

THE JAZZ REVIEW

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IN THIS ISSUE: an article on the versatile arranger and reedman BUDD JOHNSON; the second installment of the BIRD biography, including an interview with EARL HINES about the development of bop in the early forties; plus two views of THE SCHOOL OF JAZZ in Lenox, Mass.

Cato

JAZZ
THE
REVIEW

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BUDD JOHNSON

AGELESS JAZZMAN

Budd Johnson is one musician who has moved with the growth of jazz, from the music of the twenties through to modern jazz. But most followers of jazz know little about him because very little has been written about either his long career or his stature as a soloist. Beside playing all the reed instruments — and playing fluent solos on all of them — he is a notable composer and arranger, and he has directed the musical policies of two great orchestras — the Earl Hines band of 1939-42 and the Billy Eckstine band in 1945. He and Eckstine, who was also with Hines' band, persuaded Hines to hire the younger musicians in the vanguard of modern jazz, and he himself moved smoothly from swing to modern jazz, both as a soloist and as arranger.

His successful conversion to modern jazz was demonstrated recently, when he became a member and soloist in the Gil Evans big band that played Birdland in 1959, and when he went to Europe in late 1959 with Quincy Jones' band as one of the brightest soloists in a band full of fine soloists. He has made recordings with both of these bands. In Europe, he got offers to play regularly, which he has not been able to find in New York. Here, he often finds arranging work, and occasionally plays on jazz or rhythm and blues record dates, but he has not really had a chance to show how well he can play in many years. Only Hughes Panassie has tried to outline his career on records, and only Leonard Feather has given him credit for the contributions he made to the development of modern jazz.

Frank Driggs

I was just in my teens when I started playing music, in Dallas, where my brother Keg and I were born. Jazz was just getting started there at the time. Our band was called the Moonlight Melody Six; I started out on drums, and Keg was on trombone. We worked for a lady named Miss Puckett who would take us out on weekends to places like Waxahatchie. She sold "chock" beer, a mixture of beer and wine, in the different clubs, and always kept our attention diverted so we would never know where the money was. We were satisfied just to be playing and kept together for nearly a year by playing school dances and that sort of thing. This was back in the early twenties.

A year or so later our band had grown, and we got a large variety of sounds because several of us doubled. I was doubling on tenor sax and trombone as well as playing drums, and Tresevant Sims, the trumpet player, was beginning to double on bass. We played all over Texas as the Blue Moon Chasers. We were really pretty good, considering we were still in our teens, and we used to battle all the bands around there. We had a specialty number called **The Country Picnic**, on which I played all the instruments in the band, that used to knock everybody out. (We got stranded in Tulsa one time when we were ballyhooing incoming acts at a local theatre and we were just making eating money and that was all. One day a guy came through there and offered to drive us back to Texas for sixty dollars. We were staying at the Benton Hotel and we figured out a way to get our bags down the airshaft without being seen, so we all managed to cut out without paying the tab.)

Around 1927, Ben Smith came down from Little Rock, took our band over, and added a couple of men. He was from Memphis and had studied under Captain Dry at Tuskegee. He was an exceptional musician on all the reed instruments, and he also played oboe. He tightened up what was already a good band and got us a job at the Country Club at Ypsilanti for \$35 a week plus room and board; that was exceptional pay back in those days. He played alto in our band and wrote some great things for us and taught us a lot about music. We went over very well and then traveled with Ben to El Paso and to Mexico. I stayed with him until 1928 and then went home to Dallas. Soon after, they



got a shot at the first colored night club in Dal'as, Thomason Hall. The club was importing a big show from Chicago, and they sent to Kansas City to get Jesse Stone, the great arranger. They also sent for me, but I'd gone to Amarillo to join Gene Coy's Happy Black Aces. That was another terrific band. Gene was the drummer, and his wife Marge played a great piano, a lot like Mary Lou. That's where I first ran into Ben Webster, who was playing piano for the silent pictures! He used to heckle me to death to show him the scales on the sax, which I did. Keg and I went back and forth between many a band in those years, and we got stranded with Gene. We came back to Dallas to join Jesse Stone, who had just taken over a band which actually had belonged to the trumpet player T. Holder. Holder was considered sensational then; he had made a reputation while he was in Alphonso Trent's band just the same way Harry James did with Benny years later. He had the Original Clouds of Joy, who were modelled somewhat after Trent. Let me tell you about Trent; that was the greatest band I'd ever heard! They used to thrill me. They were gods back in the twenties, just like Basie was later, only many years ahead of him. Nobody else had gold instruments in those days; his whole band had them! They made \$150 a week a man. Imagine! They worked nothing but the biggest and finest hotels in the South.

A. G. Godley was their drummer; he and a guy who used to be called "Twin", who played with the Blue Devils, were the greatest drummers in the business then. We used to idolize those guys, and I'll never forget the day when Godley came up to me in Dallas when I was still playing drums and said, 'So you're trying to beat your way through the world too.'

And Snub Mosely was the greatest trombone player I'd ever heard in my life. He could do anything then, and he can still do it. In fact he'd shake up a lot of guys today if he could get a record date. That slide sax of his is his own invention, and I never saw anyone else play anything like it.

Crooke was a great banjo player in those days. They all used to wear silk — nothing else — and Crooke was the fashion plate in the band. Then they got Stuff Smith; he was playing just as great then as he does today, and he really upset Dallas. You have no idea just how fabulous that band was! They were years ahead of their time.

In those times in Dallas, there was a trumpet player named Benno Kennedy who was a bad man. He was with Trent's band and also with Troy Floyd. He had all the tricks and the strange sounds—like Rex Stewart, only he was doing it way before Rex. Don Albert, who had a beautiful tone, replaced him in Troy's band. I was playing drums for Frenchy then—his real name was Polite Christian. He was very powerful, just like Louis Armstrong, and was popular all over Texas. I even remember when Buddy Tate started playing with that family band of all his relatives. He was a much better alto player in those days.

Getting back to Jesse Stone, he didn't want the band, and eventually Andy Kirk got most of the men. Jesse got some other musicians together and we scuffled a while and finally made it back to Kansas City. Jesse was a perfectionist and he rehearsed the band all day long, every day, but that's all we had to do. We started

beating all the other bands around there, but we couldn't get set in town, so Jesse took us with him to St. Joseph so we could get some work through his former manager, Frank Rock. We had to bum rides in order to stick together, but when we got there he knew this woman who ran the Charleston Hotel down by the river and she had two rooms for all of us. We had a fourteen-piece band then, so it was seven to a room. The first four cats who got in the room got on the bed and wouldn't get off it, so the rest had to pull chairs together or sleep on the floor.

Eddie Tompkins and Paul Webster were both in that band, and Eddie was really great way back then. This was during the time when the old Red Nichols style was the thing, and Eddie could play it better than Red. He was really wonderful. He hurt himself later on, in an accident.

A gig in those days used to pay a dollar from seven to seven, and we had a kitty. We worked just like waiters used to work; if we didn't have anything in the kitty, all we had was that dollar. We didn't dare spend any of it, but we had to bring it back to Jesse who would go out with a witness and buy cheese and crackers and split them up among us evenly.

George E. Lee was coming out from Kansas City to open up a new Ballroom called the Frog Hop, and his band had to eat at the hotel we were staying at. I remember they came to town in big long cars and we watched them come in the hotel. Lee was very big in the midwest then. He was a terrific singer. He came by our rehearsal one day and liked what he heard. I made friends with him that day, and it finally helped me get in the band a little later on. During this time, Jesse was helping me get started arranging.

Lee went back to Kansas City, and we ran out of work around town, so Jesse took a job in Dallas, Missouri, which was on the outskirts of Kansas City. He was going around with a girl who had a little Whip-pet coupe and he came out just like a mother hen and took us there, two or three at a time. We had a job playing at this big beautiful club but for only room and board — no salary, just what we could get by with on tips. We had a band like Basie has now, believe me, and you can ask Basie about this band, because he came out one night and sat in with us. He said he'd never heard such a band. We stayed there until we couldn't make it anymore, and then we came on to Kansas City. We had just enough to get one apartment, and that was for all the guys, and to buy bologna and cheese. When our money ran out, we slept in the park. I got so doggone hungry that I went to George Lee's rehearsals. When he wasn't there I'd take out my horn and start playing his parts. He'd come in and say, 'What're you trying to do, take my job?' I said, 'You have no more job . . .' and he hired me then and there. The men in the band were getting seven dollars a day, and I helped get Jesse in the band later on.

George Lee used to compete with Bennie Moten. He was just as good as far as the Midwest was concerned, but Bennie had the bigger name, because he was number one best-seller on Victor at the time. They were up and down favorites throughout the Midwest, and no one band was in favor more than a year at one time. I remember we brought the first arrangements into Kansas City when I was with Jesse Stone, because

neither Bennie nor George Lee knew what an arrangement looked like. They all played heads. We had the first arrangements on paper.

We worked so much I used to beg for a night off. We worked every night, seven dollars a night clear, sometimes more because I'd get eight or ten for arrangements. It was great because I was paying a dollar and a half a week for my rooms and twenty-five cents for my meals — and those meals were the best you ever wanted to eat in your life.

Bennie Moten always wanted the best, and he wanted to get the best musicians all the time, so he tried to hire some of us away from George Lee. But he couldn't so he raided the Blue Devils and got some of them away from Walter Page. That was really, along with Trent, the best band of that time. That was when Bennie got Basie, Rushing and Hot Lips Page away from Walter Page — and in later years that's where Basie's band came out of, the old Blue Devils. Buster Smith was with the Blue Devils then, and he was already playing the same lope-along style, way before Bird ever came on the scene. They called him "Prof," and he never was too aggressive. When he got interested in writing he would write like mad. It took him a month to make an arrangement, but when he made it, it would live forever. He was really one of the great arrangers. He did come East later on in the thirties and worked with Lips Page and Snub Mosely, but he finally went back to Dallas after that and stayed.

Another guy they didn't write up in the books was Albert Hinton. He was with George Lee before I left, and he'd been in one of Jesse's bands too. He was the only one to challenge Jabbo Smith when we were playing in Milwaukee. Hinton's name was all I heard when I first came to Kansas City, but he never made it. I left Kansas City on January 9, 1932 and came to Chicago to join Earl Hines. George Lee was reorganizing then, and he was making big jumps and not getting set in any one place. My brother Keg had gone to Chicago before me and was playing with Ralph Cooper's band at the Regal Theatre and also working for Cass Simpson, a great piano player. He took me around town and introduced me to everybody. At that time Earl Hines had a great band, one of his greatest. Teddy Wilson was starting to write some arrangements for the band then and they sounded great. They were at the Grand Terrace, and I'd always pictured what they looked like. So, being real ambitious at the time, I went down there and asked if I could sit in. At the time, Earl played with the band, and continued playing by himself right through intermission. I got a chance to play with him during intermission and he dug me, and asked me if I wanted to join the band. I said I would, and he said, "Be at the bus depot at ten the next morning, because we're leaving for New York." Earl told me to get some white pants and some white shirts and to be on time. The next morning when I got there at ten and looked around, they were halfway to New York. Why he did this, I'll never know, but I was very hurt and felt very bad.

Even though I was hurt, I'd still have to work, so I joined Clarence Moore's band which took their place at the Grand Terrace. Teddy Wilson, Keg and a great trumpet man named Guy Kelly were all in the band. I did some writing for them and we broadcasted all

the time. The job lasted for a few months until Earl came back, and then I'd still go and sit in with Earl. I had to get another job so I joined Eddie Mallory's band late that year at the Granada Cafe. He was a trumpeter and his band was pretty good. Keg and Teddy Wilson also joined with me. After we'd been there for a month we went into Albert Bouchet's Villa Venese following Guy Lombardo. This was a fabulous place, some thirty-two acres. Bouchet used to have the best acts in the world there. Most of them were foreign, but he had Sally Rand. Teddy was writing some terrific arrangements for the band, and about that time his brother Gus was just about the last word as an arranger. I'd like to have some of Gus Wilson's stuff today, because it would live forever. He wrote and played trombone with Zack Whyte and Alphonso Trent. That's one place where Sy Oliver got some of his ideas for Lunceford later on.

We had to drive thirty-two miles to get to work at the Villa Venese, because it was on the other side of Lyons Township. We had to close all the windows and lock the doors and go driving through there as fast as we could. That was Capone's territory, and anyone who saw colored musicians driving through would pull them out of their cars and beat them up just for sport. We played there two or three months before we got kicked out of the union and fined two hundred dollars. The Union people wanted to save that job for white musicians and promised to send some goons around if we didn't get out. The owner was a real prince and offered to keep us right there, and provided some strong-arms for us. It was really just Teddy, Keg and myself who were fined. When we paid up we got back in the union and stayed on the job through the winter.

Teddy, Keg and myself lived together in Chicago, and we all joined Louis Armstrong around the first of 1933. He had a horrible band but he didn't pay much attention to it. He'd always say "You pay attention to yours, and I'll watch mine." He worked real hard himself, but didn't do anything to help the band. The band was actually Mike McKendrick's, the banjo player, and he wasn't much help either. Z. T. Randolph was the arranger, and he really used to write some hard stuff. He was a fine person and very well schooled, but somewhat academic. We were only making \$40 a week on the road, which was nothing, although Louis made his. He's a great cat, one of the greatest, but he's strictly an artist and didn't know anything about running a band then. We were supposed to go into Castle Farms in Cincinnati, and since we weren't working every day in the week, McKendrick wanted to put us on pro rata, but we said *nothing doing and struck*. He was going to report us to the union, but we stuck it out and finished up the gig and came back to Chicago. We made a whole gang of records with him until he broke up the band to go to Europe.

This is the first of a series of articles.

BIRD

A Biography In Interviews by Bob Reisner



Gene Ramey

Bassist Gene Ramey first met Parker when they were both on Jay McShann's band. He has been in New York since the early forties, and has played with many fine jazz groups during the past fifteen years.

I was like his guardian; being a little older I had to keep my eye on him. Once in later years he said to me, "Gene, I'm gonna punch you in the mouth to get you off me; you're too much like a daddy."

We first met in 1935. In those days there were a lot of mock band battles. They were judged by enthusiasm and loyalty rather than musical ability. When you played in your home town you won. Charlie was in a group from K.C., Missouri, and I was in one from K.C., Kansas. Later in 1935 he played regularly at a place called Green Leaf Gardens in K.C. He was very anti-social and belligerent; he would fight with all the guys about music. He was an only child, sheltered and coddled and was not used to getting along with people. He played a whole year at the Green Leaf Gardens, and I was playing at a nearby place called Bar-Le-Duc. I got to know him real well and could see him start to develop as a musician and a person. In K.C. there was an institution known as "spook breakfasts"; they were jam sessions held every morning. The ones Bird and I attended faithfully were held at a place called The Reno Club where Count Basie was playing then. Basie at that time had a nine piece band and they worked a tough schedule—from 8:30 to 5 in the morning. After that the jam sessions would begin. People stopped by

on their way to work, and there was the "sportin life" set who never worked, and musicians of any big band that was in town—like Dorsey or Garber. Sometimes there would be as many as a hundred musicians waiting to get on the stand. In K.C. there is a wonderful tradition where a more experienced musician tries to help a new one. An alto player called Prof. Smith used to help Bird get to his horn better. Efferge Ware, a guitarist, coached a whole group of us, teaching us cycles, chords, and progressions. We would sit in the park practicing all night long.

In the summer of 1937 Bird underwent a radical change musically. Before that he had had his share of musical embarrassment in which he was made a goat.

Jam sessions in a sense were constant trials of manhood. Different sections of the band would set difficult riffs behind a soloist and sometimes they see if they could lose each other; usually it was one man who became the goat. He might then come in for some kidding. Charlie would shoot back to his teasers and censors remarks like "play your own horn" or "stick to your script." One time he made no answer. Jo Jones once tossed a cymbal over his head which crashed to the floor. Major Bowes was popular then, and Jo Jones had given contestant Parker the gong like The Amateur Hour maestro used to do. Charlie stood up, packed his horn and left.

As I say in the summer of 1937 he got a job with a little band led by a singer, Georgie Lee. They played at country resorts in the mountains. Charlie took with him all the Count Basie records with Lester Young solos on them and learned Lester cold, note for note. When he came home he was the most popular musician in K.C. He lost his Sweet Lucy sound, which is like a combination of a man talking and drinking wine at the same time (Sweet Lucy was what we called wine). He became the darling of K.C., but unfortunately it was at this period he acquired the "monkey" and frequently was strung out.

Bird was the most receptive being. He got into his music all the sounds around him, the swish of a car speeding down a highway, the hum of wind as it goes through the leaves—and he also absorbed some environmental evils. Naturally we petted him and babied him, and he traded on this love and esteem we had for him until he developed into the greatest con man in the world. His own wolf cries tripped him on occasion; for he later said to me, "I'll never forgive you. Once you refused me when I was really hungry."

We would jam every possible moment, even on trains going to jobs. Bird kept everybody on the stand happy because he was a wizard at transmitting musical messages to us which made us fall out laughing. All musicians know certain musical phrases that translate themselves into "Hello, beautiful," or when a young lady ambles to the powder room "I know where you're going." Well, Bird had an ever increasing repertoire of these. During induction days he'd salute a band member who got tagged with a phrase which translated said "Bring enough clothes for three days." Jay McShann gave him latitude because as Bird explained to Jay, "If you let me act a little happy, you'll have me playing a few good notes for you." When McShann criticized his appearance he once answered "How would you like me looking like a doctor and playing like a doctor?"



**Benny Harris**

"Little Benny" Harris started playing trumpet under Dizzy Gillespie's guidance in 1937, and Benny, in turn, was the first to persuade Dizzy to listen to Charlie Parker by playing him Parker's solo on one of Jay McShann's records. Harris played on the Earl Hines band that included both Bird and Diz, composed several classic bop lines, including Crazeology and Ornithology, and later played with Charlie Parker's small groups in the fifties.

Charlie Parker first came to New York when he was about seventeen. He worked as a dishwasher because he didn't have a horn and couldn't get any work. He worked for John Williams, Mary Lou's husband, who owned a barbecue shack. I met him then, and again when he came to New York the second time.

I pulled on Dizzy's coat tails about this guy. I was always preaching Yard. I brought Scoops Carry to hear him and he was amazed. Dizzy at that time was always preaching Benny Carter till I got him to hear Bird.

I would say that I was very tight with Charlie. He lived at my house on the East Side with me and my family. He liked company. He has always been accepted everywhere. He had just as many white friends as colored. Everyone adored him. We used to discuss white musicians who played so much better than other white musicians and we wondered, why couldn't the rest play that well?

Once in Baltimore there was a rhythm section that was so bad no one wanted to play with them. They approached Bird, and he said, "I'll be glad to play," and he did. I asked him how he could play with such a pitiful trio, and he said, "All you got to do is make the wrong chords; don't try to play the right ones because there'll be three playing wrong and one playing right — be with them, play the wrong chords with them." If a guy would blame his instrument about a performance Bird would say, "A great musician never complains about his tools."

Everyone loved him so much; they spoiled him. I loved him but would never take any jive from him. I was pretty tough at the time anyway; I was a hood when I was a kid. I boxed professionally. I always stood up to him. If he refused to share something I would take it and threaten to destroy the whole thing. If he got wise, I'd challenge him and tell him I'd whip his ass, and he would back down — not out of cowardice but just out of his own good sense.

K.C. was a metropolis for drugs. I wish I knew the real answer to why people goof so I could help a lot of people. Part of it is that they all think they are much smarter than the next fellow. They think they can beat it even if nobody else has beaten it. Three out of five hundred actually beat it.

Taking drugs was not part of being in the in-group as far as getting jobs was concerned. No; strictly ability. If my own brother wasn't good, I wouldn't hire him. Drugs do tend to make a tightness — it is something in common.

My lip went bad after a year in the Earl Hines band. They swung so hard and played so much. We rehearsed so much that every man knew what every one else was doing, and if you fluffed a note someone else would play something that swung it into line.

The Earl Hines band had no cliques in it. Everyone hung out together. It was a real close knit organization. There was never any animosity. We used to get to Bird when it looked like Earl was going to fire him for goofing; fourteen of us ganged up on him in one room. We said, "You just don't want to straighten up, and the man has promised to fire you." And with that we would start punching him around the shoulders — not maliciously; just so he could feel it. "You're not gonna straighten up are you?" And he said, "I'm mad enough to kill someone." "Well if you can whip the fourteen of us, go ahead. If you want to fight, Bird, take a shot at someone and get your ass kicked in."

He behaved after that.

I got the same treatment myself when I started on a crazy kick of taking nembutals. Those yellow pills kept me real goofed. The guys pushed me against the wall and started nudging and poking and keeping me frustrated. You can't lash back, cause if you did, then they would really hit you. Their therapy worked too.

**Jerry Lloyd**

Trumpeter Jerry Lloyd (Jerry Hurwitz) is little known to most jazz fans today, but in the early days of bop, and even before, on the 52nd Street scene, he was one of the most respected trumpeters among a group of musicians who later went on to wider fame.

It was Benny Harris who first told me about Bird. "You know there's a saxophone player out in Kansas City who plays more horn than any other horn player you ever heard." To show me the way he sounded he put on a Lester Young record called **Shoe Shine Boy**. He had a machine that could speed up the revolutions until the tenor sax sounded like an alto. "That's a rough idea of how he sounds." Not much later, he was in town, and I met the man in person. He was different. He was skinny; he had bad feet — he could hardly walk at the time.

He was staying at the Woodside Hotel. He wanted a place to blow, so Benny Harris and I took him down to play at MacDougal's Tavern in Greenwich Village. There were two guys, I remember, playing with Jarvis

and Skeets. I thought I could play with anybody at the time. We went down and started playing; played a couple more tunes; he started playing. I started listening. I walked off the stand. I put my horn in the case and zipped up the zipper. Those guys in the rhythm section used to work hard for me but they really were working hard for Bird. My ego went down about forty percent. He blew about forty choruses.

I got Bird one of his first jobs in New York. He was desperate. Some days he'd go without eating. I got him a job in a joint called the Parisian Dance Hall.

On some days when he'd go without eating, he'd sit at the White Rose bar chiseling drinks. When I first met him through Benny, I was working on 52nd Street. It was daylight and people looked at us — we were a weird looking trio.

He was pretty frantic about things like borrowing money. One time he slapped me in the face for refusing him. "If I didn't respect you so much as a player I would beat the hell out of you," I told him. He used to walk a little bent over, but when he fattened up he also straightened up. He could eat four times to your one.



Idrees Suleiman

Idrees Dawud Ibn Suleiman (Horace Graham) was, according to Mary Lou Williams, one of the first to play modern jazz. He started in music with the Carolina Cotton Pickers and Fess Clarke in his home town of St. Petersburg, Florida, and has worked with Benny Carter, Cab Calloway, Earl Hines, Count Basie, Lionel Hampton, Dizzy Gillespie, Gerry Mulligan, and Thelonious Monk, among others.

I played with Bird in the Earl Hines band; I also used to jam with him back in 1941 at a place called the Kentucky Club. We would meet there every Monday at four in the morning and play till about one in the afternoon.

The things that stand out the most in my memory of him are the complex moods of the man. Among the men of the Hines band he was looked upon as a jolly fellow, full of buoyant spirits. With me he was a man of infinite patience when it came to explaining a point in music. He seemed at times the most serious person I have ever met, the most intense—without any type of superficiality. He seemed to know the insides of everything. I've seen him stagger into a club, drunk, his head drooping over his horn, seemingly asleep, and then he would come in and play perfectly, constructing masterful chouses and bringing what might have seemed mistakes into line.

I've known the good natured Bird. Once a group of young kids were jammin' in a club and they were terrible. Other musicians were yelling for them to get off the stand. Bird turned to them and said, "I hear what they're trying to do," and then he went up on the stand and he demonstrated it.

At another time, after I knew him awhile, I walked up to him once at a place where he was working and asked him if he would play a tune I loved to hear him do, **Embraceable You**. He looked me dead in the eye as if he never met or knew me and he said, "I don't know that song."



George Wallington

George Wallington (Georgio Figlia) was one of the first pianists to play modern jazz in the early days. His parents brought him here from Italy when he was one year old. He comes from a musical family — his father was an opera singer — and by the time he was fifteen, he had started working jazz gigs in Brooklyn and in Greenwich Village. In 1944, he was a member of the first bop group on 52nd Street, the Gillespie-Pettiford quintet at the Onyx Club. His pieces Godchild and Lemon Drop are well known. He now plays in New York clubs, usually with a trio.

I first heard Bird and Diz in 1942 down in the Village at a place called MacDougal Tavern. In the years between '42 and '48 the fellows lived only to play. We were obsessed by the new music. There was such pleasure in the faces. We would play our regular jobs until three in the morning, then go to an after hours place till seven and then wait around a few hours till Nola Studios would open at nine, rent a studio and practice some more. Our bodies were sustained by enthusiasm and when that alone could not carry through a weaker physique a little barbituate pill helped. But dope never made any one a better musician. It does something to your coordination.

I remember Bird tapping on my window at five in the morning to get me up to play. If that didn't do it Bird would start yelling, like a little boy, "George Wallington!" under the window.

Bird was the friendliest guy, always wonderful company except once when he was sick, and needed some junk. Bird seemed to avoid the topic of race. About the South, he said, "The only way to get around down there is with a gun. Why should any one live down there while there's a place like New York?" Statements like those were rare. Usually when someone brought up the topic Bird would smile and say, "Why discuss these things? Let's get high."

When Clyde Hart died, Bird felt that his friends were getting too worked up over an inevitable part of existence. "Why should we feel sorry? Let's not get emotional about it." This was just Bird's armor.

It is tragic that no one ever got the full impact of Bird's genius through records. Some evenings he was so inspired. One night he blew twenty-five straight choruses of **Cherokee**. One week he played differently every evening. It was at the Deuces, a club where he was once thrown out by an unhip manager who was going by the holes in Bird's socks. He sort of sat way in the corner of the bandstand and played like a little boy. He had such a cuteness.

EARL HINES ON BIRD

Dick Hadlock

I don't remember exactly when Charlie Parker joined my band. I do know it was in the forties, because it was in wartime, when we needed a tenor man. One of my musicians used to go down Minton's quite a lot, and he wanted me to come down and listen to a saxophone player, and maybe he might fit the bill. But they said he plays alto. I said, "That's not goin' to help us much." He said, "But he plays tenor, too." That was Scoops Carry, our first alto man — he's very prominent now; he's a lawyer in Chicago. His word was the authority, because he actually knew what it was about when it came to reed men, so I went down one night. Incidentally, Basie was with me, and we sat back in the corner until the young fellow came up. Meantime, he'd been playing so much horn that I said, "Well, who's that man?" The guy said, "Well, that's the boy I wanted you to hear. That's Charlie Parker!" Actually I had heard Charlie Parker in Detroit with a band out of K. C., Jay McShann's band, but he only had about a chorus and a half. That was at the Paradise Theater. He said to me, "Gee, I'd like to get in your organization sometime."

"Right at the time, things don't look too good."
"If you have an opening, I'd like you to give me an opportunity." I said, "Oh, first chance I have."
Well, that was the first time I heard him, and I never thought any more about it. It was months later when we needed this tenor man. So after hearing him, I talked with him a minute, and I said, "Do you play tenor?"

"Yeah!" he says.

So I went down and got him a tenor the next day. Truthfully speaking, I never heard so much tenor horn in my life, I want to tell you. You know how the guy got all over that alto; you **know** that he was just as bad on tenor.

The remarkable thing about Charlie, he had such an advanced mind that when we rehearsed an arrangement that no one had seen before, we'd run it down once or twice, or whatever time we had to run it down, and

we'd put it away. We decide to play it that night, everybody got the music but Charlie; he's sittin' over there on the end with his tenor. I'd say, "Look, Charlie, when you goin' to get the tune out?"

He says, "I know that."

"I mean that new number."

"I know it."

And sure enough, he knew the arrangement backwards. I never understood that guy had such a mind.

Charlie used to take his alto in the theater between shows — and have an exercise book, that's all he did — sit down; between he and Dizzy, they ran over these exercises in these books they're studying up. One day they'd have the trumpet book, and one day they'd have the alto book. They'd change around. And I think that was where actually Charlie got his particular style from, was from the different inversions and phrases in these exercises he had. They'd insert these passages that they would play in tunes that would come up. Whenever a chord would strike them, with the memories both of them had, why they'd just take one of these passages from one of these exercises and insert them in one of these tunes. And I think that is the reason for them to create the style that they got.

And they seemed to be in a little clique all to themselves. They got a kick out of themselves — not to set a style — they just played like that because they enjoyed it, and they continued to do it.

Well, I think by hitting prominent spots, and then playing in jam sessions as much as they did, I think is the cause of that style catching hold. And then all the musicians wanted to find out how fast they could get over that horn, listening to Charles. But you see, many of them made so many mistakes, because so many reed players didn't realize this was **music** he was playing! They thought it was just out of his mind, and whatever they did was all the same as Charlie. And if there's any mistake made, why they blamed it on the style they called bop. "Why that was bop!" But Charlie knew what he was playing, and when he made these flatted fifths and what have you, it was written in those exercises, and Charlie was playing actually what he remembered from those exercises. So many musicians make a mistake by thinking Charlie was picking it up out of the air, and I think that's one of the things that hurt so-called bop — I'm sorry they even named it that. They should have named it something else, because that name added a little extra salty taste, that name. But one of the things that hurt that kind of music was the fact that musicians, instead of goin' to Charlie and askin' Charlie how he did those things, or tryin' to sit around home long enough to know he actually studied these things, they went home and picked it out of the air and played what they thought sounded good. And they were so wrong until it was obnoxious to the average ear, until the people began blaming it all on the particular style. It wasn't actually the style; it was just they didn't know what they were playing. And they were too big at the time, some of the musicians were I know for a fact, to come and ask the man.

I think that's the only thing that hurts the average musician today. Years ago — we're not comparing, I don't like the idea — I don't want people to think I'm trying to make a comparison, but I want to make it back to the friendship that musicians had many years ago that they don't have now.

Years ago, when guys like Fats Waller, Coleman Hawkins, Roy Eldridge all got together, we played with each other, together, because we'd get ideas, to keep on advancing. We didn't envy the guys that actually knew more. We tried to find out what he was doin', and we could. Today, it's one of those things where a guy says "Ah! Who's he think he is?" That's very wrong. For instance, today, every idea I can possibly get — like Erroll Garner might do something I like — I say, "Erroll, some afternoon, come over my house; we'll sit down have a little tete-a-tete. Few little things I want you to show me. Somethin' you doin' — I don't know what it is, but I like it." Same thing, I'll go down to the Blackhawk and say to Oscar, "Oscar, what'd you do with your left hand there?" And they're so amazed to hear me ask that because we did that years ago. And same way with all the other musicians; they passed it on. They kept advancing, and the reason they kept advancing was because we're all friendly. All together; happy to see each other get ahead; if a guy did something, everybody was happy for the guy. Same thing happened to Parker when he joined our band. Everybody was happy for him, in fact all the members of the group. I think that's why they were so successful. Benny Green; Charlie; this guy who's with Louis, Trummy Young; and in arranging Jimmy Mundy. They were all happy. I made them stand out because I made them realize that we all appreciated it as much as the audience. "We got a kick out of hearing you play." You see, that you don't find today.

But getting back to Charlie. Charlie stayed with my band, oh, a year and a half. But Charlie was so advanced. And then, too, around New York there was a certain little group of musicians that sort of stayed with themselves. And it seems as though Charlie got with that group — and then besides, settling down as far as marriage was concerned, why I think that's one of the reasons he decided to stay around New York. But I just don't like to say these things as far as musicians are concerned. The man was such an artist. It's too bad that the public doesn't let a man like that alone, so that he can see the other side of good living. He would have been with us yet.

Now sometimes people don't intend to do things, but sometimes you'll find people follow a boy around, and if he hasn't got a strong will-power, why then he's easily to go off on the wrong foot. Well, we just loved him so much, but you can't very well talk to him like that. After all, you're in the same profession, and a few years older, but you're not his father; you see what I mean? So — much as I did — I talked to him as much as I could. I tell him, "You got the world lookin' at you, Charlie, and you're setting a standard. You've done something nobody else has done, and you can go so far."

He was happy to let me know, when I came to New York, that he had a string section with him. Well, that tickled me to death. I thought that was the greatest thing I'd heard in years. And I thought, "He's really on his way."

But the wrong crowd was running with an artist. The wrong crowd was running with an artist, and he was such a good-natured guy, and he didn't realize it. Same thing happened with Fats Waller; the wrong crowd. The wrong crowd with Billie Holiday; the wrong crowd. And we all have our own faults, but the story is this; you

don't let it get the best of you. That's the bad part of it. Have a good time! Sure! You got to have a good time in this business! But there's a time for everything, see?

Now Diz, Diz did some fine writing for us. In fact, a little tune, he wrote the number and didn't know what to call it, and I thought, since we're hearing so much about the war in Europe, let's call it **Night in Tunisia**; and he left it like that. That's one of the tunes he wrote for the band. And this **Peanuts**. He used to sing that. And a couple of others. I still have them in the book.

Happy go lucky group!

Yeah, we all used to go to Minton's then. If you wanted to hear something, somebody was really terrific, we all went to Minton's.

I'm sorry that's not being allowed today because that really brought the musicians out. When you went there, you ran into some stiff competition, so the only thing you could do was go somewhere in the wood-shed and brush up on the horn if you wanted to compete with these guys. I think it made an awful lot of musicians out of these boys.

Of course everything is commercial. The minute that all these proprietors found out that these musicians love to blow, instead of being big-hearted and hiring a few musicians — if they'd hire six or seven boys in the band and then let the others sit-in, it's a different thing — all they do is hire a piano player. But these kids had music at heart, and the proprietor realized that. I had one guy say, "I had eight or ten musicians every night, and didn't pay them a quarter."

But Charlie! Charlie was a very good section man, and a very good reader. Well, that guy reads the best. He's the last one. I mean, he was a **musician!**

I didn't hear anybody else play that way then. They weren't playing out of the books this guy had. And if they could find those books, and find the passages Charlie was doing, they would play like Charlie. Because just like you and I were to study music, and we could look at 9th chords and double augmented chords, maybe we can add a — a 6th in there, and see what happens. And maybe it sounds kind of good. Might sound kind of weird, but maybe that's what you want for the ear. That's the same thing with Charlie; Charlie played them passages in there in his own way; in his style of breathing, being able to go for five or six measures without taking a breath; and his way of phrasing would have a lot to do with it. It was his own idea.

There are things I heard Charlie do, he didn't amaze only the people he was playing in front of, but he amazed the musicians who were workin' with him; nightly that happened. Because we didn't know what he was going to do, and when he did it, it would seem impossible.

His only real bad nights were when he over-indulged. He was very consistent; he had it all the time. But like if we ate too much or we drank too much, why we aren't at our top average. But that was the only thing I found wrong. He was very consistent, because the guy knew what he wanted to do, and he could play that horn automatically. Sometimes even when he indulged too much, you could put that horn into his hand, and once he got the feel of the horn, he could still do all the things he wanted to do.

2 VIEWS

SCHOOL OF JAZZ

Don Heckman

Gunther Schuller

This year's three week session of the School of Jazz at Lenox, Mass. proved once again the school's validity and importance in American musical life. It seems to me that it fulfilled notably its twofold function as a place of learning and a kind of clearing house, where new ideas can be exchanged verbally or put into actual practise in a sympathetic environment.

There was a different atmosphere at school this year. This was not the result of different physical surroundings (the school took place entirely at Wheatleigh, an old baronial mansion, rather than at Music Inn, the site of previous years' sessions). Nor was it determined by changes in the faculty and a somewhat curtailed curriculum. It was the student body itself which gave this year's session a special cast. Whereas last year everyone (including the faculty) seemed to be stunned into a single unified reaction by the impact of Coleman and Cherry, this year's student body seemed to be more heterogeneous. As a consequence there was an atmosphere of musical ferment, with several of the more advanced students clearly striking out in independent and diverse directions.

I have always felt that the character of a "school of jazz" should be determined as much by its extracurricular jam sessions and the excitement of its final concert as by its everyday academic patterns. The latter, of course, are the main *raison d'etre* of the school, and as such are of inestimable importance. It is unfortunately not generally realized that there is today a great need for the kind of finishing school in jazz that Lenox represents. At a time when jazz is the single most exportable item this country has to offer (every foreign tour by U.S. jazz musicians bears this out), and at a time when European musicians are beginning to find their own voices, so that the American monopoly will not be a preordained certainty much longer, it is wise to give this problem some thought. In bygone days the young player could gain experience, routine and discipline in the big traveling bands or in jam sessions. Now that both of these institutions are no longer with us, the young professional has no place

JOHN LEWIS, GUNTHER SCHULLER AND VIOLIST JOHN GARVEY





to turn. I think this accounts to a great extent for the appalling gaps in the musical training of so many young players now before the public. There does not seem to be any dearth of talent; far from it. But very little of this talent seems to be channeled into enduring, communicating music. In today's peculiar economic climate, every young player is immediately hailed as a "star," and the status that, at one time, it took a musician many years to establish, is now achieved with one record date. Or at least the player is deluded into thinking so. Aside from the exceptional talent, such years of hard-fought struggle are a necessary path to the maturity and humility upon which great art feeds and grows. A record date and a spate of good reviews by critics, eager to be the discoverer of a new voice, are hardly substitutes for this maturing process. In fact, egos have been known to feed rather voraciously on this dangerous illusory nourishment.

At any rate, the School of Jazz since its inception has hoped to provide a partial answer to this problem, and as such, it and its counterparts are sorely needed. For here the young player, about to become professional, can learn much about his music and its presentation through personal direct, contact with some of the great names of jazz. A student who may be a big fish in a little pond at home may learn that his place in the musical world is as yet quite modest, that this world is full of equal or greater talents, and that the requisites of the professional life are often inordinately tough.

The curriculum is therefore designed to give the young player as much individual attention in terms of his instrument and his musical concepts as is possible in three weeks. The curriculum also assumed that a certain amount of theoretical and historical knowledge will broaden the students' outlook and perspective, and will give him a clearer realization of where he stands. It assumes, I believe correctly, that this is all part of learning one's craft.

The faculty and directors of the school are aware of the fact that many young players take a kind of stubborn pride in "going it alone." And there is always the old saw that goes "jazz can't be taught" or "too much knowledge will inhibit you, man," and similar gems of misapprehension. To many jazz players it is still shamefully "unhip" to study seriously. According to them, jazz is supposed to infiltrate your being by a kind of osmosis, which allows you to continue "goofing off" in unperurbed escapism.

I think such viewpoints were possible once upon a time. But jazz is growing and developing, perhaps faster than any other form of music. It is natural that its requirements should be more stringent today than twenty years ago. The musical and personal disciplines demanded of the jazz musician of today are greater than ever before, and anyone who chooses to disregard this fact is simply deluding himself.

I don't think it would be extravagant to claim that the majority of the students in the school's four year existence left with a great deal more than when they came. Excepting a few self-styled "hippies" (representatives of this breed are somehow always on hand), who came and left "knowing it all," the students through the years have been enriched by their contracts with such as Milt Jackson, John Lewis, J. J. Johnson, Percy Heath

and the others. This would indeed seem to be inevitable. All of which is not to imply that the school could not be improved. But it does represent a sound basic approach, which has proven its validity beyond a doubt. If the curriculum at Lenox attempts to satisfy the basic practical and intellectual needs of students, its final concert and the jam sessions supply the necessary creative and emotional stimuli.

The concert simulates rather accurately the actual playing conditions a young player may expect to face. The competitive spirit, built up gradually over a period of three weeks, is fierce, and accounts for considerable excitement at the concert, even when the student body is as uneven as this year's. As a teacher at Lenox, it is most gratifying to experience the excitement and youthful spontaneity generated by the students as they buckle down and stake their all on the 25 minutes of playing allotted to each ensemble. The hard work of the three previous weeks seems suddenly to focus into a single effort, and seems to take on a meaning it may not have had earlier. And from this "baptism of fire" something remains, something rubs off.

If the concert is the launching pad, so to speak, the jam sessions are the practise firing range, where new ideas are tried out and the players get to know each other better musically. In most cases they learn a new respect for each other. Jam sessions at Lenox were very slow in getting started this year, because of a lamentable lack of strong bass players among the students. Eventually Chuck Israels arrived on the scene, and Susan Freeman, a talented girl from Boston, was literally imported to alleviate the situation. These two, plus Earl Zindars and Joe Hunt of the Russell-Baker group, provided two rhythm sections strong enough to back the bold experiments the first jam session unleashed. For me it was an evening almost as memorable as last year's marathon session between Ornette Coleman and Jimmy Giuffre, in which both played like two battling wounded animals until a state of utter exhaustion had been reached.

This year's group was less concerned with such a soul-shattering catharsis. While also driven by the spiral of competitive inspiration, it did on occasion unite into collective efforts, which were among the highlights of the session.

The players that evening were, aside from the double rhythm sections already mentioned, Don Ellis and Al Kiger (trumpet), Dave Baker (trombone), Dave Young and Steve Marcus (tenor), and Hal McKinney (piano). They were rather evenly matched. The session took place in the "poodle tower", the ground floor of which comprises a small circular area about 20 ft. in diameter. Under the circumstances the players took up almost the entire area, and the "audience" spilled out beyond the entrance and up the spiral staircase leading to the top of the tower.

The playing went beyond the usual jam session, riff-inspired excitement by giving glimpses of musical developments which are about to add another "turn" in the evolutionary process that keeps jazz vital and alive. In Ellis' and Baker's playing two divergent approaches to rhythm were revealed. Of the two Ellis' seems to me the one with more far-reaching possibilities, primarily because it is closely related to the other elements in his style. Don Ellis has already found his own voice,

which seems to consist of a fascinating blend of jazz and contemporary classical influences. In fact, his playing represents one of the few true syntheses of jazz and classical elements, without the slightest self-consciousness and without any loss of the excitement and raw spontaneity that the best of jazz always had. I hear in Ellis' playing occasional rhythmic figures which derive clearly from the world of classical music, which, however, are interpreted with an impulsive infectious swing that never stops. It seems to me that Don has found a way of expanding the rhythmic vocabulary of jazz to include rhythmic patterns heretofore excluded because they couldn't be made to swing. If this is true, it would constitute a major breakthrough, and its implications would be far-reaching.

As I have said Ellis' rhythmic approach is closely related to the harmonic-melodic one. In fact, the one is inseparably related to the other. It is evident that Ellis has listened to and understood the music of Webern, Stockhausen, Cage and others of the avantgarde. One of his compositions, in fact, is based on an article in the German magazine "Die Reihe", a house organ of the electronic and serial composers which specializes in the most rarified (and at times obscure) intellectualism thus far perpetrated in the name of music. Yes, here again, Ellis' jazz feeling has more than survived what would seem to be a strange partnership. His playing that evening also indicated that he can sustain long solos based on one or two central ideas and hold your interest through his imagination and considerable command of his horn.

David Baker gave a sample of his bi-rhythmic approach, which is based on the soloist playing at a tempo other than that of the rhythm section—both holding their respective tempi. The "changes" occur within the speed of the soloist, not the rhythm section. The effect is very curious, and at first somewhat unsettling for the listener. Baker himself has some serious woodshedding yet to do in bringing a greater clarity (technically and musically) into his solo work. It would therefore be premature to make an evaluation of the musical import of this approach, although it obviously has in it the seeds of some very interesting possibilities. It also meets up somewhere with the free-tempo things Ornette has been doing and with Don Ellis' experiments with increasing and slowing up the time. At any rate, this jam session was symptomatic of a trend to overthrow the tyranny of the 4/4 meter, which has dominated jazz until now.

There were other excellent though more orthodox solos by the very musical Al Kiger, Dave Young, one of the fastest minds (and fingers) in jazz, and young Steve Marcus who stylistically has yet to outgrow his adoration of Coltrane. The two drummers also entered the fray with a long series of competitive, often related, solo and fours exchanges. Since they were situated on opposite sides of the room, the antiphonal effects were often rather fascinating, and the audience looked a little like spectators at a tennis match, with heads turning regularly from one side to the other.

In the out-choruses, Baker and Ellis attempted several times to launch simultaneous improvisations by all the horns. But both drummers mistook this as a cue for a free-for all, and mowed down the horns with ear-shattering volleys of drum forte. It wasn't until the final

number that Baker and Ellis were able to get their ideas across. The result was a magnificent atonal collective improvisation, which gave a glimpse of the kind of freedom jazz will undoubtedly one day achieve. At that moment the music seemed not so far removed from the most advanced "serial" scores of contemporary composers. I know that some readers may now be groaning in agony and thinking "Oh no, not **THAT!**" My only answer can be, I wish they could have heard the tremendous excitement and naturally generated rhythmic drive. There was never any doubt that we were listening to jazz—very much so, for mere choice of notes (i.e. pitches) has never determined whether a thing was jazz or not.

Other jam sessions took place, but none of them achieved the feverish momentum of that memorable evening. One had the feeling one was present at an historic occasion. It provided the necessary emotional equilibrium to the academic courses. These, however, in conjunction with occasional evening lectures (going as far afield as improvisational techniques in Eastern music) and an inspiring "open rehearsal" of the MJQ, produced an environment in which animated discussions and experimental sessions could thrive side by side with the more formal approach.

As long as the School at Lenox can contribute to the development of jazz on such a broad and catholic basis, its place in American musical life seems to me assured.

Don Heckman

In many respects jazz is the most elusive of the arts; it is suspended between entertainment and artistry like all forms that use the dramatic moment. Improvisation and inadequate techniques of notation, have complicated things further. Perhaps because of its short history, or because of the exceptional importance of spontaneity, a central score of tradition has begun to take shape only lately. Jazz history has often been organized erratically, toally unrelated to chronological order. The result has been a confusion of identity, even to people directly involved in jazz.

All of this makes the teaching of jazz very difficult. The prospective teacher of jazz may be condemned on one hand by "child of nature" fanatics, who insist that the heart of jazz is a crude, untutored spontaneity, and that the imposition of pedagogical techniques would distort its meaning. On the other hand lie the categorizers for whom the organization of material is the sine qua non of art, and who would control the body and soul of jazz by removing the freedom and responsibility of the individual.

The problem in teaching jazz is not only one of steering a course between these extremes, but also of finding suitable teaching material. Few scores of important jazz compositions of the twenties and thirties, for instance, are readily available, and the recordings have often never been reissued. So the teaching material must be hand assembled. Of the various attempts to establish broad principles for teaching jazz, hardly any have been more than moderately successful. Students often seem to have learned to play jazz in spite of

their education.

The School of Jazz in Lenox, Mass. has been one of the most interesting experiments in teaching jazz. As a student at the 1960 session, my own interest was two-fold; first, my own development as a composer and performer, and second, to grasp the principles of teaching jazz at the school—how, why and if they worked.

The school reflects and benefits from the ideas of its Director, John Lewis. By insisting upon academic discipline, with careful scheduling and organization, Mr. Lewis has made the important basic step of setting up a situation, combining classroom teaching with workshop ensembles, in which things can happen. But the balance is an extremely delicate one; the sense of organization must not be allowed to overcome the free expression of ideas. Perhaps the single most important contribution the school has to offer is the creation of an atmosphere favorable to discussion and experiment provoked by intimate contact with musicians of widely divergent musical ideas and opinions. The school was held in the most beautiful place imaginable. Lodgings, classrooms and practice areas were all located at Wheatleigh Hall, owned by Philip and Stephanie Barber who were among the school's initial organizers, outside of Lenox, Mass, only a mile or so from Tanglewood, surrounded by the wooded hills of the Berkshires. Most of the students responded admirably to the relaxed atmosphere. The student body was divided into four playing groups: an octet led by John Lewis, a septet led by J. J. Johnson, a quartet led by Milt Jackson, and a nonet led by Herb Pomeroy and Connie Kay. Also present were George Russell's sextet, which included several former students of the school, and a string ensemble led by violist John Garvey of the University of Illinois. The individual abilities and experience of the students varied widely, as might be expected, but the older students seemed to have an exceptional awareness of the broader musical environment, and in many of the informal discussions one could feel a kind of ferment of curiosity that encompassed musical problems beyond the limitations of jazz that are generally accepted, thinking that promises well for the future. The wide range of personal achievement, from beginners to professionals who were already recording under their own names, caused some knotty teaching problems. For instance, it is difficult to explain a theory with the complex implications of George Russell's Lydian Concept to students with limited technical backgrounds. Also, students with sophistication in theory will require more than elementary explanations, and may even be concerned with the basic philosophy of the system. Some reconciliation of such widely separated interests and backgrounds must be made. It seemed to me, that in this case, that Mr. Russell's theory might better be taught in private lessons.

Much more successful—it required nothing more than wide open ears—was Gunther Schuller's history of jazz class. By his excellent choice of musical examples and refusal to get bogged down in unnecessarily pedantic explanations, Mr. Schuller was able to present one of the most interesting courses of the school session. Aside from his classroom stints and private composition lessons, Mr. Schuller was also the most accessible of the faculty members. Unquestionably his con-

stant availability cost him valuable hours, but he has earned this student's gratitude, and I'm sure that of many others.

The ensemble rehearsals were continuously interesting. Careful grouping of students by Mr. Lewis had resulted in ensembles each with specific problems to be solved. One stimulus given to all groups was the prospect of the final benefit concert for all to hear their accomplishments. There are, of course, many ways to teach. One of these is to arrange a situation in which a man is expected to produce some definite result by a given time, in this case a finished performance at the benefit concert. But emphasis on the rehearsal of specific material for the sake of immediate results can lead to a sacrifice of more basic teaching and learning situations. In practice, the results depended on the individual instructor and what he chose to offer of himself to the group. In most cases, the results were exceptional; John Lewis, for instance, made many valuable suggestions about the problems of improvisation; Herb Pomeroy, the most experienced teacher on the faculty, emphasized the responsibilities of the individual in ensemble playing; J. J. Johnson, with more professionals in his ensemble, worked on creating an atmosphere conducive to unhampered improvising. Milt Jackson unfortunately was forced to leave the school in mid-session because of a family emergency, but with the help of student-composer Margo Gurian and of Gunther Schuller, his group came through.

The most exciting single experience, as might be expected, was a jam session. After almost two weeks of carefully organized rehearsals and classes, it was perhaps appropriate that the whole thing exploded in a wild burst of music-making. The main participants were David Baker, trombone; David Young, tenor; Al Kiger, trumpet; Joe Hunt, drums and Church Israels, bass, of the George Russell sextet and students Don Ellis, trumpet; Earl Zindars, drums; Steve Marcus, tenor; Hal McKinney, piano; Sue Freeman, bass; and David Lahm, piano. The session started slowly, confining itself, strangely yet somehow logically, to early bop lines like **Dizzy Atmosphere** and **Salt Peanuts**. Mostly by accident the session got under way with two rhythm sections, facing each other across the room. At up tempos, they would shift back and forth, tossing the time across the room without the loss of a beat. About an hour after the session began, a building excitement began to take hold, and on Monk's **Straight No Chaser** it broke loose. A rhythmic electricity moved from the players to those who listened. And then these sophisticated listeners, most of whom would never tap their feet in a club, began almost unanimously to clap their hands with the music. But the real work was yet to come. Obviously stimulated by each other, trumpeters Al Kiger and Don Ellis, urged on by the trombone of Dave Baker, moved more and more into atonal areas; chord changes were dropped by the wayside, melodic lines became fragmented, rhythms became jagged and complex. On the next to last tune, Baker began a solo in a time that was completely unrelated to the pulse of the group. As he developed his solo he gradually made references to the basic time but meanwhile remained firmly in his own rhythmic groove. Finally, he completed this remarkable tour de force by bringing his solo to a logical, consistent rhythmic resolution with the group pulse.

The climax of the evening came in the last chorus of the last tune, when all of the horns jointly created what amounted to an improvised atonal composition, in one of the most remarkable spontaneous, creative group acts that I have ever witnessed. I doubt that an evening at Minton's in the early forties could have been more exciting.

There were other moments, of course, the magnificent performance of the MJQ in an open rehearsal; the sense of accomplishment that came from the final concert; the endless hours of discussion, always about music, music.

The experiment in the use of strings in jazz was somewhat puzzling. At first the ensemble of three violins, two violas and two cellos, devoted most of its time to material from Harry Lookovsky's "**Stringsville**" album on Atlantic, the intention being apparently for the strings to learn to phrase and sound like jazz horns. When the difficulties of this task and the technical problems it raised became evident, the group began to rehearse the material it was to perform on the concert. Six students were BMI composition scholars for the year, but only one student composition was performed by the string group at the concert, the rest of their material coming from faculty members or composers not directly connected with the school. There may have been good reason for this but, if so, it was never made clear to the students. And it could not have been that **all** those pieces were too difficult. Also, it was announced that students would be assigned to perform at rehearsals with the string group. A few students did rehearse with the strings and a few others performed with them on the concert, but the majority had practically no contact with the string ensemble. The primary benefit came when Mr. Schuller arranged to have the ensemble tape a number of student compositions. Perhaps, since this was the first year with a string ensemble in residence, the problem of just what they were to **do** was never quite clear. If the intention is to present an opportunity for the prospective jazz musician-composer to broaden his scope, then the string ensemble should certainly have been more accessible to the general student body. If the intention was to study the development of jazz phrasing techniques for string instruments, then it seems to me foolhardy to expect results in three weeks. The subtleties of jazz rhythms are such that a horn man may take years of blowing to assimilate them. A classical musician cannot learn them in the same manner he might learn a new way of bowing. It is difficult enough for most classically trained musicians to even feel these rhythms. But experiments in the use of strings in jazz should, of course, be explored further, and the School of Jazz has made a commendable effort.

Except for its length, the benefit concert came off extremely well. Mr. Lewis organized the evening to ensure variety and he was able to devise a well balanced program.

The ensembles rose to the occasion with skill. In the first group, Mr. Lewis', tenor man Steve Marcus proved a soloist to watch. His developing proficiency, if channeled in a more individual direction, will assure his future as a jazzman. Vibist Gary McFarland no only proved to be an excellent soloist, but also contributed two fine arrangements and the only student composi-

tion performed by the string ensemble. Next came the J. J. Johnson group, a loose, free-swinging septet of professional calibre. Both Don Ellis and J. R. Monterose played well, and Ellis also showed considerable skill as a composer with an excellent line, **Homeless**. His is another talent which will be heard from. Pianist Hal McKinney, is still finding his own voice but certainly shows promise. The most surprising musician by far, however, was bassist Sue Freeman; playing with a swing and a dexterity that one doesn't associate with musicians of her sex, she gassed everybody.

The Milt Jackson group, after a somewhat shaky start, settled down to an effective, lightweight performance. The group received its main impetus from the catchy, Vibist Gray Smith made good use of his solo space, but foot-tapping lines of Margo Guryan.

The last group to appear before intermission was the George Russell Sextet. Mr. Russell has chosen to emphasize the soloists in his group rather than his writing. While they are all highly competent, even exciting new talents, there is a certain lack of cohesion and continuity that leaves one with a feeling of incompleteness, of wondering just what, if anything, he has heard. In this performance Mr. Russell's **Stratusphunk** turned out to be the best thing the group played.

The second half of the concert opened with the string group. Jim Hall joined them as guest soloist in his composition, **Piece For Guitar and Strings**, which showed a good understanding of string technique. The piece tended at times to sentimentality, but it was on the whole, very successful. The most ambitious, and certainly the most outstanding, composition performed by the strings was Gunther Schuller's **Variants On A Theme by John Lewis**. Starting with John Lewis' **Django** as basic thematic material, Mr. Schuller evolved a series of increasingly complex variations. By using improvised guitar, bass, vibes, and alto sax choruses, he was able to maintain a strong jazz character throughout.

Last of all was the Herb Pomeroy-Connie Kay Nonet. Mr. Pomeroy was unable to stay for the concert; Ed Summerlin substituted and played tenor. Mr. Pomeroy's trumpet chair was occupied by Freddie Hubbard, who had appeared at the school with J. J. Johnson's professional group. This was perhaps the most conventional ensemble on the program. Although somewhat tired by the long wait before their appearance, the nonet swung freely. A rich ensemble sound showed the thoroughness of the rehearsals that had lasted only a few weeks.

Jazz is a young, vital and sometimes onerous art, and it does not take easily to the sort of codification that is required for a successful educational establishment. Undoubtedly, the School of Jazz, with its many achievements, will continue to make some mistakes in management and judgement. But there would probably be more cause to worry if all of the decisions made up until now had been unquestioned, because then the maverick spirit of jazz might have been pushed aside in favor of organization.

I am happy to have attended the school at an early time in its history. It is an accomplished fact now and a force for the future. As such, it deserves the warm and whole-hearted support of everyone with an interest in jazz.

THE BLUES

EVOLUTION BLUES

Nature made man out of a monkey,
According to ancient history.
Nature made man out of monkey,
According to ancient history.
But it took a beautiful woman
To make a monkey out of me.

She'll give you a little sweet talk,
And a great big hug and squeeze.
Yes, she'll give you little sweet talk,
And a great big hug and squeeze.
And before you know it,
That woman will have you climbing trees.

Now you take Samson;
He was the strongest man.
Yes, you take Samson;
He was the strongest man.
But Delilah made him shave his head
As clean as his hand.

You can be strong as an ox,
Or as big as a whale.
Yes, you can be strong as an ox,
Or as big as a whale.
But when that woman gets through with you,
All you need is a tail.

Now according to ancient history,
So it was told to me,
It took a thousand years for nature,
To make man out of monkey.
But it took a very short time
For woman to make a monkey out of a man.

You don't need a map of the world
Or a blueprint to understand.

(Sung by Pleasant Joseph on Brunswick 87504.
Transcribed by Ronald Carno.)

GOODBYE BABY

Good night everybody,
I've got that on my mind.
Good night everybody,
I've got that on my mind.
I'm gonna leave you baby,
There ain't no need of cryin'.

I was sittin' at the station,
Hear the train pass by.
Want to tell you, baby,
I've got to wave my hand goodbye.
Bye bye, baby;
I've got to say goodbye.
I'm gonna leave you, baby,
There ain't no need to cry.

I just want to talk to you, baby,
Before the train leave.
I want to tell you, baby,
I've got something up my sleeve.
I've got to leave you this morning, baby,
Ain't no need to cry.
I just want to talk to you now, baby,
I hate to say goodbye.

I just want to talk to you, baby,
Tell you what I need.
I want to love you, baby.
I'll be seldom seen.
You know I'm gonna leave in the morning
On that Southbound train.
Yes I'm gonna leave now, baby,
There ain't no need to cry.

I've got two things to tell you,
Want you to realize.
And I leave you, baby,
And there ain't no need to cry,
Cause I'll be leavin', baby,
There ain't no need to cry.
Yes when I cross the Mason-Dixon line, baby,
I'll be satisfied.

(Sung by Big Bill Broonzy on Columbia WL 111.
Transcribed by Jacques Demetre.)

RECORD REVIEWS

By rigid standards the last musician to whom **great** could rightly apply was Charlie Parker. The bird had some important contemporaries, but there was no one in his time that he did not cut, out-invent, and out-play. Viewed against the entire profile of jazz history he was one of three or four soloists of unmistakably major stature and influence—nor is there anyone today of whom quite as much may be said. Therefore it is welcome news when some new fragments of his record work comes to light.

Ironically enough, Parker is not much played on the air these days. Many of his commercial recordings are no longer in the catalog and the rest have become old hat to the so-hip disc jockeys. These fellows can only survive on the New. Then, too, although the Bird was required listening for a whole generation of working musicians, he was not always easy listening. On the good nights the listener had the uneasy impression not so much of notes, as a stream of molten metal showering from a crucible. Hearing him on those occasions could be a numbing, even shattering, affair, often taking on the overtones of a religious experience; a phenomenon that may account for the fanaticism of his followers who, after his death in 1955 (at the age of 34), went around writing on the walls and posts of the New York subways: "Bird Lives!" The new issues are an unexpected windfall. From dark places have come three whole lps of Parker previously unavailable, at least to any large audience—real vintage Parker!

Acoustically all three suffer in various degrees from semi-professional or amateur engineering, but even with these handicaps they are worth almost any quantity of jazz lps which pour forth in such dreary sameness today. Still one must put up with disadvantages. For reasons best known to the manufacturers, no dates or personnels are given, so a little detective work was required on the backgrounds.

The Roost sides derive from a near scandalous Carnegie Hall concert dated September 29, 1947. Gosh, that long ago? I was pleased when I found the concert program intact in my files. The occasion was the first attempt to present pure bop to a large audience in concert. Remember, this was 1947, and the big names of jazz were Roy Eldridge, Don Byas and Bill Harris. Bop was very much a poor relation, husbanded by a hard core clique, more annoying than effective. By divine right, according to these hipsters, the Bird should have been the main

attraction, but there were a number of very good reasons for building the concert around Dizzy. Old Diz was then experimenting with the first of his big bands and of course ranked as an outstanding practitioner of the new style. More, important, he was eminently employable, which, at no stretch of the imagination could be said about Parker. It was often a matter of pure chance if Parker showed up for a booking at all (an advance was usually a fatal mistake), let alone with his horn, and the promoters had understandably put their money on the jovial and reliable trumpeter. The Bird was strictly an added starter, "Guest Artist" according to the program, and was allotted a single twenty minute spot just before the intermission.

As things turned out, the Bird showed up all right; really bugged—hopping mad, offended at having been passed over, and loaded with aggression for his old friend and protector. The concert, with its **auld lang syne** overtones, developed into something more than scheduled; not so much a formal presentation of the new music, as an embittered duel between its two leading exponents; the weapons were trumpet and alto saxophone; the common ground such established but still cryptic bop classics as **Night in Tunisia** and **Ornithology**; and the seconds, if you will, the dismayed members of Gillespie's big band rhythm section, big bemused Al McKibbin on bass, bomb-dropping Joe Harris on drums, and cool, wiggly John Lewis. Add a bewildered audience, and a small, vociferous, near-lunatic Parker clique seated well down front, and you have a very weird backdrop for the creation of music. And indeed, weird music it is that one hears on these Roost grooves.

But before turning our attention to the music, a word about the history of these records. There's a choice footnote to the story there, too. Originally these same sides appeared on the market around 1949 on a label whimsically called "Black Deuce"! The private recordings were made by a studio located in the Carnegie Hall building which offered this service to artists, mainly recitalists, performing there. Obviously, in this instance, they fell into the hands of someone with an eye for the market, and it is to this nameless rogue that the jazz collector is presently beholden. The records appeared in a few jazz-specialty stores and enjoyed a brief, limited, almost clandestine sale. No effort was made to compensate the artists or clear contractual difficulties. (Dizzy was under contract to Musicraft at the time.) But a rumble of protests soon arose and

"DIZ'N'BIRD in Concert". Roost LP 2234.

Dizzy Gillespie, trumpet; Charlie Parker, alto; John Lewis, piano; Al McKibbin, bass; Joe Harris drums.

A Night in Tunisia; Dizzy Atmosphere; **Groovin' High**; Confirmation.

"CHARLIE PARKER in historical Recordings, Vol. I". Le Jazz Cool JC-101.

Ko-Ko; 'Round about Midnight; **Cool Blues**; Ornithology; **Move**; White Christmas; **Ornithology**; Hot House; **Groovin' High**; Theme.

"CHARLIE PARKER in historical Recordings, Vol. II". Le Jazz Cool JC-102.

Cheryl; Salt Peanuts (II); **How High the Moon**; Riff tide; **Big Foot**; Salt Peanuts (I); **Out of Nowhere**; Perdido.

The collective personnel for the two Le Jazz Cool lps has been given by G. H. Jepsen in his *Discography of Charlie Parker* as Charlie Parker, alto; Miles Davis, Fats Navarro, Kenny Dorham, trumpets; Bud Powell, piano; Tommy Potter, bass; Max Roach, Roy Haynes, drums.

The adjective **great** gets thrown around rather freely these days by writers and commentators on jazz.

the sale of the records came to a halt, the result of a threatened injunction, or perhaps because of possible prosecution under a statute then before the state legislature which would make it a felony to sell pirated recordings for profit. (There was then no legislation covering such shenanigans—one gifted entrepreneur had just startled the industry by bootlegging an entire Verdi opera broadcast from the Met!) In any event the "Black Deuce" sides disappeared from the market. They became, in a matter of months collector items, much to the delight of their few proud possessors. Now, some thirteen years after the event, the sides are available to the general public.

In some respects they are still pretty sensational performances which managed to capture some of the electricity that broke loose, like chain lightning, when Charlie Parker was putting out. **Night in Tunisia** opens with all hands joining in for a routine opening chorus—everyone except Parker, that is; the Bird plays strange riff figures, somehow connected with the theme, in an incredible kind of Chalumeau lower register. The phrasing and intonation were intended to un-nerve and confound, and a lesser musician than Dizzy would have been routed at the outset. Dizzy wisely retires to gather his forces after the ensemble bit. There follows one of Bird's breathless four-bar breaks, then a long chorus played with fierce, hard, professional brilliance. The trumpet reprise is of the same quality, lustrous, chiseled, perhaps even more accurately articulated. This exchange sets the style of the following performances.

The duel is at its hottest on **Dizzy Atmosphere (Dynamo)** which is taken at a precipitous tempo. The feinting, surprise twists and musical gambits there are heady stuff. Parker is always the aggressor and Dizzy the counter-puncher. All this is the more remarkable when it is recalled that these liberties were being taken with material which only a handful of musicians had mastered at all in 1947. Variations upon variation, and the theme itself pretty far out at that! While the salient quality of the performances is one of brilliant jousting, striving to trip up and to surpass, there are some very moving passages, too. Despite their animus, Parker's solos retain that completeness of form and melodic continuity that marks his best work and makes it unique. He was the first jazz improviser to think in terms of **total melody**, as Dick Katz pointed out here. Previously the player had been bound by the restrictions of bar divisions. The

Bird created new melodies which stretched over the bar framework like a shining piece of fabric. And this of course is why he is one of the really great improvisors of all jazz, as well as one of the great innovators.

Except for the music they have to offer, the Le Jazz Cool lps are amateur productions, but the music is simply tremendous. This writer supervised some 36 sides of what are considered to be among Parker's finest commercial records for Dial, but he was never able to capture the sweep and force that distinguishes these performances. This is how small band jazz really sounded in that day when the chips were down, and the quality and the inspiration were on the bandstand. So again, we are beholden to some, here, nameless one and his recording machine. The technical difficulties include distortion, faulty balance, damage done by playings, and they are trying. But they do not cancel out the music. Generally the tracks are tolerable, and certainly those on Volume One. This seems to me one of the finest examples of the modern style. The trumpet player here is almost certainly Fats Navarro and, if this surmise is correct, it marks the sole occasion that this very wonderful musician recorded with Charlie. (Like Bird, he was in his later years a junkie; a shy, nocturnal character of unpredictable humors and lamentable reliability.) Yet, in many respects, Fats was the ideal brass companion for Bird. Fats was a player of impeccable taste, faultless execution, at home at any tempo, and his ravishing veiled tone has never been equalled. So this lp is a rare meeting of kin. They perform **Move** in a wildly ebullient fashion and their version of **Ornithology** is, I must admit, superior to the famous Dial. The fact remains that Parker, when confronted with a bare recording studio and its cold, impersonal microphone, was as much a slave to conservatism as any other jazzman. But here he plays in one of the free wheeling moods that came on him those certain evenings when everything, the time, the place, the crowd and above all, the quality of his musical companions, was just right. There is a rousing reading of **Koko**, a very fine **Cool Blues**, and Parker's only performance on record of Monk's beautiful **'Round About Midnight**. Parker's solos are not rationed to a parsimonious 32 bars, as happened in the recording studio. He lets go here and really blows. On the first **Ornithology**, for example there are four straight choruses, with surprise heaped on surprise. And the chase fours between Bird and Fats are

thrilling indeed. Hearing them play together one realizes how close Fats was on the horn to Bird and how much more suitable complement his trumpet was than Miles' or Dizzy's.

Miles seems to be on Volume Two. The material includes **Out of Nowhere** and **Giant Swing (Big Foot)**, which Charlie worked up for the Dial recording dates in the fall of 1947, just before the Petrillo recording ban (or one of them) shut down the recording industry. The group also plays **Cheryl**, probably recorded about the same time for Savoy (Savoy never gave out the dates), **Perdido**, **Riffide** (Bird's earlier **Street Beat**), **How High the Moon** and two versions of **Salt Peanuts**. The mood and performance of these tracks is quieter than those on Volume One. The trumpet often has a round tone and is used mostly in the middle register, and there is a preference for oblique statements. But perhaps these sides will seem superior to those who have grown up on a diet of cool jazz. Comparison of the two volumes will interest those trying to trace out the "birth of the cool" and Miles' essential role in the movement.

The last Dial and Savoy recordings brought to a close the great period of Charlie Parker's recording career. During the Petrillo embargo period his group lost its spirit and began to disintegrate. An unhappy incident followed in the foyer of a leading night club in Detroit with the result that Charlie found himself on a trade "don't book" list. He was dropped from the circuit where instrumental jazz stars were being featured and paid prices usually reserved for name vocalists. Unable to record, he confined his activities to playing gigs around New York. Key men like Max and Miles drifted away. When he resumed recording, under the royalty-fund system, the price of Petrillo's peace, Parker signed with Granz and such productions as "**Charlie Parker with Strings**" and "**South of the Border**" soon resulted. He seemed abandoning the trail blazed with the help of Dizzy, Max and a few others. The existence of these "amateur" recordings raises the very interesting possibility that there are undoubtedly more of them still around. This might be a good time to broadcast a general alarm for such material. Several of the better independent jazz labels (Riverside, Prestige, Atlantic, Blue Note, Pacific, Contemporary) would no doubt be only too happy to assist in the evaluation, renovation and release of such recordings. Few people are aware that Charlie Parker had one musical Boswell in a fellow named Dean Benedetti who used to follow

Bird around, usually by Greyhound bus, from one end of the country to the other, for the sole purpose of recording Parker's solos on a portable machine. And, of course, there were always the odd "home cooking" dates like the one used to make up the tracks of that name on Dial LP No. 905.

Ross Russell

ORNETTE COLEMAN: "Tomorrow is the Question". Contemporary M 3569. Ornette Coleman, alto; Don Cherry, trumpet; Percy Heath, Bass; Shelly Manne, drums. **Tears Inside;** Mind and Time; **Compassion;** Giggin'; **Rejoicing.** Red Mitchell, bass, replaces Heath. Lorraine; Turnaround; Endless.

This record was made before the formation of the Ornette Coleman quartet with Charlie Haden and Billy Higgins (now La Faro and Ed Blackwell) and before all the things that have been happening in their music since, but it should certainly not be overlooked. It contains a superior composition, for one thing, in **Lorraine** and an exceptional blues line, for which **Tears Inside** is a superb title. (The ideas in the lines of things like **Compassion** and **Rejoicing** seem the ones with the greater possibilities, however.) The record also has a cohesion, which the first Contemporary, with its apparently inhibiting and certainly clashing piano, did not have, and which the first Atlantic record, though made in the first excitement that now **four** players were grasping the nature of this music, did not have either. The cohesion here is conservative compared either to the possibilities the Atlantic suggests or the developments and order that have come since, but it is here. Perhaps it is because of Manne, Heath and Mitchell. Whatever their understanding of the music, they are more than sympathetic and enthusiastic.

Manne seem to me to understand least in that he speaks in the notes of being "free" in this music, but plays, at least in his solo on **Lorraine** and behind Cherry on **Turnaround**, almost carelessly. Both bassists **think** tonally, of course. Heath carries a heavy rhythmic and emotional burden beautifully; one can feel his enthusiasm in every note. He seems to grab onto a tonal area but when he does stray from it, he does it almost boldly. That is in contrast to Mitchell who is, as one would expect, more interested in lyric melody **per se**. He is more conservative about leaving tonality, as if he had to work his way **through** intervals before leaving them. Don Cherry's problems as an improviser so far are ideas themselves. Certainly not stating them. I think his solo on **Tears** would have its logic for

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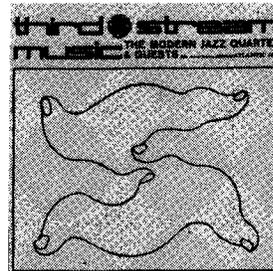


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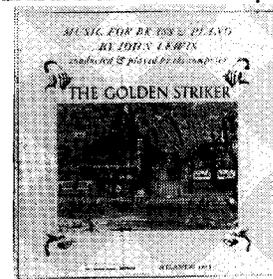
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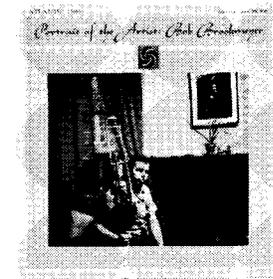
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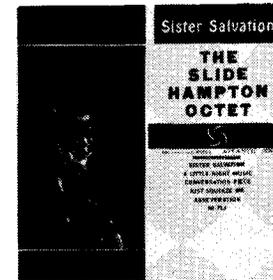
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any ears, and his use of the theme melody itself on his **Giggin'** solo might be an excellent introduction to how this music goes. Ornette seems to be just the opposite. It is curious to hear even musicians say that he "plays anything that pops into his head; it doesn't matter." Of course what pops into his head includes a lot, and he may try out most of it, as he certainly should. But, again of course, it does or it will, matter. (But don't forget that what pops into **most** people's heads is old Louis Armstrong, Lester Young or Charlie Parker phrases.) He solos last on **Turnaround**; perhaps it is the relative conservatism of all that has preceded him, but he starts with interpolation of **Do I Love You** (he seldom interpolates I am glad to say) and is quite abrupt and startling in the way that he breaks down that conservative atmosphere. But soon there is an area of rhythm and melody that he has outlined and is exploring. It seems to me that every valid innovation in jazz (by which I chiefly mean Armstrong and Parker) has had a rhythmic basis. (And every attempt at innovation that failed did not.) A couple of years ago there seemed two possibilities. There was Coltrane's way accenting and phrasing his short notes which seemed to want to subdivide Parker's eighth-note rhythm into sixteenths. The other was the very free reorganization of rhythm and meter of Monk, most strikingly used in that **Bags' Groove** solo. (It was in Rollins too and, as Dick Katz once said, something very like it seemed to be in Lester Young's later work.) Rhythmic subdivision seems possible in Ornette's work, but free meters seem far more likely. They certainly put fewer inhibitions on melody. Of course this is not a "finished" music, nor is what one can hear now from the Coleman quartet "finished" improvising, nor has anyone suggested that it is. Hearing this music now is like hearing Armstrong before Chicago or hearing Parker in Kansas City—perhaps not even like that, since what Coleman is working on represents in a sense an even more radical departure from established convention. Coleman's group is bound to attract that curious fringe that automatically wants whatever is "new" and those to whom any outpourings of the intuition or the unconscious are automatically "art". For the rest of us it is a question of hearing a group passionately, receptively and effectively working out something very, very important and, even now, very beautiful. One may regret that these men take jazz beyond tonality before jazz had completely absorbed those resourceful and enriching inversions

that are standard equipment to the classical musician. Perhaps jazz has refused to accept these inversions and has rushed through European harmony in only sixty years because, as George Russell says, it never really was a tonal-harmonic music in the first place. But who will play Ellington to this Armstrong? It is absurd to ask at this point of course. And I would not ask if I did not wonder if George Russell might be the man to make such a contribution.

Martin Williams

ORNETTE COLEMAN: "Change of the Century." Atlantic 1327. Ornette Coleman, alto; Don Cherry, trumpet; Charlie Haden, bass; Billy Higgins, drums. **Ramblin'**; Free; **Face of the Bass**; **Forerunner**; **Bird Food**; **Una Muy Bonita**; **Change of the Century**.

Few jazzmen have the fertility of invention to write seven originals for a single lp, and even fewer have the sense of musical direction to record an lp entirely made up of their own originals. Duke, Monk, Mingus; how many more?

At least three of the seven tunes (compositions?) here are highly accomplished and intriguing. **Ramblin'** is a good hillbilly flavored jazz tune, an interesting study in contrasting meters, and an effective display piece for a virtuoso bass player. **Free** is almost no more than a boogie woogie bass line, but who would have expected those quarter notes on the beat, mostly broken chords, to be played to give that effortless soaring quality? It's certainly a horn player's conception, rather than that of a pianist or a manuscript paper writer. **Una Muy Bonita** may be the most melodic and accessible of Coleman's tunes so far, and the contrast between the charming folkish melody and the bass figure is typical of Coleman's ability to get a great variety of texture from this quartet.

Ramblin' is probably the only unqualified success on the record, theme, ensembles, solos and all. Coleman's solo, which emerges so smoothly from the head, may not be on changes, but it is a model of logical construction and a fine example of how his solos work. Listen to the way he works with fragments of the theme, pokes them, nudges them, extends them into a run or a single, long, sustained note, rephrases the notes on the beat like Pete Brown, and then shifts his time conception to give his playing relief and variety. Cherry opens his solo with the same motif which also closes Ornette's solo; here, and elsewhere, he uses a lot of material in his solo that Ornette has already worked over,

which may help continuity, but also may be a sign of an over-dependence on Ornette's vision that does not necessarily speak well for the future of this young man's playing. Haden's bass solo, mostly in double stops, shows us that he is technically a masterful bassist, and also suggests how much wider and more rewarding his sources are than those of most jazz bass players; he may be the first bassist since Wilbur Ware to move away from the Blanton-Pettiford-Brown axis. And Billy Higgin's very original cymbal accompaniment to the bass solo is a delight for energy, steadiness, and variety.

Most of the other tunes are rather badly played, especially the ensemble parts. **Bird Food** is an exception, but it's just one of those synthetic Charlie Parker tunes concocted out of some of Bird's favorite intervals and rhythmic figures, and routine like his quintet recordings with Miles, improvised bridge and all. Cherry's fine solo, after the first chorus, seems to show the kind of music in which he still feels most at ease.

The head to **Change of the Century** is played especially badly—ragged enough to sound full of unintended dissonances and the kind of clashes of overtones that Coleman has used deliberately and well elsewhere. Even Ornette's solo sounds a little ill at ease with the tempo, and Cherry's is practically chaotic. But most of Ornette's solo work, especially on **Ramblin'** and **Free**, should remind us that he is a highly traditional player; that he loves some of the strong and simple rhythmic ideas of the thirties as much as he does the more complex and subtle conceptions that Parker introduced. I cannot imagine most players of his generation using some of those patterns that are so far from the hip and the modern. His solo on **Forerunner**, with its extreme dynamic contrasts, and that ascending phrase, sharply increasing in volume, that almost explodes at the listener, shows a love of contrast that runs through all his music. Next to Ornette, the date is Haden's. On **Ramblin'**, **Bonita**, and the rather commonplace tune called **Face of the Bass**, he shows a vivid and dramatic talent in his solo work, and his accompaniments are always simple, always fitting, always uncluttered. Higgins swings throughout, and in several places responds to the other players in a way that one does not always find in drummers, especially young drummers.

This is Coleman's fourth lp in less than two years, and the ragged ensemble work suggests that several of the tunes were recorded too soon. Of course the compositions

(tunes?) should have been recorded, and of course the session did take place last October before the group began working regularly, but is Ornette falling into the easy trap of becoming bored with the tunes himself before the group has really gotten comfortable playing them? And is he in the danger, since his solos are free of the normal disciplines of repetitive chord structure, of making all his solos too much in the same pattern? There seems to be evidence in this recording for both suspicions. I hope I'm wrong, for this musician, and his collaborators, have a completeness in their approach to all the aspects of their music which is both rare and promising.

Incidentally, Ornette has said (in a recent issue of *Metronome*) that none of his recordings have been doctored by splicing in the studio. This is not entirely accurate, for one of the trumpet solos on this lp was spliced in from another take. I was there.

Hsio Wen Shih

MILES DAVIS & GIL EVANS: "Porgy and Bess." Columbia CL 1274.

Miles Davis, solo trumpet; Gil Evans arrangements and conductor; Louis Mucci, Ernie Royal, John Coles, Bernie Glow, trumpets; Willie Ruff, Julius Watkins, Gunther Schuller, French horns; Jimmy Cleveland, Joseph Bennett, Dick Hixon, Frank Rehak, trombones; Phil Bodner or Jerome Richardson, Romeo Penque, flutes; Bill Barber, tuba; Julian Adderley, Danny Banks, saxophones; Paul Chambers, bass; Philly Joe Jones or Jimmy Cobb, drums. *The Buzzard Song; Bess, You Is My Woman Now; Gone, Gone, Gone, Gone; Summertime; Bess, Oh Where's My Bess; Prayer (Oh Doctor Jesus); Fisherman, Strawberry, and Devil Crab; My Man's Gone Now; It Ain't Necessarily So; Here Comes de Honey Man; I Loves You, Porgy; There's a Boat That's Leaving Soon for New York.*

In some respects a discussion of this record seems unnecessary. Almost everyone says it is an outstanding achievement and I would agree wholeheartedly. Similarly, I would just as soon not say much about Miles' playing. It is superb, and I probably couldn't add much to what men like Dick Katz and Andre Hodeir have already written. Gil Evans, however, remains a subject of considerable discussion and controversy, and I will use this record only as a point of departure for comment. He is good, but just how good? Is he another Duke? Is he the best since Duke? Is it fair or worthwhile to compare him with Duke—or with anyone?

Evans is a jazz "mind"; he makes his major contribution to jazz by composing, arranging, orchestrating. His history in the eyes of the jazz public, critics and probably musicians,

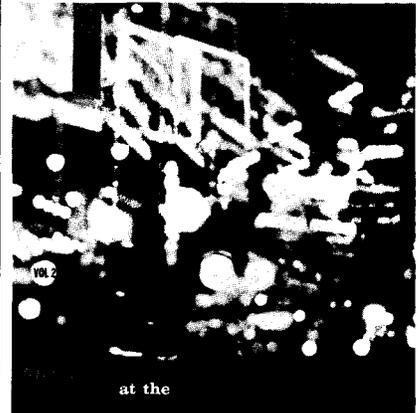
has been interesting. Although he had made splendid contributions to Thornhill's band and Miles' Nonet, no one had listed him among the top composer-arrangers. Indeed, comparatively few, among the public at least, had heard of him until Andre Hodeir's book, *Jazz: Its Evolution and Essence* came out. One chapter in Hodeir's book discussed the Miles Davis Capital record in which Evans participated. Hodeir said that Evans' work on *Boplicity* alone had earned him a high place in the rank of the jazz arrangers. That set the ball rolling. Who is Gil Evans? Go into the canebreak and find him. Offer him trinkets, farm implements, a set of teeth and a new horn if necessary. But get him.

Perhaps it is not fair to compare Gil in detail with Duke Ellington, the greatest jazz writer. Their musical conceptions are different. I would like to use such a comparison as a point of departure to discuss some aspects of Gil's style, however.

First, Duke attempts more than Gil. What Evans does, he does well, and his failures are never pretentious and embarrassing like Ellington's (that largely unsuccessful attempt at Shakespeare, "*Such Sweet Thunder*" is an example). But when Ellington succeeds, he is the great jazz composer-arranger.

In a stimulating letter published last October in *The Jazz Review*, Don Heckman said that he thought it unfair to qualify Evans' brilliance as a jazz arranger-composer by his association with Miles Davis. "The alliance of Ellington with his orchestra . . . in no way detracts from the specific jazz talent involved." Can Evans be compared as a composer to Duke—or even Quincy Jones and Ralph Burns, to mention two others connected with big band jazz writing? He has written a few attractive originals like *Blues For Pablo*, but are these as important thematic material as say, the more numerous and advanced compositions of Thelonious Monk or George Russell? Evans may have the ability to compose as well as he arranges, but hasn't been demonstrated on records to my knowledge. Does Miles include the hillbilly sounding *Jambangle* in his repertoire? And why does Evans work with material like *Struttin' With Some Barbecue* or *Ella Speed?* (That he makes them sound undated is a tribute to his skill of course.) About Heckman's second comment, his question of how much the "*Porgy*" album would lose if Donald Byrd or even Art Farmer were cast in Miles' role? Listen to "*Old Bottle, New Wine*" (World Pacific 1946). It's good, but not as successful as Gil's collaborations with Miles, partly

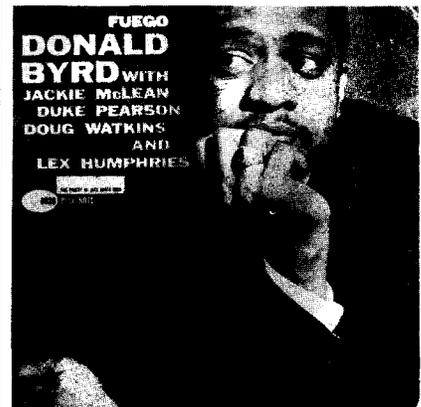
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because the featured soloist, Cannonball Adderley, is not as close in conception to Gil as Miles is. He is more extravagant and extroverted. Some of the selections, **Lester Leaps In** is one, sound overwritten and corny. It's hard to blame anyone specifically but there are too many notes. Of course, when a man like Rehak follows a Cannonball there's bound to be some letdown. Of course, Ellington can't be given credit for the skill of his soloists, but he created permanent roles for them in his band. It's no accident that Clark Terry with his half valve work replaced Rex Stewart; that Ben Webster, Al Sears and Paul Gonsalves have similar sounds; that he's always had a growl trumpet and a growl trombone man whether it be Nanton, Butter Jackson, Cootie Williams or Ray Nance; that he always had a clarinetist and only one full time tenor man in contrast to other modern reed sections. Ellington and his orchestra are wedded like nothing else in jazz. Duke also has a wider palette of moods and emotions than Gil. He has created introverted moods in compositions like **Blue Serge** and **Reminiscing In Tempo**. but Evans has never produced things with the wild power, the sumptuousness, the open sense of humor, the raw drama of a Harlem night, the carnival atmosphere that Duke has. I could cite masterpieces such as **Main Stem**, **Harlem Air Shaft**, **Cottontail**, **A Train**, **Giddybug Gallop** as illustrations.

But what I have said is not a criticism of Evans. Men like Ellington come along once every fifty or one hundred years and if Evans's talent does not match Ellington's, it probably comes as close or closer than anyone else's, except maybe Billy Strayhorn. No one has utilized instruments heretofore associated only with so-called serious music (flutes, oboe, French horn) as well as he. His orchestrations are continually fresh and original. And most important his work is sincere and always moving.

Harvey Pekar

BUDDY DeFRANCO: "Generalissimo".
Verve 8363.

Buddy DeFranco, clarinet; Harry Edison, trumpet; Bob Hardaway, tenor; Barney Kessel, guitar; Curtis Counce, bass; Alvin Stoller, drums; Jimmy Rowles, piano. **Sunday**; *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*; *Tea for Two*; *Blue Lou*; **Funky Uncle**; *Round Midnight*; **You Don't Know What Love It**; *How Can We Be Wrong*; *Lullaby of the Leaves*; *Yesterdays*. Harry Edison dominates this set. The other hornmen are pallid and dull. Edison has been criticized recently for having a limited melodic

vocabulary, but this isn't a tremendous shortcoming in view of his rhythmic and technical mastery. (Consider how much interest Louis Armstrong created on the first version of **I Can't Give You Anything but Love** even though he stayed close to the melody.) Edison lacks Armstrong's intuitive good taste, however, and he has run into the ground certain phrases that he picked up during the fifties. How many times has he ruined the continuity of a passage by quasi-hip squeezed tones or graces notes? This day he was in better than average form. His solo on **Devil and the Deep Blue Sea** is beautifully paced—the best I have ever heard him play. He uses several modern melodic phrases which fit in nicely. Unfortunately, he does not maintain this high level of improvisation; his solo on **Funky Uncle** is just a series of clichés.

Jimmy Rowles' playing is consistently good. He has an odd, almost "arranger's" piano style reminiscent of Tad Dameron. Rowles' approach is vertical and percussive rather than linear.

DeFranco is really off form. The made-to-order blandness of some of the West Coast musicians has crept into his solos, and this Kansas City Seven format doesn't help. He plays best in an introverted, disciplined group like the one he had with Jimmy Rainey and Teddy Charles ten years ago.

Hardaway is a disciple of Zoot Sims, which means everything he plays has been heard many times. Barney Kessel is a real mystery—every year he wins all kinds of polls and gets all kinds of credit—but what has he done that hasn't been done as well or better by Irving Ashby, Oscar Moore (among the older guys), Kenny Burrell, Rainey, or Tal Farlow? Some of his best playing was done in '47 with Parker. Now, like DeFranco, he's a robot. His tone has always been too twangy and now he is using ersatz funky chords a la André Previn.

And since when is dictatorship commercial?

Harvey Pekar

KENNY DORHAM: "Blue Spring".
Riverside 12-297.

Kenny Dorham, trumpet, arranger; Cannonball Adderley, alto; Cecil Payne, baritone; David Amram, french horn; Cedar Walton, piano; Paul Chambers, bass; Jimmy Cobb, Philly Joe Jones, drums. **Blue Spring**; *It Might As Well Be Spring*; **Poetic**; *Spring Is Here*; **Spring Cannon**; *Passion Spring*.

This thoughtfully conceived and executed lp shows the other side of Kenny Dorham, Dorham the composer and arranger, as well as Dorham the trumpeter. And it isn't really

the usual jazz recordings built around a "subject". Every track shows the freshness, vitality and warmth of spring which fits so well Dorham's approach to jazz. Four of the tunes are by Dorham, and in them are reflected the same clean-lined construction, the same down-to-earth feeling, and the same wonderful lyricism and sensitivity of his trumpet. He scored the two standards as well, employing some unusual voicings designed for the sonorities of the horns he has working with him, including Paul Chambers' strong upper register. In particular the somewhat overworked **It Might As Well Be Spring** gets a new lease on life.

Dorham planned everything carefully and rehearsed the group thoroughly. There is a cohesion, and there is also that particular kind of relaxation that makes for good blowing.

Dorham's trumpet is in excellent form. Cannonball and Cedar Walton are the other two frequent soloists. Cannonball comes up with some fine playing. It is interesting to notice how his association with Miles Davis and John Coltrane has helped him find his own style. Walton is a thoughtful soloist. He could be described as a harder Ray Bryant—listen to his solo on **Blue Spring**. He is also my idea of a good accompanist—alert, sure, always there but never overpowering and never getting hung up with the changes. Cecil Payne, in a brief solo bit, still has that light sound that is more like a heavy tenor than a baritone.

Chambers lays down those strong bass lines and solos on the blues and **Spring Is Here**. Philly Joe comes up with a brief but exciting solo on **Spring Cannon**.

Zita Carno

HARRY EDISON: "Mr. Swing".
Verve 8353.

Harry Edison, trumpet; Jimmy Forrest, tenor; Jimmy Jones, piano; Freddy Greene, guitar; Joe Benjamin, bass; Charlie Persip, drums. **Love Is Here To Stay**; *Short Coat*; **Baby Won't You Please Come Home**; *Impresario*; **Ill Wind**.

Harry Edison has the "presence" which distinguishes a star from a lesser performer. He has a wonderfully idiosyncratic singing jazz tone, beautiful phrasing, and a dramatic sense of timing. Unfortunately, he is also a master of *déjà-vu*, to a degree that anyone with any past familiarity with his playing can sing-along-with-Harry Edison as he is playing a "new" improvisation for the first time. This paramnesiac quality is heightened by the reappearance of one of his favorite war horses, **Love is Here to Stay**, in a lengthy track, and two originals which are unfamiliar only in their titles.

Jimmy Forrest is the only other horn player in this group. A full-toned cross between Jacquet and Webster, he succeeded the latter briefly in the Ellington Band, and stayed just long enough to fuse strains from **Happy-Go-Lucky Local** and **I Don't Know What Kind of Blues I Got into Night Train**, which bought him a first-class ticket on rhythm-&-blues circuits for several years. He returned to jazz and Edison's group when his carfare ran out. Without rock & roll vulgarities, he is warm, confident, and hackneyed. Highlighted soloist in the good Basie-oriented rhythm section is Jimmy Jones, here an interesting, updated stride pianist. In brief, a pleasant, unpretentious minor album; a typical, if not particularly incandescent Edison date.

Louis Levy

BARRY HARRIS: "At the Jazz Workshop". Riverside RLP 326.

Barry Harris, piano; Sam Jones, bass; Louis Hayes, drums.

Is You Is Or Is You Ain't My Baby; Curtain Call; **Star Eyes;** Moose the Mooche; **Lolita,** Morning Coffee; **Don't Blame Me;** Woody'n You.

The first thing to say is that Barry Harris is recorded here with a microphone so close up that his touch and sound are badly distorted.

Harris was a kind of legend for several years as a leader, teacher, and inspiration to the young modernists in Detroit. If an outlander asked how Harris played, he was usually told that Tommy Flanagan "learned from Barry". Well, I would say that Flanagan is his own man by now, and that Harris' roots are in Bud Powell and seem to go no further and no deeper. Of course, playing that way with Harris' unique gentle touch can produce a different effect in itself, but, as I say, you can't hear much of that touch here.

The version of **Ornithology** on Harris' recent Argo lp seemed to be too literally close to Bud Powell's Blue Note version for anybody's comfort, even if we call it a tribute. On this record, there are references to **Un Poco Loco** in the treatments of both **Woody'n You** and **Lolita**, and **Morning Coffee** cops part of the line of **Thelonious**, but the borrowing isn't wholesale.

Few pianists who derive from Powell can play ballads, but that may not be so important; after all, it would not have occurred to any jazz pianist before the late twenties to even attempt such pieces, at least not in a real jazz style. The pianists of the thirties learned how from Earl Hines, and Teddy Wilson did it most brilliantly. Al Haig and Joe

Albany learned from Wilson; Monk found his own way. But Powell didn't do either, and many of his slow pieces even sound like bad Tatum. I suspect a fear of lyricism, if fear is the right word, was perhaps involved; if you take some of the ideas that Powell used at other tempos and slow them down, they turn out to be most beautifully lyrical melodic fragments. The way Powell played them, they seem ingenious, appropriate and compulsive fast bop lines. On the Argo record, Harris did achieve an order and flow on **All the Things You Are**, chiefly by being very inventive melodically, and filling in with ideas constantly, but this **Don't Blame Me** seems to amble and falter, as Powell did in such moods, and one gets the image of a man undecided about whether he really wants to play such pieces or not. And on the medium bounce **Is You Is**, ideas appropriate to a ballad mood alternate with medium boppish improvisations, so that the performance seems to fall between two stools. Part of the trouble may be caused by Louis Hayes; he is a more than commendable drummer in the currently hip New York style, but his even brush work here seems to me out of sympathy with Harris' more complex rhythmic ideas.

A tense hardness of touch, and what has always seemed to me a kind of extra-musical compulsiveness in his playing have often bothered me in Powell's work, but hearing Harris play on **Moose the Mooche** with a different touch (distorted by recording) and different emotional tone made me realize how intrinsic those very qualities are to the urgent continuity Powell did achieve at his best. On the other hand, **Curtain Call** takes the very fast Powell of ten years ago and produces a cohesive performance with a feeling quite its own—and to have done that with a style that Powell evolved for quite different content is remarkable. And **Woody'n You** is very well paced, and logically and compellingly developed, in a way that makes many Powell followers seem mere phrase mongers by comparison, something that could only be achieved by a player of personal and musical integrity within his chosen style.

Martin Williams

STAN KENTON: "Standards In Silhouette". Capitol T 1394.

Stan Kenton, piano; John Bonnie, Marvin Holladay, Charlie Mariano, Jack Nimitz, Bill Trujillo, saxes; Bud Brisbois, Bill Chase, Rolf Ericson, Roger Middleton, Dalton Smith, trumpets; Jim Amlotte, Bob Knight, Kent Larsen, Archie LeCoque, Don Sebesky, trombones; Pete Chivily, bass; Jimmy

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Willow Weep For Me; *The Thrill Is Gone*; *The Meaning of the Blues*; *When Sunny Gets Blue*; *Ill Wind*; *Django*; *I Get Along Without You Very Well*; *Lonely Woman*.

It would be foolish and short-sighted to deny that this is a very good band. I suspect that they could perform almost any piece of music one would care to place before them. But how much of music is performance alone? It was not performance alone that made such great musical organizations of the Ellington and Basie bands of the thirties. It was rather a matter of the heart; of the genuine individual spirit. That is why Duke's band, for instance, sounded different when there was a personnel change: the balance was altered, sometimes ever so slightly, but here was a new man with a new story of his own that had to come together with all the others. I don't know; maybe it was a reflection of the times. But in this day of secure, organized group conformity, other needs must be met. Art seems no longer to be a symbolic projection of intense individualism. The collective has come into its own.

Kenton reflects his times. He presents a catalogue of readily available and superficial emotions for the taking; a quick thrill for the safe inhabitants of this *Herald Tribune*-ized America; feeling without experience, the cheapest, most abundant commodity in popular entertainment today.

I do not mean to detract from Bill Matheiu's considerable talents, but I think he is rather typical of the arrangers Kenton has used in the past (with the possible exception of Bill Holman). The vision has been primarily Kenton's, and the arrangers have, in the main, only been used to fill out the gaps in a picture that is not their own. So much of this music since the "Artistry" days has been constructed so as to give the greatest degree of emotional impact to the widest possible audience. This is "talking down" at its worst and Kenton has often been guilty of it. And, the notes for his "Kenton Era" recordings indicates that he still retains an incredibly distorted viewpoint of his own contributions.

Two of the numbers here have been recently arranged and recorded by Gil Evans. The contrast between this recording and the Gil Evans versions is self-evident. The emotional coloration in Evans' music is only one element of design and develops naturally as its many parts all come together; never as an end in itself. *Django* is a good example. The Kenton arrangement does nothing

more than skim the surface, using a unison statement of the theme in a sort of pseudo-waltz time, but in 4/4. Harmonization is simple, relying on altered chords and thick orchestration. The central development is given to an alto solo with a peculiarly distracting insertion of the well-known bass theme in the middle. When the alto finishes, the band builds in this figure, stamping Kenton's screaming brass trademark on the chart. Not really a bad arrangement, but a characterless one. Like the vapid faces of the Rheingold girls, all the elements are in the right places, but their total is less than the sum of the parts because they reflect inner emptiness. The Evans chart, as I've mentioned previously here is quite different. From the concisely interwoven piano and soprano solos to the final explosive climax, it is a model of developing musical complexity. All of the parts look both inward and out, balancing feeling and emotion with logic and form. Perhaps it is too much to expect even a modicum of this sort of concern for musical values from a man who professes to hold artistic considerations above all others, but Kenton has shown little in the way of musical results to justify his words.

The other piece common to this recording and Evans' "Miles Ahead" album is *The Meaning of the Blues*. Again the difference is obvious, specifically in intention. Evans' voicings, despite their richness, are never static, but have a continuous movement, both in color and in complexity. Bill Matheiu's chart is considerably more prosaic, relying principally on Ericson's trumpet and an accompaniment of thick trombones and harmon-muted trumpets. It never becomes more than a pleasant, but turgid, dance band ballad. The remaining numbers are of similar quality, with little movement or change in attitude. There are, however, several good moments: Archie LeCoque's trombone on *Ill Wind*, Charlie Mariano's alto on *I Get Along Without You Very Well* and the ensemble on *When Sunny Gets Blue*.

Although this is neither the best nor the worst he has ever had, this is unquestionably a Kenton band. All the trademarks are there, obvious to the most casual listener. I wonder what this group of talented musicians would sound like if they were allowed to gain their own personality. Their musical aptitude is excellent, and it is only those elusive factors of character and individuality that are missing. Perhaps if Kenton were able to use his qualities of leadership in this direction, he would acquire his first real jazz band.

Don Heckman

GEORGE RUSSELL: "Jazz Workshop".
RCA Victor LPM-1372.

Art Farmer, trumpet; Hal McKusick, alto; Bill Evans, piano; Barry Galbraith, guitar; Milt Hinton, bass; Joe Harris, drums. *Ye Hypocrites, Ye Beelzebub*; *Jack's Blues*; *Livingston I Presume*; Ezz-thetic. Paul Motian, drums, replaces Harris. *Night Sound*; *Round Johnny Rondo*; *Witch Hunt*; *Concerto for Billy the Kid*. Teddy Kotick, bass, and Osie Johnson, drums, replace Hinton and Motian. *Fellow Delegates*; *The Sad Sergeant*; *Knights of the Steamtable*; *Ballad of Hix Blewitt*.

(McKusick plays flute on *Fellow Delegates* and *Hix Blewitt*.)

GEORGE RUSSELL: "New York, N. Y.".
Decca DL 9216.

Art Farmer, Doc Sevrinson, Ernie Royal, trumpets; Bob Brookmeyer, Frank Rehak, Tom Mitchell, trombones; Hal McKusick, John Coltrane, Sol Schlinger, reeds; Bill Evans, piano; Barry Galbraith, guitar; Milt Hinton, bass; Charlie Persip, drums. *Manhattan*

Farmer, Joe Wilder, Royal, trumpets; Brookmeyer, Jimmy Cleveland, Mitchell, trombones; Phil Woods, McKusick, Al Cohn, Gene Allen, reeds; Evans, piano; Galbraith, guitar; George Duvivier, bass; Max Roach, drums. *A Helluva Town*.

Don Lamond, replaces Roach; Al Epstein, bongoes; George Russell, chromatic drums, added. *Manhattan-Rico*.

Farmer, Wilder, Joe Ferrante, trumpets; Brookmeyer, Rehack, Mitchell, trombones; Woods, McKusick, Benny Golson, Schlinger, reeds; Evans, piano; Galbraith, guitar; Hinton, bass; Persip, drums.

Big City Blues; *East Side Medley*; *Autumn in New York*; *How About You*.

At its best, jazz composition presents a fusion between writing and extemporisation. In the outstanding recordings of Jelly Roll Morton, Ellington, Monk and John Lewis, the pre-determined and improvised sections appear mutually dependent extensions of each other. Achieving such a relationship has depended, for Ellington and Lewis, on having under their direction, for greater or lesser periods, groups of performers whose potentialities they know intimately—men who are completely familiar with, and generally sympathetic to, their leader's approach. Denied these ideal conditions—which can allow so much scope for experiment—the best a jazz composer can hope to do is to assemble for recordings a pick-up group which will interpret his work, more or less unfamiliar to them, with intuitive sympathy and produce improvisations which, although personal, accord with the character of the compositions. This is a lot to expect, but it has been achieved fairly often, as the finest Morton and Monk records—*Doctor Jazz*, *The Chant* or the *Blue Note Evidence* and *Misterioso*—show. In his remarkable RCA Victor "Jazz Workshop" lp George Russell, while

not reaching the depth of original expression achieved by the composers mentioned above, has nonetheless achieved a group of performances which give us an accurate idea of his powers of composition, and help to define his very individual position in jazz writing. He picked his musicians extremely well. As far as one can tell, Farmer, Evans, Galbraith and McKusick understand his intentions fully and are wholly sympathetic to his ideas. Time, also, was on Russell's side, for the lp was recorded in three sessions spread out over 1956.

Regular readers of *The Jazz Review* will be familiar with elements of Russell's tonal language from John Benson Brooks's article in the February, 1960 issue. No detailed examination can be made here of how this is applied in practice, nor of precisely how it affects the musicians in their extemporisations. But the foremost impression this record gives is one of freshness—Russell is in a new tonal world (or a world of new relationships) which has nothing contrived or freakish about it, but, on the contrary, is natural, self-sufficient, and possesses enormous possibilities. This record demonstrates that, once one has mastered it, the Lydian concept, far from being a constricting discipline, affords great freedom in a number of directions. Within this very large framework Russell is extremely inventive—inventive of themes and developments of distinctive character and varied mood.

Perhaps *Jack's Blues* displays the scope of the composer's resources as well as anything here. This manages to combine the unified expression of contrasting moods in quite a short time. The theme section is slow, but conveys the impression of a shifting, indefinite tempo, and features a beautiful, blues-derived melody. A firmer pace is set for the alto solo, a brief linking ensemble provides contrast, a jaunty piano solo follows, the guitar is accompanied by the horns, and the theme returns. The form here and on most of the other tracks—theme, solos, theme—is conventional enough, yet the relationship between written and improvised material is never static, for Russell places the solos differently and supplies varied bridges and contrasting backgrounds. However, no words can adequately delineate the subtle originality with which the horn, piano, and guitar parts are organized on this and several other tracks. Nor can they describe the changing and diversified textures; Russell's individuality is everywhere in evidence; nothing is determined by mere formulae, and there seem to be no commonplace sounds or

stock arranging techniques in those scores at all. *Night Sound* is a similar blues-based piece with shifting tonal centers. More evocative still is *The Sad Sergeant*, with its trumpet calls and drum rolls which—amusingly and at a distance—suggest the parade ground. The imaginative way in which these rolls and trumpet figures are varied and used in conjunction with the spiritual *Ye Hypocrites, ye Beelzebub* (upon which another track also is based) form a good illustration of Russell's unfettered accomplishment. Contrasting with these are *Livingstone* and a full treatment of *Ye Hypocrite*. Here, in place of the sensitive melodic lines of *Jack's Blues* and *Night Sound*, strongly differentiated patterns are set against each other and against the basic beat. Never, though, does the texture become dense or cluttered. As much can be said of the exhilarating *Round Johnny Rondo*, which has an unusually diverse theme section. The horns are used contrapuntally—and very interesting dissonant counterpoint it is, too—antiphonally, and combined in opposing patterns.

Different again is *Ballad*, which has a fine, open air feeling. It begins with unaccompanied flute and guitar lines, the piano enters later with intriguing harmonies, and there is a sharply contrasting, and humorous, pseudo-dixie section. *Ezz-thetic*, with its convoluted melodic line, is another gay yet powerful piece. This is, incidentally, a far more satisfying performance than the version Lee Konitz recorded in 1951. (It is unfortunate that Russell did not include *Odjenar*, also recorded by Konitz, on this disc in place of *Concerto*, the one inferior composition here.) This new performance of *Ezz-thetic* includes Evans's best solo on the disc—a very good one. Indeed, throughout Evans and Farmer appear to be entirely at home with Russell's music and, while retaining all the identifying characteristics of their styles, improvise solos that are real extensions of the composed material. (The accord between the writing and the best of the improvising is shown on *Livingstone*, where the return of the involved thematic section sounds perfectly natural following the relative simplicity of the solos.) McKusick is equally sympathetic, equally competent, but his lack of individuality as a soloist is one of the weak points of this record. Galbraith is less obviously prominent but plays an important part in the ensembles and was, I think, a considerable factor in the success of these performances.

Many other notable passages on this record could be mentioned, for example, the duet-extemporisation for wood drums and chromatic drums

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in **Fellow Delegates**, but the foregoing should indicate sufficiently that it is an exceptional lp of "composed and improvised" jazz. It is not simply a question of Russell's mastery of the mechanics of a particular mode of composition, but of his being able to express a variety of moods in pieces which afford the soloists plenty of scope and which always swing. Russell's scoring may be quite complex at times, but it is never the kind of complexity that is inimical to swing.

Set against the achievement of the "Workshop" lp, "New York, N. Y." is a disappointment. Hendricks' spoken commentary, which prefaces each track, is superfluous and, with repeated hearing, annoying. The music should be allowed to speak for itself. **Manhattan**, like several of the tracks, contains scoring that is good, yet seldom distinguished. The trombone solos (Brookmeyer and Rehack) are empty, but Bill Evans is excellent. So is Coltrane in this rather unexpected context. Better than most of the writing on this track are the bridges between the solos, especially the forceful one linking Evans and Coltrane. Note also the unusual positioning of the guitar above the full ensemble between Coltrane's and Farmer's solos. **Big City Blues** is considerably superior, and is in fact easily the best track. The theme is a haunting one, and is enhanced by much more personal scoring and harmony, skillfully developed in a lengthy passage deploying the entire ensemble; the tempo doubles for the solos. Golson remains a puzzling soloist. His tone is clearly derived from the Don Byas-Lucky Thompson modes of tenor playing, yet his phrases attempt to imitate Coltrane. Such tone and such phrasing go ill together (this is the more obvious after **Manhattan**, in which Coltrane himself soloed twice) and so direct an imitation is unworthy of the talent Golson has shown as a writer. There is some fine scoring behind Evans's solo on this track. **Manhatta-Rico** is unremarkable thematically; the scoring is good, but is far from the best the composer can do. Even so, it still maintains a level of personal craftsmanship considerably above the work of a number of better-known arrangers. There is good playing on bongos and chromatic drums, and Farmer and Evans once more come off best in the solos. **Medley** largely features Evans in a kind of superior cocktail playing and reflects little credit on anyone concerned. More good scoring—but not on the level of **Blues**—can be heard on **Helluva Town**, and there is a fine solo by Roach.

It is hard to decide in just what spirit "New York, N. Y." was produced. Did Russell deliberately write-down

on some sections—especially **Medley**—or was he persuaded to do so by Decca? Only **Big City Blues** is really worthy of him, and it would be unfortunate if people heard this record and thought it represented the best of his powers. The compromising, relatively commercial nature of parts of "New York, N. Y." seems the more regrettable when one recalls the curiously evocative atmospheres of pieces like **Night Sound**, **The Sad Sergeant** or **Ballad of Hix Blewitt**. If Russell had written a kind of tone-parallel (to use Ellington's term) of New York City on that level it would have been a memorable composition indeed.

Max Harrison

MAL WALDRON: "Mal/4 Trio". New Jazz 8208.

Mal Waldron, piano; Addison Farmer, bass; Kenny Dennis, drums.

Splidium-Dow; Like Someone in Love; **Get Happy**; J. M.'s Dream Doll; **Too Close for Comfort**; By Myself; **Love Span**. This lp by Mal Waldron is a trio recording because in the leader's own opinion (and apparently in that of New Jazz) his playing technique has improved sufficiently to warrant it. Says Waldron: "There was a time when my writing was way ahead of my playing. But now I've learned to use the same techniques I use when I'm writing when I'm performing." I agree that Mal does employ the same techniques in writing and playing. But the first part of the above quote implies that Waldron believes he has achieved a technical facility at the keyboard up to the level of his writing. Reviews of Waldron's series of discs for Prestige-New Jazz indicate that the playing of this artist has gradually improved from **Mal/1** to **Mal/4**. On the whole I cannot agree. The only noticeable change in Mal's piano work is that his confidence appears to have improved, making his performances less shaky; the same atrocious fingering, the scuttling brittleness of his lines, and the inability to produce flow in execution are there, and I suspect they will remain.

These technical characteristics probably make Mal Waldron's playing largely unacceptable to listeners who demand technical excellence above all else, and who are aware of no other criterion for judging their favorites.

But I am happy to say that there are several other very important criteria by which a jazz artist may be judged, and that **M/4** is an excellent jazz record and Mal Waldron an excellent jazz musician because he is superlative in these other facets of the art. His conception is unfailingly moving, his sense of overall

dynamics always good, his construction in producing a solo masterful, and his improvisation as nearly pure and free from personal and public clichés as one is likely to encounter. I still prefer **M/1** through **M/3** because in those albums you get to hear other good men (Farmer, Sulieman, Gryce, and Eric Dixon) explore Waldron's structures; but **M/4** is a fine example of how musical qualities in the absence of technical excellence can buoy up a 12 inch lp performance so that it can be listened to repeatedly.

Waldron's supporters here are not the best in the business by any means. Addison Farmer is a musical bassist whose sound is more fully recorded here than in the past, although he still tends to be chunky at times, and uses too small a portion of the possible range of his instrument compared to Mingus, Chambers, Mitchell, LaFaro, et al. Dennis' sense of dynamics is narrow, his playing throughout this lp stays in just about the same groove—a medium hard one—except on the slow ballads. Dennis swings, but he doesn't seem to be accustomed to playing in a trio. Some of his punctuation, in the middle choruses of **Too Close For Comfort** and elsewhere, is labored.

The range of material here is good, starting with a hard moaning blues, **Splidium Dow**, on which Waldron's ability to take a simple phrase and, through repetition, slight alteration, and change in accent, create a moving blues statement seems unsurpassed in contemporary jazz. **Like Someone in Love** is at first deliberate and very slow. At this tempo many jazz pianists tend to become excessively flowery, or to fall apart funereally. But Waldron is both spare and poignantly moving in the opening, stepping it up a shade for the improvisational segments, but **not** changing the basic mood. **Get Happy** is taken at a tempo that so far out-distances Mal's keyboard facility that it is painful; even Waldron's other qualities are hard to discern here while he is concerned with keeping up. **Too Close for Comfort** is my favorite track; it is the longest of all the performances, but though Mal is as spare and functional as can be, he maintains interest chorus after chorus, each time finding a slight variant of the tune without resorting to contrivance or change of mood. Each of the other selections illustrates Waldron's jazz talents, some adequately, some superbly.

I have refrained from trying to

place Mal Waldron into a specific niche in the contemporary jazz piano scene. His only obvious and admitted influence is Monk, but the relationship to the latter is probably one mainly of a mature recognition by Waldron of the similarity in harmonic approach that he and Monk have, and a resulting inspiration to further his work in this direction, rather than an active attempt to emulate Monk. The fact is that Mal Waldron is as much his own man as anyone on the scene, only secondarily, I believe, a jazz piano player; primarily a distinctive jazzman, quite apart from his chosen instrument.

John William Hardy

DINAH WASHINGTON: "After Hours with Miss D". Emarcy MG-36028.

Dinah Washington, vocals; Clark Terry, trumpet; Gus Chappell, trombone; Rick Henderson, alto; Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Paul Quinichette, tenors, Junior Mance or S. Anderson, piano; Keter Betts, bass; Ed Thigpen, drums; Candido, bongos, Jackie Davis, organ.

Blue Skies; Bye Bye Blues; Am I Blue; Our Love is Here to Stay; A Foggy Day; I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart; Pennies from Heaven; Love for Sale.

Dinah Washington has almost no rival as Queen Bee of the jazz-concert circuit. She is personable, has presence, and knows how to sell her vocal material, be it blues or ballad. Billed with (or above) the top draw groups on the hard-blowing auditorium circuit, Dinah usually appears with quality accompaniments and presumably is a serious jazz singer. An important name on records, too. In attempting to evaluate this highly successful singer, one is challenged by her eclectic style. Her truest tone is like Billie Holiday's, small, pure, and insinuating. At such times as she uses it, her beat is strong and her phrasing sinuous; she is intimate and highly effective.

Sarah Vaughn, of course, represents the major style change since Billie Holiday. A cross of Billie and a touch of Sarah suggests real possibilities, that might add warmth and intimacy to the cool objectiveness of the modern school. But Dinah Washington employs this mode in a minor way, more to add flavor and piquancy than to carry the main part of her performance. Her real emphasis is on the big, earthy, dramatic delivery that goes back to the twenties and originated with Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith. And there is no question that as she uses it, it is highly effective with large audiences. Subtlety and small, pure sounds are more suitable in the cabaret than the auditorium.

I find the results disturbingly uneven. The first class talents in jazz are consistent. They have arrived at a system of phrasing, rhythmic projection, and intonation that is all of one piece: It may come from several antecedents, but it comes out whole. There would be no clash of vibrato as one finds in Miss Washington; no abandonment of beat to satisfy the dramatic posture; no wavering of intention or use of devices for the sake of virtuoso display. The intent to tell a story in musical terms is never, I feel, uppermost in Miss Washington's mind; her main concern seems to be in selling a song in the most dramatic way possible. The audience, not the art, comes first in her performance.

This lp is a very fair sample of her work, certainly as good as her live performances. Dinah has a formidable presence that takes charge in the recording studio as readily as it does in the concert hall. The material is very well chosen and such seems always to be true, for even if, in fact, someone picks it for her she has the master showman's intuition concerning what is suitable for her kind of performance. The backgrounds are excellent, too; free and spirited, with a fine overall sound. Clark Terry and Lockjaw Davis provide the big, muscular, brawling sort of lines that help point up Miss Washington's hard-sell delivery. Jackie Davis comes on very strong with his rampant electric organ. Like the liner notes say, man, it wails.

Ross Russell

JIMMIE RODGERS: "My Rough and Rowdy Ways". RCA Victor LPM-2112.

Jimmie Rodgers' Last Blue Yodel (The Women Make a Fool Out of Me); Mississippi Moon; My Rough and Rowdy Ways; Blue Yodel No. 9 (Standin' on the Corner); My Blue Eyed Jane; The One Rose; Southern Cannonball; Long Tall Mamma Blues; In the Jailhouse Now No. 2; Peach Picking Time Down in Georgia; Blue Yodel No. 1 (T For Texas); Travellin' Blues; Mule Skinner Blues (Blue Yodel No. 8); My Carolina Sunshine Girl; The Brakeman's Blues (Yodeling the Blues Away); Away Out on the Mountain. "RAY CHARLES in Person".

Atlantic 8039.

Ray Charles, piano and vocals; Marcus Belgrave, John Hunt, trumpets; David Newman, tenor; Bennie Crawford, baritone; Edgar Willis, bass; Teagle Fleming, drums; vocal accompaniment by The Raylettes; vocal solo on The Right Time and Tell The Truth by Marjorie Hendricks

The Right Time; What'd I Say; Yes Indeed!; The Spirit-Feel; Frenesi; Drown in my Own Tear; Tell The Truth.

The late Jimmie Rodgers' forté appears to be his blue yodels (four of which are included in this album) along with other blues, and some

inconsequential country songs, all recorded between 1927 and 1944. The yodels contain familiar fragments which Rodgers intersperses with yodeled refrains. The form of these yodels became so firmly established that singers, both commercial and folk, later followed its outlines. Thus Rodgers acted as a sort of middle man, an agent who carried material from the folk to the non-folk level, from which it then filtered back into folk tradition.

In contrast to the Negro blues singers of the thirties, who sang many of the same verses which appear in Rodgers' yodels, Jimmie seems musically pretty cut and dried. Melody and rhythm are straight forward, almost square, with few of the tricky rhythmic shifts and nebulous melodic areas. In fact, what Jimmie sings is actually blues in ragtime, but with a hillbilly flavor.

To listen to Rodgers is at times a bit jolting, because his premature entrances and his chord changes in the middle of a measure give the effect that he is out of meter, but if studiously counted out, the pieces come out right in the end. Besides coming in ahead of time, Rodgers often extends his lines beyond where they should end; and again, rather than furthering rhythmic interest through this device, like the "country" blues men, he sounds somewhat amateurish, as though he hadn't yet learned to count.

Rodgers' work resembles that of Ray Charles in that Charles' pieces also contain familiar stanzas that float from song to song. Charles, like Rodgers, has molded this material into an individual style. With Charles, though, to a far greater extent than with Rodgers, the style has become a formula. Rodgers used the material to highlight his own abilities and his performances (which in themselves are nothing startling); while Charles lately has permitted the material to blot out his considerable talents. Charles' material has never measured up to his ability—the melody, and even more the text, of his classic **I Got a Woman** are nothing but cliché after cliché—but Ray upholsters his songs with a musical covering arresting enough to draw attention completely away from the banalities. When he's trying to mesmerize a crowd, however, as is the case with the "In Person" album, Ray is no better than his material, and hardly better than many another rock and roller. Charles, in albums such as this, fails to live up to his earlier promise.

The liner on the Rodgers album says Earl Hines and Louis Armstrong play on **Blue Yodel Number 9**. That could be debated.

Mimi Clar

SHORTER REVIEWS

"The **HERB PILHOFER Trio**" (Argo LP-567) is, as far as I know, the initial recording of this group with guitarist Dale Olinger and bassist Stu Anderson. The unit is a tightly integrated one and depends for much of its effectiveness upon the close polyphonic interplay of the voices. They have chosen material which is good in itself and has not been overplayed: **Valse Hot, The Duke, My Ship, Godchild**. Their playing is always in good taste and their ideas are clearly defined and consistently developed. Each player seems to understand the others and to know how to work in with them. Pilhofer and Olinger bear most of the solo burden and they acquit themselves well. Nevertheless, most of the performances seem to lack what I would call vitality. Everything is well done, but one is conscious of what seems a desire to be correct at all costs, and neither the solos nor the polyphonic passages seem to have feeling of deep engagement.

The title "**LES McCANN Plays the Truth**" (Pacific Jazz PJ-2) should be enough to tell you what to expect; that and titles like **A Little 3/4 for God and Co.** and **Fish This Week But Next Week Chittlings**. McCann is a funky pianist. His touch is somewhat lighter than most, but his playing has no originality, and he nowhere shows signs of being able to develop a solo. He depends on the standard figures dear to all pianists of his persuasion. When he turns from 'church' music to ballads the result is weltschmerz on **I'll Remember April**, glib blankness of **How High the Moon**, and banality on **This Can't Be Love**. Leroy Vinnegar provides a stable background, while drummer Ron Jefferson seems to be a performer of some skill and poise. From Frank Evan's liner notes I learn that McCann has learned from and is admired by Miles Davis; I can't hear what and I don't hear why.

"The **OSCAR PETERSON Trio at the JATP**" (Verve MG-8368) is from an undated concert when the trio was Brown and Kessel plus the leader. Peterson's flashy technique and inept ideas are displayed at length; **Cheek to Cheek** is an extremely apt illustration of the emptiness and tastlessness he is so prone to. Kessel and Brown do their jobs. The last track, **Cotton Tail**, is from one of those P. T. Barnum finales

and features some bars from Pres, Eldridge, Phillips, Carter, etc. It also has a long pedestrian drum solo from Buddy Rich. Peterson has no solo.

Sentimental big bands enthusiasts should be elated by **TERRY GIBBS' "Swing is Here"** (Verve MG-2134) with charts by such stalwarts as Bill Holman, Al Cohn, Marty Paich, and Manny Albam; slick, carefully tailored work without novelty or feeling. Ubiquitous performers Conte Candoli, Stu Williamson, Frank Rosolino, Bill Perkins, and Mel Lewis are among the sidemen. Gibbs is his usual bland self and provides simulated swing.

"**The Guitar Artistry of TAL FARLOW**" (Verve MG V-8370) is a sort of artsy-craftsy, *intime* affair with flutists-saxophonists Bobby Jasper and Frank Wess and pianist Dick Hyman. It is too bad, for Farlow can be an interesting soloist. In his best work his lines have melodic direction and impeccable, if somewhat stiff, time. There is a good example here in his unamplified playing on **Telefunky**. However, the rest of his work, both amplified and unamplified, seems somehow only competent.

A Foggy Day, Sweet Lorraine, and **Telefunky** have a trio of guitar, bass, and flute or saxophone and Milt Hinton is thoroughly admirable on these tracks.

The **ADDERLEY BROTHERS** are back again with "**Them Dirty Blues**" (Riverside RLP 12-322), a rather disheartening experience, particularly when one considers the extent Cannonball had developed as a soloist before forming this group—a good, consistent player, reliable for an even level of performance. His playing here seems almost a mish-mash of casually tossed out ideas of which the vulgarity of **Easy Living** is, unfortunately, a good example. There are the ersatz-Davis sounds of brother Nat, and on three tracks, the carefully manufactured funk of Bobby Timmons. The book is full of sterling Silver, but it does make one appreciate Silver and the Jazz Messengers.

Four of the tracks here have Barry Harris on piano, but even this estimable musician seems defeated, and the promising Louis Hayes has fallen off since his days with Silver. Sam Jones does what is expected, but he can do more.

The **BUCK CLARKE Quintet** is a new group from Washington, D.C., with Clarke on bongoes and conga drum; Don McKenzie, vibraphone; Charles Hampton, piano, alto, clarinet, and wooden flute; Fred Williams, bass; Roscoe Hunter, drums. Their recording debut, "**Cool Hands**" (Offbeat OJ-3003), is moderately interesting. The instrumentation may suggest either a cocktail unit or an MJQ derivative, but neither is

entirely the case. It is a well coordinated, driving group, with somewhat unsteady but able soloists who try to speak with their own voices. They do not always succeed, but their efforts are commendable. The best soloist is unquestionably McKenzie. He has obviously studied and learned much from Milt Jackson, but he has made good use of his study. His improvisations are ably wrought and well developed with neat melodic figures and without embroidery or faking. I think his work on his own composition **Floretta** is a good example of his playing, but unfortunately, the tune is a sort of pastiche of John Lewis. Multi-instrumentalist Hampton is best on alto which he plays with quasi-Parker ideas and agitated grace, but on **Lover Man** he uses some obvious, melodramatic runs. As a pianist he functions well, but not memorably here; his clarinet is pleasant but little more. I think the wood flute and the track **X-A-Dose** was a mistake. Clarke integrates his bongos and conga with the drums to complement Hunter and does not play them for gratuitous effects. Hunter and Williams seem somewhat indecisive, but they provide the necessary support.

"**Singin' the Blues**" (Camden CAL-588) is a collection of reissues from RCA compiled by Leonard Feather. It includes Leadbelly's **Good Morning Blues**; Lizzie Miles' **Yellow Dog Gal Blues**; Hot Lips Page's **Just Another Woman**; Lil Green's **Why Don't You Do Right**; Waller's **Bessie, Bessie, Bessie**; Manone's **How Long Blues**; Armstrong-Teagarden's **50-50 Blues**; Johnny Moore's **How Blue Can You Get**; Eckstine's **Jelly, Jelly**; Rushing's **Walking Slow Behind You**; Lucy Reed's **You've Got A Date With the Blues**; The Rhythm Club of London's **Mighty Like the Blues**. I would say the Leadbelly and the Armstrong-Teagarden warrant reissuing. The Leadbelly has a hint of the "Popular Front" of the thirties, and the other is a vocal trifle with some good solos work from the two. Some case can be made for Lil Green, Johnny Moore, and Page, but if these, and the poorer remainder of the tracks are all that you can garner from those bulging files of blues recordings at RCA, why bother? Feather has been a jazz critic for over twenty years; does this set reflect his ideas of the blues and blues singing? Eckstine? Lizzie Miles? That Manone? There is much better Rushing to be found elsewhere! If you're going to do Waller, why this one? But why go on when there are only Lucy Reed with Charlie Ventura and the Sextet of the Rhythm Club of London with Hazel Scott as vocalist and pianist to go on to? Leonard Feather is listed as pianist and composer on **Just Another Woman**

and composer on **Mighty Like the Blues**, while Jane Feather is given composer credit for **You've Got a Date With the Blues**. Feathering the nest?

The **SIDNEY BECHET** concert recording from the 1958 Brussels Fair (Columbia CL 1410) is plagued by a poor rhythm section, Arvell Shaw, and Kansas Fields and pianist George Wein. Wein is prone to lugubrious solos, and there is a tasteless *arco* solo from Shaw on **Society Blues**. Then, too, there seems to be a lack of understanding among Bechet and Clayton and Dickenson so that the ensemble passages are usually badly conceived, particularly on **St. Louis Blues** and a poor **When the Saints Go Marching In**. Bechet grandstands untidily on **St. Louis Blues**, and his great skill and superb melodic sense are the victims. Much of his work on **Sewanee River** is virtually a parody of his **Summertime**. (Of course, the melody is abysmal, but why play it?) Vic Dickenson performs largely with hes mannerisms; on **In a Sentimental Mood** he coasts along, blithe and tricky, on snorts and smears. The best moments of the set come from Buck Clayton whose completely developed solo on **Society Blues** is beautiful enough to compensate for his obvious playing on **All of Me**. He is also the voice of taste, reason, and moderation in **St. Louis Blues**.

JIMMY RUSHING is certainly the best known and most popular of the "Kansas City" blues singers. His voice is large but flexible and he adds a wistful, rather sad air to the hard, sophisticated Midwestern blues that he sings. I feel that in his occasional attempts with popular songs he is unable to rework them into appropriate vehicles for his essentially realistically melancholy mode of expression. "**Rushing Lullabies**" (Columbia CL 1401) uses a small Uptown-styled group, variously with Buddy Tate, Ray Bryant, Skeeter Best, Jo Jones, and Sir Charles Thompson to back him. They play functionally. Rushing's singing on most of the tracks seems almost disinterested; he runs through **I Can't Believe That You're in Love with Me** and **Good Rockin' Tonight** without conviction. This sort of treatment is more obvious in the unsuitable numbers like **Russian Lulaby** and **I Cried for You**. However, on more appropriate songs like **One Evening, You Can't Run Around**, and **Did You Ever** his real ability gives depth to some of the varieties of human disillusion and the stoic weariness in coping with them. **You Can't Run Around** has an ambience of passive suffering and abasement that is harrowing—and artistically successful.

H. A. Woodfin



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Noted jazz historian, MARSHALL STEARNS, author of the *STORY OF JAZZ*, takes notes for his new book on jazz and the dance from an interview tape that he plays back on his NORELCO 'Continental' tape recorder. DR. STEARNS is Director of the INSTITUTE OF JAZZ STUDIES and Associate Professor of English at HUNTER COLLEGE. "I make constant use of my NORELCO 'Continental' when doing field work for my books and articles," states DR. STEARNS. "Here, the most significant feature is three speed versatility. I find that the extremely economical 1 1/2 speed is ideal for recording interviews from which I later take material needed for my work. The other speeds are exceptional for their ability to capture the full fidelity of music and voice." The NORELCO 'Continental' is a product of North American Philips Co., Inc., High Fidelity Products Division, Dept. 1ee5, 230 Duffy Avenue, Hicksville, L. I., N. Y.

JAZZ IN PRINT



by NAT HENTOFF

In the New Statesman, Francis Newton, the British history professor who taught in America this past summer, reported on jazz in New York: "... New York jazz is at least two minorities; and it is disturbing that they have so little relation with each other. Uptown there is the jazz of Harlem (the one that does not even get advertised in the New Yorker, otherwise a faithful guide to the music). This is the sort of noise you hear coming out of the dark belly of the L Bar on Broadway and 148th, the visceral sound of Marlow Morris' rhythmic organ-playing, rather like crystallized glue, or in the Top Club on West 145th ... It is not very ambitious music, but by God the place jumps and the clients at the bar laugh and stomp their feet as men ought to do when they are enjoying themselves. Those who listen to this music are not 'fans'; they are just people who like to have some entertainment while they drink. Those who play it are craftsmen and showmen, who accept the facts of life in the jungle with disconcerting calm." The other "minority" Newton describes is downtown at the Jazz Gallery, the Five Spot, etc. Newton writes of Ornette Coleman - and contrast it with the adolescent gaucheries of Down Beat - "The far-out boys do

him an injustice by insisting on the revolutionary character of the sounds which, in defiance of all the rules of all musical games, he produces out of his plastic alto-sax, and which can only be described in words which carry unwanted overtones of depreciation: squeaking, neighing, honking and suchlike. Widening the technical range of an instrument is not enough to make a player more than freak. The unforgettable thing about this very dark, soft-handed man playing with a vertical fold over his nose, is the passion with which he blows. I have heard nothing like it in modern jazz since Parker. He can and does play the chorus of a standard straight - with an intense, voiced, lamenting feeling for the blues which lays this critic flat on his back. He swings. Beside him his trumpeter and pupil Don Cherry sounds like a thin piper of experimental exercises. Coleman is a big thing in jazz, and it is to the credit of New York that it has recognized him in a few months, after years of lonely playing in the wilderness of the west.

"But who has recognized him? The public at the Five Spot is overwhelmingly young, white, and intellectual or bohemian. Here are the jazz fans (white or colored) with the 'Draft Stevenson' buttons, lost over their \$1.50 beer. If Coleman were to blow in Small's Paradise in Harlem, it would clear the place in five minutes. Musicians such as he are, it seems, as cut off now from the common listeners among their people as Webern is from the public at the Filey Butin's. They depend on those who are

themselves alienated, the internal emigrants of America."

Leonard Feather is quoted in Variety as having decided to leave criticism and concentrate on music composition and work. "His contention now is that jazz, as well as being an art form is part of show business. The problem, he asserts, is that the majority of jazz reviewers stress the esoteric importance and dismiss the entertainment values."

Good-bye, Leonard, but when were you here?

Records are now available of modern African jazz. Gallo (Africa) Ltd., 161 President Street, Johannesburg, South Africa has released Jazz Epistle - Verse 1 (Continental 14) and two volumes of Jazz in Africa Featuring John Mehegan (Continental 9 and 10). Issued in Britain but not yet available in this country is Charlie Parker in Sweden (Collector Records, a division of Selection, Charing Cross Road, London, W.C.2 England). The record was made in Autumn, 1950.

Gene Lees' Down Beat report of the Newport rebellion at the Cliff Walk Manor is one of the worst examples of selective reporting I've ever seen. Lees has made Down Beat brighter and more readable - if no less superficial - but he might try to keep his personal piques out of the news columns. His humorist, George Crater, continues to be as self-deluding "inside" as a band chick. Crater-Sherman is the echt examples of the kind of squeaky hippie that Babs Gonzales loves to put on. The 1960 edition of N. W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and

Periodicals indicate that Down Beat's circulation, as of its March and June, 1959, Audit Bureau of Circulation statements, is 35,671. The year before it had been 44,509. In 1958: 35,707.

Whatever happened to the proceeds of the Billie Holiday marker fund? Ralph Gleason suggested in the San Francisco Chronicle that "jazz fans who want to do something in memory of Billie Holiday might send their dollars (or more) to CORE (Congress of Racial Equality), 38 Park Row, New York 38, N. Y. I suspect Billie would dig that more than a headstone."

If you want copies of the biographical booklets BMI has been publishing on such of its jazz writers as Charles Mingus, George Russell, John Lewis, etc., write to Russell Sanjek, BMI, 589 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N. Y. In addition to a biographical sketch of the composer, each booklet contains a list of his BMI compositions and a discography.

Cannonball Adderley, who should know, spoke to a New York World Telegram reporter about New York as a jazz testing ground: "...no matter what they bring here, New York shakes them. A young tenor player was complaining to me that Coleman Hawkins makes him nervous. Man, I told him Hawkins was SUPPOSED to make him nervous. Hawkins has been making other sax players nervous for 40 years...This town is like a world governing body of jazz."

Albert McCarthy has begun a new international discographical magazine - Discographical Forum: A Bi-Monthly of Jazz and Blues Research. First

issue is dated May, 1950. It's \$1.50 a year from Albert J. McCarthy, The Old Bakehouse, Back Road East, St. Ives, Cornwall, England. First issue has a listing with personnel of the records made by Charlie Mingus's former Debut label - with recording dates - as well as other departments. Second issue (July) has a listing of Sunset Records which put out some interesting jazz in the mid-forties, a blues forum, etc. McCarthy welcomes contributions.

Another new discographical magazine is a bi-monthly, Jazz-Disco, published and edited by Christer Borg, Tessinsvag 1c, Malmo V, Sweden. First issue has a Lou Donaldson discography and a listing of musicians' who have recorded under Moslem names (the contemporary equivalent in discography of deciphering blues players' pseudonyms). Matrix (incorporating The Discophile) continues. For subscription information, contact Peter Russell, 93 Union Street, Stonehouse, Plymouth, Devon, England. Yet another useful journal in the field is Jazz Statistics. A recent issue had discographies of Cootie Williams, Sonny Boy Williamson, and Howlin' Wolf. It's \$1 a year (six issues) from Otto Fluckiger, Bifangstrasse 6, Reinach BL, Switzerland. In this country, I'd recommend Disc Collector ("The Country Record Collectors Bible") for anyone interested in bluegrass and other country music. Number 14, for example, includes a discography of Lester Flatt & Earl Scruggs & The Foggy Mountain Boys - soul music of a different but no less authentic

vein. Disc Collector is at P.O. Box 169, Crestwood, Delaware, and as I recall, a subscription is \$1 a year. The very best - or at the least, the freshest and most knowledgeable - folk music magazine now publishing in America is The Little Sandy Review, 3220 Park Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minnesota. It's \$3 a year.

Chris Strachwitz has formed the International Blues Society. The society will record blues singers and has pooled resources with Paul Oliver and Jacques Demetre who have been recording in this country this past summer. An annual membership is \$12 a year to Chris Strachwitz, 17650½ Navajo Trail, Los Gatos, California. For the fee, a member gets three IBS LPs and periodic research bulletins...Record Research meanwhile has published the third edition of its Blues Research bulletin. (Available from Record Research, 131 Hart Street, Brooklyn, 6, N. Y.) The agency that gives the most immediate and direct help to Negroes in the South who are being economically crushed for attempting to register to vote is the National Committee for Rural Schools, Inc., 112 East 19th Street, New York 3, N. Y. Contributions can be sent to Rae Brandstein.

If you deal with British records shops - and it's easy to do - Volumes 7 and 8 of Fontana's Treasures of North-American Negro Music have been released. Seven has four sides by Texas Alexander. Eight (they're all EPs) is by Sam Morgan's New Orleans band. Does anyone keep a list of European reissues currently available? If so, we'd like to print it.

LONG ISLAND SOUNDS

Al Fisher

A card placed on every table at the Cork 'n Bib in Westbury, Long Island, probably sums up the atmosphere of the place rather well. The card thanks the customer for his patronage but requests that he refrain from unnecessary noise while the musicians are playing. The request is not just talk. Occasionally a hard-nosed square has been asked to leave when seized with a sudden urge to discuss Schopenhauer in strident tones, or to pound out off-tempo paradiddles on the table top with the silver.

The Cork 'n Bib, one of the longest-lived jazz nightclubs in the East, occupies the ground floor of an unimposing frame building on Post Avenue, the town's main traffic artery and what passes for its business section. Westbury lies at the heart of the North Shore's "mink and manure" belt and its principle thoroughfare, named for one of the pioneer millionaires, reflects the horsey interests of the residents. At its southern end, it passes the inviting gates of Roosevelt Raceway, where in season, the men are separated from the ribbon clerks at the fifty dollar windows. Further north, it runs by Nino's, a favorite inn of the polo set, noted for its exotic menu which boasts such far out items as chocolate covered ants, rattlesnake meat and broiled agave worms; and also as residence-in-exile of jockey Earl Sande, rider of **Man O' War** and **Twenty Grand**, who is known as "the Bird of the winner's circle" to C 'n B habitués.

Among the C 'n B's other neighbors are three saddlery shops. Now where else can you buy a silver-inlaid saddle right off the counter?

At its northern end, Post Avenue becomes a winding country road, wandering past the bucolic beauties of the Whitney, Phelps and Bostwick estates, with their herds of Black Angus cattle, Arabian steeds, polo fields and sprawling barns and stables. One of these equine hostleries boasts a clock tower and carillon. How chic can you get?

In this environment, Charlie Graziano and his attractive wife Betty have operated a successful jazz club since March 1954.

The Grazianos have no ready explanation of how they got into an enterprise whose future, five years ago, seemed

nebulous at best. Says Charlie, "I happen to love the sounds and had hopes that jazz could make it on Long Island if properly presented. There have been some pretty rough times. In fact, we're a long way from being a runaway smash right now. No, I can't tell you why Betty and I sunk our worldly goods into this club. It was just something we'd dreamed about for a long time. We'd both been in show business as performers and figured we'd like to have our own place to stay close to the excitement of living entertainment, The Cork 'n Bib was the answer."

I looked around the room. The general decor is neo-Spanish out of early F. Scott Fitzgerald. The main hall is large enough to seat 200 for dinner. It has a high, beamed ceiling, acoustically ideal for jazz. The bandstand is a foot-high platform covered with deep-pile carpeting, heavy drapes along the back and sides and an ornamental overhang. The construction of the room and its small stage, plus an excellent sound system, makes it possible for a jazz artist to be presented at his best.

Just in front of the main room is a small cocktail lounge with a few tables, usually filled with performers during breaks. The barroom just off the street, is a typical gin mill scene with booths, a time-scarred bar and the hippest juke box on Long Island. This is the refuge of the college set who flock in to hear Maynard Ferguson, Horace Silver, Don Elliot and other favorites over the P-A speakers, where they can nurse their bottle of beer all night and by-pass the 3.50 minimum (for food OR liquor) which is imposed on Fridays and Saturday nights. I asked Charlie about his relations with musicians. I had discussed the club with people like Gigi Gryce, Ferguson and some of his sidemen, the late Lester Young, pianists Herb Rainey and Bobby Corwin—all agreed that working conditions at the club were something else. The owner explained his approach.

"If club owners have trouble with the players, they probably create it themselves. Sure they'll show up late or get their dates mixed now and then. I try to remember that I'm dealing with talented people, artists. These people have a different attitude about deadlines, about rules and regulations which a banker, for instance, might consider all-important. Don't get me wrong; nobody puts me on. I'm fair with the musicians, and they reciprocate." He walked behind the bar. "Look at these, postcards from all over the world, sent to me by guys who have worked here. Lee Konitz, Gerry Mulligan, Roy Eldridge—they all want to know how 'our place' is doing."

To date, the greatest drawing attraction the club has had was the George Shearing small group. Charlie recalls that Shearing pulled turnaway crowds, with fans lining up down the street.

"It was Radio City Music Hall all the way," he recalls.

The C 'n B's March 1954 attraction was Coleman Hawkins. The Bean has been back several times since, playing better than ever. On his last date, some months ago, he walked into the spot, looked around and said, "Man, this is a friendly groove!"

Charlie and Betty's personal favorite was Billie Holiday. They like to recall a wonderful evening in 1956, just before Billie's Carnegie Hall concert. A girl singer was featured that evening, but pretty soon Dizzy showed, then Tony Scott (Bill Crow couldn't make it), Lee Konitz, and finally Lady Day and her husband. The group immediately jelled into one of those sessions that a jazz fan dreams about. Charlie announced at three A.M. that the bar was closed and locked the doors. A roomful of thirsty people sat until seven while the boys blew, and Billie sat on the edge of the stand, wailing her heart into a hand mike.

"Billie sang here many times," Charlie recalled. "Often she'd just drop in with friends though, and work harder than the group I'd hired. More than once too, when I'd booked her, she'd sing an extra set for a handful of people who arrived late. She always gave a little something extra. She was a great artist and a fine person."

Billie received a standing ovation that night, something that has happened at the Cork on only one other occasion. The audience refused to let Konitz, Warne Marsh and Lennie Tristano leave the stand at the end of a fiery set. "Lennie was moving that night, and although he bugged me about our piano being out of tune, he blew a lot of up-tempo stuff and sounded better than I've heard him in years."

Charlie admits that his suburban location has delayed general acceptance, especially by the trade press, but he isn't bitter about it. "Away from New York, everything's Bridgeport," he said. "What the hell, there are two or three critics living within ten miles of here who have never darkened my door step nor written a line about the place. I guess they have their reasons, but off hand, I can't guess what they are. Maybe they figure that jazz stops at the city line." However, Graziano points out that he is close to the new Long Island Expressway and the Northern State Parkway. For a fan without wheels, the Long Island Railroad rumbles within 75 yards of the swinging threshold of the C 'n B.

Charlie is proud of the Italian-American cuisine dished up by chef Pepi. "Too many jazz clubs serve swill and let it go at that." Charlie feels that a good dinner and a guarantee of tasty jazz should encourage hardy jazz fans to travel out from the city. "We've had people here from Philly," he observes. "I have them on my mailing list and they think nothing of trekking out here on a week-end when a particular fa-

BOOK REVIEW

vorite is in. In fact, most of my customers are regulars. I have a current mailing list numbering around 1200. I advertise in a metropolitan daily and buy occasional radio spots. If it weren't for my regulars though, plus the good word passed around by the musicians themselves, I'd be selling takeout pizzas and getting my jazz kicks out of records."

Graziano opens his place to jazz on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Monday is set aside for the airing of local musicians and old hands like former Levittown resident Konitz show up to blow along and appraise the talent. Wednesday is session night, with a group of pros hired as "discussion leaders." Honest attempts are made on these occasions to encourage visitors to jam. Many of these attempts come off very well. On week-ends, name groups are booked, and the place swings.

The C'n B employs about a dozen folks regularly. Five years ago, most of them couldn't believe that people would pay money to listen to the "noise" at Graziano's. Now they've all become such dedicated fans that Charlie can hardly keep the joint open when the Randalls Island Festival is running. On the other hand, both bartenders are frustrated musicians and often jam with their boss after the last customer has been ushered out. Charlie plays trumpet almost as well as Mickey, his eleven year old son, whose two idols in music are Terry Gibbs and Art Farmer.

"My place has stability," says Charlie. "I can name two dozen places around New York that have opened and closed in the past five years. I'm not trying to be the Billy Rose of jazz. There are many things I'd like to try, but I won't until the time is just right. That way I hope to be able to keep the place running and the boys gainfully employed until jazz becomes the fabulous commercial hit it's bound to be."

He waved his hand. "These walls have seen some pretty memorable things, like the Billie Holiday session I told you about. Francoise Sagan, on her first trip to the States, rolled in here with her entire entourage, just to hear Billie. Sal Mineo, Gene Krupa and their agents, arranging the final details of "The Gene Krupa Story" here. Lambert-Hendrick-Ross made their first nightclub appearance here. Seeing local college students getting up there and playing on equal terms with the pros because of their drive and thorough technical backgrounds. Blasé pros forgetting themselves and playing overtime sets, moved by the enthusiastic response of our customers. We're going to be around for a while, make no mistake."

You can't argue too much with a man who set up a modern jazz club over five years ago and made it come off. But it's encouraging to have someone around who can prove that a jazz club run with integrity can survive.

JAZZ IN BRITAIN by David Boulton. W. H. Allen, London.

Many books have been written about the history of jazz, yet few tell of jazz outside of its native country. Thus *Jazz in Britain* is welcome. David Boulton writes with none of the anti-modern prejudices of many British commentators, and he has a background of knowledge which critics of anything should have, but which is often lacking among jazz critics.

Jazz in Britain is divided into four parts: "Four Decades of Jazz in Britain," "Table Talk," "British Bands Today," and the appendices which include a helpful list of British magazines and books. "Table Talk," the most interesting part, contains penetrating and original thoughts on "What is Jazz?" "The Englishness of English Jazz," "Trad. and Mod.," "The Field of Pseudo-Jazz," "Skiffle," and "The Future of Jazz."

In "What is Jazz?" Boulton discusses the prearrangement and technical proficiency in music which came with industrialism. This, he believes, put an end to freedom and improvisation in folk music, taking away some of its life. But now it has given players a new impulse to play jazz in reaction. Boulton says in the historical section that Britain got its first impression of Negro folk music from American minstrels in 1848. Then in 1873 the first Negro group—eight singers—arrived in London bringing spirituals to Britain's knowledge of the music. In 1912 white and Negro ragtime groups began to appear and within several years dozens of British "jazz" groups appeared playing a highly syncopated music.

With the arrival of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band in London in 1919, funny hats and antics became identified with "jazz." There was a decline of interest by the early twenties. But the appearance of a scored jazz with improvised solos revived the interest in

jazz in the late twenties. Soon British musicians were teaching themselves how to play it, and articles, reviews and books on jazz began to appear—many of them written by musicians. By the late thirties, jazz playing in Britain once again was in a decline. In the early forties, the New Orleans revival began. Boulton attempts to explain why a revival, which began in the U.S., took hold so firmly and remained entrenched in England. The ban on American musicians playing in England (which recently ended) started in 1935 as the result of a quarrel between the American Federation of Musicians and Britain's Musicians Union. This, he says, put an end to personal contacts between musicians of the two countries. The war probably created other hindrances. But the British fans listened attentively to neo-New Orleans jazz. They didn't begin to dance to the music until 1947 when an Australian band—also created during the revival—arrived and to play at a ballroom.

The idea of the Englishness of English jazz may surprise; Boulton mentions the different regional styles in America. Why should English jazz be almost totally like American jazz? Isn't "Chicago jazz," which was played by musicians inspired by New Orleans musicians, different from New Orleans jazz? All are influenced by the culture in which they exist.

Boulton defends the co-existence of both modern jazz and the revival and continuance of traditional jazz against the argument that present day musicians shouldn't play New Orleans jazz just because it is music of a different time and cannot be truthfully re-created. Boulton reveals that commercial music, manufactured for a middle class taste, is created the same way in Britain as it is here and follows the same fads. But one British fad never took hold in the U.S., skiffle, a sort of folk-jazz. It soon went through as many forms and mergers as rhythm and blues, country and western and rock and roll in America, and Boulton examines them all. Boulton traces skiffle from its American beginnings in spasm, blue-blowing and jug bands to its British present when it was merged by force with pop and rock and roll music for public consumption. He compares skiffle with the status of jazz around 1917, suggesting that true skiffle may soon gain a wide following. Because of the strong essentially folk element in skiffle, I doubt it.

While neo-New Orleans fans were beginning to dance, a British counterpart to Minton's was started by altoists Johnny Dankworth and Ronnie Scott. But it was not until 1950 that modern jazz became a strong force. Thus, in a list of British jazz groups in 1958, only eight play modern while thirty-one play traditional, and two play mainstream.

Jerry DeMuth

LETTERS

to create on my record.

Mary Anne Jackson
Van Nuys, Cal.

WRITE THAT THING

I am writing this in the hope of enlisting the sympathies of revivalists, dixielanders, or whatever the proper name, in helping me with a project I feel to be important to jazz.

I have never been one of those critics who believed in holding to the **status quo** of some particular period—usually, with such critics, the jazz of the twenties. I have always believed that jazz should have taken the historical course, that is a course like the one that gave us the great music of the Western world. This course consisted mainly in the development of improvised 16th century dance music, first into simple pieces, later into suites, and finally into more extended compositions.

Since composition is constantly being made use of in modern jazz it might be argued that jazz is following the historical procedure. But while Western music developed slowly at first without too marked a change in the melodic content, jazz ran the gamut of scalar development (with the model of classical music always before it) that had taken Western music four hundred years, **without developing in construction**. As for my views on modern jazz, I have stated them before and although I naturally keep finding new arguments against it, this is not the place to air them.

However I think it is important to say that I feel the jazz of the twenties, however great its value in the musical scene, failed to develop its potentialities. Instead it continually changed for the worse and I believe that what will finally emerge subsequent to these changes will not have the great and unique character that distinguished jazz in its early stages. Clearly the historical procedure as applied to jazz must start at a much earlier stage than the one at which the modern jazz musicians began applying compositional techniques.

As much as I enjoy listening to the present-day dixielanders I feel that they are at a dead end and have long since proved their point: that it is possible for contemporary players to come close to the jazz of the past. Of course besides proving this point they do fulfill a need in the same way a classical orchestra does when it plays a concert of music of the past. But my belief is that the best of these bands could be still better and their music, as a whole, could be raised to a higher level of significance.

I have already made a start in an attempt to apply the historical procedure to jazz with four pieces, but unless one has sympathy for the project to begin with, he is not going to see that anything is proved by what I

have done. And rightly so, for the growth from improvisation to notation will be, in its beginning, hesitant as it must be if it is going to be of any value at all. We must remember that the compositional efforts of the early lutenists and harpsichordists were not world-shaking, and as a matter of fact did not compare with the brilliance of the actual improvisational performances. These early compositions were hesitant; there was nothing bold in the result, only in the venture. In this connection I quoted in **the Hound and Horn** (Summer 1934) the impressions of the 17th century writer Andre Maugars on hearing Frescobaldi (1583-1644) play: ". . . to judge of his profound learning, you must hear him improvise." But if it were not for the men who, for whatever reason, notated their compositional works we would never have had the music of Bach, or for that matter of any classical music since then.

Admittedly there have been some new possibilities with the invention of phonograph recording, but again this is not the place for me to go into arguments as to why I feel that the possibilities of recorded improvisation have not displaced development by means of notated composition.

When I go to a live jazz concert today I can never be treated to anything but the present, unsatisfactory stage of its development. And if there is a dixieland band present, even if it could play some of the classic jazz pieces well, the chances are that I will get renditions "in the style of something else," somewhat similar to a pianist playing a little tune in the styles of Beethoven, Mozart or Bach. As apt as such performance may be, they are a far cry from the great music of these composers.

If there are any players, composers or arrangers who share my assessment of the development of jazz to date and who feel as I do about the promise for its future that the historical process offers, please get in touch with me through **The Jazz Review**.

Roger Pryor Dodge
New York City

ASK A SILLY QUESTION

It will be a while before I (and how many others?) can take myself seriously again, after Dick Wellstood's masterpiece of irreverence (**The Jazz Review**, August, 1960). To strike exactly the right tone in that sort of thing—I mean mostly the responses—is the mark of genius. Anybody can be flip, and that's what most of us are when we try that sort of thing. You see now that while it's good to ask questions, not all questions are good. What are you, on some kind of Zen kick? Wellstood's also worked with Taft Jordan and the Georgia Peach.

J. S. Shipman
Waban, Mass.

PROPHET'S HONOR

May a Philadelphian join in the praise (**The Jazz Review**, August 1960) of Chris Albertson of WHAT-FM? Only the station management seems unaware of his value and potential. Men like Chris Albertson are few and hard to find—and this unfortunately also true of jazz on WHAT-FM.

Francis Verna
Philadelphia, Pa.

NEVER APOLOGIZE, NEVER EXPLAIN

In his review of my album, H. A. Woodfin refers to my "lack of ideas". I think that what he should have said is that there were ideas there, but he didn't like them. As proof, I submit that when he says "she sounds vaguely like an oddly distorted and curdled Tristano", he gets closed to the truth. I admire Lennie Tristano very much and have been influenced by him somewhat. Critics have often said that they didn't understand Tristano, and now they're saying they don't understand me or Ornette Coleman. I'm still learning and I expect to be criticized, but critics should have at least an open mind when they hear things that sound "distorted" or "curdled". Fresh dissonance was exactly what I was aiming