland Hanna's work is quite exceptional in places,

especially because of an obvious influence from Bud Powell. Blakey plays well, particularly on **Hallelujah**, but the feeling still haunts me that he has allowed his startling technical proficiency to replace the surging personal intensity that dominated his earlier work. Probably few, if any, drummers in jazz could approach Blakey's creative potential, but I doubt that he has ever made full use of it. The most disconcerting element in these recordings is their tedious sameness. If this were the similarity of purpose that one finds in a classical movement then it would be something else. But a classical style is able to express its vitality completely, despite the external limits on its design. This type of jazz does not seem to have reached that point.

Don Heckman

"THE COUNTRY BLUES." Edited by Samuel B. Charters. RBF Records RBF 1.

Emphatically, this is a disc to buy for one's collection. As a miscellany of blues it makes excellent listening and though a number of the titles will be familiar to collectors there will undoubtedly be sought-after items as well. For the general collector and jazz enthusiast it will help to fill in the blues background. However, there were reasons for issuing this lp beyond the desire to make available a number of attractive recordings of the past. "The problem of reissues is no closer to solution in 1959 than it was six years ago, but we have felt that this documentation was too important to wait for the inevitable change in attitude by the larger companies" says the eight-page booklet that goes with the disc, presumably explaining why these items have been drawn from the past catalogues of half a dozen companies, all unacknowledged. This no doubt explains too, why the titles and names of tunes and singers only are listed and there is no indication of the relationships between artists, when they were recorded, where, or what they are intended to represent. In fact the booklet tells nothing about the record. But the record is "intended as an appendix to the Rinehart book where the lives and the songs of the artists are

discussed, but it is of considerable value in itself as a musical survey of the blues idiom" say the editor and author.

As a "documentation too important to wait for the inevitable change" etc., as an appendix "of considerable help to the general reader who is being introduced to the country blues for the first time", and as a "musical survey of the blues idiom" which is "of considerable value" the record seems a boy sent to do a man's job. The disc succeeds best as an appendix to **The Country Blues**, for it does reflect both the merits and the weaknesses of that book. Three of the most impressive tracks are **Preachin' Blues** by Robert Johnson, **I'm a Guitar King** by Tommy McClennan and **Fixin' to Die** by Bukka White, all made between November 1936 (Johnson) and December 1941—which might surprise the purchaser attracted by the Steamboat Gothic design. These three singers, all powerful, coarse-grained and impassioned, all fairly limited technically on guitar but marvellous within their limitations, are, allowing for their personal differences, representative of the same Northern Mississippi tradition. A better example of McClennan would be easy to find but these are splendid. In a selection like this where the compilers have ignored restrictions imposed by record companies, one might justly comment that the example of Sleepy John Estes, **Special Agent**, is good, but a dozen better records by this singer spring to mind. Blind Willie McTell from Atlanta is represented by **Statesboro Blues**, a very fine example which illustrates well his personal use of the blues form, his essentially Negroid guitar and strangely "white" voice. Another Atlanta singer, Peg Leg Howell, sings a sad and introspective **Low Down Rounder's Blues**, altogether more sensitive and moving than the rollicking, unsubtle folk artist described in the book. This is drawn from the vocation 14000's so unreasonably and unknowledgeably attacked in the book, as indeed is "**You Gonna Need Somebody on Your Bond**" by Blind Willie Johnson. But wait, what is he doing here? Blind Willie Johnson is exempted from the unfavorable comments on the 14000 series and is the subject of a whole chapter of **The Country Blues**. A Gospel singer and itinerant preacher, Johnson's playing shows an undoubted relationship with the blues, but not as certain a link as that displayed by say, Blind Gary Davis. Does he merit a chapter in a book on blues or a track in a record which is a survey of the blues idiom any more than an unrepentant singer of sinful blues like Bo Carter would warrant a place in a survey of Gospel music? I don't think so.

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The fact that Charters has also done admirable research on Willie Johnson does not mean that his presence here is really warranted. The author-editor has done valuable and thorough research on the jug bands of Memphis, or at least those associated with Shade, Burse and Cannon, and the book comes to life when he writes of them. But the blues were only a part of their repertoire which also included minstrel shows material and country ballads and songs. The two items here, enjoyable in themselves, are extrovert country music very much on the blues fringe and for the newly introduced general reader (and listener) "Walk Right In" by Cannon's Jug Stompers and "Stealin', Stealin'" by the Memphis Jug Band, both very similar in character, could have been more thoughtfully selected. In view of the misleading impression of Big Bill Broonzy in the book, with its innumerable inaccuracies and marked prejudices, it is a little surprising to find him included here, but any of a score of items with Black Bob or Josh Altheimer on the ARC labels would have been more suitable in this context than **Key to the Highway**, made in 1941 with Washboard Sam and Jazz Gillum. This is Big Bill with many years of the city blues behind him. And **I Been Treated Wrong** by Washboard Sam (and incidentally, Big Bill), made some months later is urban blues and an oddly inappropriate choice for a country blues anthology. Similarly the inclusion of Leroy Carr in both book and record is very arguable and the title of **Alabama Woman Blues** suggests a rural nature that is not in this or any other record of Carr's. The two remaining titles are by **Blind Lemon Jefferson** and **Lonnie Johnson**. The Jefferson is the oft-issued **Matchbox Blues**, admittedly with **Black Snake Moan** the best recorded of his blues and, though familiar, a classic example of one of the greatest blues singers. It is the "opener" for the record and introduces the listener to the blues, stark but nonetheless adorned. Against this Lonnie Johnson, as much city as country singer, is forced to measure his talents. Surely no greater injustice could be done him than to follow Lemon with Johnson's **Careless Love**, the most ineffectual of all his first sixty-odd recordings.

If the foregoing comments that I imply that I am opposed to this record or the tracks themselves, than I have given a false impression. As one with a passion for good blues of every kind and form I can welcome it as most attractive collection, assembled with only the sketchiest unifying theme. Much as I take pleasure in recommending it from this point of view I can only reiterate

that as an all-embracing, important documentation of the Country Blues drawn no-holds-barred from all available sources, it is not satisfactory.
Paul Oliver

"The Wonderful World of JONATHAN WINTERS." Verve Records, MGV 15009.
"Outside SHELLEY BERMAN. Verve Records, MGV 15007.
MORT SAHL: "A Way of Life." Verve Records, MGV 15006.
LENNY BRUCE: "Togetherness." Fantasy Records, 7007.

"Inside humor" is an inaccurate description of the work of insinuating perversus like Winters, Berman, Sahl and Bruce. Anyone who knows Bert Lahr's fire-alarm voice or Bobby Clark's water-fly grace knows that the old-time comics were **inside** entertainers first and foremost. They made of their personalities huge and accommodating structures of which the audience was only a necessary extension. Because their approach to their audiences was as active and unfinicky as a crop-spraying helicopter, these comedians made the most unimportant spectator feel like a confidential partner in their rambunctious craftsmanship. The best of our present comedians share with the best of the old-timers a genius for creating a milieu of their own, in which they and their audience feel as natural and free as minnows in a running stream. However, these younger comics' "insideness" consists in playing a children's game with the spectator in which the entertainer's anxieties, self-doubts and tremors are strewn throughout the act like Easter eggs. Winters uses semi-hysteria to make you wonder whether he is using his anxieties or being used by them; Shelley Berman exploits photographically-exact dialogue with an insinuating emphasis that makes a gag line out of ordinary speech. All good art, high or low, depends in great part upon such half-intentional self-betrayal; where these entertainers sometimes go wrong is in trying to adapt their nervous, tight-lipped humors to the sloppy expansiveness of sprawling Jolson or Durante audiences. Jonathan Winters is, I think, the most likable and least monotonous of the four; almost solely, I am sure, because he is least decided about where he's going, and how best to use remarkable energy and technical resourcefulness. He combines the ingenuousness, mock-confidence and near-hysterics I have known in several plump and precocious prep-school boys, and also such comedians as Keaton and Lloyd. Like good mimicry or pantomime, his vocal effects have a shiver of fantasy about them, his

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incredible imitation of a football audience heard from afar, devoutly mooring its team's letters, is as ticklingly weird as it is accurate. When he has to develop anything—as in the promisingly begun airplane sketch—the skit collapses like the airplane. But when he can work in a loose, permissive pattern—as in a for-once inoffensive hip parody of Robin Hood—Winters cocky insights and sneaky throwaway lines are as exhilarating—though as short-lived—as a whole regatta of paper airplanes. Shelley Berman's soundest talent is a writer's sensitivity to the gaffes, fidgets and fallen archness of a self-conscious telephone conversant trying suicidally to sound natural and make his point at the same time. "Oops! Oops, there!" he mutters to an operator, in the tone of a short-wave "ham" who has nearly contacted Alaska. There is a certain self-satisfaction in this which obtrudes like an over-sized prostate in the beginning of his act. And a tendency to over-decorate his gags makes the amusing first and second sketches a little blowsy. But in the third—an autobiographical skit about his father, a Jewish tradesman, trying to deter Sheldon from a stage career—Mr. Berman is an almost perfect terms with himself and his subject. His decent intelligence at portraying usually mishandled comic types is his most winning characteristic; and this is one of the few recent Jewish sketches I've heard which didn't suggest to me a guest sneering at his host's crudities in private. Mort Sahl's ironic appreciation of other people's absurdity and his ability to corkscrew absurdity with his own nonsense-logic seems to me far more essentially Yiddish than Shelley Berman's East Side comedy. For reminding me of this I owe thanks to this recording of an apparently shambling act at the Sands Hotel, where Sahl seems mostly out of breath from prostrating himself to the patrons. This crowd is that sloppy, raucous, over-indulgent audience which so many comedians refer to as "wonderful", for all-to-apparent reason. Even his usual timing and precision are way off, as in an over-long story of a prostitute's trial, with, however, a funny payoff line by the lawyer. I've no love for the little club audiences; but, waspishly alert and knowing, they can obviously draw more blood from Mr. Sahl than can the Sands fleas with which he was burdened on this jaunt. Probably no art is eclectic enough and un-static enough to accurately represent American adolescence; but I've long thought that Lenny Bruce, with the recklessness and bumptiousness of his conversational drag-strip racing, comes very near.

So did the early Jerry Lewis; so, occasionally, does **Mad** magazine. The trouble with these reckless high-ballers is, that so frequently they go straight down the chute from heedless, ruthless and exhilarating adolescence into safe-playing, cruel-mouthed and stultifying middle age. Lenny Bruce does, for most of this recording. Two bits—one about hip diseases, the other about the shark problem in Miami—have the drive and abandon of his better things. But, like Sahl, he needs a halfway demanding audience, and the audience on this record was obviously licking his hand—not unnaturally, considering the sounds they were making. The epitome of Bruce's New Taste is a snarlingly self-righteous joke about Orthodox Jews which he wasn't permitted to make on the Steve Allen show: one of my few occasions for agreement with the TV executives, although I'm sure they remained insensitive to the personal spite which made the thing really offensive. Mr. Bruce delivers most of these inventions in a sulky, narcissistic voice which I at length identified as that of the "straight" Jerry Lewis. Get well fast, Lenny.

Donald Phelps

SHORTER REVIEWS

SONNY STITT is a thoroughly professional and workmanlike musician. As an improviser he can project, for me, a feeling of deep commitment to life and music which is both uncommon and gratifying—this is partly a way of saying that he is a fine craftsman. "**Personal Appearance**" (Verve MG V-8324) is one of the very best, if not the best, records that he has produced, though Stitt's music has usually not been well captured on record. All the tracks are at least good, and two of them are much more. On alto in **Autumn In New York** he embellishes, twists, dissolves, and pulverizes the theme, and produces his best single recorded effort. Only slightly less effective is his tenor work on **Easy Living**, in which he demonstrates what can be learned and applied from Lester Young without imitation. The essential Stitt is to be found on these two tracks, and one can learn a good

deal from them. It is particularly interesting to notice how he develops four bar phrases that we expect to continue, only to surprise us with a new idea on the first beat of the fifth bar. The rhythm section deserves all praise for its stimulating, capable, and sympathetic accompaniment, and Bobby Timmons has a fine, tersely phrased solo on **Easy Living**.

The blowing session is the staple product of jazz recording; the bulk of each year's jazz releases is made up of good, bad, and indifferent specimens of that endemic form. A rewarding example of it is "**Tanganyika Strut**" (Savoy MG-12136). Wilbur Harden, John Coltrane, and Curtis Fuller, with backing from Art Taylor, Ali Jackson on bass and Howard Williams or Tommy Flanagan on piano, work on fairly routine material (Harden's **B. J.** and **Anedac, Once in a While**, and the title tune, Fuller's composition), but everyone plays at the top of his form. The results are often more than satisfactory.

WILBUR HARDEN is a sadly underrated musician. His work on fluegelhorn here again shows him to be a soloist of intelligence, taste, and a conception of his own. Basically, his style is an extension of Miles Davis's which stresses a melodic flow governed by a precise and unobtrusive sense of continuity. One feels that each note is placed where it is because it **belongs there**. Even a cursory hearing of his solo on **B. J.** should be enough to convince the sceptic. John Coltrane, of course, is gifted with a fantastic rhythmic skill and a harmonic ability which allows him to explore each chord fully. Nevertheless, he has not as yet channelled these abilities sufficiently to permit his work to be really satisfactory melodically. There is an air of the incomplete about all of his work even at its most impressive—as it is on **Anedac**. Curtis Fuller fully displays his recently attained stature. From a rather timid exponent of J. J. Johnson's style he has now become a most adroit practitioner. His playing is marked by an excellent sense of time and an air of real concern with his line and its meaning which is only too often absent from the work of his master. Art Taylor plays excellently, with force and simple good taste. Howard Williams is a competent pianist with little personality of his own; when Tommy Flanagan takes his place on the title tune we realize what was missing. Ali Jackson's bass is steady and unassuming—and, hence, apt to be overlooked. While I have no real aesthetic complaint, I must register the economic complaint that five dollars is too much for playing time of less than thirty minutes. On "**Bird's Night**" (Savoy MG-12138) altoist **PHIL WOODS** works with

baritonist Cecil Payne, Frank Socolow on tenor, and a rhythm section composed of Duke Jordan, Wendell Marshall, and Art Taylor. This is a reissue of a Signal recording made at the Five Spot in 1957, devoted to four Parker tunes: **Parker's Mood**, **Steeplechase**, **Buzzy**, and **Scrapple from the Apple**. Aside from some of Duke Jordan's solos, the performances are marred by a verbosity and lack of concision. Phil Woods is a capable Parker disciple, but his discipleship does not extend beyond an attempt to emulate Parker's tone—and ideas—which leads to irrelevancy. (The result might be just as irrelevant if Woods were able to suggest something of Parker's rhythmic scope, which he does not.) A similar lack of understanding of Parker's style mars the like attempts at playing his ideas of Socolow and Payne—not that they play badly, but their work here is nearly completely without originality. Even Duke Jordan on **Steeplechase** and **Buzzy** is uncharacteristically disorganized and ragged. However, on **Parker's Mood** and **Scrapple from the Apple** his solos are marked by that thoroughgoing rightness of construction which makes him such an exemplary musician. Art Taylor's work is, again, remarkably cogent and a long way from the rather stereotyped support he has provided on so many sessions of this sort.

Cellist **FRED KATZ** in "**Fred Katz and His Jammers**" (Decca DL 9217) presents a genteel and mannered session, distressingly typical of certain attempts to dilute jazz into an ersatz music, retaining a suggestion of the real thing. Along with Katz are Johnny Pisano on guitar, Gene Estes on vibraphone, and Leroy Vinnegar for bass; the trumpet work is divided between Pete Candoli and Don Fagerquist with drummers Frank Butler, Billy Higgins, and Lenny McBrowne filling in on various tracks. The tunes range from Katz originals in **Elegy** and **To Blow is To Know** to Monk's **Ruby**, **My Dear** and Parker's **Dexterity**.

The whole affair is pretty arty and pretty pallid with Katz's basically innocuous and ineffective cello a constant irritation. I think archness is as good a word as any to sum up the whole thing. **Ruby**, **My Dear** turns into an extremely fitting unconscious parody of Katz and all his works with its precious contrapuntal effects, spurious seriousness, and simulation of European chamber music.

CURTIS FULLER is to be found again on "**Bluesette**" (Savoy MG-12141) in the company of Benny Golson, Tommy Flanagan, Jimmy Garrison on bass, and Al Harewood on drums, a fairly typical Golson session characterized by an urbane, detached style which emphasizes a gentle, easy going lyricism uncomplicated by emotion. Golson lacks either the rhythmic agility

or the harmonic range of Coltrane, and his playing is only a pastiche of Coltrane's more easily assimilable mannerisms. Fuller plays well throughout, but much of the time with an offhand quality. There are moments, as in **Love Your Spell is Everywhere** and **Five Spot After Dark**, when he seems about to dig in for some extended inventions, but his line is soon dissipated. Much the same problem seems to inhibit Tommy Flanagan.

The **BRUBECK** Quartet is at hand again in "**Gone with the Wind**" (Columbia CL-1347). The tunes are an oddly assorted group ranging from **Swanee River** and **Camptown Races** to **Georgia on My Mind** and **The Lonesome Road**, but their treatment is characteristically Brubeckian. Brubeck is undoubtedly a sincere and sympathetic man, but his work and his idea of the Quartet do not rise above triviality. His pianistics, and they are just that, lack rhythmic and melodic significance. It has been said that Joe Morello is a brilliant and inspiring drummer. I cannot see that his work is anything but the display of a virtuoso and excessively mannered talent, and I think his solo on **Shortnin' Bread** provides ample support for my contention. His backing and his solo lines do not support and supplement the total performance as much as they call attention to their all too obvious brilliance. As to Paul Desmond, I must admit that until I recently re-played his records I had thought him dull. I confess my error which was due to my failure to penetrate beneath the superficial coating of imperturbability and dynamic sameness in most of his solos. He is a gifted and individual musician who constantly develops melodic lines of real interest. I think that his playing here on **Georgia on My Mind** for instance, is completely convincing, valid, and valuable.

If blowing dates are sometimes disappointing in their repetitiousness and lack of originality, they are still far more valuable than the pretentious attempts at arranged big band profundity which in the last decade were so plentiful. Chico O'Farrell's "**The Aztec Suite**" (United Artists UAL 4062) is played by a twenty-piece group with **ART FARMER** as the featured soloist and Al Cohn conducting. This is one of those ventures into extended composition as a pseudo-art. The whole thing actually is a sequence of Kenton-like Latin arrangements on insignificant themes, monotonously undeveloped. Virtually the same criticism applies to the arrangements of standards on the other side of the lp. However, the characteristic excellence of Art Farmer is immediately apparent each time he is heard. Unfortunately, O'Farrell's work often either overpowers him with its sophisticated New York-Latin blatancy

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or leaves him out altogether. When he is heard he immediately impresses one by a rather febrile dynamism which seems to be a new facet of his talent. The usual Farmer attributes of melodic skill, a certain subtle rhythmic agility, and an underplayed but most impressive overall command are as much in evidence as ever, but in his playing on **Delirio** and **Alone Together**, for example, there is equally present an assertiveness and poise that does not solicit but **demands** one's attention. Zoot Sims is the only other soloist to be heard from at any length, and his work displays a sameness of texture and poverty of ideas which have unfortunately damaged much of his recent playing.

The number of jazz "mood music" recordings continues to grow. One of the most recent of these popular jazz efforts is **JOE WILDER'S "The Pretty Sound"** (Columbia CL-1372) with such well known recording studio figures as Hank Jones, Urbie Green, Herbie Mann, Jerome Richardson, and Osie Johnson playing very prettily indeed. The bland arrangements are by Teo Macero (virtuosity can move from the **avant-garde** to **kitsch** with no real difficulty) and Mike Colicchio. The tunes are such standards as **Harbor Lights**, **Guys and Dolls**, and even Brahms' **Lullaby**. There are a few good moments from Wilder on **Greensleeves** and Green on **Blue Moon**.

Pianist **DICK MARX** has produced another of those unfortunately modish show tune sets on **"Marx Makes Broadway"** (Omega OML-1002). Along with Buddy Collette, Red Mitchell, Frank Capp, Howard Roberts, Irving Ashby and others, Marx runs through **Joey, All of You, If I Were a Bell** and seven others of similar vintage. Despite the presence of jazz musicians on the record, I do not see that it is really a jazz recording at all.

H. A. Woodfin

For the better part of her career, **CHRIS CONNOR** has been identified, rightly or wrongly, as a jazz singer. The validity of this conclusion has always been open to question, but rarely so obviously as in her recent date for Atlantic, **"Chris In Person"** (Atlantic 8040). The peculiarities of Miss Connor's intonation and phrasing do not readily adapt to a performance in which she lacks the benefit of careful engineering, and her singing needs the resources of a considerate editor. **ANITA O'DAY**, in her Verve recording, **"Cool Heat"** (MG V-8312), fares somewhat better. Her rough-hewn style is comfortably abetted by the presence of Jimmy Giuffre's quiet, unobtrusive charts. My own preference is for Miss O'Day with the accompaniment of only a rhythm section, but if it is necessary to record her with larger groups, then I'm

certainly glad they chose an arranger with Giuffre's good taste.

ANDRE PREVIN's predilection for the music of Broadway is perhaps natural for one of his training and outlook. Yet it is fortunate that he brings a firm understanding and love of jazz to this material. At best, his improvisatory talents are somewhat beneath the upper echelon, but he has an unflinching good ear and fine craftsmanship. **"Andre Previn Plays Songs By Jerome Kern"** (Contemporary M-3567) is a solo record with a bit more freedom than in his earlier recordings; he relies less upon short bursts of rhythmic motives and more upon a flowing melodic and harmonic ornamentation.

In his unfortunately titled **"Impossible"** (Metrojazz E-1014), **PETE JOLLY** also places a heavy emphasis upon show tunes, but Jolly works from what appears to have been a carefully organized basis. He and Ralph Pena give a sameness of interpretation to totally unrelated selections. Another pianist, **JOE CASTRO**, demonstrates in **"Groove Funk Soul"** (Atlantic—1324) a studied familiarity with Horace Silver. Castro probably has more technique than Silver does, but much fewer ideas. Of particular interest, however, is the presence on the recording of drummer Billy Higgins. His role is limited here, but he gives ample indication of his increasing abilities. After a year of what must have been extremely complicated effort, Atlantic has released **"Stringsville"** (Atlantic 1319) with the multiple skills of **HARRY LOOKOFSKY**. For those who insist that jazz, particularly modern jazz, cannot be played on violin, this recording is required listening. Lookofsky has employed double stops, string mutes, vibratoless tone and innumerable other devices in an admirable and mostly successful attempt to emulate the techniques of the contemporary horn man. This, of course, involved the reinterpretation of axioms that are at the very core of the classical string tradition. Arrangements by Bob Brookmeyer and Hank Jones incorporate the best jazz writing for strings that I have heard since George Handy and Ralph Burns. I was particularly intrigued with Jones' chart on **Round About Midnight** and Bookmeyer's satiric **Dancing On The Grave**. Although many musicians of Italian descent have been associated with jazz in this country, very little has been heard of the native version. Now Verve has released a recording by the **BASSO-VALDAMBRINI** quintet (MG V-20009). The group has obviously had much access to recordings of middle fifties' West Coast Jazz. Valdambrini's style suffers from his choice of Chet Baker's tired platitudes as a model. Basso does a bit better by following the Lester tradition. The

group performs in a rather slick, professional manner.

The performance of the **NEWPORT YOUTH BAND** at the Festival is old news. Yet it is still more than pleasant to hear the Coral record of that exciting event (CRL 57306). A certain inconsistency in the rhythmic flow is more obvious than it was at first hearing, but the biting ensemble passages still sound excellent. Andy Marsala is quite remarkable, and almost more impressive was the baritone solo work of Ronnie Cuber in his delightful break in **Tiny's Blues** and the playing throughout of pianist Mike Abene and drummer Larry Rosen.

The story of **"STACCATO"** (Capitol ST 1287) is from the same mold as most gristle and grime melodramas; it revolves around a private dick who plays "jazz" piano for kicks in a Greenwich Village night club (on MacDougal Street, yet).

The use of jazz as a mood-setting agent in television and films has become a common practice. In many producers' minds, jazz has seemed the ideal accompaniment to displays of sadism. Of course, this is to use jazz in the most short-sighted manner possible. But after all, the prostitution of talent by television is one of the spectacles of our time.

Fortunately, it is in the nature of the artist to exceed the limitations of his environment, no matter how atrocious it may be. Shelly Manne, after all, has recorded a satisfactory version of the music from **"Peter Gunn"**, but Elmer Bernstein has concocted a score that is loaded with the cliches of the trade; excessive echo, clanging guitars (two of them), repetitious boogie bass, rock and roll saxophones, and he uses them **ad nauseum**. The only surprise to me is that John Cassevetes, the star of this deplorable accident, could associate himself with such a travesty. This is the same John Cassavetes who was forthright enough to use Charlie Mingus' compositions and group for the sound track of his own film, **"Shadows"**.

Don Heckman

When John Lee 'Sonny Boy' Williamson was murdered in 1948, singer Rice Miller chose to take over his name. **SONNY BOY WILLIAMSON** No. 2 is talented enough not to need the doubtful advantages of reflected glory. Miller began his recording career with the Trumpet label of Jackson, Mississippi, singing and playing harmonica in the old Mississippi tradition, and his **Mighty Long Time** was one of the most poignant post-war blues recordings. His last Trumpet records began to show signs of rhythm and blues influence.

Miller moved North and began to record for Checker, and **"Down and Out Blues"** (Checker LP-1437) is compiled from his

singles, including his first sides, **Don't Start Me Talking** and **Let Me Explain**, for that label. If these are not the best recordings he has made, they do constitute an impressive selection. He sings with pronounced vibrato, and he has not lost the country flavor in his singing. It seems to me that his harmonica playing has become more like that of his namesake in the past few years, and if anything, he is more eloquent, if less fiery than Sonny Boy No. 1. **All my Love in Vain** contains a very fine 'talking' solo which well demonstrates his range and expressiveness. This is a twelve-bar blues in the traditional style, but he often prefers to sing eight-bar verses with four-bar refrains, though his songs are still in a blues framework and with blues content. He avoids monotony by the use of changes of rhythm (six to the bar on **The Key**). He is usually accompanied, rather unremarkably, by guitar, piano, bass and drums, though an occasional competent break suggests changes of personnel. If this lp is not as continually stimulating as the original *Sonny Boy's lp* (French RCA 130/238) it is because he has not musicians like Joshua Altheimer, Bill Bronzy, Big Maceo, Tampa Red, Blind John Davis and Ransom Knowling to give him the support he deserves. It is a one-man show, but a good one. Miller sings a fine version of **Fattening Frogs for Snakes** (the Mobile Struggler, not the Rosetta Crawford one) and **Wake Up** is a novel treatment of the old English ballad **Our Goodman** which Coley Jones once recorded as **Drunkard Special**. The slow suspicions of a stupid husband unfortunately are faded out before the punch line is reached. A pity. Sonny Boy Williamson No. 2 is well worth hearing. **BROWNIE MCGHEE** and **SONNY TERRY**, like Leadbelly, Josh White and Big Bill Broonzy, became emissaries for the blues, moving out of the natural habitat of the blues to play to white audiences, in the concert hall and even across the Atlantic. There is nothing wrong with missionary work as such, but the blues thrive best when close to the roots, and transplanting can affect the growth. Sonny and Brownie have toured as far as the Indian Antipodes, and that their music has remained so intact is much to their credit. But a change has taken place in their new "**Down Home Blues**" (Prestige/Bluesville 1002), well illustrated by a new version of **Fox Hunt**. In their Library of Congress version and even in the Elektra version this was still the **Fox Chase**, the folk blues harmonica virtuoso piece; now it is a stage presentation with commentary by Brownie; no longer an interpretation but an attempt at a recreation of a scene. Neither artist plays the hint of a wrong note on this lp, and the years of playing together have caused them

to imitate each other's phrasing unconsciously. But while their work can hardly be faulted, there is a certain lack of excitement, of any element of the unexpected. The demands of their careers have caused them to record extensively in recent years and there are mannerisms, like opening and closing phrases, that occur unafraidly time and again. All the same, this is one of their best collections to date, and there is much good work. **Baby, How Long?** has a fine vocal and really excellent harmonica; **I'm Prison Bound** and **Louise, Louise** are good blues to rival **Pawn Shop**; and **Let Me Be Your Dog**, though it has very standard lyrics, contains much good harmonica and a rhythmic walking bass. Brownie McGhee is best when he is challenged or when he concentrates on playing. For this reason, **Back to New Orleans**, with a fine vocal by Terry, is undoubtedly the best track, for it contains the rippling arpeggio work which Brownie can do so well, but so rarely does on his recordings these days. Well-known as a Chicago blues bassist, **WILLIE DIXON** virtually makes his recording debut as a blues singer on "**Willie's Bluest**" (Prestige/Bluesville 1003). (He has made a couple of sides already.) He has a rough, strong voice, very much in the Chicago tradition in spite of his Mississippi origins. **Nervous** is a novelty number with a simulated trembling stutter, not an especially wise choice to begin the lp. **Sittin' and Cryin' the Blues** tends to be over-dramatized, but Dixon has plenty of ideas and his words and themes—all his own—are generally varied. He favors a verse and refrain structure rather than the three-line blues form, as on **Good Understanding** and **That's All I Want Baby** among others. The best tracks are **Built for Comfort** which is rough and fast with an excellent bass solo by Dixon, and **Move Me**, another forceful number. Memphis Slim accompanies Dixon adequately without moments of particular interest, and leads on two instrumental numbers, **Go Easy** and **Slim's Thing**, in which recollections of familiar boogie pieces like Johnson's **Roll Em**, **Pete** creep in rather too easily. Al Ashby on tenor adds nothing of value to the record, and Wally Richardson on guitar is unremarkable though competent. Dixon, nearer to the mike than on most records on which he appears instrumentally, can be heard well on bass through a number of tracks. If there is a reason for the dissatisfaction that I felt on hearing this record it lies I think, in the lack of any blues of real feeling or depth. Willie Dixon is no lightweight, physically, vocally or instrumentally, and I feel he could do justice to less lightweight material. Fortunately a blues singer does not rely

for his popularity on the writers of sleeve notes. **JIMMY REED** is not "the greatest living exponent" of the blues. But "not since the fabled 'Leadbelly' has a folk singer attained such purity and so captured the true feeling of the blues," writes Sid McCoy on "**Jimmy Reed**" (Vee-Jay LP-1004), inviting a comparison between two totally different artists and one which inevitably reflects on Reed. A guitarist of limited means, a harmonica player with a fondness for screeching notes and a singer with a rather childish voice, he is by no means exceptional. But on the items included in this lp he does have the beat, the pulse, the feel of the blues and, unlike the selection on Vee-Jay 1008, variety. **Boogie in the Dark** is Jimmy Reed at his very best; an instrumental number which really swings. On the instrumentals he seems to play better harmonica, and **Roll and Rhumba** with its Latin-American rhythm, blue phrasing is an agreeable item. A large number of Reed's tunes are addressed to "baby" and in the vocals a certain sentimentality creeps into both content and delivery. It is present in **Honest I Do**, his best-selling record. **You Got Me Crying, Ain't That Loving You Baby** and **You're Something Else** are the best of the vocals. The second album, "**Rockin' with Reed**" (Vee-Jay LP-1008) uses material mostly recorded since 1958. Reed's early recordings for Vee-Jay (made 1953 to 1955) are more imaginative, stronger and more exciting than anything in this collection. Mississippi-born but raised in Gary, Reed plays both guitar and harmonica with only moderate accomplishment and sings in a rather high, tongue-tied voice which is not immediately appealing. The latter is still less appealing to this listener in his later recordings when Reed introduced a breathy vibrato doubtless intended to imply barely suppressed passion. A monotonous reliance on a familiar boogie rhythm makes tiresome listening and the old rapport between Jimmy's second guitarist Eddie Taylor and himself has declined to a repetition of stock phrases. Reed composes most of his material, which mostly revolves around troubled love affairs, becoming maudlin on **A String to Your Heart** but rather better on **I Know It's a Sin** which also contains good harmonica work. I think the best tracks are the two instrumentals, **Ends and Odds** and the excellent **Rockin' with Reed**. "Jimmy Reed is for folks who like to JUMP . . . NOT BOP . . . NOT CHA CHA CHA . . . NOT JITTERBUG, BUT PURE-DEE JUMP" writes Frank London Brown in the abysmal, dismal, hype-hip sleeve-note. But there is nothing here that moves like **Boogie in the Dark** or is as strong as **Ain't That Lovin' You Baby**.

Paul Oliver

BOOK REVIEWS

Peter Gammond's surveys of Ellington in the twenties and of **A Drum is a Woman**, Raymond Horricks' chronicle of the forties and his study of the orchestral suites, Alun Morgan's examination of the fifties, and Gerald Lascelles' views on Ellington as a pianist are compilations of miscellaneous information or discouraging displays of critical ineptitude, or both. Stanley Dance's observations on Ellington's personality are commonplace. He also seems to imply strongly that Ellington is above criticism (from the samples in this book, I can see why he should think so) and that he is to be most congratulated on avoiding those nasty boppers, which tells us a great deal about Stanley Dance but little about Ellington. Daniel Halperin's recollections of his contacts with the Ellington band are, for the most part, singularly dull for anyone who is more impressed by Ellington than by Halperin. Burnett James attempts to enlighten us on Ellington as a composer, but he soon falls into turgidity and irrelevance. Jeff Aldam's remarks on the Ellington sidemen are elementary. There are also some kind, but unnecessary, tributes from Johnny Dankworth, Alan Clare, and Ken Moule. Only Charles Fox and Vic Bellerby attempt serious criticism. Fox's study of Ellington in the thirties is, within the space limitations, reasonably thorough. However, his judgments tend to the conventional more than the just. Vic Bellerby in one piece surveys all of Ellington's work and in another, **Such Sweet Thunder**. Unfortunately, his work is marred by a series of cursory and inaccurate impressionistic descriptions. Of considerable value is the condensation of Richard Boyer's **New Yorker** profile of Ellington, "The Hot Bach," which dates from 1944. This is a first rate piece of journalism which tells us a great deal about Ellington's music simply by Boyer's careful observation and delineation of Ellington, his men, and their milieu. Boyer makes no pretense of being a jazz critic, and his work is refreshingly clear of any preconceptions. His description, for example, of an Ellington rehearsal is sufficiently detailed to clear up many of the puzzling questions about the well-known compositional interplay between Ellington and the members of the band. It is unfortunate that the editor chose to cut this piece when he could so easily have dispensed with some of the other contributions to make space.

This book serves generally to point up the lack of significant criticism of Ellington's career, from the splendid Cotton Club style of the twenties, through its continued successes in the thirties, to its apex in the early forties, down to the band of today which can alternate between the brilliance of **Such Sweet Thunder** and the plodding quality of many of its recent recordings. The general tone of fatuous hero wor-

ship in so many of these contributions helps to explain this lack of commentary; real criticism is heresy. Total and unquestioning admiration has never been a tribute to any artist; with an artist of Ellington's stature, strength, and accomplishment, it is ridiculous.

H. A. Woodfin

Belafonte, an Unauthorized Biography by Arnold Shaw. Chilton Publishers; New York, 1960.

There are many forms of opportunism, and one of the most annoying is the kind which exploits the suffering of others. This book, purportedly a biography of Harry Belafonte the singer, is one example. It uses the life of this man, and a backdrop of "jazz atmosphere" to self-righteously expose the embarrassing underside of America's race problem. In this it is essentially a political pamphlet and not biography. It might not be going very far to call it inflammatory trash since the author's rhetoric seems calculated to stimulate violence rather than understanding.

Yet the style of the book reveals not even the honest emotion that can infect a work of this kind. The writing is strangely flat, dull, bored and boring, soggy with repetitious constructions and heavy with sociological and psychological clichés. The content is a reiteration of what every Negro knows for himself: the endless sins of the white man against the black. Unfortunately, the audience one would like to reach on this subject—the white middle class, from which almost all important social action springs in the United States—will be put off by the tasteless sensationalism which pervades the book. For a particularly blatant example, the little sections called "Stereo", stuck in between chapters, whose only function is to illustrate a theme which undergoes no development, and which was obvious from the outset. In each "Stereo" some notable of the Negro world, frequently a jazz musician, is dragged in as further illustration of racial persecution. Between interracial incidents Belafonte's life proceeds as that of a bright, good-looking young man who became a success in spite of brown skin, poverty and all that goes with them. Somehow all the psychoanalytic claptrap Mr. Shaw drags in to justify some pretty egotistical and selfish behavior do not greatly move me. I can't help comparing Shaw's report of Belafonte's melodramatics with the stoicism and beauty of King Oliver's last letters. (Or Jackie Robinson when he was breaking in with the Dodgers, for that matter.)

This is in no way a good book except as undeveloped source material to document the life of a particular young artist-businessman, or the general problem of man's failure to share God's blessings.

Fredrick Conn

Duke Ellington: His Life and Music edited by Peter Gammond.

The idea behind this miscellany was a happy one; its execution, alas, was considerably less happy. With few exceptions the articles it includes are specimens of conventional jazz criticism, which is usually not criticism at all, or platitudinous personal tributes. Of the fifteen pieces, only one is actually worthy of serious attention.

JAZZ IN PRINT

MARTIN T. WILLIAMS

My co-editor has agreed to let me use his space this month. Nothing special in mind, necessarily. I just wanted to know what it feels like.

Henry Woodfin noticed Barbara Gardner's review of Duke Pearson in Down Beat. "Gate City Blues has all the necessary naughtiness to elevate it to enviable heights... His superb finesse, spiced with the water from the well of life, ought to yield a seasoned, groundrooted performer."

Well, Michigan water tastes like sherry wine.

Robert Hatch reviewed Jazz on a Summer's Day in the Nation and concluded, "As for the music, I'm not an initiate, but I think I know what jazz is about. One of these days, the boys in the audience are going to start handling the girls the way these musicians handle their instruments; then the authorities will surely step in and we shall cry "tyranny" like libertarian sheep. The dithyrambic cry is fine healthy exercise, and one can grin for quite a while at the varieties of erotic experimentation the jazz musicians can evoke; but even dancing around the Maypole gets monotonous in the end, and the time may come when jazz will want to look around for other appetites to feed."

Never mind about jazz. When are they going to put



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valves on those girls?
In the May Jazz Monthly,
editor Albert McCarthy
somehow saw a confirmation
for his 'mainstream'
position in the fact that
Jack Cooke found some of
the Miles Davis-Gil Evans
"Miles Ahead", "oppressive,
melodramatic, and in the
case of the final bars of
I Don't Wanna Be Kissed,
ludicrous. "Later in the
same issue, Max Harrison
said about those who beat
the mainstream drum, "They
could instead have written
many authoritative
articles on the men they
do care about, and thereby
over the years introduced
countless new listeners to
that music. It is
unfortunate they chose the
other, fruitless course,
for attacks on modernists
do not make a convincing
plea for mainstreamers."
Hear! Hear! Except for
biographies, there are no
comprehensive essays on
the Lunceford band, Don
Redman's music, Hender-
son's, Ben Webster, Lionel
Hampton, Red Allen, the
Basie style, Buck Clayton,
Vic Dickenson, Jack
Teagarden, Teddy Wilson,
Earl Hines, Harry Edison,
Bud Johnson, Jo Jones.
There is an essay on Dickie
Wells, and you know who
wrote that. There has been
only one published effort
at a comprehensive account
of Armstrong's career.
Frankly, gentlemen, your
record stinks. The same
issue of Jazz Monthly began
a series by Jack Cooke on
Art Blakey and the Jazz
Messengers and continues
Malcolm Walker's Charlie
Mingus discography.
Speaking of Mingus: his
beautiful and generous
tribute to Ornette Coleman
surely gives us another
reason to call him a great
jazzman. I confess
Cannonball Adderley's
piece on Ornette in the

same May 26 Down Beat
reminded me a bit of the
kind of pseudo-criticism
that Julian himself often
complains about.
There's a curious piece on
Coleman in the first issue
of the 'new' Metronome by
Ted E. White (curious not
because I happen to figure
in it). White quotes John
Lewis, "Ornette Coleman is
doing the only really new
thing in jazz since the
innovations in the mid-
forties." Then he adds
"Ornette is not another
Parker." (WHAT did John
say?) Later he quotes
Ornette's, "I don't know
how it's going to sound
before I play it any more
than anybody else does,"
and adds, "This strongly
suggests that Coleman is
an intuitive musician."
And, "I don't suppose it is
coincidental that Coleman
plays a saxophone." And
"Coleman's way of playing
is not a separate thing
from his music." Yes, it
would seem that way,
wouldn't it?
The same Metronome quoted
Jimmy Giuffre's remark to
Howard Lucraft, "I can
stand bad reviews because
I haven't perfected my art
at all. But one English
critic said I should try
using counterpoint." He
meant Max Harrison in this
magazine, of course.
Speaking (still and again)
of Harrison, his essay on
Gerry Mulligan in the
Raymond Horricks book
These Jazzmen of our Time
contains this excellent
insight, "(The Mulligan
Quartet's) instrumentation
threw emphasis on clear
melodic expression and
simple rhythmic construc-
tion. The resulting lack
of tension was another
attraction . . . the
somewhat detached relaxa-
tion of the Mulligan
Quartet entertains and
even intrigues the listener

without unduly involving
him. Thus audiences . . .
were able . . . to
congratulate themselves on
their advanced taste while
experiencing quite
straightforward music . . .
The air of rather smart
disillusionment that
surrounds interpretations
like Funny Valentine would
also be sympathetic to
superficially sophisti-
cated audiences."
Not only do I not share a
spell-my-name-right
attitude, I have the
strongest misgivings about
the concept of 'publicity'
in general. However, I
confess to being quite
pleased, in principle,
about The New Yorker's
"Mostly for Music" list-
ings, though in practice,
I am not quite so pleased.
The listings aren't
complete. Perhaps they
don't intend to be (the
movie listings frankly
aren't) but there are
things going on in
Brooklyn, in the Bronx,
and even in Manhattan, if
they must be parochial,
that I would like to hear
about. Then there are the
frequently inaccurate
blurbs: Johnny Letman at
the Metropole is a Dixie-
land musician; so is Buck
Clayton at Condon's. They
also contain such insights
as: "Chris Connor, who can
sing a song as straight
as a string," or "Kenny
Burrell's high-tension
threesome." They often
have their share of the old
New Yorker's strained
cleverness. It is the sort
of thing that used to pass
for sophisticated wit, I
suppose, but the
masters of the style,
Wolcott Gibbs or John
McCarten, manage a know-
little, care-less,
smugness.
Examples: "Any resemblance
to a mushroom-shaped cloud
is coincidental, but the

noise does come in solid chunks." (The usual "Goings On" metaphor for jazz is gunfire and explosion.) "Ornette Coleman who regards the alto saxophone as his whipping boy. . . ." "John Coltrane's quartet. . . even more abstract than the paintings." I sheepishly confess a certain sympathy for this one however: "Herbie Mann, whose flute pours oil on the troubled bongos." In charge of the "Goings On" department is Rogers Whittaker; I think criticism should be signed. The alternate selection for June at the Reader's Subscription (a high-brow book club, I guess you'd call it) was two Thelonious Monk records. Whitney Balliett in his review of Memphis Slim and boogie woogie, called the form complex. So did Leonard Bernstein on What is Jazz. (So how come any fraternity house pianist could play it?) Balliett also called it an harmonic form, and called the harmonies wayward. Well, Slim does goof the submediants sometimes. . . Max Harrison (again???) concluded in a recent Jazz Monthly essay that Charlie Parker's best Savoy recordings were Billie's Bounce (take 5), Now's The Time (4), Thriving From a Riff (1), Koko (2), Donna Lee (3 and 4), Cheryl (2), Buzzy (5), Chasing the Bird (1), Another Hair-Do (3), Bluebird (1 and 3), Bird Gets the Worm (1), Barbados (4), Constellation (1 and 4), Parker's Mood (3). There was disagreement between Benny Golson's account of the origin and intent of the Jazztet in the May 26th Down Beat and that by Art Farmer in the May issue of this magazine.

Curtis Fuller had split as both pieces were in the press. . . Tom Scanlan in that same Down Beat presented the following strange proposition: "Current majority thinking in jazz criticism implies, and sometimes insists, that what's new is somehow, ipso facto, what's most exciting and most important. . ." Yeah, yeah. And the best essay on Duke Ellington is by Gunther Schuller, on Louis Armstrong and Dickie Wells by Andre Hodeir, and three good essays on Lester Young are by Ross Russell, Louis Gottlieb and Nat Hentoff. . . The Jazz Review would like to publish more blues lyrics of Robert Johnson. Any volunteer transcribers? . . . I was very surprised to learn from Variety that the producer for Marlene Dietrich's recent European tour was Norman Granz. On second thought I don't know why I was surprised. An article on the Collegiate Jazz Festival at Notre Dame in the May International Musician concludes that it "provided a wonderful showcase for new jazz groups to display their musical versatility." Sure. And Martha dug it the most. There is a new discography from Denmark in the Debut Records series by Jorgen Grunet Jepsen. It combines Fats Navarro and Clifford Brown -- appropriately enough. There are also now revisions of the Ellington volumes, the Armstrongs, and Kenton, Basie, Lester Young, Parker, and Miles Davis booklets, with Billie Holiday, Mulligan and Konitz (in one volume), Monk and Rollins in preparation. American distributors are still Walter Allen, 168 Cedar Hill Ave., Belleville 9,

N. J. in the East and Ernest Edwards, Jr., 718 Keenan Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. in the West. Price is still \$1.25 for each booklet. Forthcoming publications from Allen include bio-discographical studies of Jack Teagarden by Howard Waters and of Fletcher Henderson by Allen himself. ✓

I have "program guides" from the all-jazz WHAT-FM in Philadelphia and the five hour daily jazz operation on WNCN-FM in New York. I have the feeling that if classical stations tried to "sell" their music in the fan magazine manner that these booklets do jazz, they would loose their audiences.

I have copies of the April estrad (Sweden), the April Rhythme (Belgium, in Flemish), and the March Jazz (Poland). I can hardly read a word of any of them.

A complete and completely new jazz discography by Brian Rust will shortly appear in England.

Just to prove I'm not playing favorites, I will conclude with the news that my co-editor had a piece in the May 6 Commonweal on the popularity of rock and roll; he thinks it is the answer to the psychological needs of a disturbed generation, and not a conspiracy of payola. He is right. Wait, wait, just one more. Nat Hentoff on the liner notes to Andre Previn's "King Size": "Certainly in Previn's work in this album there is no feeling of any admixtures of materials or influences alien to jazz. . . he's emerging as a pianist with a story of his own to tell."

Honest, Judge, just give me a break this time and you'll never see me in here again.

the word jazz,

part 4

The music may have been born in New Orleans, but the label "jazz" (or *jas, jass, jaz, jasz, jaszcz, jazzz*) was first applied to it in San Francisco. That's what some say. Others, including drummer Baby Dodds, cite New Orleans. Chicago and New York have also been credited. This fourth article on the history of the word reviews the literature on the place and date of its application to music and bands and its various spellings. The *Jazz Review* will publish a bibliography after the final article in the series.

Alan P. Merriam

and

Fradley H. Garner

Places, Dates and Spellings

Where, when and under what circumstances "jazz" and music were wed is almost as puzzling as where the word came from. Remembering the music was born in New Orleans, it is surprising to see some writers point the finger at San Francisco. There on the west coast "jazz" and music were united—if you believe the earliest published testimony. Joseph K. Gorham, according to the *Literary Digest* of April 26, 1919, said the word was "common to the knowledge and frequent in the vocabulary of the Barbary coast" (Anon 1919e:47). Clay Smith concurred (Anon 1924e:595).

So did Peter Tamony: Late in February, 1913, the San Francisco Seals went into training at Boyes Springs . . . Mr. Slattery, a sports editor, had heard the word jazz in craps games around San Francisco. It is a Creole word and means, in general, to speed up . . . Mr. Slattery, with a sports-writer's sense of the striking, began to use "jazz" as a synonym for "ginger" and "pep." . . . In a few days the novelty was taken up by other writers and the people around the camp, and was used in all descriptions. On the field the players were full of the old jazz, and there was jazz in the effervescent waters of the springs. Everything was jazzy, including the music Art Hickman played for the entertainment of the players and visitors . . . The music he provided was his stylization of the rag-time of the day. It was an immediate hit. James Woods, manager of the Hotel St. Francis, heard Hickman while on a

visit to Boyes. After Hickman opened at the St. Francis, national use of the word was only a matter of time (Tamony 1939:5).

A "peculiar" use of the word—but still in San Francisco—was supposedly reported by the American composer Ferdie Grofe. Author and critic Henry Osgood, in the first American book about jazz, said: Speaking of different meanings, Ferdie Grofe . . . tells of a peculiar use of the word jazz in San Francisco, which it does not seem to have obtained anywhere else. Out there in the years just preceding the War there were certain large and popular cafes which maintained orchestras and also a regular pianist, and gave cabaret performances, limited, however, to singing by young women. Each one had a solo to sing and occasionally they joined in an ensemble. They did not sing their solos from the stage where the pianist was stationed. It was part of their duties to mingle with the guests and join them at table. Whenever one of them heard the pianist begin the prelude to her number, she would rise wherever she happened to be and sing, but when the pianist decided it was time for an ensemble, he would announce, "The next number will be jazz," and they would all troop back to the stage. There was no extra "pepping up" or rhythmic exaggeration in these choruses, and the word appears to have had no special significance as regards the music, simply meaning that it would be sung *tutti* instead of solo (Osgood 1926a:18).

This account has been repeated by a number of writers, Stanley Nelson and Robert Goffin among them. William Ludwig, in the May, 1922 *Metronome*, claimed the word "was first used in this country by negroes working on the docks and levees in the South" (Ludwig 1922:78). He apparently referred to its use in music. More to the point, drummer Baby Dodds declared: "The word 'jazz' as a musical term, was born in New Orleans" (Anon 1945:5). Darnell Howard said "The term 'jazz' then originated in New Orleans" (*loc. cit.*) and Coeuroy and Schaeffner (1926:101) said virtually the same thing. But Douglas Stannard, writing in the *New Statesman and Nation* on "The Negro and Tin Pan Alley," categorically denied it. "New Orleans musicians themselves," he said, "were not familiar with the expression" (Stannard 1941:83).

An article in *Jazz Session* further complicated matters. Richard M. Jones and Bud Jacobson said New York was the place (Anon 1945:5). As for the date the word first appeared in print, a man named Chap-

man is reported to have "turned up a poster some 100 years old, with the word **Jass** on it" (Anon 1958a:10). Otherwise, we have Cecil Austin's word that "The term 'jazz' in its relation to music dates from about this time post Civil War" (Austin 1925:258).

Clay Smith detested the word, but he didn't think it was that old. "**Jazz** was born and christened in the low dance halls of our far west of three decades ago" (Anon 1924e:595). That would make it about 1900. Henry Osgood, referring back to an interview with James Reese Europe, the leader of a Negro military band in World War I, said: "It is possible that Lieutenant Europe correctly cited the first use of jazz as an adjective, for he places it about 1900-1905, ten years at least before the term 'jazz band' came into general use . . ." (Osgood 1926a:14).

Richard M. Jones is quoted as saying:

The term "jazz" originated in New Orleans during the early part of the century as a descriptive word. It wasn't until after the Original Dixieland Band added the word "jass" to its title while recording in New York during 1913 or 1914 that the word spread into other bands. It was undoubtedly a press agent's idea that first gave the word its start during the ODJB recordings. However, the word, as a musical term, was first used in New Orleans upon the return of the ODJB from New York. The word then spread to other bands in other cities (Anon 1945:5).

Peter Tamony's date for the coupling of word and music, 1913, was endorsed by Darnell Howard, though Tamony, as mentioned, located it in San Francisco (Tamony 1939:5). These recollections were offered by Howard in a **Jazz Session** symposium on "Origin of Term JAZZ":

I first heard the word "jazz" used musically in reference to the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. This was in 1913, and the ODJB had just recorded **Livery Stable Blues**. That same year, while I was playing with the John Wecliffe band in Milwaukee, the band's press agent erected a huge sign above the dance hall where we were playing. The large, flashy letters read: JOHN WECLIFFE'S JAZZ BAND. This caused quite a commotion, for the word "jazz" at this time was a rather shady word, used only in reference to sex. This was Milwaukee; quite a few miles north of Chicago. The ODJB was already employing the word "jazz" musically. They started their band in New Orleans. The term "jazz" then originated in New Orleans (Anon 1945).

Baby Dodds, in the same article, told

almost the same story, but dated it 1914:

The word "jazz" as a musical term, was born in New Orleans. The Original Dixieland Jazz Band, playing at the Casino in the tenderloin district of New Orleans in 1914, first employed the term. The first time I came into direct contact with the term, though, was in 1919 when I joined Fate Marable's Jazz E Sazz Band on the Capitol Steamer or Steamer Sydney. The term definitely was used first in New Orleans, before Chicago (Anon 1945:5).

Again referring to the ODJB, Jacobson, in the **Jazz Session** article, said: Wilbur Sweatman . . . had a lot to do with originating the word "jazz." He wrote a short article for the **Chicago Daily News** in 1915 stating that he was the first person to use the term in a band. If so, the term undoubtedly started in New York. The ODJB might have picked up the term from the Sweatman Band while recording in New York, then upon returning to New Orleans, spread it around to other bands. I remember distinctly seeing the word used in Chicago in 1914; I don't believe it was any earlier. The two words, JAZZ BAND, were pasted on a high sign above the Arsonia Cafe where Art Arseth's Band was playing at the time (Anon 1945:5).

Was the music christened "jazz (or 'jass") as part of a deliberate smear campaign? That's what Tom Brown thought, and **The New York Times** took note of it in the Dixieland trombonist's obituary. The account appeared first in the anthology **Jazzmen**, in 1939. Charles Edward Smith, a critic, wrote of the Tom Brown Band:

In June 1915, however, they could and did take a job at the Lamb's Cafe in Chicago. . . .

They didn't have union clearance on that first Chicago job. According to Tom Brown it was an attempt by union officials to lowrate them that gave jazz its name. Jazz, or jass as it was then spelled, was a familiar word around 22nd Street where the red lights glowed, but it wasn't used about music. The story has it that the statement that jazz music was being played at Lamb's Cafe was a whispering campaign, the purpose of which was to smear the band. People were curious to know what "jass" music was, and they came in droves to find out. Presently the new sign out front read: "Added attraction—Brown's Dixieland Jass Band, Direct from New Orleans, Best Dance Music in Chicago" (Smith 1939:46).

This is what the **Times** reported in Tom Brown's obituary, March 26, 1958:

Mr. Brown, a trombonist, said the term "jazz music" was first applied to his

band in Chicago in 1915. It was playing at the Lambs Club there and was attracting crowds with the music that originated in New Orleans.

He related how another band at the club became jealous and complained to the union. The union issued a statement saying that "jazz music was being played at Lambs," intending to discredit the Brown band.

Instead of hurting it, Mr. Brown said, the public streamed in to see what the music was all about (Anon 1958b:37:1). Several other writers, including Robert Goffin (1946:64) and James D. Hart (1932:245), tell just about the same story, probably derived from the same source (**Jazzmen**). Hart said "it was not until about 1915 that the word came into its present widespread use."

An overwhelming majority of these writers favor a date sometime between 1915 and 1917. If the folk tales and name corruption accounts have any basis in truth, the word itself—or one that sounded almost like it—may have been used earlier in the South, or in other regions or locales.*

While it was usually spelled "jass" or "jazz," Walter Kingsley noted in 1917 that it was "variously spelled Jas, Jass, Jaz, Jazz, Jasz, and Jasz" (Kingsley 1917:III, 3:6-8), and Grenville Vernon said it was sometimes spelled "'jass' and sometimes 'jazz'" (Vernon 1919:IV, 5:1-2).

Stanley Nelson in 1930 listed "jas, jass, jaz, jazz, jasz or jazsz" (Goffin 1932:45), and Douglas Stannard said "The early spelling of the word was alternatively jas, jass, and jazz" (Stannard 1941:83). Few of these alternate spellings ever were used in the literature, however, and most are probably the orthographic inventions of the authors concerned.

*The first appearance of the word "rag-time" on a music sheet, according to Hobson, who cites Rogers (Hobson 1939:28) was "in 1895 on the cover of the Negro comedian Bert Williams's song, **Oh I Don't Know, You're Not So Much**." The first use of the word "blues" is reported in 1919 by the **Music Trade Review**:

An antique dealer on Twenty-eighth street has a window display of old sheet music belonging to another generation. Of interest is one sheet entitled "Regimental Blues," published by First, Pond & Co., then located at 547 Broadway, and dedicated the "Regimental Blues" of Savannah, Ga. The copyright bears the date of 1860 (Anon 1919b:55).

Whether the word here refers to music or to regimental uniform or colors cannot be ascertained without more information about the song and its lyric.

CONCERT REVIEW

According to the program notes, the final concert in Charles Schwartz's wholly commendable series of "Jazz Profiles" at the Circle in the Square was to present the "Jazz Compositions" of Gunther Schuller. To quote Schuller's introduction, the music would "show the various possible ways of combining jazz and classical music." Neither statement is a really accurate description of what one heard that evening, and the second turned out to be nearly nonsense.

The participating musicians were Ornette Coleman (alto); Bill Evans (piano); Scott LaFaro (bass); Sticks Evans and Paul Cohen (drums); Eric Dolphy (alto, flute, bass clarinet); Barry Galbraith (guitar); Eddie Costa (vibraphone); Robert DiDomenica (flute); and the Contemporary String Quartet: Charles Tregar and Joseph Schor (violins); John Garvey (viola); and Joseph Tekula (cello).

The evening was decidedly a credit to everyone involved: the composer, the jazz musicians, and the string quartet. It was, from beginning to end, an evening of music and (let's be frank about this) not like many a jazz concert where something really interesting might happen one minute in ten. If the strings did have some trouble with jazz phrasing at times, it is less a discredit to them than it is a reflection of a situation in American music—a situation which, to their credit, they have undertaken to change.

An evening of music, a constantly enjoyable and enlightening one and, I believe, a very important one.

Abstraction No. 1, with Ornette Coleman and the string quartet as major participants, was the most "classical" piece: a jazz musician improvising as part of a mirror, serial composition in the contemporary idiom; a building of textures and rhythms to a climax, then an exact reversal. **Abstractions** was performed twice, once before the intermission, once after. Coleman's grasp of the piece was so thorough that he was able to find his way in it not only with two different improvisations but in two different ways. On the first performance he improvised **within** the textures (an early Mozart concerto would be a good

analogy); on the second against and in a parallel foil to them (as in a Beethoven concerto, to continue the analogy).

Almost opposite was **Little Blue Devil** a section of Schuller's concert work of last year programmed on pictures by Paul Klee—a written "classical" composition using jazz form and phrasing.

Transformation, the earliest work heard, and **Conversations**, from last year's concert by the Modern Jazz and Beaux Art quartets, take opposite approaches. The former gradually transforms classical writing into jazz improvising, and back. Despite another excellent solo by Bill Evans, the approach still seems to me to deny the force and uniqueness of each idiom and the alliance an almost sentimental one.

Conversations, as I have said in the December issue, **uses** the conflict and tension between the two idioms, their ways of phrasing, and their separate virtues, as its basis. It seems to me a success—and perhaps the beginning of wisdom. Bill Evans achieved the very difficult task of both preceding and following a good solo by Eddie Costa and still giving the whole improvisational section continuity and wholeness. He did it, chiefly by using the same musical ideas in both his solos, but on his return he incorporates all the tension that Costa had built in the meanwhile.

In a rather different way, **Progression in Tempo** seems to me also a failure. Perhaps I am judging a performance and not a composition, but a good deal of the writing somehow seemed Ravel or Gershwin-esque in effect, rather like those fay, blues-y pieces of the twenties. Costa and Evans were a contrast, of course. Also, it is true that jazz groups do increase tempos and that, although they do not always do it intentionally, it can be exciting. However, jazz musicians do it as a response to what is happening in the music. To impose it from without is a different matter. (But does Schuller know Will Ezell's **Barrell House Woman**?)

The two other pieces on the program were the most important. The four **Variants On a Theme of John Lewis** used **Django**. Barry Galbraith's statement of the theme was lovely, but for the first time in the evening there was a marring sluggishness in the string quartet's playing, and I doubt that Schuller wanted the second section played with that slight schmaltz that John Garvey gave it. I also suspect that Eric Dolphy could have used more space for his solo; players his age just aren't used to pacing brief solos. Schuller's various handlings of that wonderful bass figure were a marvel, and its simple effectiveness is the strongest temptation to put it to banal use, as other versions of **Django** have shown.

Variants on a theme of Thelonious Monk was four variations on **Criss Cross**. It is my chief reason for using the word "nonsense" above, for Schuller's "arrangement" of Monk's theme seems to me in no sense a classical work. It is a jazz work and, I think, a splendid one. Whatever the work may owe in form to Schuller's other life is quite assimilated; it certainly has no air of the "experiment" or the practice room.

In the first section, Ornette Coleman improvised first and he used Monk's melody as his basis in a way I wish Monk could have heard. Bill Evans entered behind him to prepare for the second soloist, Dolphy (on bass clarinet); then Costa. Each soloist began for several bars under the previous improviser in a kind of overlapping, free polyphony—and hearing Ornette Coleman and Eric Dolphy improvising simultaneously on a Monk theme was, in itself, more than most jazz concerts have to offer.

The second variant was slow and got a somber mood from Monk's patterns I would never have thought appropriate or even possible. Coleman embellished written parts. The third went largely to Dolphy and Scott LaFaro and their excellent improvising included a wonderful spontaneous cadenza.

The final section began with a Monkish rebuilding of the theme by the strings and included solos by Galbraith (who seems to me a better player than improviser), Dolphy on flute, and Coleman. Again they reflected the creative enthusiasm with which every musician participated in the evening. What I have said here about this "Variants" on **Criss Cross** is merely a few notes based on hearing one performance. It is, I believe, a major work (based on Monk's already major piece!) not only within the jazz idiom, but legitimately extending it. If I have any reservations, it would be that the writing for the strings in the first section seemed a bit thick for so rhythmically provocative a theme, but, again, that may have been a (quite forgivable) matter of performance.

As I began by saying, it was an evening of music, and one did not have to wait out nine minutes for the one when something really happened. Of course, except for the work of a handful of the really brilliant improvisers, the only protection jazz has ever found against the possibility of failure in those other nine minutes is the one Done Redman gave it so well: get something good down on paper. It has been ten years since something this important for a group of this size was go down on paper. And thanks particularly to Coleman, Dolphy, LaFaro, and to Schuller—and to Monk—it has as important a relevance to the next ten years as to the past.

No. Nobody got it down on tape.

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